

## Breast-feeding checklist

### ○ Nursing bras

Buy nursing bras close to your due date, when one of our trained fitters will be able to estimate your size once your baby is born. You should avoid wired bras throughout pregnancy and while breast-feeding, to protect delicate breast tissue. You'll probably need 3 or 4 nursing bras, which have clips and drop-down cups for easy feeding.

### ○ Breast pads

Breast pads slip inside your bra to protect your underwear. You can choose from disposable or machine-washable versions. Thermal pads are also useful for relieving discomfort, and can be used hot or cold, depending on which you find most comfortable.

### ○ Nipple cream

A natural lanolin cream can provide soothing relief. Choose something with no taste, colour or perfume, so that it's safe for your baby when breast-feeding.

### ○ Muslin squares

You'll find these absorbent cotton cloths useful for all sorts of things, from protecting your clothes to covering up while breast-feeding. Buy at least 6 or 8, so you always have some to hand. You can choose from plain white or a variety of colours and patterns.

### ○ Pillow

Help get your baby in the right position for feeding with a supportive pillow. Many designs double as extra support for you during the last months of pregnancy.

### ○ Breast pump

Once breast-feeding is established, you may want to try expressing. You can choose from manual and electric pumps – if you're expressing regularly, you may find an electric or battery-operated pump easier. Expressed milk can be stored in a sterile lidded container or storage bag in the fridge or freezer.

## Bottle-feeding checklist

### ○ 6-8 bottles and teats

Bottles and teats come in different shapes and sizes, so it's worth trying a couple to find the one that best suits your baby. Modern bottles are designed to mimic breast-feeding as closely as possible, and have vent systems to stop air getting into your baby's tummy and help prevent wind and colic. Teats are available in a range of flows, from slow for newborns to fast for older babies.

### ○ Steriliser

Until your baby is 6 months old, bottles and teats must be washed and sterilised before every use to kill the bacteria that can cause stomach bugs. There are 3 types of steriliser to choose from: chemical sterilisers, which use a sterilisation tablet or liquid in cold water; electric steam sterilisers, which plug into the mains and create steam to kill harmful bacteria; and microwave sterilisers, which do the same job as electric sterilisers, but in the microwave.

### ○ Bottle warmer

A bottle warmer is a great buy for peace of mind, heating milk to exactly the right temperature in just a few minutes.

### ○ Bottle brush

Specially designed bottle brushes are useful for getting bottles and teats clean before sterilising.

### ○ Muslin squares

See left.

### ○ Pillow

See left.



## Weaning tips

- Most babies are ready to start solids at around six months, and the Department of Health recommends waiting until then to reduce the risk of developing food allergies. Look out for your baby showing an interest in what you're eating, still seeming hungry after a feed, or waking at night after having previously slept through.

- If space is tight, look for a highchair that folds away neatly when not in use, or consider a booster seat that attaches to a chair or table. Many highchairs are adjustable, with removable trays, reclining seats and multiple height settings so they'll grow with your child.

- You'll need plastic plates, cups and spoons (it's best not to use metal until your baby is a year old). Bibs are essential for protecting your baby's clothes; you'll probably find full coveralls with sleeves and wipe-clean designs most useful.

- If you're planning to make your own food, preparing in bulk and freezing is the most economical way. Think about investing in a blender to quickly whizz up fruit and vegetable purees, and divide them into portions in small containers before freezing.