

# Choosing Reusable Nappies

## Real Nappy Facts

- Save £500 or more per baby when using reusable nappies (more if you pass the nappies on to the next child).
- 8 million disposable nappies are thrown away into landfill sites every day in the UK – that makes 3 billion nappies a year.
- They are easy to use and laundry services are available in some areas.
- Available in many different styles and colours to choose and not a safety pin in sight!

## Which Kind Of Nappy?

Now you have decided to use reusable nappies there is the decision on which type to use! Your choice depends on what your main priorities are: cost, environmental impact, drying facilities, convenience. This is a brief guide the different types of nappy and the pros and cons of each.

### 1. Flat Nappies

These are the nappies that your mum will remember as Terry nappies and are available in two different types – flat nappies and pre-folds. Each type needs a waterproof cover on top. They come in a range of colours and fabrics including unbleached cotton and bamboo.

- Flat nappies need a quick fold before use and are fixed with a nappy pin or a Nappi Nippa.
- Pre-fold nappies are rectangular nappies that fold into a pad. They are designed to be used with a variety of covers and don't need pins to fasten them.
- Most economical: flat nappies can start from as little as 75p each and pre-folds from £1.
- Quickest to dry, because they fold out flat.
- You only need one size of terry nappy from birth to potty, pre-folds will need different sizes of nappy and wrap to reach potty training depending on the manufacturer.
- Folding flat nappies can take a little practice to start with and are more fiddly when out and about.
- They can be a little bulky on small babies.

### 2. Fitted Nappies

Fitted nappies are shaped to fit and don't need folding. They generally fasten with either Velcro or poppers and need a waterproof wrap over the top.

There is a wide range of fitted nappies available - some are suitable from birth to potty, others come in different sizes. They are available in a range of fabrics - hemp, organic cotton, microfibre, bamboo, fleece or terry.

#### **One Size Nappies**

One size nappies are suitable from birth to potty. They may need extra boosters for older babies, nighttime and daytime naps. Boosters usually fix with poppers but some new nappies have pockets to stuff the booster liner into.

- Only one size of nappy is needed making it the most economical fitted nappy
- Easy to use – with no folding.
- Useful if you have more than one child in nappies, because you can use the same nappies.
- Some styles can be a bit bulky on smaller babies.
- Some thicker styles can be slow drying

#### **Different Size Nappies**

Work in the same way as one size nappies but you need different sizes of nappy and wrap to see you through from birth to potty.

- Available in a range of styles
- Can be slimmer fitting as they are sized to the baby
- Can be expensive but allow you to spread the cost as you can buy the different sizes when you need them

### 3. All in One Nappies

All in one nappies are made up of the nappy and a waterproof outer layer and therefore don't need a separate wrap. They are the closest to disposable nappies in the way that they work. They can either be one piece nappies or pocket nappies.

#### **One Piece Nappies**

One piece nappies have everything all in one piece and normally need a liner to make it easier to dispose of solids. Those with a cuff at the leg allow more room for baby to wriggle and it is best to avoid those with a pvc waterproof layer as this is not breathable

- Easiest to use of all reusable nappies.
- Ideal for child-care and baby sitters.
- Most expensive real nappy option.
- Slowest to dry of all nappies.

#### **Pocket Nappies**

Pocket nappies consist of a waterproof wrap with a stay-dry fleece pocket. A flat or shaped nappy is stuffed into the pocket to provide the absorbency. They are easy to use but the wrap needs to be changed with the nappy each time. However they dry quickly as the nappy can be folded out flat.

- Quick and easy to put on when stuffed with a nappy.
- Ideal for child-care and baby sitters.
- Quick to dry as flat nappies fold out.
- Can be expensive

Reusable nappies also come in different fabrics each with its own benefits and again the choice depends on your priorities for using real nappies – some are more environmentally sustainable whereas micro-fibre is man-made but dries really quickly.

### Which Fabric?

**Cotton** - Cotton is very absorbent and soft, and relatively quick to dry. Organic cotton is also available as an option.

**Bamboo** - Bamboo fabric is up to 40% more absorbent than cotton and is incredibly soft. It also requires less chemicals to grow than cotton and is claimed to have natural antibacterial properties. However, it does take longer to dry.

**Microfibre** - Microfibre is a synthetic man-made fabric which is very absorbent and dries incredibly quickly. It is often used for booster pads and some nappies use it for the inner lining. Ideal if drying is a problem.

**Fleece** - Fleece is used to make pocket nappies and liners. Fleece is very soft next to baby's skin and acts as a great stay-dry barrier to keep baby's skin dry for longer.

**Wool** - Wool is often knitted into wraps which are naturally waterproof and breathable. It is ideal for babies with extra sensitive skin.

**Hemp** - Hemp is an environmentally friendly crop and makes a very soft, absorbent fabric making it ideal for booster pads or night time nappies. Again it takes longer to dry than cotton.

For advice and a demonstration of the latest designs pop in to see Paul or Nikki at Amesbury Baby Centre. Wiltshire residents are also able to contact the Wiltshire Wildlife Trust Nappy Line on 01380 725670 and speak to the Real Nappy Advisor, Gary Lamont for advice on choosing nappies and grants available for Wiltshire residents.



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