



## HOSPITAL BAG

### For Mum

1. Antenatal/Hospital Card.
2. Books/Magazines.
3. Breast Pads (disposable or washable).
4. Chocolate and other favourite snacks. You might not want to eat during labour, but you could be hungry afterwards.
5. Comfortable change of clothes and underwear.
6. Comfortable Shoes/thongs/slippers.
7. Dressing Gown and/or pyjamas suitable for breastfeeding.
8. Earplugs – hospitals are usually very noisy. *Mine wasn't too bad.*
9. Energy drinks.
10. Massage Oil.
11. Heat Pack.
12. Maternity Bra.
13. Maternity Sanitary Pads.
14. Medicare and/or Health Insurance Card.
15. Music (with birth playlist) & charger.
16. Old large, loose t-shirt or nightie to wear during labour. *I wore a hospital gown, as I had an epidural, so needed it open at the back.*
17. Perineal Ice Packs.
18. Phone Charger with long cord.
19. Soft Toilet Roll/Flushable Wipes (1-ply hospital toilet roll isn't usually the best, especially if that area is sore. *Ps – it will be sore*).
20. Swimming costume, if you want to use the shower for pain relief or are having a water birth.
21. TENS Machine (rent one online or from a chemist). *I only used mine briefly as I had an epidural, but it was very good.*
22. Toiletries Bag - Face Wipes, Tissues, Hand Cream, Water Spray, Hair Brush & Hair Elastics, Dry Shampoo, Makeup, Toothbrush & Toothpaste, Shower Gel, Moisturiser, Lip Balm, Nipple Cream, Vitamins and Medications, Deodorant, Towel & Face Cloth, Panadol & Medication.
23. Towel – a large soft one, as hospital ones are usually tiny.

### For Dad

24. Board shorts for massaging mum in the shower. *I had an epidural, so didn't use the shower, but these would have been crucial if I had.*
25. Camera. *Your phone is usually sufficient, but make sure you don't miss those special first moments.*
26. Change for parking and vending machines.
27. Change of clothes.

- 28. Jumper/jacket/hoodie (as delivery ward & birth centre are air-conditioned).
- 29. Phone Charger & Phone.
- 30. Pillow.
- 31. Snacks and packaged drinks – they'll need to keep their energy up .
- 32. Towels for car (in case water breaks).

#### For Baby

- 33. Baby clothes – socks, onesies, hat/beanie (depending on time of year), wraps, going home outfit. RPA Hospital in Sydney recommends you take 4 changes of clothes including a wrap.
- 34. Blanket. *We used the hospital blanket until we got home.*
- 35. Bottles and formula (if you don't want to, or are unable to, breastfeed). *The hospital will usually provide this if you need them.*
- 36. Car seat/capsule (unless you are planning to book a taxi home, with a baby capsule).
- 37. Dummy/pacifier. *I would buy one just in case you need it, even if you think you won't or are against them. I changed my mind on day 5 I think and wished I'd used it sooner. And don't wait until they are 4 months old to introduce. It will probably be too late.*
- 38. Nappy cream (e.g. Sudocrem).
- 39. Newborn nappies (up to 12 per day!) and baby wipes. Your hospital may provide a few, but probably not enough. RPA Hospital recommends you take 1 packet.



## FOR THE BABY

### Essentials

40. **Baby Carrier.** Even if you have a pram, these are great as they allow you to have two hands free, whilst snuggling the baby. Most carriers come with an optional insert for newborns. Many mums recommend Ego Carriers as they take the distance, but a body sling is a similar option. Our Ergobaby Omni 360 is great as it can be used from 0 months to 3 years! *I carry my son in mine, whilst I do chores, make lunch, go for walks etc.*
41. **Baby Monitor – with or without video?** *We love our Roger Armstrong one, as it has a larger than normal video screen.*
42. **Bouncer/rocker/baby swing/baby gym and/or playmat.** They are all a great way to entertain your child, whilst you do a few crucial chores (e.g. – eat, have a shower, finish the cuppa tea you made 5 hours ago). *Not technically essential, but they could save your sanity! I don't know what I would do without our rocker and activity gym/playmat.*
43. **Breast Pump – electric or manual? Single or double?** *Our initial pump (Tommee Tippee) was disappointing, but the Spectra S2 is amazing.*
44. **Car Seat** to bring your baby home is the number one essential item – do you want one which can attach to your pram, so you can (theoretically) transfer a sleeping baby from a car to their cot and vice versa? Either way, make sure it meets current Australian safety standards of course. Some car seats convert from rear-facing baby seat to child seat then booster seat.
45. **Chest of Drawers** with a change pad on top or a change table with a mat.
46. **Cot and Mattress**, including sheets and waterproof mattress protectors. Make sure you have spares for those accidents.
47. **Muslin Wraps/Swaddles** are perfect to wrap your baby in the first few months, so they feel secure (the same way they did whilst in the womb). They are designed to keep the baby safe, not warm, so choose a lightweight breathable fabric. They are also useful as a buggy or cot sunshade, as a lightweight breastfeeding cover and as a changing table cover. *My son loves the Love to Dream swaddles and they are SO Much easier than the wraps. The ErgoCocoon are good too.*
48. **Newborn Nappies** - cloth or disposable? Or in between (they combine a disposable or washable nappy liner with a shell made from soft cotton or bamboo and a pretty cover). Huggies don't leak and have a colour strip so you can see how much the baby has peed. *We have discovered that Thank You nappies are really absorbent and don't usually leak, but Aldi and Huggies are good too.*
49. **Choosing a pram** can, at first glance, be more overwhelming than choosing a new car. But important features to consider include: with or without parent facing option (the latter is said to promote child-parent interaction and language development, for toddlers as well as babies); the option to add a seat for second child later; lies flat for newborns; lightweight and size of wheels for different terrain. Some prams come with useful accessories (e.g. cup holder, rain cover and UV cover, bassinet & bassinet mattress protector), whereas with others you will need to buy them as extra if you decide you need them.

### Clothes

50. **Cardigans/Jackets.**
51. **Cloth Nappies** (they have so many uses, even if you don't use them for nappies, such as cleaning up vomit, burping, spills etc).
52. **Cute outfits for special occasions.**
53. **Hat for summer and beanie for winter.**
54. **Mittens.** Can be useful if your baby scratches themselves a lot, although a lot of onesies have them built-in.
55. **Onesies** are great as they provide an instant outfit. They are much better than singlets, as the latter will ride up. Some mums rave about Bonds Zippy Wondersuits, whereas others say they are

overpriced and prefer onesies with zips from M&S and Target. Zips are the crucial part, as they are much easier to get on and off than press studs. If you live in Sydney, there is a Bonds outlet shop in Sydenham. NB - Bonds run big and Target run small. I agree about Bonds Wondersuits. They are pretty much always on sale somewhere. Also, not only do they have a double zip, but they are really stretchy so easy to get on and off. Some onesies are hard, as the arms aren't stretchy, so you feel like you have to bend your baby's arm back.

- 56. Socks/Booties. Essential for times they aren't wearing a onesie with built-in feet.
- 57. Swimsuit/Swim Nappies. *We haven't started swimming yet, but I have bought these already and can't wait to use them.*

## Feeding

- 58. Baby Bottles (more if you're solely bottle feeding).
- 59. Baby Formula (have a can on hand even if you are planning to breastfeed, as it can be hard to establish or you may need to do top-ups).
- 60. Bibs & Burp Cloths.
- 61. Bottle Warmer. *We just place the bottle in a container filled with hot water.*
- 62. Breast Milk Storage Bags. Crucial if you are pumping more milk than you can use in one day.
- 63. Highchair (use from about 5/6 months old)
- 64. Steriliser – electric or microwave? Crucial if you are going to bottlefeed at all, as babies can't fight off bacteria in their first year. *We sterilise our bottles in a microwave steriliser. Cheap, quick and easy.*

## Nursery

- 65. Comfortable Chair for breastfeeding.
- 66. Cuddly Toys/Rattles/Sensory Toys.
- 67. Nappy Wipes.
- 68. Musical Mobile. *Max is mesmerised by his.*
- 69. Sleep bags, for when they not wrapped/swaddled (when they can roll, from about 4 or 5 months). *Saves using blankets and sheets, which if not tucked in tightly, could rise up and cover your child's face.*
- 70. Night Light - some will tell you the room temperature too.
- 71. Soothing Music.
- 72. Wardrobe (if you have the room). *I use the wardrobe for his current size, and the place larger clothes in the drawers (which are clearly labelled).*

## Out & About

- 73. Car Seat and Pram Toys. *Handy to keep some in different spots, so you don't need to remember them every time you go out.*
- 74. Car Window Shade.
- 75. Large Baby Bag for outings, with a portable changing kit (wipes, tissues, mat, cream, nappies etc).
- 76. Portacot. *We haven't been away overnight yet, but this will be invaluable when we do.*
- 77. Pram Blanket.
- 78. Rearward Facing Mirror, so your baby can see the driver.

## Bathing

79. Baby Shampoo and Conditioner.
80. Baby Soap/Body Wash.
81. Bath – insert for your existing bath, one with a stand or one which sits on your kitchen benchtop.  
*Don't make the same mistake we made – we bought a small one from Ikea, but by 5 months Max had almost grown out of it. We just bought a much larger one with built-in seat (Roger Armstrong Onda) and Max loves it. Wish we had bought it upfront.*
82. Bath Thermometer. *You can test using your elbow.*
83. Bath Toys.
84. Soft Hooded Towels.
85. Sponge/Face Cloth.

## First Aid & Toiletries

90. Baby Brush & Comb. Especially useful if your baby has Cradle Cap.
91. Baby Nail Clippers. *It's surprising how quickly they grow.*
92. Baby Oil/Lotion.
93. Baby Panadol/Nurofen. *Always ensure you check what age they can be used from.*
94. Cotton Wool Balls.
95. Nappy Cream (e.g. Sudocrem)
96. Talc-Free Powder.
97. Teething Gel.
98. Thermometer.



## For Mum

99. Milestone cards to record those special moments.
100. Maternity/nursing bras.
101. Breastfeeding Tops.
102. Breastfeeding/Sleep Support Pillow. *We bought an expensive one but just use a cheap cushion most of the time.*
103. Coffee Machine if you love coffee and don't have one at home already, as popping to the cafe will become much harder with a newborn. *Scrap this one. You will find that getting out of the house will be essential after a week or so...even if it is just to get a coffee.*
104. Dry Shampoo.
105. Favourite treats as well as healthy snacks that can be eaten with one hand.
106. Hand Sanitiser.
107. Kaz Cooke's book 'Up the Duff: The Real Guide to Pregnancy' is amazing, funny, informative and extremely helpful. There is also an app, but annoyingly it is not available for Android phones yet.
108. Kindle (or the app on your phone) so you can read whilst breastfeeding at night.
109. Lansinoh Nipple Cream.
110. Napisan vanish powder and a bucket to soak clothes.
111. Netflix and a good internet plan.
112. Nipple Shields if your baby is having persistent latch-on problems. *Consult a lactation expert first though.*
113. Pants Expander/Belly Band.
114. Pregnancy Journal/App to record weight, milestones, feeds and appointments. *I use Baby Daybook.*
115. Pregnancy Support Belt to relieve moderate to bad pregnancy back pain.
116. Sense of Humour. *Nobody knows what they are doing the first time and despite all the books, there is not a definitive manual.*
117. Stretch Mark Cream.

## GENERAL TIPS

118. DON'T be overwhelmed! Most of the above items are not needed straight away. The shops aren't going anywhere and online shopping is amazing. Aside from the essentials, you can buy items after the baby is born if you realise you need it or it will at least make life easier.
119. DON'T buy too many newborn/0000 size clothes, as they grow out of them so quickly.
120. DON'T buy anything fancy, as the baby will probably vomit/wee/poo on them.
121. DON'T write a Birth Plan – the doctors, nurses and midwives know what they are doing, but they won't do anything without your permission anyway. And most items on a Birth Plan will happen anyway (e.g. partner cutting the umbilical cord and holding your baby straight after birth).
122. DO check local buy swap sell groups on Facebook, which are great for second hand items (I wouldn't buy a second-hand car seat though, as safety laws have changed over the years).
123. DO use hire companies such as Kinder Share, Hire For Baby and Tiny Tots Toy Hire. They are particularly great for expensive items which you don't need for long or if you are flying interstate and don't want to take everything with you.
124. DON'T buy too much before your baby shower (if you are having one), as you'll be surprised how much you'll get as gifts.
125. DON'T compete with other mums and try to keep up with the Joneses'. Every baby is different, and they certainly don't care what the brand is.
126. DO buy clothes and bedding that are 100% cotton or bamboo, so your baby doesn't sweat.
127. DO splurge on good quality for the 'essentials' if you can. Big W, Kmart and Facebook Marketplace are your new best friend for pretty much everything else.