

## TOP SAVING TIPS

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Buying for your first baby is an expensive task, so we've put together some suggestions to help you keep the costs down.

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### Tip 1. Prioritise

With so many lovely baby products on the market, it's easy to get carried away and tempted by clever marketing campaigns. On our baby list you'll find every item marked as either "Must-have" or "Nice-to-have". As the name implies, "Must-have" items are those we think you'll find essential, so focus on getting them first. You can always go back to the "Nice-to-have" items if you've got money left over.

### Tip 2. Budget Buy

For each item we suggest, we've recommend products across a range of prices so there will always be a budget choice you can opt for.

### Tip 3. Spend Wisely

Whilst you want to spend cautiously, there are certain items where it's worth spending a little extra for items that will make your life easier. Spend a little more where necessary, and compromise elsewhere. Here's what we'd suggest:

#### Spend on

- **A push chair**  
You will use it for a good few years on a daily basis, and one that doesn't suit you will drive you crazy! If you can't afford the one you need, shop around and check out second hand options.
- **A car seat**  
This is really important as you can't put a price on your baby's safety.
- **A decent cot / cotbed**  
Ensure you get one that isn't going to wobble.
- **Mattresses**  
A good quality mattress will provide safety and comfort.
- **Nappies**  
During the first six months when your baby's skin is still very delicate, good quality nappies will help prevent nappy rash. Later on you can move on to more economical brands.
- **Bottles**  
It's worth spending more if your baby happens to prefer an expensive brand of bottle. Once your baby is feeding well you will find it sleeps better and this will make life easier and happier for both of you.
- **Sleeping bags**  
These can be expensive, but it is worth buying a few good ones. Cheaper versions tend to be shorter, and therefore less comfortable, and they also come off more easily. A good quality sleeping bag makes for a good nights sleep for all the family.
- **A baby monitor**  
It's worth really thinking about what you need from your baby monitor as again this is an item you will use every day. Opt to spend more on one that's going to suit your house and needs.

#### Save on

- **Play time**  
Whilst cheap toys are not a good option for very young babies, it's worth remembering that for the first 6 months they don't need many toys and it takes very little to entertain them. So instead of expensive toys, give them household items like a wooden spoon and saucepan. A plastic bottle

filled with large pasta, cardboard boxes and plastic pots are all safe and will be quite adequate to keep your baby engaged and entertained.

- **Clothing**  
Babies grow very quickly so you'll find they don't fit their clothes for very long. As such there is no point in wasting money on expensive outfits. Around the weaning stage you'll also find that clothing gets very messy so you won't want your baby dressed in anything too fancy or expensive. Opt for cheaper brands of clothing with a few treat outfits for special occasions.
- **Moses basket / crib**  
Your baby will only use this for a short period of time, so this isn't something worth spending a lot of money on. Opt for a cheap moses basket or crib, and for extra reassurance and comfort get a good quality mattress.
- **Teddies and soft toys**  
Whilst these look lovely, babies don't tend to play with them so there's no point having a lot. Your baby may become attached to one or two, but the rest you'll just find yourself having to store somewhere!  
As teddies and soft toys make popular gifts, it's also worth asking family and friends to buy you things you're genuinely going to need instead.
- **Nursery furniture**  
You can do without a changing unit, specially designed nursery furniture and a nursing chair. Whilst they're all nice to have, they are costly items and you can make do with cheaper options as long as you have enough storage space.

#### **Tip 4. Go Second Hand**

There is a huge second hand baby market in the UK, and the internet has made it much easier to track down bargains. If you're short on cash, it's an option well worth exploring. As well as charity shops on the high street, here are some good places to start:

- **Nappy Valley** ([www.nappyvalley.co.uk](http://www.nappyvalley.co.uk))  
Set up by mum Joanna Pearce, Nappy Valley is a second hand marketplace specifically for buying and selling second hand baby goods. You can view products by area, and then contact the seller once you've found something you want.
- **Freecycle** ([www.freecycle.org](http://www.freecycle.org))  
Freecycle was created to "build a worldwide gifting movement that reduces waste, saves precious resources & eases the burden on our landfills while enabling our members to benefit from the strength of a larger community." Essentially the site enables people to give away unwanted items to a person of their choosing. To use Freecycle, go to the website and find your nearest group. You can then view items on offer, or post a "wanted" ad for the product you're looking for.
- **eBay** ([www.ebay.co.uk](http://www.ebay.co.uk))  
The famous auction website sees users selling off unwanted items as well as established traders operating dedicated eBay stores. Great for picking up bargains and there's a huge range of second hand goods to choose from. However, a word of caution – if your item is going to be posted to you, make sure you're either very confident it's in good condition, or make sure you have the option to return it if not. If you can arrange to collect the item, or have the seller deliver it to you, that would be a safer bet.
- **Oxfam** ([www.oxfam.org.uk/shop](http://www.oxfam.org.uk/shop))  
The Oxfam online shop is also worth checking for second hand clothing. The range varies constantly, but when we looked we found clothes starting at size 3-6 months from brands such as Baby Gap, Marks & Spencer and Next.

For health and safety reasons you should avoid buying car seats or mattresses second hand, as you cannot be sure of their history or condition.

### **Tip 5. Get Your Money Back**

As well as buying second hand, you should also consider selling second hand. Items such as push chairs hold their value very well if looked after. So if you'd prefer to buy a new one and it is expensive, look after it and you will probably get back at least half what you paid for it later down the line.

### **Tip 6. Get It Gifted**

Friends and family are very generous with gifts when a new baby is born. So rather than receive some nice, but not very useful gifts, why not share your Baby List with family & friends on My List Is Here? That way you can be sure of receiving things you really need, and it's a great way of getting some treats or "nice-to-have" items.

### **Tip 7. Don't Feel Guilty**

There is intense pressure on parents today, so don't let guilt force you in to buying something you don't really need. Our baby list has been created by mums, and with the benefit of their experience they are very well placed to tell you exactly what you need and what you can do without. If something's essential, we'll tell you why, and if you can live without it, we'll let you know! And if you're still having doubts, talk to your own parents. You'll probably find they raised you quite happily without most of the stuff you're agonising over!

### **Tip 8. Look for the Price Match Promise**

Whilst we try to find you the best price on everything on our Baby List, prices change almost daily, so we can't guarantee we're always displaying the cheapest price. Furthermore, we also want to send you to sites where you will find good quality, reliable and detailed advice about the product you are going to buy. So we might find a product that's cheaper on Amazon, but we've recommended you buy it from Mothercare because the quality of information you receive is more consistent and robust. However, many retailers we suggest offer a Price Match Promise if you can find the item cheaper online. So if an item is more than you want to pay for it, shop around, see if you can find it cheaper, and use the Price Match Promise. The following stores offer these:

- Mothercare
- Bambino Direct
- Kiddicare
- Babythings4u

### **Tip 9. Shop Around**

Unfortunately the expense of having a baby doesn't stop when it's born. Items like disposable nappies will be a significant cost over several years. However, the baby market is extremely competitive, and Boots and the various supermarkets will frequently have deals and offers on items like nappies. Keep an eye out for these and bulk buy when they're on.

### **Tip 10. Join the Club**

Boots and most of the supermarkets offer reward points, so it's well worth having a loyalty card as you will certainly be spending more at the supermarket once your baby is born. The odd £5 saving from your reward points will help when money is tight.

As well as loyalty schemes, many retailers also have parent clubs. These are well worth joining for advice, useful tips, recipes for weaning, general baby information and great offers. With some parenting clubs you'll also get offers of extra loyalty points, and every little helps!

Below are some clubs you might want to consider joining:

- Boots Parenting Club  
Benefits include:  
10 reward points for every £1 spent on baby products  
Access to information online 24/7, including a parenting community  
A chance to receive free gifts if you regularly buy baby products at Boots

- Tesco Baby & Toddler Club  
Benefits include:  
Discounts on baby essentials  
Regular tailor-made magazines full of useful help with anything from being pregnant for the first time to dealing with toddler tantrums  
The benefits of the website, including offers and shopping ideas, one-to-one expert advice from some of the top names in parenting and children's health, the chance to chat to other parents online and recipe ideas
- Sainsbury's Little Ones Baby & Toddler Club
- Asda Baby & Toddler Club
- Bounty  
Benefits include:  
Money-off vouchers, discounts and freebies
- Emma's Diary  
Benefits include:  
Forums to meet other mums  
Entry to exclusive competitions  
Free Emma's Diary gift packs
- Pampers Village  
Benefits include:  
Free Baby Welcome Pack for pregnant mums (up to 32 weeks)  
Coupons to try out the latest Pampers products  
Newsletters  
Expert tips
- Huggies Club  
Benefits include:  
Handy hints and useful information
- Tommee Tippee Parenting Club  
Benefits include:  
Advice, tips and hints from a trained midwife  
Free entry into competitions  
Online discounts
- Ella's Kitchen  
Benefits include:  
A free weaning guide  
Coupons giving you money off Ella's Kitchen's organic food
- Organix  
Benefits include:  
Regular recipes, ideas, offers and feeding tips
- Heinz Baby Club  
Benefits include:  
Mail packs with product samples, money-off vouchers and feeding guides  
Monthly emails with giveaways  
Nutritional information, recipes, meal planners and expert advice from Heinz Nutritionist Claire

- HiPP Baby Club

Benefits include:

A personalised baby calendar

Exclusive offers and competitions

Regular baby development emails

Free 1st year record book

Expert advice

A-Z of pregnancy & baby health

Access to the HiPP Chat forum

Free HiPP Organic samples and money off coupons