

NAPPY GUIDE

As a parent, nappies will quickly become a big part of your life! You should therefore think carefully about what type of nappy you wish to use, and which is best suited to your lifestyle. Our guide outlines the options available and the costs involved.

What types of nappies are there?

There are various types of nappy available:

- **Reusable nappies**

Also known as “washable” or “real”, reusable nappies are popular as both an eco-friendly choice and economical option. It's more environmentally-friendly to opt for reusables even when you factor in the washing. Once you've bought them, they can do for more than one child, and not having to buy nappies makes a real difference to the cost of your weekly shop.

They are less convenient than disposables, but nappy cleaning services are available and can make life a lot easier if you are working or just a busy mum!

The initial cost of setting yourself up with reusables can seem expensive, but is considerably less than the cumulative cost of disposable nappies over two-and-a-half years. You can also use them for more than one child or even resell them provided they are in good condition. Many real nappy companies offer a reasonably priced trial kit and most local councils have an incentive scheme offering either a cheap trial option or financial help with the set-up cost. As reusables come in a variety of shapes and sizes, you should try a few options and find the one that works best for you and the baby before making a full investment.

Many local areas have meetings you can attend to learn more about cloth nappies, speak to mothers who have used them and see samples of nappies. Check with your local council to see what's happening in your area.

- **Disposable nappies**

Disposable nappies are constantly being redeveloped - to fit babies better, to match their activity levels and increase absorbency. They are very convenient as they don't require washing or drying.

As a result most parents choose disposables, and parents using reusable nappies will sometimes use disposables when away from home or for the first few months after their baby is born. Some parents also opt for reusables during the day and disposables at night.

The cumulative cost of disposables is high, so it's wise to buy in bulk when deals are on – Boots and the various supermarkets frequently offer good deals and you can take advantage of their reward schemes too. Keep an eye on parenting clubs as money-saving coupons are frequently on offer.

- **Eco Nappies**

If you're concerned about the environmental impact of disposable nappies, eco nappies are a good option. They are as convenient as ordinary disposables, and only a little more expensive.

However, you do need to consider what matters to you in an eco nappy – some are more biodegradable than others and some have less of an environmental impact in the production process and, to further complicate matters, others contain less chemicals! So decide what is most important to you before choosing a brand.

Here are some examples of eco nappies:

- **Moltex nappies** are made with more than 50% biodegradable materials, the absorbent pulp core is 100% chlorine free and the breathable protective back-sheet film is 100%

biodegradable. The pulp used in Moltex nappies carries the FSC label (Forest Stewardship Council) which means that the forests are managed sustainably to benefit people and planet.

- **Nature Babycare** nappies are 100% chlorine free, based on biodegradable materials and biodegradable back sheet film based on maize. They are also 100% GM free.
- **Bambo** nappies are eco disposable nappies which undergo a modern oxygen bleaching process and are free from harmful chemicals, making them kinder on the skin and more environmentally friendly. They were awarded the Nordic Swan Eco Label.

Whether you choose reusable, disposable or eco nappies, you will probably need to test a few different styles as male and female babies are shaped differently. Helpfully, trial kits are available for many nappies.

Cost

Young babies need changing as many as 10 or 12 times a day, older babies at least 6 to 8 times a day which means nappies will be one of your biggest expenses.

- **Reusable Nappies**

The cost of buying and washing cloth nappies for two and a half years will range from around £180 to £350, depending on the type of nappy. Nappy laundry services cost between £6 and £9 a week which works out to between £780 and £1,170 over two and a half years.

If you are considering reusable nappies for economical reasons then you will need to be sure you have time to wash them yourself, as constant use of nappy laundering services will significantly increase the cost.

- **Disposable Nappies**

The cost of using disposable nappies over the same two and a half year period ranges from £460 to £730.

- **Eco Nappies**

Eco nappies work out only slightly more expensive per pack than normal disposables.

What you will need

Whichever type of nappy you choose, you will also need:

- a **dry bucket and lid** to put soiled nappies and clothes in
- **reusable wipes**
- **cotton wool pads and water, or fragrance free wipes**
- at least one **changing mat**
- **nappy cream**
- **nappy bags**
- During the first six months you may find it useful to buy a specially designed **nappy bin** which will seal nappies. This means you don't need to use nappy bags, and you don't have to take smelly nappies outside to an outdoor bin straight away - this is particularly helpful at night.

You will also need a changing bag and supplies when out and about. We'd suggest you take the following:

- a thin folding **changing mat**
- disposable / reusable **wipes**, or **cotton pads and a small plastic bowl for water**
- **nappies** – we'd suggest keeping 5 nappies in your changing bag
- **nappy cream**

- **a muslin** - this is to put on the changing mat as it can be cold on babies' skin
 - **disinfectant wipes / spray**
 - **nappy bags**
 - a clean set of **clothes for baby**
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You can find out more information about nappies on these sites:

For more information about nappies and nappy changing:

<http://www.nhs.uk/Planners/birthtofive/Pages/Nappieshub.aspx>

If you are considering reusable nappies, The Nappy Lady offers a great deal of advice. It's well worth filling in their questionnaire that will help identify the best brand of reusables for you.

www.thenappylady.co.uk/submitTAQ.asp