

FEEDING/A Place to Sit

OVERVIEW

Once your baby is old enough to be sitting up at meal time, you'll probably want them to have a seat at the table (or in the kitchen, etc.). There are a number of ways to accomplish this - some seats attach to the table itself, some are boosters that can be attached to full-sized chairs, some are free-standing (the traditional "high chair"). Some have attachable trays and some are intended to be used right at the table. If you are pressed for space, there are a lot of options that fold up into small packages - either to slide into a narrow space, or fold up for travel.

HIDDEN HAZARDS

Formaldehyde is used in the adhesive that binds composite wood, particle board, and plywood together. It can also be used as glue or adhesive with solid-wood furniture. Older high chairs sold before 2008 may have been painted with **lead**-based paint. Metal high chairs can be "powder-coated" with a material made with **bisphenols**. Some trays may be made with **polyvinyl chloride (PVC)**. Padded seats may be made with PVC (for washability) and/or have **antimicrobial** chemicals added. They may also be made of polyurethane foam, and thus could contain **flame retardant** chemicals.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Some chairs offer different positions depending on age (reclining for younger babies, for example). Make sure your seat has proper restrains/straps to keep babies from slipping. Family heirlooms are unlikely to have such safeguards. Want to be especially frugal? Simple fabric seats attach to existing chairs can save space and money.

RECOMMENDATIONS

If you choose a full sized high chair, consider a solid wood chair. If the chair is made of composite wood or plywood, ask about volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and formaldehyde - and seek those that are certified to **CARB (California Air Resources Board) Phase 2 limits**. Look for a **"flame-retardant free" label** on any padding. Some wooden high chairs can convert to children's chairs that you can adjust as they grow, to extend the life of the chair. On a budget? A second-hand high chair can be just fine. Be sure it's made after 2008. Avoid older padded items, however, which will very likely contain now-banned flame retardant chemicals.

REFERENCES & RESOURCES

Learn more about the hidden hazards by reviewing the [glossary](#) or take a deep dive by reading [Safer Products for Babies and Toddlers: Resources and Recommendations for Retailers](#).

Learn more about the [California Air Resources Board's limits](#) on formaldehyde and other chemicals here.