

No Fluff Baby Stuff:

**The Stuff That Baby Needs -
No More and No Less!**

By Cheryl Williams Levey

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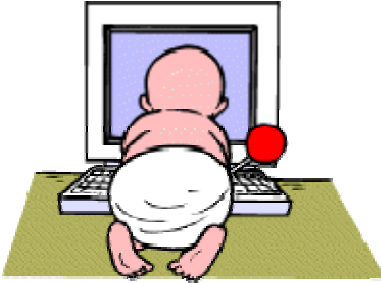
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Introduction

Babies seem to need so much, especially if you are a first-time expecting or new parent. When I had my first baby, the list of stuff to get seemed endless, but in the end, it wasn't as bad as I thought. There are countless things on the market that you can get for your baby, and some of it is convenient. But the truth is, most of it is not essential to your baby's health and well being.



I've heard other expecting and new parents talk about all the stuff to get, worrying about having everything, so I wrote up this little booklet organizing what baby really needs and mentioning other things that would be nice but are not essential. There are also some

links here to show you some places you can shop around online. Trust me, with a baby, buying online and having it delivered right to you is so much easier than shopping around in regular stores and having to haul everything home -- either pregnant or with an infant!

This information might also be useful to people getting gifts for a new baby - check out especially the [personalized gift page](#), which has some great ideas and resources for special gifts and keepsakes for that special baby or child.

While I don't intend this to be a comprehensive guide (by any stretch of the imagination!), as a basic listing of stuff a baby might need, this is what baby really needs. There are lots and lots of "nice to haves" but if you have a bare-bones budget, this guide is perfect for you.

Before you buy any baby stuff, check out the recall lists at the [Consumer Product Safety Commission](#) and sign up for their email list. You'll be notified of recalls and if you own any recalled products, you'll be told how to get a refund or fix for the products.

On the next page, there's a list of general baby stuff -- no fluff, just things that are truly necessary -- and a few places to find great online deals for everything your baby needs. There are several shopping resources here so that you can make sure you're getting the best deals.

BabyCenter has a bunch of shopping guides, recommendations, reviews, etc., so that you know your choices and make the best one for what you need and prefer. [BabyCenter Shopping Guides and Recommendations](#)

Basically, baby stuff falls into the following categories. Each category has some things that you absolutely need for baby, and those are listed. Click on each heading for more details.

[Bathing](#): baby bathtubs, washcloths, baby soap/shampoo, lotion, towels, baby nail/clippers/scissors manicure set, nasal aspirator, thermometer, cotton balls and swabs, bath toys, tub seats, bath mats, spout covers

[Clothing](#): onesies, socks, sleepers, jackets, hats, tshirts, receiving blankets (for comfort and swaddling), Dreft laundry detergent

[Diapering](#): diapers, wipes, diaper rash creme

Nice extras: Diaper Genies or airtight diaper pails/trashcans, wipe warmers

[Feeding](#): bottles/nipples, bottle brush, rubber tipped spoons, burp cloths, plastic plates and bowls, sippy cups, bibs, breast pumps, bottle sterilizer, baby food grinder, bottle/baby food warmer, plastic spill mats, formula, binkys

[Furniture](#): cribs, crib mattresses, changing tables, dressers, rocking chairs, gliders, play yards, clothes hampers, high chairs, bouncer seats, swings, doorway jumpers

[Out and About](#): car seats, strollers, diaper bags/tote bags, slings, infant carriers, stroller toys

[Safety](#): padded materials for corners and edges, electric plugs, doorknob covers, baby monitors, night light, gates, smoke/carbon monoxide alarms for baby's room, first aid kit, toilet seat locks, oven knob covers, cabinet/drawer latches

[Health](#): infant acetaminophen, gas relief medicine, nasal bulb syringe, diaper rash cream, alcohol and cotton balls/Q-tips

[Sleeping](#): crib sets, blankets, crib linens, waterproof mattress covers, co-sleepers, portable cribs, mobiles, sound machines, crib toys, vaporizers

[Toys](#): rattles, books, developmental toys, walkers/exersaucer, music CDs and videos, baby gyms/play arches

[Sentimental stuff](#): baby books, growth charts, milestone journals, keepsake and photo books, etc. These things are obviously not essentials, but you'll probably regret it if you don't at least keep a baby book.

[Personalized Baby Gift Ideas](#): [Personalized Baby Gift Ideas](#)

Baby Bathing

As a newborn, your baby will pretty much only need short sponge baths (you don't want baby to get cold!). But you will need a few things - towels (hooded are nice, but not really necessary), soft washcloths, baby soap, shampoo, and lotion.

With everything having to do with babies (and I'll probably say this more than once), there are all kinds of options in all kinds of prices. Some people get the top of the line baby tub, and some just wash baby on the kitchen counter on a soft towel. It all depends on your style. Personally, I used a mid-line baby tub, and put a baby-sized sponge (for softness) in it. I didn't put much water in, and I didn't bathe my babies for very long. Once, when I was washing my second baby this way, I saw him shivering. Although my first didn't, my second baby loved getting in the shower with me, and sometimes I'd just do that and not worry with any soap - I'd just get in holding him wrapped in a blankie (so the water didn't hit him too hard), and he would just look like he was in heaven! If you do this, be careful that the water isn't too hot - we can handle much hotter water than babies can, and be sure to put lotion on your baby when you get out. Believe it or not, bathing, even with just water, can dry out baby's skin.



You'll need to wait until baby can sit up alone to put him or her in a regular tub, whether you use a bath seat or not. When baby starts taking baths in the bathtub, you might consider a non-slip bath mat and a spout cover. For a while, I used an inflatable smaller tub, and that worked out very well. Some people swear by bath seats, but I've never used one. Like everything when you're a parent, just do what seems right for you and your child, and believe me, it won't always be what other people are telling you to do!

Whatever you use, **never, ever, leave baby alone.** Please read [this flyer about bath safety](#). Print it out and post it in your bathroom.

Other bathing-related products you should have on hand are baby nail clippers and/or manicure set, a nasal aspirator (to gently suck out nasal congestion), and cotton balls and swabs. I used both when cleaning the umbilical cord stump, and sometimes used swabs to clean out noses - but never ears. Never put a swab in baby's ears. The nasal aspirator comes in very handy because babies don't know how to blow their noses. The baby manicure set also is nice so that you can make sure baby's fingernails aren't sharp. If they are and he scratches himself, he can cut himself (or you!).

- [Bathing](#)
- [Skin and Hair Care](#)

On a semi-related note (it's all bathroom stuff!), at about 1 1/2 to three years old, you'll want to start potty training, so you can check out the neat things that are available for that here: [Potty Training](#).

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Baby Clothing

You'll probably find that you have too many clothes for baby, rather than not enough. At the least, you'll need receiving blankets, onesies, socks, sleepers, and hats.

Of course, that's for at home, mostly. If you're going to take baby out, he or she will need to be clothed appropriately, depending on the season. The biggest thing to consider is to not OVERdress your child. If it's nippy out, a jacket (with hood or hat) is better than a snow suit. Babies can get overheated if they are overdressed. But, for cold weather, you'll need jackets/coats, regular clothing (shirts, shorts, pants, dresses) and more. You can shop around on the Baby Center [Clothing](#) pages, and you can get some great deals on eBay. Don't forget to check out yard sales and places like [eBay](#), [Target](#), [Wal-Mart](#), and [ToysRUs](#).



You also want to wash your baby's clothes in Dreft laundry detergent, so be sure to get some of that too. Dreft is a special detergent made specifically for baby laundry needs - it is specially formulated to rinse completely out and does not contain harsh chemicals (which can irritate baby skin).

Read these Consumer Product Safety Commission [Guidelines For Buying Children's Sleepwear](#).

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Baby Diapering

The bottom link for baby's bottom :) are diapers, wipes, and diaper rash creme. There are lots of other things you can get, like a wipe warmer and a Diaper Genie, but they aren't essentials. We even got rid of our changing table - we changed our baby on a big ottoman (covered with a blanket in case of a "spill!"). It's nice and comfy for him and we can sit down while we change!



No doubt, though, that some things are just plain nice to have. In colder climates, a wipe warmer is a very nice thing to have!

One note, with a newborn, the impulse is to buy massive amounts of things - but don't do this with diapers. Get a few packages of the newborn size, but not too much, because your baby will grow out of them pretty quickly, so get a package or two of the next couple of sizes, and then you'll be ready.

Baby Center's [Diapering](#) page has all kinds of things to choose from.

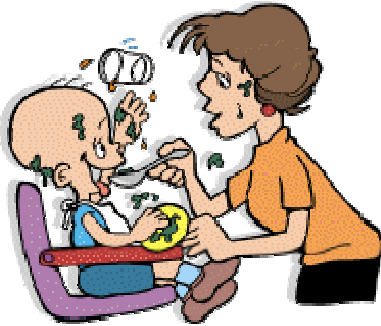
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Baby Feeding

At first, your baby just needs breast milk or formula, but you'll need some of the "accessories" for whichever method of feeding you are using.

If you are breastfeeding, you really could get away with nothing except burp clothes as long as you always have your baby with you. But, realistically, you will probably want to have a breast pump and some bottles/nipples on hand.

If you're bottle feeding, you'll (of course) need bottles, nipples, burp clothes, and formula. I have found that the Carnation brand worked best with my kids. Other people swear by other brands. You'll need to try them to see what works. A word of caution, though, if you start a formula and baby seems just fine on it, don't change! (Don't fix what ain't broken!)



About bottle nipples - be sure to get the right kind of nipples. They have different flow speeds (different sized holes) for different ages. If it flows too fast, your baby could choke.

Later, you'll need other stuff like sippy cups, bowls and spoons.

Don't forget bibs! And a plastic spill mat under the high chair is a really good idea!

Speaking of high chairs, we didn't use a high chair for our second child - he was strapped into a booster in a chair at our table. Other people use the seats that attach to the table. Again, as always, whatever works best for you and your family. If you will buy a high chair, before you do, read the high chair checklist on the Consumer Product Safety Commission's [Tips For Your Baby's Safety](#).

The Baby Center has extensive products so you can do a lot of comparing before you decide what you want and need:

- [Feeding](#)
- [Highchairs & Booster Seats](#)

While not a food, some babies are comforted by sucking on a binky (pacifier) or a finger.

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Baby Furniture

The baby furniture that is essential is a dresser for all the cute clothes the baby will have. A separate clothes hamper is also essential in the beginning because you'll be washing baby's clothes with Dreft - separately from the rest of the family's clothes.

Baby will need somewhere to sleep. A crib is nice to have, but don't think it's a necessity. My second child never even used it! He'd sleep on the floor if he had to, but would not tolerate the crib. So we used it for laundry :) He also did NOT like the bassinet. So, he basically slept with me. There are really neat "side" beds that can attach to your regular bed, so baby is right there, but not in danger of you rolling on him or anything. Check out the [Baby Sleeping page](#) for more info.

Baby can sit in his infant car seat for pretty much everything else (including eating). Later, you might want to get a high chair and/or booster seat for meals.



Other baby furniture you might want to have includes: cribs, crib mattresses, changing tables, rocking chairs, gliders, play yards, bouncer seats, swings, doorway jumpers, etc. Check out the Consumer Product Safety Commission's checklist [Tips For Your Baby's Safety](#) to learn about the safe use of cribs, crib bedding, and other baby essentials.

The Nursery Depot has some excellent selections of bedding and furniture, and you can [Save 30% on 20,000+ Crib & Kid bedding items, Cribs & Changing Tables from 20+ leading brands with free shipping and their low price guarantee.](#)

Baby Bedding Town [Discount Baby Furniture](#) and [ABaby.com](#) have some great deals on baby furniture.

If you want to shop around some more, you can also try Baby Center:

- [Nursery](#)
- [Nursery Accessories](#)
- [Nursery Bedding](#)
- [Nursery Furnishings](#)

It's best to shop around to be sure you are getting the best deals.
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Baby Out and About

You need an infant car seat, stroller, play yard, and diaper bag (stocked with diapers, wipes, rash cream, snacks, bottles, etc). Again be sure to check out the Consumer Product Safety Commission's recall list, especially if you are buying from yard sales or on [eBay](#). Check out the CPSC [Tips For Your Baby's Safety](#) for a handy checklist.



Car Seat

You will need to find out the specifications for a car seat that will fit in your car. All car seats are not made alike. Check out these links to shop around:

- [Car Seats](#)
- [Infant Car Seats](#)
- [Infant Toddler Car Seats](#)
- [Booster Car Seats](#)
- [Baby Bedding Town Discount Baby Carseats](#)

Stroller

Personally, I found that a [Travel System](#) worked best in the beginning because baby was able to stay buckled safely in the car seat from car to stroller. When he fell asleep, having to unbuckle and move him was practically impossible without waking him up and upsetting him.

Of course, depending on your lifestyle and personality, you might find that another kind of stroller is best for you.

- [Double Strollers](#)
- [Jog Strollers](#)
- [Lightweight Strollers](#)
- [Standard-Size Strollers](#)
- [Strollers](#)
- [Baby Bedding Town Discount Baby Strollers](#)

Other stuff you might want to have are [Carriers, Backpacks & Slings](#) . I used a sling with one of my kids and it was absolutely wonderful.

And a [Play Yard](#) is absolutely essential, especially if you travel with your baby. We used a portable play yard as a crib when traveling. That way we didn't have to worry about where our kids would sleep and if they'd be safe.

A [bouncer](#) isn't essential, but some babies just love it.

A diaper bag, however, is an essential, and you'll be hauling it around for a few years, so be sure to get one that you really like. It doesn't have to be baby-like. I had one that was like a backpack once, and it worked beautifully while still looking stylish.

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Baby Safety

Babies need a safe environment. As newborns, you need to worry about infant car seats, holding their heads up, and making sure cribs and bedding are safe. The Consumer Product Safety Commission has a checklist titled [Tips For Your Baby's Safety](#) that lists many of the items your baby will be using and hazards you should look out for.



Of course, everything baby needs (like car seat, strollers, bedding, etc.) will be purchased with safety in mind. However, there are some items that are purely safety oriented and don't fit into other baby needs categories, like baby monitor, smoke/carbon monoxide alarms for baby's room, and safety gates, latches, locks, outlet plugs, etc.

As a newborn, your baby isn't mobile yet, so latching everything and putting breakables and other untouchables out of reach isn't crucial yet (though it will be later). At home, your main concerns (other than those noted in other categories, such as infant car seats and bedding safety) should be things such as having a monitor set up if baby sleeps in a different room than you, and making sure he is never left lying somewhere where he could fall off, such as the diaper changing table, and never leaving baby in a bath alone, even if it is in the sink or a baby tub.

When baby starts crawling, you'll have a whole new set of safety concerns, so you will want to start getting prepared after baby's birth, but you don't necessarily need to have everything on hand and ready to go before the birth. By the time baby starts crawling, you'll definitely need a gate or two, electrical plugs, cabinet

latches, and a host of other things as they apply to your home (e.g., special gating for stairways, padding for any sharp edges on furniture, etc.)

Check out the Baby Center [Safety](#) site and learn all about keeping your baby safe.

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Baby Health

You will need to have a few health related items on hand. Health care kits are popular and have items that are very useful, but I found I didn't always use everything in them. The basics of what you really need are:



A digital thermometer – preferably one that goes in the ear as it is really fast. You never realize how hard it is to get a temperature reading with a fussy, squirmy, uncomfortable, unhappy child, until it's 3 a.m. and you're trying desperately to keep a thermometer in his mouth – or backside – and realizing that he isn't going to cooperate!

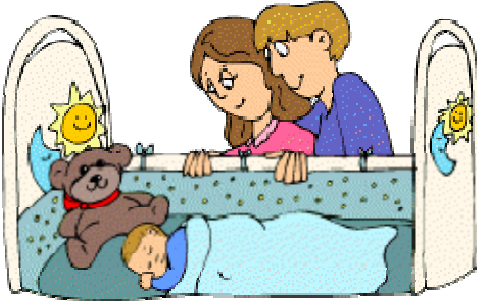
- Infant acetaminophen, like infant Tylenol – for fevers and aches and pains
- Gas relief medicine – especially for colicky babies, but also helps greatly when baby isn't burping enough.
- Nasal bulb syringe – because baby can't blow his own nose yet.
- Desitin or diaper rash cream of your choice (this is also mentioned in the Baby Diapering section).
- Alcohol and cotton balls/q-tips for cleaning the umbilical cord stump.

There are a whole host of other items you might find helpful as well. Baby Center has a great selection of [Baby Healthcare](#) items, and [Dreamtime Baby](#) does too.

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Baby Sleeping

Check out the Consumer Product Safety Commission's checklist [Tips For Your Baby's Safety](#) to learn about the safe use of cribs, crib bedding, and other baby essentials. Learn more here about [Safe Bedding Practices](#) for infants. Also, check out the [Guidelines for Buying Children's Sleepwear](#) to be sure your baby wears safe pjs.



Some people want their kids in cribs and some advocate co-sleeping. There are pros and cons to both, but when I found the [Arms Reach Co-Sleeper](#), I was thrilled because it seemed to provide a little of both. Baby could be within reach, but not right in the bed. Other nice ideas are [bassinets](#). and [cradles](#).

Whether you use the co-sleeper or bassinet or not, you'll want to have a nursery for the baby. If you have a [crib](#), you'll need a snug fitting mattress, crib sheets, waterproof mattress covers, and a crib set with a bumper. Other items you might want to have are mobiles, sound machines, crib toys, humidifier/vaporizer, etc.

You can find everything you could possibly want at Baby Bedding Town, and they have some wonderfully low prices on many things. Check it out here; [Baby Bedding Town: Discount Baby Bedding Sets and Accessories](#). Make sure you're getting the best deal by comparing prices with [Nursery Depot](#).



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Baby Toys

Before you buy any baby toys, make sure you check out the Consumer Product Safety Commission's recall list, especially if you are buying from yard sales or on ebay. Check out the CPSC [Tips For Your Baby's Safety](#) for a handy checklist.



Also, just use common sense. If something doesn't seem safe to you, don't get it. Although it should be, just because it's on the store shelves doesn't mean it's safe. Otherwise, there wouldn't be so many recalls and such. So you decide what you're going to let your kid play with.

Newborns don't need much toy-wise, but as they grow, they'll need more. In the beginning, rattles and your face are enough, although you might want to get a few other neat things, like a baby arch/gym.

Later, you'll want to look at developmental toys, books, and bigger stuff like exersaucers. I personally don't recommend walkers simply because the baby can get around pretty easily and can get into trouble - I think exersaucers are much safer. But again, every parent has different ideas.

Baby Center has a huge selection of toys.

- [Toys](#)
- [Books, Music & Video](#)
- [Toys by Age](#)

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Baby Sentimental Stuff

When baby is born, you'll find yourself entranced with this little being, and wanting to savor and save every moment of her ever so rapidly passing first years. One way to catch a little bit of the magic is through keepsakes. There are so many different things you can do! Here are just a few of the most popular examples:

- Of course, photo albums, including electronic ones
- Baby's own website (check out [Babies-Online](#) for examples)
- Baby books to chart firsts and other milestones
- Scrapbooks and memory boxes to store and showcase keepsakes
- Growth charts
- Bronzed or otherwise preserved first shoes
- Locks of hair (first haircut, or just wispy baby hair)
- Hand and foot molds
- Personalized gifts and keepsakes

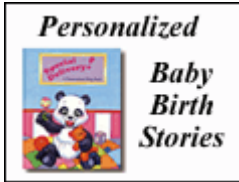
[Personalized Baby Gift Shop at Personal Creations](#)

[Personalized Baby Gifts from Personalization Mall](#)

More personalized gift ideas on the next page.

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Personalized Baby Gift Ideas



Personalized stories! "We'll make that special baby in your life the star of their very own personalized hard bound baby book filled with quality text and professional illustrations throughout."



Personalized Children's Books

My Very Own Name! - "My Very Own Name is a beautifully illustrated, hardcover book that is made especially for each child. This educational book helps young children learn to recognize letters and spell their names."



Name Trains! "Build your child's name with trains. Compatible with Name Trains Accessories, Name Trains Play Sets, and most standard wooden trains and tracks including Thomas the Train and Brio. Great gifts for all occasions for children."



Personalized Children's Music! "This delightful Personalized Children's Music CD contains 8 original "happy" songs that your child will want to hear over and over again. The Personalized Children's Music and lyrics feature your child in 8 different "fun" occupations including: Airplane Pilot, Firefighter, Train Engineer, Dentist and Candy Store Clerk!"

Unique Personalized Baby Gift Ideas!



Plant a Tree in the baby's name! "Arrange for your gift tree to be planted in the State or listed Country of your choice. Each TreeGivers gift tree supplements the natural resources of our Earth and brings life and beauty to the countryside!"



Elite Titles! - Give a special baby a privileged title! "Choose from Lord, Lady, Baron, Baroness, Earl, Count, Countess, Viscount, Viscountess, Marquis, Marchioness, Duke, Duchess, Sir and more."



A great selection of adorable baby gift baskets in themes like "Just Ducky" and "Twinkle Twinkle Little Star."

Conclusion

Having a baby can feel very overwhelming and daunting. Feeling this way is completely normal. But, everything will work out just fine. You have nine months to gather up everything that baby needs so you'll be ready in plenty of time! Just be sure to have the items mentioned here on hand and you'll be just fine. I know even the basics seem like a lot, but once baby is here, you'll understand that everything you bought or received really is important.

All they need is love

The thing to remember, and I hate to get all sappy on you here at the end of a book of material stuff you need for your baby, but what your baby needs most of all is love. Cuddling, holding, kissing, rubbing, playing, soothing (when colic sets in or when baby is crying), and just paying attention to baby so that you learn to recognize his needs – hunger, tired, dirty diaper, just needing to be held... Give your baby love and patience and everything else will fall into place.

This is one of the most exciting times of your life! Congratulations!

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Did you find this little book helpful? Please let me know so that I can better serve you in the future. Contact me by using the form at <http://www.cherylsweb.com/contact.html>

Thanks!

A stylized signature of the name "Cheryl" in a cursive, yellow font with a blue outline.