

12 TIPS ON GETTING ORGANISED FOR A NEW ARRIVAL

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It's an exciting and daunting time to be expecting a new edition to ones family whether it is your first child or another to add to the precious little one/s you have already.

As a parent and organising expert I believe the preparation and organisation you undertake prior to the new arrival can assist to make life easier in those early weeks. I can't promise you that it will all be smooth sailing but putting in time and effort early can help!

Here are 12 tips for you to consider:

Purchase or borrow all the basics that you will need - these include things like a cot, pram, and car seat which you need to install so you can actually bring the baby home after birth. Down the track (usually after about 3 months) you will need to consider other times like a high chair, stroller. If you already have these items and they are packed away, take the time to pull them out, set them up and check they are still in good working order.

If you are **purchasing new items** then there are so many more options around than when I had my first child 14 years ago. Do your research, speak to other mums, ask questions on social media and look at reviews and information on the Internet before purchasing.

Don't overbuy - from experience I suggest you don't go overboard with purchasing clothes until you know what

you have and their size - purchase enough newborn basics to get you by in the first few weeks. Both my boys were big 10 pound babies and therefore hardly even used many of my purchases. It's also a good idea to wash all clothing before you put it on your baby - wash in gentle detergent.

Decide what nappies to use - most people tend to go with disposable these days though the choice is yours. I still suggest buying a pack of cloth nappies even if you don't use them as a nappy - they are great for use on or around, the change table, over the shoulder for carrying bubs around, in general for cleaning up mess. My children are now 11 and 14 and we still use them around the home today as they make great rags.

Set up a baby change station - Make sure you have all the necessary items like a bin, nappies, wipes and creams in one place and with easy access to use. If you have multiple levels in your home it might be useful to have a station set up in say the living space as well as one up in the baby's room if on a different level.

In the weeks before baby arrives it might be a good idea to **start cooking extra serves** of your favourite freezer friendly meals like pasta sauce, casseroles, soup. Also if friends and family ask if you'd like any help don't be afraid to ask for a meal or something. Most people wouldn't offer if they didn't want to! On the flip side don't be afraid to ask for help either as sometimes people will assume

you are coping and they stand back waiting for an invitation as they don't want to interfere.

Make the most of your nesting feeling and do some cleaning and organising if you are feeling up to it. You can get the nursery organised, set up where the baby will sleep, arrange the change table and so on. You don't have to worry so much about baby proofing your home at this stage as it's not required until your baby can crawl or move around. However you may still want to start thinking about it and what you might need to do in the future.

Before the baby arrives go out and **spend time with your partner** and do something you both enjoy. It might be a little while before you get this opportunity again. I always suggest to expecting mothers to take yourself off to the movies, have a beauty treatment, catch up with friends whilst you have the opportunity. It's not that you won't ever get to do this again it's just that more planning has to go into it when you have a little one to care for as well!

Don't strive for perfection once the baby is born - for many women it is important to not try and be superwoman and some days just getting a shower can be a major achievement! As an organised person I actually had to work really hard not to try and do everything and to let others help.

Someone very wise once said to me that you can listen to

others but at the end of the day **trust your own instinct** and follow the advice you want to and leave the rest! I still find I take this approach even today when it comes to my children moving through their teenage years.

Think about childcare - these days you really need to consider all the options around going back to work, whether it be full time or part time, and who will care for your child/children if you do? If you are going to use a childcare facility then once again do your research and put your name down early to ensure a space is likely to be available when you need it. If you have other children you will also need to think about childcare options whilst you and your partner will be at the hospital having your child.

Think about school - if you are even remotely thinking about your child going to a private school for either primary or secondary education then you need to think about putting their name down as early as you can these days. My advice is if it is a consideration to at least do this whether you end up sending them there (we haven't to date) as it gives you the option rather than not having it at all when the time comes.

At the end of the day my advice is to take your time, do what works for you, seek help if you need it and enjoy the overall experience of being a parent!

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Amanda Lecaude is professional organiser who loves being able to help people – her clients – get organised. She sees the difference it makes in their everyday lives, particularly families, just to have a way to create some TIME, SPACE and BALANCE! She is also very passionate about equipping school students with organising skills for life to maximise greater results primarily in secondary school and limit the overwhelm and frustration for both them and their parents.

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