

THE KIT

Your guide to absolutely everything your baby needs starts here. Because although your love is the most important thing of all, there are lots of other essentials. So you must be sure to make the right choices

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IT'S NOT WITHOUT good reason that a pregnancy is nine months long. You need every single week to get used to the idea of impending parenthood – not to mention the overwhelming list of everything you need to buy. It's the mum-to-be's question: 'What do I need? What do I want? Where do I start?'

The truth is that tiny babies need a lot of stuff. Everywhere you go you'll see mums with an endless array of baby paraphernalia. Every shop you enter will have more baby equipment than you ever thought existed. But how do you know what you *really* need?

It's essential to do your research and get it right. This magazine is packed with information that'll help you make your big buying decisions. The first step is to study our essential checklists on the following six pages – each modelled by baby Oliver – so you know

precisely what you need for life with a baby. Next, read our Buyer's Guide to make two of your biggest decisions – the pushchair and the car seat. These are the major items that can make your life a pleasure (if you choose wisely) or a pain (if you don't).

Once you have all the information you need, head to Mothercare – the best possible one-stop shop for mothers-to-be (take the cut-out-and-keep checklist on page 88 with you). Our stores have trained staff with lots of experience to advise and guide you through your choices. All of the kit you'll need comes in a huge variety of colours, fabrics, designs and prices, so you can buy just the things you need in a style you're sure to love. If you can't get to a store, shop from home via www.mothercare.com or through the catalogue – pick up a copy in-store, or request it online.

SLEEPING

■ MOSES BASKET AND STAND, OR SWINGING CRIB

At the beginning, babies prefer the smaller environment of a Moses basket or crib. A Moses basket is also portable, so at home your baby can nap wherever you are.

■ COT OR COT BED

Once your baby gets too big for a Moses basket, he'll need a cot. A cot-bed will last longer, as the sides come off, creating an ideal first bed for a toddler.

■ NEW MATTRESS

Even if you borrow a crib or cot, a new mattress is essential. Make sure it fits properly – the gap between mattress and crib should be less than 4cm.

■ ROOM THERMOMETER, MONITOR AND NIGHT-LIGHT

These three gadgets will give you reassurance when your baby is asleep. A thermometer will show the room temperature is fine (18°C is ideal), a monitor will let you hear

any cries from your baby, even if you're downstairs watching TV, and a night-light will give a gentle glow of light for night-time feeds.

■ 4 FITTED BOTTOM AND 4 TOP SHEETS FOR MOSES BASKET/CRIB; 4 FITTED BOTTOM AND 4 TOP SHEETS FOR COT/COT BED

This may sound like a lot, but babies are messy things. Leaking nappies make for grubby sheets, so bedding will often be in the wash.

■ 2 BLANKETS FOR MOSES BASKET/CRIB AND 2 BLANKETS FOR COT/COT BED

Two blankets plus a sheet is the ideal covering for use in a baby's room kept at 18°C. A blanket doubled over counts as 2 layers.

■ SLEEPING BAG

If your baby kicks off the covers and gets cold at night, use a sleeping bag instead of top sheet and blankets. Never use a sleeping bag as well as bedding – it'll cause overheating. >

01



OLIVER SNUGGLES DOWN:

- Hereford Cot (W1580), £60.
- Baby Jungle Sheet (Y8608), £14.
- Blue Fleece Blanket (V3638), £14.
- Little Pirates Sleepsuit (Y4238), £12.
- Bear (V3746), £8. Dog (T1871), £4

TRAVELLING

■ PUSHCHAIR

This is an essential item, whether you're venturing out for short shopping trips or for long afternoon walks in the park. Make sure you find the right one for you.

■ CAR SEAT

If your baby's going in a car – and that means a taxi or a friend's car, too – he must be in an approved child seat, even for the shortest of journeys.

■ BABY CARRIER

Being in a carrier or papoose soothes a fretful baby, gives you some hands-free time – so that you can get on with all those chores at home or pop out to the shops – and is perfect for country walks too.

■ CHANGE BAG

Keep a change bag by the door for outings, so you're never without those essentials (nappies, wipes, mat...).

■ SUN BLINDS

Cars can get extremely hot in the summertime, and most babies hate bright light – and, in particular, the direct light of the sun shining in their eyes – so shades on car windows are essential.

■ PARASOL

Babies' vulnerable skin must be protected from UV rays. A pushchair parasol can be angled to block light from any direction. In addition, use sun-protection cream.

■ RAIN COVER

If it's pouring, an umbrella's no good for a pushchair. A Mothercare Weathershield™ protects from rain and from puddle splashes from the side.

■ PUSHCHAIR BLANKETS

If your pushchair doesn't come with a cosytoe, you'll need a blanket. Fold it down when you're inside heated stores, and pull it up when you're back outside.

02



OLIVER GETS SET FOR AN OUTING:

Quinny Zapp Pushchair (X0719), £150 (suitable from six months, or from birth when used with the Cabrio car seat). **Cabrio Orange Flash Car Seat** (X0731), £110. **Blue Fleece Blanket** (V3638), £14. **Hooded Cardigan** (Y2146), £12. **Trousers** (Y3321), £8. **Bootees**, Oliver's own

FEEDING

BREASTFEEDING

■ 2 NURSING BRAS AND 1 SLEEP BRA

Nursing bras have handy clips, so cups fold down for feeding. Sleep bras keep breasts comfy at night.

■ BREAST PADS

For coping with leaking milk, these can be disposable or washable.

■ MUSLIN SQUARES AND BIBS

Get lots to protect your baby, and your shoulder, from possetted milk.

BOTTLEFEEDING

■ 6 FEEDING BOTTLES

For giving breast milk, formula or cool boiled water in hot weather.

■ 6 TEATS

Teats come with bottles, but extras with different flow rates are handy for babies who like milk faster or slower.

■ BREAST PUMP

To express milk, go for a manual or electric pump. But don't try

until 6 weeks, when your finely balanced milk supply should be established.

■ STERILISER

Bottles and teats must be sterilised – bacteria thrive in all types of milk. Choose from electric, microwave or cold-water versions.

■ BOTTLE BRUSH AND TEAT BRUSH

Before sterilising, every trace of

formula or breast milk must be cleaned from bottles and teats – a job that needs special brushes.

■ MUSLIN SQUARES AND BIBS

Get lots to protect your baby, and your shoulder, from possetted milk.

■ MILK

Expressed breastmilk or infant formula milk

■ BOTTLE WARMER

For perfectly warmed milk. >

03



OLIVER IS BOTTLEFED AND BREASTFED BY HIS MUM RUTH: Bib and bodysuit, from **8-piece Newborn Set** (Y4308), £20. **Muslin Squares** (V4020), £9 for six. **Avent Bottle** (C8282), £8.50 for three. **Microwave Steriliser** (W4523), £18. **Bottle Warmer** (J6360), £20. **Bottle Brush** (T3395), £2.49 (including teat brush, not shown)

BATHING

■ BABY BATH

A small baby bath can help to make your newborn feel more secure at bathtime and help to protect your back, too.

■ BATH SUPPORT

Wiggly babies plus water can make bathtime a slippery nightmare. A bath support will cradle your baby gently but securely. Never leave your baby unattended in the bath, even for the shortest time.

■ TOP 'N' TAIL BOWL

No time for a bath? Just wash nappy area and face. This bowl with two sections keeps the water separate.

■ NON-SLIP BATH MAT

If you have to use your own bath, place one of these on the bottom – otherwise it'll be like a skating rink.

■ BATH THERMOMETER

This will reassure you that the water is not too hot or cold.

■ NAIL SCISSORS AND HAIRBRUSH

Nails need trimming to prevent accidental scratching. A hairbrush – if your baby needs one – must be soft so it doesn't scratch the scalp.

■ TOWELS AND CHANGE MAT/ CHANGING STATION

Towels are best if they are hooded, as a lot of heat is lost through the head. A wipe-clean change mat is essential for nappy changing.

■ NAPPY PAIL OR WRAPPER

If you choose fabric nappies, you'll need a pail for soaking. If you choose disposables, a nappy wrapper is a handy disposal unit.

■ BABY TOILETRIES

Stock up on the basics: newborn-size nappies, fragrance-free wipes (newborn skin is sensitive), cotton wool, barrier cream, hypoallergenic baby shampoo and wash.

04

OLIVER GETS SQUEAKY CLEAN:

Baby Jungle Change Mat (Y3437), £7. **Cuddle 'n' Dry Towels** (Y1562), £13 for a pack of three. **Top 'n' Tail Bowl** (V2974), £5. **Mothercare Baby Bath** (S1698), £1.89.



DRESSING

■ 6-8 SLEEPSUITS

Sleepsuits are the simplest things to dress newborns in. They have poppers down the legs to make nappy changing easier.

■ 6-8 BODYSUITS OR VESTS

Bodysuits are vests with poppers under the crotch. They are ideal because they don't ride up, keep the nappy securely in place and are good for layering under sleepsuits.

■ 2 CARDIGANS

Babies can't regulate their own temperature, so layers are the best way to dress. Pop on a cardigan when it's cold, slip it off when it's warm. Cardigans are ideal, as many babies object to things going over their heads.

■ 3-4 DAYWEAR OUTFITS

Choose a few outfits for special days out. As babies get older, differentiating between daytime

and night-time clothes will help them know that bedtime means sleep.

■ 2-3 PAIRS OF SOCKS

You'll need several pairs of socks that your baby will be able to wear with footless outfits.

■ 2-3 PAIRS OF SCRATCH MITTS

Scratch mitts stop ragged nails damaging tiny faces.

■ 2 HATS

Babies lose lots of heat through their heads, especially if they have no hair! Keep their head covered if it's chilly.

■ 1 JACKET OR PRAMSUIT

Essential for going out – an all-in-one pramsuit is best for winter months, a jacket is fine for warmer weather.

■ 1 SHAWL

Ideal for warming up and cuddles. >

05

OLIVER GETS ALL DRESSED UP

Hot Dog's T-shirt (Y2112), £6. **Trousers** (3321), £8. **Hooded Cardigan** (Y3915), £12. **Cream Fleece Blanket** (W0844), £14. Vest from **8-piece Newborn Set** (Y4308), £20. **Wipes** (S1736), £1.30 for 24.



PLAYING

■ COT MOBILE

A cot mobile gives your baby an interesting environment to wake up to. Choose one with a music mechanism to satisfy the curiosity of tiny ears as well as eyes.

■ BOUNCING CRADLE OR SWING

You need a place to strap your baby in safely while you get on with things in the house – a bouncing

cradle is ideal as you can see him and he can see you. A swing is good for soothing a fractious baby.

■ PLAYNEST, GYM OR PLAYMAT

Mats and nests to lie on or in have activities attached – different textures, sounds, shapes and colours to explore. A gym – which arches over your baby and has activities hanging down encourages exploration and

hand-eye co-ordination as he learns to bat at the swinging toys.

■ SOFT RATTLES AND BLOCKS

Babies react to noise and a major development milestone is realising that an action has caused a sound – like when you shake a rattle. Soft blocks are another ideal first toy.

■ 2 FABRIC BOOKS

Books are educational, even from

birth. Fabric books are soft to handle – choose black-and-white patterns or brightly coloured pictures as young babies respond to monochromatic contrast and to intense colours.

■ 1 SOFT NEWBORN TOY

That first bunny or bear may end up as a well-loved comforter, which your baby snuggles up to after you've given that goodnight kiss. □

06

PLAYTIME FOR OLIVER:

Alphabet Soft Cubes (M8199), £7.

Bear (V3746), £8. **Rattling Horse** (T1855)

and **Rattling Cat** (Q3006), £5 each. **Ant**

Teether Rattle (S1763), £5. **Little Pirates**

Sleepsuit (Y4238), £12. **Cream Fleece**

Blanket (W0844), £14.

