

Choosing the Right Nappy for Your Baby: A Complete Guide



Highlights

Most babies and toddlers need to wear nappies until they're at least 2 years of age.

It's common for toddlers to wear nappies at night time, even after they are toilet trained during the day.

Disposable nappies tend to be the most convenient and absorbent option.

It may be useful to try a range of different nappies to see which suits you and your baby.

Environmental impact and cost are important factors when deciding on the type of nappy to use.

In This Article

Nappy Options Explained

What You Should Know About Cloth Nappies

Benefits and Challenges of Cloth Use

Understanding Disposable Nappies

Making the Best Choice for Your Baby

How Often to Change a Nappy

Caring for Your Baby's Skin

Product Safety for Sensitive Skin
Staying Safe During Nappy Changes
Tools And Assistance

Nappy Options Explained

There are two main types of nappies: cloth and disposable. Cloth nappies are available in various forms, such as traditional towelling squares, pre-folds, and fitted nappies. Modern cloth nappies are reusable and made from materials like bamboo, hemp, or blends of absorbent fabrics. Disposable nappies are made from a combination of fibres and chemicals that provide absorbency, with a plastic outer layer and inner layers designed to keep moisture away from the baby's skin.

What You Should Know About Cloth Nappies

Cloth nappies come in traditional square forms, pre-folds, or fitted styles. They are made from materials like bamboo or hemp, offering a variety of absorbency levels. Cloth nappies may require more maintenance, such as soaking, washing, and drying, which can be time-consuming and energy-intensive.

Benefits and Challenges of Cloth Use

Advantages of using cloth nappies:

Cloth nappies are considered more environmentally friendly because they can be reused.

They appeal to parents who prefer a more natural style of parenting and value recycling.

Disadvantages of cloth nappies:

Washing and drying cloth nappies takes time, effort, and energy.

The initial cost of purchasing cloth nappies can be high.

Cloth nappies are more prone to leakage and require more frequent clothing and bedding changes.

Understanding Disposable Nappies

What to consider with disposable nappies:

Disposable nappies are convenient and do not require laundering. They are generally more absorbent than cloth nappies, reducing the risk of nappy rash.

Advantages of disposable nappies:

Disposable nappies are compact and convenient for packing and storing. They keep the baby's skin drier, reducing the likelihood of nappy rash.

Disadvantages of disposable nappies:

They contribute to landfill waste and have a high environmental impact. Biodegradable disposable nappies are available but can be more expensive.

Making the Best Choice for Your Baby

Consider factors like cost, convenience, and environmental impact. Many parents try different types of nappies as their baby grows, depending on their specific needs and circumstances.

How Often to Change a Nappy

Newborns generally need to be changed up to 12 times each day, while toddlers need around 6 to 8 changes per day. It is a good habit to change your baby's nappy before each feed to ensure comfort.

Caring for Your Baby's Skin

When changing your baby's nappy, clean their skin thoroughly and replace the nappy with a fresh one. If your baby has a dirty nappy, they may need a bath. For an uncircumcised baby boy, avoid retracting the foreskin and just clean around the area. For a baby girl, wipe from front to back when cleaning the nappy area.

Product Safety for Sensitive Skin

Use products labeled as suitable for babies, such as water or hypoallergenic wipes, or simply use cotton wool with water. Avoid using powder on your baby's skin, especially in the nappy area. Nappy rash creams help protect against wet or dirty nappies. Change your baby's nappy more frequently if they have nappy rash, and consult a healthcare professional if it persists.

Staying Safe During Nappy Changes

Ensure you have all necessary items within reach before starting the change. Always stay with your baby while changing their nappy to prevent accidents. Never leave your baby unattended during a nappy change. Keep nappy disposal bags out of your baby's reach to avoid suffocation risks. Wash your hands thoroughly after changing your baby's nappy to reduce the risk of illness.

Tools And Assistance

Keep a fully stocked changing kit with clean nappies, wipes, and creams. Try using a changing mat to create a safe and easy-to-clean surface. Consider reusable wet bags for storing cloth nappies on the go. Talk to other parents or support groups to learn what works best in real life. Monitor your baby's reactions to different nappy types and adjust accordingly.