

Essential Baby Registry Checklist

By Heather Mark
Provided by Modern Mom

It's easy to go gaga over the thousands of adorable infant items on the shelves of baby megastores and cozy boutiques. If you're a first-time parent, it can be tempting to stock your registry with every imaginable trinket. But be sure to have a healthy balance of "wants" versus "needs." You'll also want to include gift items that cover a range of prices so your loved ones can select gifts that fit their budget.

Textiles

Step 1

Select clothing items that are appropriate for the season of your baby's birth. A baby born in Florida in August will need light, cool clothes, while a baby born in Maine in February will need hats, sweaters and other warm clothes. Newborns don't need lots of clothes, but they're so adorable you might just have to put a whole bunch on the registry.

Step 2

Choose several types of blankets. Expect to use lots of receiving blankets, so put two or three packages on your registry. Also include any fuzzy baby blankets for your little one to cuddle up with in the car, the stroller or while playing on the floor.

Step 3

Don't forget to include linens. Two crib sheets is probably enough to start with, but also include sheets for your play yard, waterproof mattress covers, two or three infant towels, baby washcloths and burp cloths.

Bath Time and Skin Care

Step 1

Choose any baby tub you like. There are basic models all the way up to spa infant tubs with digital water temperature displays, waterfalls and perpetual fresh-water circulation. Baby won't need bath toys for several months, but feel free to register for some.

Step 2

Be conservative with the body washes, shampoos and lotions. It takes an awfully long time to get through one 12 oz. bottle of baby shampoo, so err on the side of minimalism. The same goes for diaper-rash creams and baby powder; one container goes a long way.

Step 3

Don't scrimp on the baby wipes. You'll be changing lots of diapers in those first few weeks, and you'll be amazed how quickly those baby wipes disappear. Register for several six-packs of baby wipes.

Step 4

Put diapers on your list. You'll blast through these, so include several (or more) jumbo packs on your registry. Register for more than one size, too. You'll be amazed how quickly your baby will outgrow newborn-sized diapers and move on to size 1.

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Eating

Step 1

Stock up on bottles if you plan on formula feeding or using stored breast milk. There are an overwhelming number of choices in baby bottles. Some babies prefer one bottle over another, a silicone nipple to a latex one, glass or plastic. Whichever bottles you choose, make sure the label reads “BPA Free.” And don’t overlook the bargain-priced bottles like the Evenflo Classic; they’re easy to clean and assemble, and they never leak. If you’ll be exclusively breast-feeding, you probably won’t even need any baby bottles until it’s time for a sippy cup.

Step 2

Register for a couple of baby bottle scrub brushes and a dishwasher basket to hold all the small things.

Step 3

Register for a bottle sterilizer if you want an easy way to sterilize bottles, breast pumps or pacifiers. Microwave sterilizers are incredibly easy and convenient and keep items sterile until the container is opened.

Step 4

Put a breast pump on the list if it doesn’t make you feel awkward. If you plan on breast-feeding, having a pump nearby can help relieve engorgement in addition to expressing and storing breast milk.

Fun Stuff

Step 1

Add a play mat to the registry so baby has something fun to look at, and eventually play with, while she’s on the floor. Even small play mats can dish out oodles of fun to little ones. More elaborate mats include flashing lights and music and water pillows.

Step 2

Include various types of rattles. At first, rattles can be held by adults to engage the baby’s attention, but by the time baby is big enough to play with the rattle herself, she’ll be poking at it and shaking it, having a grand old time.

Step 3

Put some books on the registry so you’ll have story time essentials from day 1. It’s never too early to start reading to a baby, so pick out some books with vibrant pictures and colorful characters.