

# The ultimate pregnancy to-do list

## FIRST TRIMESTER

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- Make sure you're really pregnant**  
Try a home pregnancy test or two in the week after your period normally arrives.
- Investigate health insurance**  
Know what your health plan covers and where to get help if you don't have insurance.
- Make a prenatal appointment**  
Get on your caregiver's calendar — but don't be surprised if your first appointment isn't until 8 weeks or later.
- If you smoke, quit**  
Smoking raises the risk of a host of pregnancy problems, including miscarriage and preterm birth.
- Make sure your activities are pregnancy-safe**  
Some everyday things may be hazardous now. See [babycenter.com/pregnancy-is-it-safe](http://babycenter.com/pregnancy-is-it-safe)
- Do your best to eat well**  
First-trimester nausea can make this difficult, so do the best you can. See [babycenter.com/pregnancy-eating-well](http://babycenter.com/pregnancy-eating-well)
- Drink water**  
During pregnancy you need six to eight 8-ounce glasses of fluid per day, plus an additional 8 ounces for each hour of light activity.
- Go to bed early**  
You may be more exhausted than you ever imagined you could be. Turn in early — even if you feel like a grandma.
- Consider your options for prenatal testing**  
Various tests can give you information about your baby's risk for chromosomal problems and birth defects.
- Think about when you'll announce your pregnancy**  
Some women spill the beans right away. Others wait until the second trimester, when the risk of miscarriage drops.
- Take your prenatal vitamin**  
The folic acid in these is especially important now — it reduces the risk of neural tube defects.
- Choose a caregiver**  
Ask friends, relatives, or your doctor to recommend an OB, family physician, or midwife — or search online.
- Make sure your meds are safe**  
Ask your caregiver about any prescription and over-the-counter medications you're taking.
- Stop drinking alcohol**  
As little as one drink a day can be harmful to your baby.
- Cut down on caffeine**  
High caffeine consumption is linked to miscarriage and other pregnancy problems. See how much is safe at [babycenter.com/caffeine-during-pregnancy](http://babycenter.com/caffeine-during-pregnancy)
- Start avoiding hazardous foods**  
Learn which foods to skip at [babycenter.com/unsafe-pregnancy-foods](http://babycenter.com/unsafe-pregnancy-foods)
- Stock your kitchen with healthy stuff**  
Make your pantry, fridge, and freezer pregnancy-friendly. Get a shopping list at [babycenter.com/healthy-pregnancy-grocery-list](http://babycenter.com/healthy-pregnancy-grocery-list)
- Get relief from morning sickness**  
This strikes about three-quarters of pregnant women during the first trimester. For coping strategies, see [babycenter.com/morning-sickness](http://babycenter.com/morning-sickness)
- Learn the signs of a pregnancy problem**  
For a list of symptoms that should set off warning bells, see [babycenter.com/signs-of-a-pregnancy-problem](http://babycenter.com/signs-of-a-pregnancy-problem)
- Follow your baby's development**  
Sign up for BabyCenter's weekly pregnancy updates at [babycenter.com/newsletters](http://babycenter.com/newsletters)

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- Start taking belly photos**  
It's a great way to document your growing bump.
- Buy some new bras and undies**  
Maternity bras and underwear can make a big difference in your comfort.
- Join your Birth Club**  
Connect with women due the same month as you at [babycenter.com/birth-clubs](https://www.babycenter.com/birth-clubs)
- Get ready to see or hear your baby**  
You may hear your baby's rapid heartbeat on a Doppler fetal monitor or have an early ultrasound.
- Start a baby name list**  
You have plenty of time to decide on a baby name — but it's fun to start writing down the possibilities. See [babycenter.com/baby-names](https://www.babycenter.com/baby-names)
- Make a baby budget**  
Make a plan for new-baby expenses. The cost of clothes, food, diapers, toys, and gear can add up fast! See [babycenter.com/baby-cost-calculator](https://www.babycenter.com/baby-cost-calculator)
- Start a daily ritual to connect with your baby**  
Set aside time to think about your baby, maybe just after waking up and before going to sleep.
- Have sex if you feel up to it**  
You may feel too tired, moody, or nauseated to make love. But if you are feeling amorous, go ahead — pregnancy sex is usually safe.
- Talk to your partner about parenting**  
To get the conversation going, write lists of things your mother and father "always" and "never" did. Then share what you wrote down.

## SECOND TRIMESTER

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- Find a prenatal exercise class**  
It's a great way to meet other pregnant women — and stay motivated to exercise.
- Track your weight gain**  
Our tool can help you stay on course. Visit [babycenter.com/pregnancy-weight-gain-estimator](https://www.babycenter.com/pregnancy-weight-gain-estimator)
- Consider a professional labor coach (doula)**  
If you'd like a doula to help you during labor and delivery, start interviewing candidates now.
- Start moisturizing your belly**  
Slathering on the lotion may not prevent stretch marks, but it will help stop itchiness!
- Decide whether you'll find out the sex of your baby**  
Boy, girl — or big surprise? If you have an ultrasound or amniocentesis coming up, you'll need to choose now.
- Look into childbirth classes**  
Sign up for an in-person course or our online class: [babycenter.com/childbirth-class](https://www.babycenter.com/childbirth-class)
- Prepare older children**  
If you have an older child or children, the new baby may rock their world. To ease the transition, visit [babycenter.com/preparing-your-child-for-a-new-sibling](https://www.babycenter.com/preparing-your-child-for-a-new-sibling)
- Learn about second-trimester visits and tests**  
Find out what your caregiver will do at each visit at [babycenter.com/second-trimester-prenatal-visits](https://www.babycenter.com/second-trimester-prenatal-visits)
- Shop for maternity clothes**  
Even if you're not visibly preggers yet, maternity clothes may be more comfortable now.
- Plan some adult time**  
Your excitement about your baby is revving up, but take a moment to enjoy this baby-free time.
- Narrow your baby names list**  
Share your ideas with your partner and create a list of names you both like.
- Jot down your crazy pregnancy dreams**  
Are your dreams getting weirder and weirder? Write them down to analyze later.
- Do some financial planning**  
Becoming a parent means new financial responsibilities. For details, visit [babycenter.com/family-finances-overview](https://www.babycenter.com/family-finances-overview)
- Prepare pets**  
Pets also benefit from special pre-baby preparation. Learn more at [babycenter.com/preparing-pets-for-babies](https://www.babycenter.com/preparing-pets-for-babies)

## SECOND TRIMESTER

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- Start your childcare search**  
If you'll need childcare for your baby, start investigating your options now. See [babycenter.com/childcare-options](http://babycenter.com/childcare-options)
- Celebrate your halfway point**  
At 20 weeks, you're halfway through your pregnancy. Hooray!
- Start doing Kegel exercises**  
Kegels keep your pelvic floor muscles strong through pregnancy and beyond. Learn how to do them at [babycenter.com/kegel-exercises](http://babycenter.com/kegel-exercises)
- Think about your maternity leave**  
If you're planning to take maternity leave, check in with your human resources department or your supervisor now.
- Consider a babymoon**  
Now's the perfect time to take an indulgent, pre-baby trip.
- Avoid unsafe activities**  
Now that your belly's bigger, you'll need to avoid some sports and activities. Visit [babycenter.com/pregnancy-is-it-safe](http://babycenter.com/pregnancy-is-it-safe)
- Tackle your home improvement projects**  
The nesting instinct may be kicking in. If so, make the most of it!
- Eat healthy**  
You need an additional 300 calories a day for yourself and your growing baby. Make them count! See [babycenter.com/eating-for-two](http://babycenter.com/eating-for-two)
- Get your teeth cleaned**  
Not only is it safe to get your teeth cleaned during pregnancy, it's highly recommended.
- Start sleeping on your side**  
Once you reach mid-pregnancy, it's wise to snooze on your side — especially your left side — to improve blood flow and reduce swelling.
- Create a baby registry**  
Family and friends will soon be wondering what you need or want, particularly if someone's throwing you a baby shower.
- Check your rings**  
If pregnancy swelling is making your rings feel snug, do yourself a favor and take them off now before they get stuck!
- Think about your baby shower**  
You may want to chime in with ideas on the theme, games, and guest list. See [babycenter.com/babyshower](http://babycenter.com/babyshower)
- Write a letter to your baby**  
If writing isn't your style, put together a collage or a memory box of pregnancy mementos.
- Dedicate time to your partner**  
In the midst of all your baby prep, take time to bond with your partner and celebrate what makes you love one another.

## THIRD TRIMESTER

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- Keep track of your baby's movements**  
Pay attention to your baby's kicks, twitches, and rolls and let your caregiver know right away if you notice a decrease in movement.
- Consider more classes**  
In addition to a childbirth class, you may want to consider classes on baby care, breastfeeding, and infant CPR.
- Choose a doctor for your baby**  
Get names of pediatricians or family practitioners from friends, co-workers, neighbors, or your pregnancy caregiver.
- Assemble your baby gear**  
This is the perfect job for your partner or a friend who wants to help.
- Learn about third-trimester visits and tests**  
Find out what your caregiver will do at each visit at [babycenter.com/third-trimester-prenatal-visits](http://babycenter.com/third-trimester-prenatal-visits)
- Prepare for breastfeeding**  
If you're planning to breastfeed your baby, learn as much as you can about it now. See [babycenter.com/breastfeeding](http://babycenter.com/breastfeeding)
- Thinking about big decisions**  
Start thinking and talking about decisions like circumcising or not, and banking your cord blood.
- Set up a safe place for your baby to sleep**  
Whether your baby slumbers in a bassinet, crib, or with you, it's important to follow basic safety guidelines. See [babycenter.com/baby-sleep-safety](http://babycenter.com/baby-sleep-safety)

## THIRD TRIMESTER

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- Talk to your baby**  
Your baby can hear your voice now, and talking to him or her is a great way to start the bonding process.
- Know the stages of labor**  
Labor and birth is divided into three main stages. Learn more about them so you'll feel prepared. See [babycenter.com/stages-of-labor](https://www.babycenter.com/stages-of-labor)
- Wash your baby's clothing and bedding**  
Wash anything that will go near your baby's skin to remove any irritants in the fabrics.
- Commemorate your belly**  
Celebrate your amazing pregnant belly by making a belly cast, having a professional portrait taken, or getting a henna design.
- Read up on baby care**  
The third trimester is the perfect time to switch reading gears from pregnancy to baby.
- Have your house cleaned**  
Consider hiring a housecleaner or asking a friend or family member to tackle this task.
- Make food for after your baby's born**  
When you cook, start doubling recipes and freezing half. You'll be happy to have meals at the ready.
- Install your baby's car seat**  
You can't drive your baby home without a car seat, and they can be more complicated to install than you'd think.
- Make a plan for when labor starts**  
Long before the first contractions hit, you'll want to know who to call and where to go.
- Make a baby watch list**  
Figure out who you'll tell right after your baby arrives (or when you go into labor) and how you'll spread the word.
- Find baby name inspiration**  
If you don't have a few great baby names on deck, visit our Baby Names Finder at [babycenter.com/baby-names](https://www.babycenter.com/baby-names)
- Handle late-pregnancy jitters**  
If all the unknowns are making you nervous, check in with other moms-to-be at [babycenter.com/birth-clubs](https://www.babycenter.com/birth-clubs)
- Learn about coping with labor pain**  
Get information at [babycenter.com/pain-medication-for-labor](https://www.babycenter.com/pain-medication-for-labor) or [babycenter.com/natural-childbirth](https://www.babycenter.com/natural-childbirth)
- Create a birth plan**  
It's helpful to figure out — and share — your preferences ahead of time. Visit [babycenter.com/birth-plan-worksheet](https://www.babycenter.com/birth-plan-worksheet)
- Start lining up helpers**  
Ask friends and family to help out after your baby's born. You can even make a schedule so each helper has a specific task and a date to do it.
- Consider top baby costs and how to save**  
Raising a baby isn't cheap. But there are plenty of ways to save money. See [babycenter.com/top-baby-costs](https://www.babycenter.com/top-baby-costs)
- Pack your bag for the hospital or birth center**  
For key things to bring, visit [babycenter.com/packing-for-the-hospital-or-birth-center](https://www.babycenter.com/packing-for-the-hospital-or-birth-center)
- Stock up on household supplies**  
Load up now on pantry staples, frozen food, toiletries, medicine, toilet paper, shampoo, diapers, and wipes.
- Tour your hospital or birth center**  
Get familiar with where you'll give birth, and see if you can preregister.
- Create an online birth announcement**  
Start making your free online birth announcement at [babycenter.com/birth-announcements](https://www.babycenter.com/birth-announcements)
- Look out for late-pregnancy complications**  
Be on the lookout for symptoms that warrant a call to your caregiver. See [babycenter.com/signs-of-a-pregnancy-problem](https://www.babycenter.com/signs-of-a-pregnancy-problem)
- Learn what your body will be like after birth**  
It's normal to still look pregnant after giving birth! Learn more at [babycenter.com/body-changes-after-childbirth](https://www.babycenter.com/body-changes-after-childbirth)
- Stock up on light entertainment**  
Once your baby arrives, you'll be glad to have easy, quick ways to get an entertainment fix when you get the chance.
- Don't panic if you go past your due date**  
After months of anticipation, your due date rolls around, and...you're still pregnant. It's a frustrating, but common, situation.

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For more details, visit [babycenter.com/ultimate-pregnancy-to-do-list](https://www.babycenter.com/ultimate-pregnancy-to-do-list)