

GETTING READY FOR BABY

SLEEPING/Bedding

OVERVIEW

There are a lot of things you can put on top of your mattress or wrap your baby in. However, there are only a few things you need and a bunch you definitely don't, for safety reasons. To protect your mattress you may want a mattress pad, or a "puddle pad" (a smaller piece of usually wool placed where diaper leaks may happen) to protect your mattress. You'll want several fitted sheets. And you'll need some blankets that can swaddle your newborn and then pajamas or wearable blankets (see [sleepwear](#)). And really - that's it. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends having nothing but a sheet and your baby in the crib.

HIDDEN HAZARDS

There are a number of ways to make mattress pads and other bed-related items waterproof and some use fewer chemicals of concern than others. Poly**vinyl chloride** (PVC, or vinyl) is common, which can contain **phthalates**. If you choose foam-based bumpers, these may have **flame retardant** chemicals. As with all textiles, they may contain a number of **solvents** as finishing and manufacturing chemicals.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

In addition to helping promote a healthy sleep space, keeping a spare crib can save money because you aren't filling it with decorative add-ons.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Whenever possible, choose organic textiles for items that will touch your baby's body. Products made of fabric are certified organic by **GOTS** (the Global Organic Textile Standard). Avoid latex to avoid possible allergies. Waterproofing that is safest includes the liquid-resistant wool "puddle pads," and polyethylene/polypropylene coatings. You won't need waterproof mattress pads if your mattress surface is already waterproof, though they can make cleaning up accidents easier. As with all textiles, launder before using them for your baby.

REFERENCES & RESOURCES

Learn more about why you should [skip bumper pads](#).

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](#).