

- 7 - 10 ZIPPERED sleepsuits - buy 0-1 M or 0-3 m - NOT newborn. Your baby grows very very quickly and they will basically live in these. Trust me, the zips make so much difference for night time changes. Also, buy the ones with integrated feet.. Link [here](#). People will tell you your baby is cold. Ignore them. They should be dressed the same as you - plus one extra layer at most.
- Sun hat - a must for a Turkish summer
- When we are at home and the indoor temperature is above 24C - I just let my girls roll around naked/in a nappy. Never put a newborn in direct sun.
- A couple of big bamboo muslins - these can be used as blankets/nursing covers/ car seat covers/pram covers - everything and they don't get too hot in the summer. You only need a couple. Link [here](#)
- If you plan to breastfeed - be prepared. It may hurt and it will take time for your body to get used to it. Buy this lanolin ointment and put it on ALL THE TIME. Link [here](#)
- I love my [breastfeeding pillow. I take](#) the pillow all around town with me as it makes positioning the baby easier and stops me from hunching over so much. It also doubles up as a lounger for the baby so she can sit on the sofa with us and a support for tummy time. When she was a newborn she also napped on it all the time
- Baby carriers are amazing. They sleep best next to you and your hands are free to do things. There is only one carrier worth considering. It's worth the investment. Trust me - we tried EVERYTHING from wraps, to sling to other carriers. Roxy will only nap in her carrier. Buy [this](#) one and make sure you get the newborn insert. [This one](#) is also amazingly comfortable. Both grow with your baby. Worth ordering both to see which one feels best for your body shape and then returning the one you don't want. Or if you are looking to buy second hand, borrow and try from a friend!
- You need LOADS of [these](#). For spit up. For washing your baby. By loads and then buy more :)
- You need [these](#). We have about 50 cloths and about 30 bibs. We get through them in 2-3 days.
- We keep her laundry separate and wash it using [this](#). If the clothes are stained we use this [first](#).
- Your baby should sleep in the same room as you for at least for the first six months. Our babies both slept with us in our bed and we use [this](#). We like this because it is easy for naps downstairs on the sofa and we take it with us when we go travelling as well. We also have a Chicco [Next2me](#) but we don't use it! They don't use a big crib/cot until much later. Hopefully your baby will sleep in a cot - neither of mine ever did and honestly, it is so much easier to have them in the bed with you for feeding if you are breastfeeding. You just roll over and feed and then roll back!

- Your baby will sleep in a sleeping bag/swaddles - We have [this one](#) as it grows with the baby - make sure you buy the correct tog for summer - probably 1.0 TOG in transition seasons and 0.5/0.2 TOG in midsummer. We use a 2.5 TOG for cooler months They can't sleep with blankets - they may suffocate
- Try different nappies to see what best fits your baby. I started with Sleepy but they were too narrow for by big bottomed babes - we now use Molfix and Carrefour's own brand - Minnies.
- Set up a changing station in your living room AND your bedroom as this is where you will be spending most of your time. We have a basket that has nappies, [water wipes](#) and a portable changing mat like [this](#) . You will change them on the sofa, on the bed, on the dining table- everywhere.
- Keep a basket or hamper in the room you spend the most time in. Any dirty clothes/bibs/cloths etc just keep throwing in there and then add into her laundry hamper at the end of each day.
- We keep a plastic bowl near the changing mat for poonamis - throw the dirty clothes straight in and carry to the sink and soak with stain remover. Scrub and rinse before throwing into the washing machine with the rest of the baby laundry
- We have a bag set up like [this](#) which we just throw into my handbag or a backpack for whenever we go out with the baby. It has a couple of nappies, a couple of disposable changing mats like [this](#) and a clean pyjama (love those zips) If they have a messy nappy it's easy to change them on the pad, wrap everything up and then throw it in the bin
- You will need a playmat - very useful to put them on when you are eating your dinner, need your hands for a cup of tea etc. You also need to do tummy time for a few minutes every day. Be warned - most babies HATE tummy time to begin with but stick with it. This [one](#) is fabulous because newborns really only see images with high contrast (black and white) and later on, patterns.
- You will only bath your baby 2-3 times a week and not at all for the first month. We use [this set up](#) on the shower floor and I sit on a small collapsible stool to save my back. Also Istanbul's hard water is very drying on the skin so better not to bathe too often. The bath is still being used perfectly by my three year old!
- Toys are not necessary for the first couple of months - they won't know what to do with them or how to react to them. The baby is only just starting to notice her toys and she is 3 months old. You can buy sensory toys secondhand later on. Same with books. She is more interested in the tone of your voice. I just read out whatever I happen to be reading at the time.
- We bought [this travel system](#) and are delighted with it - you need something sturdy for Istanbul's pavements! We also got the [isofix base](#) so we don't have to bother messing around with seatbelts everytime we want to go somewhere in the car. The bassinet is

perfect for long walks. A newborn shouldn't be in the car seat for longer than 90 minutes so it is perfect for a quick trip to the supermarket etc.

Other things I have learnt in my first three months:

- Only get a couple of packets of Size 1 nappies - they grow out of them very quickly
- You won't go out of your house for the first month - that's okay and totally normal
- You will be feeding constantly - look up cluster feeding and mentally prepare for it. I would spend HOURS breastfeeding on the sofa moving my daughter(s) from breast to breast without a break. It's super exhausting and you get very sore. Use the lanolin ointment and warn your partner they have to constantly bring snacks and top up your water bottle. Breastfeeding makes you outrageously hungry and thirsty. Make sure you have a big water bottle filled up and nearby all the time. Also subscribe to Netflix and Prime - you watch a lot of TV
- Newborns are NOISY sleepers. They sound like feeding time at the zoo. Don't panic - it's normal
- It's important for the newborn months to have some idea of the number of feedings, dirty nappies etc. I use the Huckleberry app (free version) and it is brilliant. Also helps with establishing her nap times.
- Breastfeeding is tough. It's okay to find it difficult. It's okay not to be perfect at it straight away. It took me 8 weeks to become confident, comfortable and mostly pain free. I had to supplement with formula for the first few weeks. That's okay too.
- If you choose to go down the formula route then that is okay too, A bit of breast and formula is okay too. Whatever you choose to do to keep your baby fed is okay. Don't be pressured by other people and listen to what they have to say.
- Buy one of each bottle and see what your baby prefers before committing to buying many. We tried 4 different types of bottles and teats, Tommy Tippee, Lansinoh, Medela and Avent. One baby only likes glass Avent bottles, my second only drank from Tommy Tippee. We started her on one feed a day with a bottle and expressed milk so it is easier for her to transition when I go back to work
- [Sterilising bags](#) are brilliant and save time as well as your bottles. If you boil in a pan as I used to, Istanbul's hard water builds up mineral deposits on the bottles ruining them
- Cradle cap is normal - just rub on some pure coconut oil and it will go away.
- Blocked eye ducts are also normal - boil and cool some water and soak a cotton ball. Wipe away the eye gunk every time you do a diaper change. Use each cotton ball once and don't go back over the eye or you are just spreading the infection
- If you choose to pump and store milk for going back to work, wait until your supply is established. Give it a month or two and then start worrying about it.

- If you need to pump to help with your supply from the beginning (as I did) then rent a hospital grade pump - more effective than a pump you can buy in the shop. You can also get custom measured for flanges that fit your nipples instead of being stuck with a standard size that usually ends up being too big or too small. Let me know and I can send you the contact details of someone that rents pumps in Istanbul.
- Mittens, gloves, socks, shoes - a waste of time
- Bite her nails yourself - safer than nail clippers
- When baby does a big messy poo - I clean her under the tap instead of trying to use a million wipes. More effective and more hygienic.
- No soap required. It ruins their skin. No moisturiser required either. Buy very soft cotton pestamels instead of expensive baby towels. They are perfect!
- You wait until the stump falls off before you bath your baby. Before then - just wipe them with a warm wet cloth every night.
- My babies hated dummies - I bought a few different ones to try and she didn't like any of them - if your baby likes them, that's fine. If she doesn't, that's fine too.
- **Borrow** a swing or rocker before investing in one to see what your baby prefers. We were gifted [a very expensive swing](#) and both the babies hate it. She also hates being rocked. She just wants to be carried in our arms or on a shoulder. Now she is older she manages about 15 min in it but for the first couple of months she screamed the house down if we tried to use it.
- White noise and swaddling was our saviour for nap/sleep times. We use Sleep-o-Phant on Spotify but you can also find it [on Youtube](#). Stick it on your phone or iPad and then put it next to them in the cot/bed/bassinet/car seat etc. Lifesaver.
- We bought a secondhand [Motorola baby monitor with video and audio](#). We started about week 10 to put baby down for her morning nap in her big crib to start getting her used to going to sleep by herself in it. I like the Motorola because you can download the app onto your phone and then your phone acts like a camera too. Before then, she was always with us!
- Fill your freezer! You won't have time or energy to think about cooking for the first 6 weeks. Trust me. Stock it full as possible before the baby comes. We had ours full of lasagnes, pasta bakes, curry, stews etc. All we did was get one out every evening and throw it in the oven and ate it with some mixed frozen vegetables. You won't have time, headspace or energy to cook healthy meals for the first few weeks. I ordered a month of food from [CookMeEatMe](#) and it was honestly the best decision I ever made.
- Buy everything SECOND HAND! Baby things are expensive and you don't use them for more than a few months. Get onto FB marketplace, FB groups, WhatsApp groups etc. etc. The only thing we bought new was the travel system as we didn't want a second hand car seat for safety.

I'm going to leave you with some words of wisdom from my mum's best friend. A senior midwife in the UK with over 30 years of experience, she helped me out a lot at the beginning. I was struggling with postpartum depression and guilt from not being able to breastfeed exclusively and having to supplement with formula. I should also add I'm a secondary teacher hence the start of the sentence!

"As a teacher, can you walk into a room and tell who's been breastfed and who's been formula fed? Can you tell who slept in their parents bed and who slept in a crib? What about who took a dummy and who didn't? Or can you tell who has been loved and cared for, respected and brought up with kindness and understanding and who hasn't? These things like feeding and sleeping may seem huge but we are talking about one year or less of your child's life. As long as they are fed, warm, clean, clothed, loved, and cuddled your baby will be fine. No one knows your baby as well as you, not even your doctor, midwife or lady down the road with 13 kids! Trust your instincts, believe in your love for your child and you will be absolutely grand. The other things are details which will sort themselves out in the end. Your baby will tell you what she wants. Follow her and your own instincts. You can do this."