

Absolutely Everything that You Must Have For an Upcoming Baby Boy or Girl

After conceiving, going through a pregnancy, and finally delivering your baby, you can't be blamed if you start to think that the tough part is behind you.

Soon enough though, you'll discover that this simply isn't the case.

No matter how prepared you think you are, the truth is that it is never prepared enough. There's always something that you forgot, overlooked, or simply never considered or spared a thought for.

Sure, when you hold your baby in your arms for the first time, your thoughts are definitely not going to be on the coming months. In fact, you probably aren't thinking of anything apart from how beautiful your child is.

But that said, are things ready for your child when you both go home from the hospital?

Honestly, if you're a first-time parent, you may have a hard time imagining just how much needs to be ready. Up to now, you've undoubtedly been so focused on actually having a baby, that the chances are you haven't thought much past this point.

On the other hand, if you have had a baby before, then you surely have an idea of what we're talking about. But that doesn't make it any easier to sort things out!

Don't worry. Take deep breaths. This guide is here for that exact reason – to help you sort out absolutely everything that you simply must have for your upcoming baby boy or girl.

Over the course of these pages, you'll find you're about to discover what you should be doing, and how you should be going about doing it. We're going to explore every nook and cranny so that, when the time rolls round and you've had your baby, you're going to be fully prepared for him or her!

All you need to do is be sure to read, understand, and then act on the advice that we'll provide!

Bottom line: Your baby deserves the best, and part and parcel of that is ensuring that you have everything ready for them.

Before we delve into what exactly you need though, there's a little bit about all of this that you should know first, and a few questions that need to be answered so that you can make sure that you're on the right track...

“When Should I Start the Preparation?”

If you're asking yourself this question, congratulations, you're already thinking ahead! Many parents actually wait until their child is born, or right before, to start preparing, and this is a big, big mistake!

Here's the best advice that you can get: It is never too early to start preparation.

Once you know that you're pregnant, you already know that you're going to have a baby pretty soon, and so from that point on, you should start getting prepared. Why wait until the last minute and then find yourself swamped?

Admittedly, as you'll see soon enough, you might want to stave off some of the preparation until later on, but a lot of it can be done almost as soon as you get the results of your pregnancy test!

By starting to prepare early, you're going to be giving yourself several advantages. First and foremost among these is the fact that you're going to have ample time to make sure that everything is sorted out.

Also, you'll be able to more carefully weigh each and every decision that you have to make, so when your baby finally does arrive, everything is just perfect!

One thing that you'll notice almost immediately is that there really are a lot of things that you're going to need. Some of these items may even be fairly pricey, and so you're going to have to do some financial planning as well.

Naturally, as with everything there are cheaper alternatives, and where possible, we're going to advise you on how best to proceed if you're on a budget. Also, we're going to go about this in an 'order of importance fashion'.

That means that we're going to cover the absolute essentials first, and then move on to other things that you should have too!

All things said and done, you shouldn't have to break the bank to get everything ready for your baby, but you're going to need to spend a little. Of course, if you've had a child before, or have friends whom have had children before, then you may very well find that you're able to get some of these things second-hand.

If you're scratching your head right now and wondering as to what exactly we mean – don't. Let's jump straight into things and start to look at the absolute essentials that you should have on hand as soon as humanly possible!

Absolute Essentials for a New Arrival

Of all the many things out there that you must have for a baby, these are the things that, no two ways about it, you simply can't do without!

So buckle up, and pay close attention. What's about to follow are some of the most important aspects of preparing for a baby that you'll ever learn about, and they're what you can't afford *not* to know about!

Beginning right at the top, you're about to get a full list of what you need to get ready, and some advice as to how you should go about it.

Let's get started, shall we?

Baby Diapers

Surprised that this is right at the top of our list? Well, you shouldn't be.

Truth is, baby diapers are the very first things that you should get ready. They're something that you simply can't do without, and going home before you have at least a small stock of them would be disastrous.

Imagine running around at the last minute searching for diapers?

Anyway, the importance of baby diapers is really not too hard to grasp – but you may not realize just how important they are. Put it this way: A newborn baby can go through 8 to 12 diapers in a day!

Yes, that's right 8 to 12 diapers in one day alone.

So if you thought that you could get away with having a stock of any less than that – think again. Really, you should have at least a couple of days worth of diaper supply at any given time, so that you won't ever run low.

Now, generally speaking, there are two main types of diapers that you could use, and these are:

1. Cloth diapers

As you can well imagine, cloth diapers are exactly what they say they are – strips of cloth that are folded into diapers for babies to wear. Most importantly however, cloth diapers are reusable!

That means that once a diaper is dirtied, all that you need to do is wash it, dry it, and you can use it again.

Also, another consideration is the fact that, being made out of various fabrics, cloth diapers tend to let children's skin 'breathe', and thus prevent frequent diaper rashes, which is definitely something worth considering.

However, having to constantly be washing diapers can, needless to say, become a chore.

One solution to this is the fact that in many places (especially big cities) there are now 'diaper services', which deliver fresh diapers frequently. Naturally, they also pick up the used diapers.

Of course, this is a more expensive option.

End of the day, the hallmark of cloth diapers remains the fact that they are reusable, which, in contrast to our other type of diaper, is really what distinguishes them...

2. Disposable diapers

Once again, the name itself pretty much sums up this type of diaper, and they're essentially 'one-use' diapers that, after dirtied, are thrown away.

Although disposable diapers have advanced a lot over the years, they're still, for the most part, not biodegradable, and also some types can cause diaper rashes due to the materials that they're made out of.

However, it is worth noting that many brands of this type of diaper have the advantage of absorbing more moisture than the traditional cloth diapers, which can actually help reduce the risk of diaper rash in some ways.

Honestly speaking though, the main advantage of disposable diapers is simply the convenience. Instead of being landed with a load of laundry, you'll be able to just pick up fresh ones and throw away old ones.

Knowing the two types of diapers available, you should be able to see now that there are a couple of points worth considering, and mainly these revolve around the fact that cloth diapers are cheaper than disposable diapers, because they are reusable. But, disposable diapers are way more convenient really.

Largely, this makes it a matter of preference. Some parents find that it is easier to start off with disposable diapers and then move on to cloth diapers later on. That way, initially at least, you won't have that much extra work with the laundry, and will be able to get used to your baby's needs!

Course, if you're on a tight budget, you might just want to be using cloth diapers.

Remember, although baby diapers are generally sold in 'new born' sizes, you might want to consider getting a mix of those, and a size larger.

Until your baby is actually born, it's going to be really hard to estimate his or her size, and you should definitely take into account the fact that not all babies are born at the 'newborn' size. If you have at least a few diapers around that are a size above that, you'll be prepared for this possibility.

More importantly, your baby is going to grow into that larger size anyway, so it's not like you're going to be 'wasting' the diapers!

Once you've sorted out the diapers for your eventual baby, it's time we look at the next most-important thing that you should be preparing...

Sleeping Place for the Baby

Incidentally, many people think that the only option for getting a sleeping place ready for the baby is to have a crib. This isn't really true in the slightest.

While it is true that a crib is a possibility, it is by no means the only choice that you have, and you should consider your options carefully long before your baby arrives. Believe us, you'll want this sorted by the time your baby does get home, so that he or she has a place to sleep right from the start.

When weighing your options you need to consider a few things, but as you'll see, once again, preference is going to play a big role in your selection.

1. Cribs

As the standard sleeping place, cribs are definitely the most popular option out there. Many cribs nowadays have various features, such as adjustable mattress heights, and some are even portable.

Primarily, the main advantage of a crib is that it will be a suitable sleeping place for babies until they're about two years old, and are able to crawl or climb out of the crib.

Surrounded as it is with fairly high (relatively!) fencing, your baby isn't going to be accidentally rolling out, and won't be able to climb out and wander around in the middle of the night without you knowing!

Once your baby can get out of the crib, needless to say, you'll have to pursue alternative options, but at two years old, a baby should be able to sleep in a bed even, so long as it has some form of fencing so that they can't roll off.

Keep in mind though that cribs can be slightly expensive, and so a good option for cheap cribs would be to either go to second-hand sales, or hand-me-downs from some friends or relatives of yours who have had children before and no longer need their old cribs.

As an added advantage, the portable versions of these cribs mean that you can have your child in whatever part of the house you're in.

2. Co-Sleepers

Even if you don't instantly recognize the term, chances are you've seen these contraptions before.

Essentially a co-sleeper looks like a small crib that is attached to the side of a bed. So therefore, as the name implies, you could sleep with your baby practically right beside you throughout the night.

Needless to say, when your baby is still very young, this is appealing. It means that you will have almost instantaneous access to your child, and are able to feed him or her in the middle of the night without ever getting up (assuming you keep a bottle of milk handy, or breast feed).

Also, having your baby close by during the first few months is something that many mothers enjoy, and it does help ease your mind, knowing that they're right there.

Unfortunately, the downside of co-sleepers is that they're not as permanent a solution as cribs, because babies are able to get out of them much sooner. So while it is a great initial option, eventually you will have to seek out alternative sleeping arrangements.

If you're on a tight budget, you might want to skip this and just go for a crib, for that reason. Still, if you're able to get a hand-me-down, then that would be nice too.

Many of the newer co-sleeper units allow for adjustable heights, and also have various other accessories that could help make life easier, such as a place to hold baby bottles, and so on.

Of course, this isn't your only option either...

3. Bassinets

Think of a bassinet as a small bed specifically for babies. Odds are, you've encountered them before, as they (or some version of them) are very often used in hospitals.

Basically, they appear to be a 'cocoon'-like bed, big enough to just hold a baby, and therefore light enough to carry around. Therein lies their main advantage, as they're highly portable.

So instead of having to carry your baby upstairs to a co-sleeper or crib every time he or she takes a nap, you could easily just have a bassinet that you're able to move to whichever part of the house you're in.

By doing so, your baby will always be close by, even when sleeping.

Now, as you've probably realized, a bassinet is a great thing to have, even if you already have a crib or co-sleeper. It's portability means that you'll be extending your options, and allow you a greater freedom of movement while still knowing that your baby is close enough to you.

On the downside though, bassinets are normally only intended for babies up to 3, or at very most 4, months old. After that, bassinets are generally not big enough, and even if they are, a roll could send the baby tumbling out – which is definitely not on the cards.

For those first few months though, you'll find that having a bassinet is worth it!

4. Cradles

Despite the fact that many regard cradles as a relic of the past, the truth is that they are still as good a sleeping place for a baby as they ever were!

Add to that the fact that, chances are, you can find one fairly cheap, and possibly even free as a hand-me-down or family keepsake. Cradles are, after all, often kept by families and passed down over the generations.

In many ways, cradles actually resemble bassinets, only they tend to be lower to the ground, and are often on rockers, so that you can rock your child comfortably to sleep.

Still, due to these similarities, cradles also share similar advantages with bassinets, that being that they are very portable, and can easily provide you with an alternative option to your regular crib.

However, this also means that they share similar weaknesses, most notably the fact that after your child is a few months old, he or she will probably outgrow the cradle, and be able to get out of it with ease.

End of the day, just as was the case with diapers, your choice of a place to sleep for your child is ultimately just a matter of preference, as you should see now.

Once again, there is the question of convenience, where no doubt, the most convenient option would be to have a co-sleeper and bassinet or cradle initially, before moving on to a crib later on.

Naturally, this option is going to be fairly costly though, especially if you're buying all of the things that you need.

So, if you're on a budget, as we've noted thus far, you could either just make do with a crib alone, or rely on whatever second-hand items you're able to obtain for cheap prices (or free, of course!).

Whatever the case, be sure that you have arranged at least some place to sleep for your child before he or she is delivered. Leaving it till after is just going to add to the amount of tasks that you'll need to perform.

Now let's move on to our next item...

First Aid Kit

Sadly, this is one item that most soon-to-be-parents often don't think about either. After all, with everything else that needs to be sorted out, it really isn't the kind of thing that would pop to mind.

But it should be!

Although, hopefully, you'll never ever need to use a first aid kit, the simple fact of the matter is that you probably will in some way or other. And you should be prepared for any eventuality, especially one that involves your child's well being!

Of course, you're not expected to have a replacement hospital in your own house, but ensuring that you have a properly stocked first aid kit can go a long way.

Nowadays, you can even find infant-oriented first aid kits sold. Otherwise, if you're not so sure of where you can find these, you can even build one yourself from the ground up using just a regular first aid kit.

Without a doubt, the same normal ingredients should be there. Plasters, bandages, iodine, and such things are really irreplaceable. Apart from that though, you'll want some other things that are more suited for children.

For example, infant acetaminophen or ibuprofen would be a good place to start. A rectal thermometer and lubricant would be another great addition.

Also, you would benefit greatly if you could find out the numbers of pediatricians in your area, or even emergency medical hotlines that you can call, and keep them somewhere in the first aid kit itself.

Some people even go as far as to have small 'guide cards' that detail what you could do if you're ever face to face with some of the more common problems that babies have. Either make these yourself, or try to see if you can find a good guide book.

End of the day, anything and everything that would help you in a medical related situation should be part of your first aid kit.

Clothing and Miscellaneous Wear

Honestly, we say 'miscellaneous wear' as well because, naturally, when people say 'clothing' they actually end up leaving out a lot of clothe-related items that they shouldn't.

Obviously, clothing is something that is necessary. In many ways, diapers technically fall under this bracket too, but we're discussing them apart because of the sheer importance of being well stocked in terms of diapers.

But diapers aside, there are many other items of clothing that you need – and you should be well stocked so that you don't have to be running to the shop once you get home from the hospital.

Here and now, we're going to go over some of the things that you should consider:

1. Onesies

Heard of these beauties before? Essentially, 'onesies' are a one-piece article of clothing that have an opening normally at the crotch area. Frankly, they're really called an 'infant bodysuit', but 'onesies' give them much nicer ring.

In short – onesies are convenient.

One great advantage of onesies is the fact that they're gender-neutral. Sure, you may already have had an ultrasound and know whether or not you're having a boy or a girl, but if you want to start stocking up before that, well, onesies are a great way to go.

If you live in a country that is cold, then you could even use onesies as an initial warm layer, and then dress your baby in other clothes on top of it.

When your baby is very young, you won't want to have to twist him or her into clothes. Some of the types of clothing out there may look good, but many end up being notoriously difficult to dress a child in.

Thus, onesies are all the more appealing because you can, quite literally, slip them on and off with ease.

Nowadays, this type of clothing come in a variety of designs, and even styles, so you should be able to find something that looks great, but retains the convenience and comfort of onesies.

2. Beanie Hats

Yet another great piece of baby clothing, beanie hats serve to protect your child's head and ears – from the various elements, as well as from accidentally being rubbed the wrong way when your baby tosses or turns.

So, in other words, you're not going to have to worry about your baby squirming out of his blanket, since his head will be well protected.

3. Baby Booties and Mittens

Similarly, baby booties and mittens also give that 'extra mile' in terms of protection.

In particular, mittens are additionally useful because they'll stop your baby from inadvertently scratching his or herself, and maybe causing rashes to become further inflamed, or hurting his or herself.

Naturally, they'll also help keep your baby nice, snug, and warm during cold weather.

4. Other Clothing Items

When it comes to clothing in general, although we've covered the big items, there is one general rule of thumb that you should always follow: Go for functionality as opposed to style.

With all the options in baby wear that exist, there's of course going to be the temptation to dress your child in the cutest outfit that you can find.

Unfortunately, the cutest outfit may not be the most practical, and you could find that having a collection of 'cute' clothing means that you have trouble getting your child in and out of them when they need changing.

If you really want, you can, of course, have a few sets of 'cute' clothing for visits to the grandparents houses, or other functions, but the bulk of your baby's clothing should be more practical than not.

Also, try to avoid clothes that are too loose-fitting. While it may seem to make sense to buy clothes that are a size or two bigger, since your baby is going to grow into them soon enough anyway, clothes that are too loose can be a health hazard.

End of the day, so long as you have a number of sets of practical clothing (enough so that you don't run out!), you should be fine.

Armed with what we've listed so far, you should find that your life is a whole lot easier. Start stocking up on clothes as soon as you can, and you'll find that it clears up time for you later on to spend on other preparation that needs to be done.

As far as 'must have' items for babies go, clothes are definitely on the list.

Final Words on the 'Absolute Essentials'

Over the course of this guide, we've so far covered the 4 'absolutely essential' items that you're going to need for your newborn child.

By this point, you should notice that these are simply things that you can't do without. Really, if you don't sort out any one of these items, then you're going to find yourself in heaps of trouble when you get home from the hospital, baby in hand.

However, now that you know what you need to be thinking about, you're off to a great head start.

Take time to plan out what you need to purchase, what you can get from other sources, and what exactly you desire. Already, you know all the options that are in front of you, so making a well informed decision is the only thing left to do.

But wait! Before you actually go out and start shopping, there are some other 'must have' items that we need to discuss.

That's right, although you now know the absolute essentials, there are still more items that you should have ready for your child. Even though they weren't, and aren't 'essential' enough for us to discuss them earlier, they're still important enough for you to want to have them.

In this next section, we're going to deal with all these other types of items.

For now, just keep the urge to start sorting out your purchases on hold for a moment, while you discover some other amazing items that, when all is said and done, could help you to make your life a lot easier!

Much Needed Extras for a Newborn

Basically, as the title of this section strongly implies, these are 'extras'. Now you might be thinking that extras just mean luxuries that you don't really need – but think again.

While it is true that you could, conceivably, manage quite well without some of these items, the truth is that they're going to end up really smoothing the path for you. Some of the items we're about to discuss will help you to save time, others will make difficult tasks a whole lot easier.

And yet others are just downright advisable because they'll be of great benefit to your baby.

As a parent, anything and everything that could help your child is naturally, very much needed! That is the underlying truth that can't be denied.

So, bearing this in mind, over the course of this chapter we're going to be really looking at some extras that will be a great advantage.

Shall we begin?

Baby Car Seats

When you first get home from the hospital, you're probably not going to feel like going out for anything at all for quite some time. After all, you have your baby to take care of, which is a big demand on your time – so why would you go out at all?

Well, as you'll soon realize, even though your time now does have additional demands on it, sometimes you just have to go out.

What if there's an emergency, and you really need to rush off somewhere? What if you need to pop out to the shop to quickly buy something?

Naturally, if you have someone else around who could look after your baby, that's fine – but what happens when you don't? At some point or other, chances are you're going to find yourself in a situation where you need to take your baby in the car with you.

And when that happens, you absolutely do need to have a baby car seat.

If you know any parent that has ever tried to strap their baby into a regular car seat using a safety belt, they'll tell you that it is pretty much impossible. Firstly, a seat belt isn't meant for

someone that small, and so its diagonal strap isn't much use at all, and may even start to rub against the baby's head, which could cause injuries.

Secondly, even if you do somehow manage to sort out that dreaded strap, your baby isn't going to be secure at all. So you're going to find that you're going to have to try to drive while constantly checking to see that your baby is okay.

In short: Don't do this!

Not only is it dangerous, but it is reckless, and you should never, ever, even think about doing it.

Naturally, the solution to this problem is simple: Get a baby car seat. Nowadays, they're really easy to find, and come in a variety of different builds, and price ranges. If you look hard enough, you'll find some that are really pretty affordable.

After you have a baby seat, be sure that it fits well and is securely fastened. Now, you have all the freedom of movement you need... or do you?

Baby Carriers

Just as with baby seats, these are what you'll need if you plan to walk about and take your newborn with you.

Certainly, if you like, you could simply cradle your baby in your arms as you walk, but this is going to cause your arms to ache pretty fast, and also it isn't the safest way to carry your baby anyway – what if you accidentally are knocked and drop your child?

Bearing that in mind, baby carriers are the way to go, and they come in a large variety.

Most common are the frontal baby carriers, which act as a sling in front of you where you can place your baby when you're walking, or even just doing household chores. Because your baby is in front of you, you'll be able to better notice anything and everything about him or her.

As an added bonus, some research has shown that babies react and notice more things while they're higher up, and it can even help them to walk faster.

Anyway, having a carrier around is going to make your life miles easier, and so you should definitely at least look around and see the options that are available.

Baby Shampoo and Washing Lotions or Soaps

Both of these are, as you can well imagine, very necessary, but there's a slight twist that you might not realize: You should be using them too! Or at least, the washing lotion or soaps anyway.

When your baby is newly born, his or her skin is very sensitive. That's why you're going to need these specialized washing lotions or soaps and shampoos. Furthermore, the shampoos should be the varieties that aren't going to sting his or her eyes, and cause them to tear.

Not exposing your baby to the more 'harsh' chemicals that can be found in more adult soaps is critical.

Of course, your baby's exposure to such adult soaps can also come from being in contact with you. Even if you do wash off thoroughly, some chemicals may still remain on your skin, and can transfer over by contact, irritating your baby's skin in turn!

To avoid this, the solution is simple, just use the same washing lotion or soap as you do for your child.

After a couple of months, you won't need to worry about this at all, but it is a great way to dodge some of those initial problems that many parents have.

Other Miscellaneous Items

Even after everything we've discussed, there are still more things that need to be prepared, more items to be bought, and other considerations to be made. Most of these though, are really a lot more minor than what we've been discussing, and just knowing about them should suffice.

So, with that in mind, let's give you a look at some of the other miscellaneous items that you might want to be looking at:

1. Clean Wipes

As you can probably imagine from what we said about how many diapers you'll need, you're going to have to be cleaning your baby a lot, and clean wipes go miles to help you do just that!

2. Burp Cloths

Similarly, many babies have problems with burping, and having a burp cloth or two, or three, around to wipe them off would be handy.

3. Baby Bath Tub

Although many people use sinks until their babies are big enough for regular bath tubs, having a specialized mini baby bath tub initially would be helpful.

4. Swaddling Blankets

Essentially, these are comfortable blankets that you can either wrap your baby in, or layer around the crib (or other sleeping place) for added comfort.

5. Diaper Backpack

If you intend to go out, you need to bring your diapers, wipes, and everything else you need along with you – so having a diaper backpack to do so is a great idea.

Do you get the picture regarding what you should be thinking of? Sure, there are many other items that could be added to that list, but these are by far the most important ones, and the ones that you really shouldn't try to do without!

At this point, you're almost done!

Now that you know what you need, there's very little left that we can give you, so with a few words, and a little advice, we'll let you go ahead and take advantage of everything that you've learnt in this guide.

Getting Everything that Your Child Needs Ready

Knowing what you need is great – but you need to really start taking action... now!

Believe us, there's no time like the present, and as you'll soon find, time is a luxury that no parent really ever has. There are, quite simply, so many things that you need to do, and you're never going to have enough time to do all of them if you wait around!

So, start right now.

Based on what you know, start making a list of the things you have, and the things you need.

From that list, try to think of where you can get the things that you need. For example, do your parents have an old crib you can take off their hands? Are any of your friends looking to get rid of some of their baby's items?

Mark down what you can get, and where you can get it, especially taking care to note what you're going to have to actually go out to the shops and buy for yourself.

While you're doing this, you should also start to make specific decisions regarding the various options that you know are ahead of you. Start thinking about it now, and by the time you've decided, your list should be complete.

All that remains after that is to go out there and get everything ready!

Sounds easy enough doesn't it? Well, if you go about things in the right way, and most importantly, start to do so sooner rather than later, you should have no trouble getting everything ready in time.

Then, when you bring your baby home from the hospital, you can rest easy knowing that everything is taken care of.

Good luck!