

## Nursery Decor

There's nothing more wonderful than planning the nursery for your new baby. If you've decided to find out the gender of your baby, you can have the room all ready for him or her when you come home from the hospital.

What kinds of things do you need to create a safe haven and optimal sleep environment? The trend for awhile was to have bright, stimulating colors in the nursery or mobiles in black and white to help the baby's eyes develop. This faded from popularity pretty quickly as parents found out all that trendy stuff wasn't conducive to sleep!

Make sure your crib conforms to all the guidelines for safety and that you have a good, firm mattress. Keep to softer pastel colors - blues, greens, pinks and yellows. Any color you like is good, although some, like blues and greens, are more restful.

Make sure the bedding and the entire room is clean and fresh. Until your baby is at least a year old, a quilt or comforter should be for decoration only. You can buy specially made quilt clips to hang it on a wall. Your baby's bed needs to be unobstructed by blankets, pillows or sheets, so that her face is clear at all times and there's no danger of obstructing her breathing. You might want to have a small foam wedge that's positioned to keep the baby from rolling on her stomach. You should also keep stuffed animals or other toys out of the crib until the baby's older. In addition, you may want to purchase a baby monitor to hear your baby throughout the night. These days, some monitors actually show your baby on a screen or video, amazing!

Make the room a pleasant one. If you use a scent, like lavender, keep it light. Nothing overpowering. Keep it as dust-free as possible to avoid sneezing and stuffy noses. The nursery should feel like a safe and cozy place that your baby associates with restfulness and security.

## Nursery Setup

The most important part of any nursery is the crib. You want to make it safe and cozy. No matter what type of crib you get, make sure it conforms to all safety guidelines and standards. Make sure the crib mattress fits snugly against the rails, so the baby can't get wedged between them. You also want to be sure the crib sheet fits snug and tight, nothing loose or bunched up.

Until the baby is at least a year old, you don't want to use sheets or blankets. A comforter or quilt should be for decoration only in that first year. Make sure the baby's sleepwear is clean and soft and appropriate for her age and for the weather. You don't want them too warm or too light, as babies can't regulate their own body temperatures at first.

The only crib accessory that you want inside the crib when the baby's sleeping is perhaps a small, foam wedge that you can use to keep the baby from rolling on her stomach. Sleeping on her back or on her side is the position many experts recommend at first.

The sheets should always be fresh and clean; use unscented detergent in case your baby's sensitive to fragrances.

Keep the room dust-free and the space underneath the crib clutter-free, so it won't accumulate dust. If your baby's sensitive to dust, you don't want to trigger a bout of sneezing and a runny nose at bedtime or naptime.

Make the room and bed sheeting colors soft and restful. Too much color and contrast will stimulate the baby's vision and keep her alert, just when you want her to wind down for bedtime or a nap. The baby's room and crib should be soft and inviting places to be. She has busy days - there's so much to learn and do! The crib needs to be a place that's calm and restful for her.

### Moving To The Nursery

When you bring your new baby home, you probably will have the urge to keep him near you at all times, especially when you (try to!) go to sleep for the night. It makes sense to have a crib or cradle in your bedroom at first, since it will minimize the distance you have to walk to handle nighttime feedings.

You can try moving the baby into his nursery for naps right from the beginning, to try to minimize any trauma or anxiety by moving him into a strange room with new smells and sights when he's a little older. Sit with him in a rocker or glider and rock him to sleep at first, then move him into his crib.

Later, you can put him in his crib and if he's fussy or can't get to sleep, try sitting near the crib for a few nights until he falls asleep. Then move the chair further away for another week or so. Finally, position the chair near the door, so the baby gets used to falling asleep without being right next to you.

It will be hard in the beginning, but if you're consistent, eventually, you'll get your baby to the point where he can fall asleep in his own room. Start to establish a nighttime routine, so your baby knows what to expect. A nice, warm bath, followed by changing into soft clean pajamas is a good start. Even a very young baby can be read to at bedtime. You can also sing to him and just talk to him. The sound of your voice is what matters so he feels safe and secure enough to fall asleep. By starting these simple routines early, hopefully you'll avoid trouble later on trying to move the baby into his nursery and getting him to sleep at a normal time.

### Music For Babies

You've probably seen videos and CDs for babies. There are some theories that classical music can make your baby smarter, and exposing your baby to music is part of what we do to introduce them to all the sights and sounds of their world.

Music can definitely help calm your baby down and put him in a restful state at bedtime or nap time. What are some good choices for a baby?

Almost anything you love or use for relaxation is good for a baby too. There are good collections of Mozart or Bach for bedtime. The music of Enya can be very soothing as well. Georgia Kelly's harp music is also relaxing and peaceful.

When your baby's awake, there are lots of nursery rhymes or music from kids' movies that can stimulate his senses. We've known kids who respond to minimalist Phillip Glass's music; it's simple and rhythmic and when they get older, they'll dance with it. Spirituals and soft gospel music are also good choices to help the baby get to sleep.

White noise, in the form of a fan (not directed right at the baby), or from sound machines that simulate the sound of an ocean or rain can be restful as well, and can block out noise from the home. You don't need to create an artificially silent environment for the baby, however, since that can make it harder for them to get to sleep when the home's rhythms and noises get back to normal.

This is a great time for you to explore classical music as well, if it's not already part of your life. The same music that's helping your baby get to sleep can help soothe your own nerves and provide a wonderful time of bonding and restfulness for you and your baby together.

### Nursery Feng Shui

You've probably heard of feng shui, the Chinese system for arrangement and placement of furniture in a room. It's often used in businesses and homes as a way to create positive energy in your environment. Even if you've never used feng shui in your own space, why not consider it for your baby's room? Feng shui is now making its way into the nursery, and for good reason, too.

Feng Shui proposes that by arranging and aligning the room correctly, energy will flow better in the room. Positive energy flow will create an environment to thrive for people of any age, especially a baby. To maximize the energy in baby's room, there are several important factors to consider, such as room location, safety, colors, and furniture arrangement. Using feng shui in the nursery will help to make babies less fussy, who will feel more comfortable in their surroundings, and who will be healthy and flourish.

What does it take to accomplish this? Following some basic considerations will help both baby and parents create a room that makes them both happy. First of all, put the baby's room in a good location. A new baby should have a bedroom that is not over a garage or has an empty space below. The bedroom also shouldn't be located where there is excessive noise that might keep the baby from sleeping, such as close to a living room where the TV is on, or close to a noisy street or neighbor.

The bed should not be against a window or be directly in line with the door. Make sure the baby does not sleep or is placed against a slanted wall. Avoid placing the baby against a wall that is shared with a bathroom, toilet, storage, or utility-type room. Create good, but soft energy and movement, with mobiles hung close to a window to move gently in the breeze and keep soft music playing in the room.

The baby's nursery should always be clutter free. Nothing at all should be underneath the crib. Few things should line the walls, keep it minimal. Each night, the dirty diapers should be taken out so a clean, fresh smell circulates. A small air filter can be placed to ensure clean crisp air 24/7.

## The Different Types Of Baby Monitors

Our children are our most valuable possessions. If only it was possible to be able to watch over them 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, then you would. This is most especially true when it comes to babies since they are dependent on their parents with everything that they do.

Unfortunately, parents are only humans and as such, you also get tired and will need rest from time to time. And what better way to rest than from the comforts of your room. This is where baby monitors come in handy. With these devices, you will still be able to monitor your baby even if he or she is in another room.

### What Are Baby Monitors?

Basically, a baby monitor, also known as a baby alarm, is a device that can be used to monitor your children or babies even if they are located in a separate room than yours. It is a simplex transmitter and receiver system that can be used to remotely listen for different noises made by your kids and babies.

A transmitter device with a microphone is placed in the room of your baby (usually near the baby). Another device with a receiver and with speakers can be carried by you, the parents, or the baby sitter, or anyone who is taking care of the babies. With baby monitors, you can keep track of your baby's even if you are doing something else in the proximity of your house.

### Types of Baby Monitors

Baby monitors have evolved through the years. From the simple transmitter and receiver device, different baby monitors have been developed. Currently, there are two types of baby monitors: video baby monitors and audio baby monitors.

Video baby monitors, as the name implies, use video footages for overseeing events in the room where the baby is located. It incorporates the technology used by webcams in computers. Instead of only using the simple transmitter with microphone, a camera is installed with it. The receiver, instead of just having speakers, already has LCD screens installed along with them.

Video baby monitors have also taken advantage of the current technology of the Internet. With the video baby monitor installed in the room, parents can access the cameras and view the conditions of their babies even when they are at the office. All they need is a computer with Internet access and voila! Instant video feed direct from the baby's room.

The other type of baby monitor is the audio baby monitor. This is the descendant of the basic uni-directional system used by basic and usually old monitors. These new types of baby monitors however have been integrated with new technology. Instead of just being able to hear your baby, you can now actually talk back to him or her.

There are even some devices that will let you send commands to the baby's device to play different music to hush him or her back to sleep.

Both types of baby monitors, audio and video, can either be wired or wireless. The wireless devices may, in some cases, be more advantageous than the wired devices since you will be able to go anywhere anytime for as long as both devices are within range.

The set back of this setup though is that wireless connections seem to be more affected with different interferences than the wired devices.

### Room Temperature Can Help Reduce The Risk Of Sids

Parents no longer have to lose sleep over Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) thanks to the latest research findings, and they can take a proactive role in reducing both the worry and risk involved for their infant.

SIDS appears to result from a combination of various factors including breathing difficulties, underdevelopment of baby's cardio-respiratory control functions, dangerous sleeping habits, and various medical conditions. Dr. William Sears, father of eight and a practicing pediatrician for over 30 years, suggests that the following SIDS risk lowering steps can help parents can reduce the risk and create a nurturing, safe, and comfortable environment for their little one, both pre-natally and post-natally.

The first step, according to Dr. Sears, is giving your baby a healthy womb environment. Although the SIDS risk in premature babies is higher, the good news is that over 99 percent of premature infants don't die of SIDS and that mothers-to-be can take pre-emptive steps to lessen their baby's risk to SIDS with smart prenatal choices. He advises getting good prenatal care, feeding yourself properly with lots of high-nutrition foods, and giving your baby a drug-free and smoke-free womb are three great ways to decrease the risk.

He also advises keeping your baby comfortably warm, but not too warm. Over-bundling, and consequently overheating, has been shown to increase the risk of SIDS. Overheating may disrupt the normal neurological control of sleep and breathing. The respiratory control center in the brain is affected by abnormal changes in temperature, and SIDS researchers believe that overheating may cause respiratory control centers in some babies to fail. Make sure your baby's head is uncovered, and put your baby to sleep on his side or back.

When baby sleeps on her stomach, or prone, with her cheek and abdominal organs against the bedding, these prime areas of heat release are covered, thus conserving heat. Also, never bundle a sick baby, as babies who are sick tend to have fevers, and bundling only increases body

temperature. Keep the room temperature where your baby sleeps around 68 degrees, unless you have a preterm or newborn weighing less than eight pounds; then you might want to increase the temperature by a few degrees.

As a general guide, dress and cover your infant in as much, or as little, clothing and blankets as you would put on yourself. Then, let your hands be a thermostat. Babies who are overheated tend to be more restless as well.