

gearing up for baby: THE LIST

by jane maynard and jessica hansen • copyright © 2011 this week for dinner

SLEEPING

- **BASSINETTE:** You'll want baby close by those first few weeks or months. A bassinette in your bedroom is a great solution. For Cate, we borrowed one from a friend made by Kolcraft and it was great. For Anna, we used a *Graco Pack N Play* with the basinette feature so that she was up near the level of our bed. For Baby #3 we will be using the *Brica Fold N Go Travel Bassinette* because there isn't room in our current bedroom for the Pack N Play.
- **CRIB AND BEDDING:** Eventually you'll want baby sleeping in a different room, so make sure you have a bed for them! We actually don't have room for a crib right now, so baby #3 is going to be relegated to the Pack N Play once he's out of our room. Poor guy. If you DO have a crib, get the bedding ahead of time so you don't have to think about it once baby is here.
- **BLANKETS:** You'll probably get a billion as gifts, so hold off to buy any until after your shower! I love flannel blankets personally - super handy.
- **MOBILE:** you know, the hanging thing that plays music above baby in the crib. My babies loved theirs.

TRAVELING:

- **INFANT CAR SEAT / STROLLER / TRAVEL SYSTEM:** I love having an infant car seat that fits into some sort of stroller. I highly recommend getting a Travel System or a stroller base like the Snap N Go that the infant car seat can fit into. The system we had for Cate is no longer made, so I won't bother telling you about it. Jessica used the Graco MetroLite Travel System and really liked it. For Anna I used a Peg Perego travel system and, in all honesty, did not like it at all. It just wasn't easy to use - every time I had to put the infant car seat into the base or the stroller, it was a struggle. It's been a few years, so it could be better now. For this baby we have the Orbit Baby G2 Travel System - I've yet to use it with a baby, but so far it has a ton of features that I know I am going to love. We will also be trying out the Maxi Cosi car seat and stroller, but I haven't used yet either. I have many friends who have gotten the Chicco systems and have really liked them, while an uber-helpful saleslady at Babies R Us swears by Graco.
- **UMBRELLA STROLLER:** I love having an umbrella stroller, for when baby gets bigger. They take up less space in your car and are easy to use. We bought a cheap-o one the first time around and were happy with it, but with Anna we bought a Maclaren and I LOVE IT. Totally worth the money. We bought the \$100 model and have been very happy with it, but I sometimes wish we had just splurged and gotten the \$200 model, which has a reclining seat and other small adaptations. The reason I love Maclaren is the handles are higher and you NEVER kick the wheels, which you always do with the less expensive umbrella strollers.
- **CONVERTIBLE CAR SEAT (FOR WHEN THEY GROW OUT OF THE INFANT CAR SEAT):** Once your baby exceeds the weight or height limit for the infant car seat, you need to get a convertible carseat (i.e. it can be rear- AND forward-facing). Even though they outgrow the infant car seat, they still have to be rear-facing until **at least 1 year or for as long as they can go** (there are different rear-facing weight limits for different car seats). The reason that they are rear-facing for so long has to do with spine development - and you just can't be sure when your baby's spine reaches that point when it's ready for forward-facing. Definitely stay rear-facing for at least 1 year, but I always keep my kids rear-facing pretty much until they reach the weight limit for rear-facing on our car seat. When Cate and Anna grew out of their infant car seats, we used a Britax Marathon. It has a 35-pound rear-facing weight limit and a 65-pound forward-facing weight limit. We have been very happy with this car seat - easy to use and has side-impact protection, which is not required and is not included in all car seats. Just things to think about when you look at different brands! The Britax Roundabout has lower weight

gearing up for baby: THE LIST

page 2

limits but is not as bulky.

- **BOOSTER SEAT:** This is for post-car seat kids. We use Graco with the high back and it's great.
- **JOGGING STROLLER:** Not everyone needs a jogging stroller, depends on your needs. If you want a jogging stroller, my favorite hands down is the BOB Revolution - front wheel can rotate OR be locked into place. We have the double Duallie BOB Revolution and I have not regretted one dime spent on that stroller.

BATH SUPPLIES

- **INFANT SPONGE BATH THINGY:** Yes, there are lots of fancy bathtubs for babies out there. And I think they're useless. I buy the yellow sponge bath thingy for under \$10 and it works fabulously. I felt like my babies slipped around too much in those big fancy tubs plus they take up a ton of room, which we do not have a lot of. The little yellow sponge thingy dries out quickly, keeps baby from sliding around and can work in a large sink or the bathtub. Plus, it's soft. That's gotta be nice for baby!
- 2-3 Baby Towels with the hood corner
- Baby Washcloths
- Baby Bathwash

DIAPERING

- **DIAPERS:** I LOVE LOVE LOVE LOVE LOVE Pampers Swaddlers. I am so willing to spend a little extra money on them. They are so soft and the stretchy tabs make for a great fit. And my girls hardly ever blew out of them with poopy diapers. EVERY TIME I used Huggies with both of my girls they have poop craziness leaking everywhere. I would say 75% of the moms I talk with have had the same experience. But that other 25% are opposite – Huggies work and Pampers don't. Just try Pampers first and see what category your baby falls into. Also, I've had so many friends go to all the trouble of trying Huggies and Kirkland and what-not, and most of them just end up going back to the Pampers. Once they're size 3, I switch to Pampers Cruisers - they have the same stretchy tabs the Swaddlers do. Before you think I just waste my money on diapers, I've gone through phases where I give the cheap diapers a chance. It usually goes okay, but honestly we have more accidents and/or my girls get irritated skin. Okay, off the diaper soapbox.
- **CHANGING TABLE:** It's nice to have a dedicated space for changing diapers. We bought a 3-drawer dresser that comes up to just above our waist and use that as the changing table. There are some really great changing tables out there that I would have loved to have gotten, we just never have had room.
- **CHANGING PAD AND COVER:** You need a changing pad to put on that changing table, and that needs a cover. Also, Jessica discovered these small waterproof changing pad thingies (I know, great name description) that she would put on the changing pad so she didn't have to clean the cover as often. I use them now, too!
- **DIAPER CADDY:** We have the basket diaper caddy from Pottery Barn Kids, but there are other versions at other stores. I love having this basket - I keep the wipes in there, some diapers, ointment, thermometer, etc, etc. It's nice to have a handy spot to stick all that little stuff, and I also like that it's portable, so I can move it from room to room.
- **LOTS OF WIPES!!!** Stock up on wipes ahead of time! For my new babies, I actually use a washcloth for the first couple weeks because their skin was so sensitive, even with the softest wipes. But once we got out of that phase, I would use fragrance-free, sensitive skin wipes for a few months. The Kirkland brand wipes at Costco are great too and fragrance-free - although I use them a little later. My kids have sensitive bums, what can I say?

gearing up for baby: THE LIST

page 3

- **DIAPER OINTMENT:** I LOVE Boudreaux's Butt Paste. Cate had the craziest rash when she was a baby - it was the only thing that eventually worked! Again, I think this is one of those trial-and-error products - you just need to find what works for your baby.
- **BABY POWDER:** I love liquid baby powder. You have to keep an eye out for it - Carter's is actually selling it now. For Cate, I used traditional baby powder, but when I had Anna, one of the nurses told me the traditional powder isn't good to use...but I can't remember her reason behind it! The liquid baby powder works great and that's what I've ended up using.
- **TRAVEL CASE FOR WIPES:** You'll need some sort of travel case for wipes to throw in the diaper bag!
- **DIAPER BAG:** Either get a big purse that can hold everything or get a diaper bag. You'll need something to tote around the diapers/wipes/extra clothes/bottles/etc those first months!
- **DIAPER PAIL:** For Cate we had a Safety 1st NEAT system and I LOVED IT. Then they stopped making it. We tried the Diaper Genie II when Anna was born, and I liked it fine, but the refills were pricey. I ended up just putting a can with a bag on the back porch and taking that to the trash once a day instead of having a pail in the bedroom. A lot of my friends used the Diaper Champ and loved it because you could just use any old bag, no refill needed.

FEEDING

- **NURSING PILLOW:** If you are going to breastfeed, I highly recommend getting a nursing pillow. I LOVE MY BOPPY. I've kept the same one for all three kids. Couldn't live without it!
- **BOTTLES AND NIPPLES:** I hardly EVER used bottles, so I have no advice. But I would recommend you get bottles that are phthalate and BPA free! The breastfeeding store recommended Avent to me, but that was 6 years ago...I'm sure there are new things on the market now. I do remember being glad I had 4 and 8 ounce sized bottles, we used the 4 ounce bottles earlier on. This is another trial-and-error product - your baby will probably end up preferring one kind of nipple over another, so you just gotta try stuff out. Make sure the nipples you buy for the bottles match the baby's age.
- **BREAST PUMP:** If you're going to pump at all, either buy or rent a good electric breast pump. I never pumped, so, again, not much experience here, but I did have an Avent hand pump and it was pretty much useless.
- **NURSING BRAS:** Go get fitted somewhere where they know what they are doing - fitting should occur around 37 weeks. I bought 2 daytime and 1 nighttime bra and was happy with that combo. This time around I also got a tank that has a built in nursing bra, I think it's going to be great.
- **NURSING PADS:** My favorites were Gerber Ultra Thin pads. The woman at the maternity clothes store just showed me some cool reusable pads that were made out of silicon or something...they seemed pretty neat, they stop flow rather than absorb milk. I used nursing pads with Cate, but Anna not very much because I discovered this trick...if you feel your milk let down, if you immediately push on your breast, you can stop it from leaking. For Anna, I only used nursing pads in the very beginning when milk was coming in, but later on the 'push on the boob' trick worked like a charm!
- **FORMULA:** If you are going to formula feed, start stocking up now...the stuff costs a pretty penny!
- **BURP CLOTHS:** I love the cloth diapers *without* padding down the middle for burp clothes...we went through them like water for Cate, who was the queen of spitting up!
- **MYLICON DROPS AND, IF THINGS GET SERIOUS, MYLANTA:** Cate spit up all the time and was gassy - we used Mylicon all the time, and eventually ended up using Mylanta as per our doctor's recommendation. Anna, on the other hand, never needed either. Will just depend on your baby! I just have a Mylicon bottle on hand

gearing up for baby: THE LIST

page 4

before baby is born in case we need it, no need to go out to get it.

- AVENT BOTTLE STERILIZER: You can sterilize bottles in the microwave – you can always just boil all that stuff on the stove, but I like the microwave set from Avent because I can put a bunch of stuff in it to sterilize and I know it's sterile when I use it later.

CLOTHES

- MITS FOR BABY: We definitely had our babies sleep with those little infant mitts on their hands in the beginning. Keeps them warm and from scratching their faces off! I only used them a few weeks, but definitely used them.
- WHITE ONESIES: Just have a bunch handy - it's nice to put them under clothes, if diapers leak often it just gets on the onesie! Plus it keeps baby warmer.
- WHITE HAT: I loved having a white hat - since baby wears a hat most of the time in the beginning, I liked having a white one that went with all their clothes.
- SLEEPERS: PJs with feet. My babies live in them the first weeks, and I LOVE the Gymboree sleepers size 0-3 months, they fit newborns wonderfully!
- A quick note on clothes – you'll get a lot of gifts from people that are 0-12 months, but after that not much. So if you're buying your own to stock up, might want to get bigger clothes. I guess it completely depends on what you get at your shower. ALSO... so many clothes Cate never wore because I got them out too late – the months on the tags are usually wrong and they can wear stuff earlier than you think. Wish I'd gotten stuff out sooner.

BABY CARE STUFF

- LOTION: I bought a big thing of Eucerin when Cate was born, but I wish I'd gotten Aquaphor as it's easier to spread. I also would have bought a much smaller container.
- HEALTHCARE AND GROOMING COMBO KIT: Just stuff you need - handy to have the kit. ALTHOUGH...I didn't bother with baby #3, I must admit. ;)
- NASAL ASPIRATOR: The one you get at the hospital will be the best one you ever get. Hang onto it! The ones you buy in the store just don't suck as well. The hospital version is harder to clean out - I just suck up water with a bit of bleach, swish it around and let it sit for a few minutes, then suck and squeeze fresh water a billion times to rinse out. Worth the annoying cleaning technique because they suck so much better!
- PACIFIERS: This is TOTALLY a baby preference thing. My biggest recommendation is get pacifiers that are BPA and phthalate free. Both my girls ended up going with their thumbs eventually, and some babies don't suck anything.

LAUNDERING

- DETERGENT: Dreft, All for Baby or All Allergen Free - I use the All Free detergent b/c it has the same ingredients as Dreft and I use it on all of our clothes - and it's less money than Dreft. Also, I used the Free dryer sheets as well - as little fragrance or chemicals you can get, the better for baby's skin. Not kidding, Cate had a rash, and when I switched to the Free dryer sheets, it immediately went away. Wash baby clothes before wearing. I run my baby's clothes twice through the washer before first use.
- STAIN REMOVER: You'll be using this all the time! Soil Love works great on baby poop, Oxyclean works well too. But definitely have a spray bottle of whatever stain remover you like handy at all times!

gearing up for baby: THE LIST

page 5

“FUN” STUFF FOR MOM

- Maxi Pads - long, overnight, absorbent ones - they make them pretty thin nowadays, which is nice
- Hemorrhoid cream
- Tucks wipes
- Flushable wet wipes
- Lanolin cream (for nipples)...I only used this the first week, so just get a small tube to start, but glad I had it! Often the hospital will give you some.

MEMORY-RELATED ITEMS

- CAMERA! Make sure you have a camera of some sort! I love the Canon digital point-and-shoots. For SRL, [click here to read about the camera that I use, the Canon Rebel T2i](#). Also, make sure you have a video camera, too! We bought a camcorder when Cate was born, but we never get that out now...we just use our small Kodak HD video camera.
- Baby Book / Memory Book - Get it ahead of time and get one where you just have to fill in the pages, keep it simple on yourself.
- Handprint/footprint stuff - have an ink pad and something you want to print on (the baby book usually has a page, too) before baby is born. Having those prints from the early days is one of my favorite things, and there's no way I would have gotten it done if I didn't have the supplies before baby came!

HANDY GEAR

- BOUNCY SEAT: Cate really liked sitting in it, but Anna did not, so we ended up giving it away.
- EXER-SAUCCER: Cate loved this, takes up a lot of room but is nice. Anna actually loved it too!
- SWING: We didn't use one for Cate, but we used it ALL the time for Anna. Definitely going to have it for Baby #3.
- BIG BASKET FOR TOYS: We got a nice basket from Pottery Barn Kids that has wheels. It's nice to have a place to put all the toys and stuffed animals people will give you. We still use that basket for our girls' toys!
- BABY CARRIER OR SLING: We had a Snuggly for Cate, but she grew out of it FAST. We used the Infantino for Anna and I liked it much better, but again, didn't use it much. I think this is definitely a baby and mom/dad preference item. Ask around, try them out, see what works.
- AUTO MIRROR: This is one of my favorite baby gear items. I love being able to see baby from the front seat when they are still rear-facing...and the babies like looking in the mirror, too!
- BABY MONITOR: If you live in a small apartment like us, you may not need this...but if you live in a house, I think it's a GREAT thing to have. We have one made by Safety First that has two receivers - what I like about it is a little red light lights up when the baby makes a noise. That actually came in very handy.
- ROCKING CHAIR / GLIDER: Not a necessity, but was happy we had one for the first two girls. We don't have room now, so no choice in the matter. Our rocking chair was white Mission style, \$120 on Overstock.com. Burlington Coat Factory had lots of rocking chairs for around \$100. If you can afford it, the gliders are really nice.