



First time going through pregnancy?

There's a lot of info out there, and it can be overwhelming trying to figure out what's best for you and your baby. Use this guide to help you figure out what to do!



Build Your Birthing Team

You don't have to go through this on your own.

Create a birthing team that includes people who you trust and can count on. Consider adding a doula to your team. They can provide education, emotional support, and pain relief options while advocating for you during labor. Include your family, friends, partner(s), therapists, psychiatric providers, and a midwife or OB you feel comfortable with.

Consider a Pelvic Floor Therapist

A **pelvic floor therapist** can be amazing as your body is changing and the weight of your bump shifts on to your pelvic floor. If you go prior to birth, they can help you understand the position your body is most relaxed to labor in and how to effectively push. They can help with the pee-while-you-sneeze (incontinence) or pain while walking.

If you go postpartum, they can help with recovery to prevent incontinence or other long-term issues.



Don't Feel Guilty About Resting

Growing a human is exhausting work. Fatigue, needing naps, or feeling like you just need a break is completely normal. This is your body's way of telling you to slow down and practice self-care.

If you're tired, take the nap. Rest is crucial as you prepare for the life changes ahead.

Bond With Your Bump

At around 6 months, your baby can start hearing you.

It might feel a little strange at first, but it's a great time to connect with your baby. Talk to them, play your favorite music, read books out loud, and even write them letters about your thoughts during pregnancy. You'll be building a bond before they even arrive. If talking is awkward, just go for a journal you can give them when they get older.



Make a Birth Plan



You've got options when it comes to how you want to bring your baby into the world. Whether you want to give birth in a hospital, birthing center, or at home, make sure you know your options.

Do you want a water birth or to stay mobile? Are you going for an epidural? Would you prefer skin-to-skin contact with your baby immediately? Will you breastfeed, pump, or use formula? A birthing class or doula can help you create a plan that works best for you. Remember, this is your birth experience.

WHAT'S A BIRTH PLAN?



A **birth plan** is essentially a document where you outline your preferences for **labor, delivery, and postpartum care**.

It's a way to communicate your wishes to your healthcare team, so they know how you want things to go when the big day arrives. While not everything may go according to plan (because birth can be unpredictable), it helps ensure that you feel empowered and heard throughout the process.

But if you'd like something more extensive, TheBump.com provides a thorough birth plan template you can use.

Must-Have Items to Include In Your Birth Plan:

- **Where** you want to give birth: hospital, birthing center, or at home.
- **Pain management** preferences: Are you open to pain meds, like an epidural, or do you want to try natural pain relief methods?
- **Labor positions:** Would you like to stay mobile or labor in bed? Maybe you're considering a water birth.
- **Immediate care for your baby:** Do you want skin-to-skin contact right away? Will you breastfeed, pump, or use formula?
- **Cutting the umbilical cord:** Do you want delayed cord clamping, or should the cord be cut right after birth?



Your birth plan is completely customizable, so it can reflect what's most important to you. While flexibility is key—note that childbirth can be unpredictable!

Having a plan can help you feel more prepared and in control.

