First Baby Checklist

Everything first-time parents need to prepare before and after their baby arrives, organized into clear, manageable steps.

Prepare Your Home

- [ ] Set up a safe sleep space with a firm, flat mattress and fitted sheet.
- [ ] Choose and prepare a diaper-changing area with supplies within reach.
- [ ] Wash baby clothes, blankets, and bedding in a gentle detergent.
- [ ] Babyproof basics like outlet covers, cabinet latches, and cord safety.
- [ ] Stock a small first-aid kit and a digital thermometer.
  Ask your pediatrician which items they recommend keeping on hand.
- [ ] Create a comfortable spot for feeding with good back support and a side table.

Baby Gear and Travel

- [ ] Install an infant car seat and have it inspected before the due date.
- [ ] Choose a stroller or carrier that fits your daily routine.
- [ ] Set up a crib, bassinet, or co-sleeper that meets current safety standards.
- [ ] Get a baby monitor if your sleep space is in another room.
- [ ] Prepare a diaper bag stocked with the basics for outings.
- [ ] Add a portable changing pad and a few spare outfits to your bag.

Feeding Supplies

- [ ] Decide on your feeding approach and gather the matching supplies.
- [ ] Stock bottles, nipples, and a bottle brush if you plan to bottle-feed.
- [ ] Set up a breast pump and storage bags if you plan to pump.
- [ ] Have burp cloths and bibs ready for spills and spit-up.
- [ ] Keep a comfortable feeding pillow nearby for support.
- [ ] Talk to your provider about feeding questions and concerns.
  A lactation consultant can help if breastfeeding feels difficult early on.

Clothing and Diapering

- [ ] Stock newborn and next-size bodysuits, sleepers, and socks.
- [ ] Keep a few packs of diapers in the smallest size and the next size up.
- [ ] Have plenty of wipes and a gentle diaper cream on hand.
- [ ] Add swaddles or sleep sacks suited to the season.
- [ ] Prepare hats, mittens, and weather-appropriate layers.
- [ ] Set up a small laundry routine for frequent outfit changes.

Health and Safety

- [ ] Choose a pediatrician and schedule the first newborn visit.
- [ ] Gather baby bath supplies, soft towels, and a gentle wash.
- [ ] Keep a nasal aspirator and infant nail file or clippers ready.

- [ ] Learn the basics of safe sleep and follow them every time.
- [ ] Save key phone numbers for your provider and nearest urgent care.
  Consider a basic infant CPR class before your due date.
- [ ] Review any health guidance from your provider for the first weeks.

Paperwork and Finances

- [ ] Confirm the process for the birth certificate and Social Security number.
- [ ] Add your baby to your health insurance within the enrollment window.
- [ ] Review and arrange parental leave with your employer.
- [ ] Update beneficiaries and consider a basic will or guardianship plan.
- [ ] Set a simple budget for new baby-related expenses.
- [ ] Keep all important documents together in one labeled folder.

Line Up Support

- [ ] Identify who can help in the first weeks home.
- [ ] Prepare and freeze a few easy meals ahead of time.
- [ ] Set boundaries and a plan for early visitors.
- [ ] Save contacts for support lines, classes, or new-parent groups.
- [ ] Arrange backup transportation in case you need it.
- [ ] Plan small moments of rest and recovery for both parents.
  Accept offers of help with chores, meals, and errands.