

# PREPARE FOR BABY CHECKLIST



- Create a baby registry. This is a great way to let friends and family know what you need for your baby, and to avoid getting duplicate gifts.
- Take a childbirth class and/or hire a doula. This can help you learn about the different stages of labor and delivery, and give you tips on how to manage the pain.
- Research and purchase the car seat of your choice, then properly install it in your car.  
<https://www.nhtsa.gov/equipment/car-seats-and-booster-seats>
- Research and choose a pediatrician that accepts your insurance and is open for new patients. Find one who is supportive of your parenting style. Referrals from other moms are the best.
- Check out the Stanford.edu website and learn all about newborn care and breastfeeding in the “Newborn Nursery” part of the site. They have many great videos and photos.
- If you will be working outside the home after the birth of your child and will need help to care for your baby, begin investigating your childcare options. Again referrals are best.
- Assess your home for safety and begin to baby proof with special attention to stairs, pools and unsteady, large pieces of furniture. Crawl around your house on hands and knees. If you can reach something hazardous, so will your baby.
- Learn everything you can about feeding your baby. Breastfeeding (directly from the breast) is best and recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics for the first year of life. Pumping breastmilk is preferred over formula.
- If your current “baby” is a pet, talk with your veterinarian about the best way to prepare your pet for life after baby.
- Resist marketing that targets prospective parents. Remember, your newborn’s needs are simple and involve basic clothing and diapers, a place to sleep that is safe and a quality car seat. Newborns do not play with toys or care about having a fancy nursery.
- Learn the whole truth about SIDS risks, post the poison control number and your pediatrician’s number somewhere easy to find and turn down the thermostat on your water heater.
- Find support as you begin this journey into parenthood. Connect with family and friends. Join parenting groups online and in-person, they can be a great way to meet other families who are on the same path as you with similar parenting philosophies.
- Pack a labor bag. This should include everything you’ll need for your hospital/birth center stay, such as comfortable clothes, toiletries, and snacks.