



The Ultimate Maternity Hospital Bag Checklist

Are you all set for the big day? Your baby might arrive earlier than expected, so it's worth having your baby hospital bag organized and packed during month eight of your pregnancy – just in case.

This checklist will help you prepare everything you'll need for yourself and your new baby. Plus there's a mini-checklist for birth partners as well. Perhaps pack your bags together so you can double-check that you'll each have everything you might need. Once all the bags are packed, keep them handy, either in the car or near the door, so you'll be ready to go at a moment's notice.

Hospital Bag for Mom: Labor and Delivery

- Hospital paperwork, ID, and insurance card.**
Have copies of your medical records handy, so that your doctors can easily review your medical history. Hospitals require your ID, any medical cards, and insurance documents up front, so make sure you have a copy of these readily available.
- Birth plan (if you have one).**
You might have discussed your birth plan with your medical team, but having a few copies printed and available for doctors means that everyone can refer to it in case last-minute questions arise.
- Bathrobe.**
A soft bathrobe is useful for pacing around during labor, or afterward, if you spend some time in the hospital.
- Socks.**
Your feet may get cold during labor.
- Slippers and flip-flops.**
You'll want slippers that are comfortable and easy to slip in and out of to wear as you walk around the hospital ward. Pack some flip-flops for using in the shower.
- Lip balm.**
Your lips can get chapped during labor. Having some lip balm on hand will help keep your lips hydrated and comfortable.
- Body lotion or massage oil.**
Some moms-to-be find a little massage during labor relaxing. If this could be you, pop some lotion or oil in your hospital bag.
- Water spray and sponge.**
During labor, if you start to feel hot, it can help to spray some water on your face and neck, or to sponge some cool water on your forehead.
- Comfortable pillow(s).**
Your hospital will provide you with pillows, but they might not be the right kind for you. If you have a favorite pillow at home, then you may want to bring it along as well.
- Relaxing entertainment.**
Pack some things to help you pass the time like a book, magazines, a tablet with movies or series downloaded on it, or a music player.
- Eye mask and earplugs.**
To help you get rest in a busy and bright maternity ward, an eye mask and earplugs could be just what you need during the downtimes of labor, or for your well deserved shuteye after the delivery.



Hospital Bag for Mom: After Delivery

- Nightgowns.**
You'll need something comfortable to sleep in during your hospital stay, and a soft, loose nightgown is a good option. Choose a front-opening style if you plan to breastfeed.
- Heavy-duty maternity pads.**
The hospital will provide some of these, but you may want to pack a few heavy-duty maternity pads, just in case. It's normal to bleed a lot after the birth, and maternity pads are softer and more absorbent than standard pads. Initially you may need to change pads every one to two hours, but within a few days, the flow will start to decrease.
- Underwear.**
Pack several pairs of comfortable underwear that are large enough to wear over heavy-duty maternity pads.
- Bras.**
Be prepared with a few nursing bras or other comfortable, well-fitting bras.
- Toiletries.**
Don't forget tissues, hairbrush, comb, deodorant, toothbrush, toothpaste, shampoo, conditioner, hairdryer, hair clips, and hair ties. Pack a plastic bag to pop dirty clothes in.
- Cosmetics and skin care products.**
If makeup is part of your usual routine, then don't forget your cosmetics. Plus, make sure you pack some moisturizer, as your skin may feel drier than usual.
- Glasses and contact lenses (if you need them).**
It may seem obvious, but sometimes it's these little things that can escape your attention when packing your hospital bag. Don't forget contact lens solution and a lens case if you use contact lenses.
- Phone and charger.**
Unless you opt for a little digital detox during this special time, don't forget your phone and charger. You can stay in touch with loved ones, use it to take those first few pictures, and post your special news on social media.
- Clothes.**
Aside from your nightgown, you might choose to take some comfortable clothes to wear during your hospital stay. Pack an extra outfit to wear home. Choose something loose-fitting, with a drawstring or elastic waist.
- Handouts and reference books.**
You might have received some handy notes from your prenatal classes or have some reference books about newborns. The doctors and nurses will be able to give you lots of personalized guidance, but you might find these resources more useful once you actually have your newborn in your arms.
- Snacks and drinks.**
Labor can sometimes be very long, so you could consider packing some snacks and drinks. However, speak to your medical team about whether or not you will be allowed to eat or drink anything during labor. Also, consider packing some of your favorite snacks for after labor as you may feel like some comfort food during your hospital stay.



Hospital Bag Essentials for the Birth Partner

As a birth partner you might also want to pack some things for your time supporting mom in the hospital:

- Snacks and water.**
Labor can be thirsty work even for supportive partners. Consider packing some snacks and water, as well as change for the hospital vending machines.
- Phone, camera and/or video camera, plus chargers and batteries.**
Don't forget to pack a phone to stay in contact with loved ones, and for some entertainment during downtimes. The camera will come in handy to take some happy snaps. (Make sure the camera's memory card has plenty of free space on it.)
- Clothes.**
Labor is an unpredictable process, so a change of clothes is always a good idea, as you never know how long the stay will be.
- Toiletries.**
After a long labor, you might need to freshen up in the shower. Most hospitals are fine with this, but you can confirm this beforehand.
- Spare glasses or spare contact lenses.**
It might be a long day, so having spares of these essentials could come in handy.
- Small pillow.**
You might appreciate getting a bit of rest during downtimes, as well.
- Entertainment.**
Something to do: books, a tablet, and a music player are all good options.

Hospital Bag for Your Baby

- Bodysuits.**
Hospital policies can vary on what newborns can be dressed in so consult with your doctor in advance about what to pack. You may need to add to what the hospital provides in terms of accessories and layers. Remember, with bodysuits it's a good idea to choose those that fasten up at the front.
- Socks and booties.**
Newborns can get cold easily so take some socks and booties just in case. Even during skin-to-skin contact, your newborn can wear a hat and socks.
- Blanket.**
The hospital will likely provide blankets, but a blanket of your own is always good to have on hand to use during skin-to-skin contact. It can also be used to keep your baby warm in the car seat on the way home.
- Going-home outfit.**
Consider the weather conditions: a bodysuit, booties, and hat could be fine during the warmer months, but in winter, pack mittens and a jacket or snowsuit, as well.
- Car seat.**
This obviously isn't for the hospital bag, but the right car seat should be installed in your car around the same time you pack your baby bag so it's ready for the hospital.

With this hospital bag checklist, you'll be well prepared for your time in the hospital. Read up on the signs of labor, so that you know when it's time to grab the bag and be on your way. Good luck!