



Buying Diapers

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At an average of nearly 30 cents a diaper for brand-name disposables and about 3,000 diapers, you can expect to spend around \$1,000 during your first year of diapering—and that's not even factoring in wipes, diaper creams, and all the other diapering paraphernalia. With those figures in mind, we thought it would be useful to point out several potential ways you can save yourself some money in the diapering department.



- **Start small.** Start out by buying diapers in smaller quantities. You'll want to make sure you've found a good match, but also, keep in mind that your newborn will be growing very quickly in the months to come. If at first you happen to settle on a more expensive brand, remember that as your baby gets older (ie, potentially has less sensitive skin, less leaky poop, and pees less frequently), you may want to experiment with less expensive brands.
- **Divide and conquer.** Calculate your cost per diaper. This may sound obvious, but by simply dividing the cost of a pack of diapers by the number of diapers in the pack, you can figure out whether what you're getting is really a good deal or is just being advertised as one. Quite often, the retail (and virtual) stores list this price-per-diaper cost for you, if you just remember to look for it. If and when you do, you'll find that mega-jumbo packs aren't always the best bargain, and one store's sale price doesn't always beat the everyday price at another.

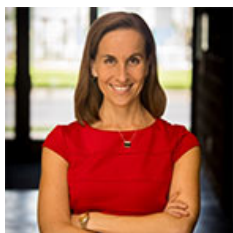
DIAPER(LESS) TRIVIA

Did you know that in certain Asian and African cultures, babies are not put into diapers? When a baby awakens or the parent notices certain cues, the parent places the baby over a bush or another designated area to pee or poop. Although you may want to adapt this technique when it comes time to potty train, based on social norms in America, we don't recommend you try this with your newborn at home!

- **Cut coupons.** If you're the coupon type, it won't take much convincing for you to find a quick search for diaper coupons well worth your while. If you're not the coupon type, you might want to give it a try anyway. At the rate you'll be using diapers, there's really not a good reason to pass up \$1, \$2, or even \$5 off a pack. While you're at it, consider using your coupons at stores that double manufacturers' coupons.
- **Think big.** When you find a sale or have coupons, buy extra diapers in advance to spare yourself a middle of the night run to the grocery store because you've used your last one. If you're going to take advantage and really stock up, you might just want to consider having your reserve supply be a size up from the one your baby's currently wearing. That way, you don't wind up having a stockpile of leftover, too-small diapers that don't fit as your baby outgrows them faster than you can use them.
- **Join the club. Take note of frequent buyers' clubs.** You know you're going to be in the market for diapers for a long time to come, and by simply collecting proofs of purchase (or "diaper points"), many companies reward you with baby clothes, toys, music, and other products. Similarly, some grocery and drugstore chains now tally up dollars spent on baby items and offer rebates or coupons each time you reach a certain total (for example, a \$10 store coupon every time you spend \$100 on baby items at that store).

- **Consider your options.** Consider using cloth diapers and washing them yourself. By some estimates, using a diaper service instead of paying for disposable diapers only lets you break even. By others, washing cloth diapers yourself has the potential to cut your diapering costs by as much as half. [Back to Top](#)

About Dr. Jana



Laura A. Jana, MD, FAAP, is a pediatrician and mother of 3 with a faculty appointment at the Penn State University Edna Bennett Pierce Prevention Research Center. She is the author of more than 30 parenting and children's books and serves as an early childhood expert/contributor for organizations including the Maternal and Child Health Bureau, Primrose Schools, and *US News & World Report*. She lives in Omaha, NE.

About Dr. Shu



Jennifer Shu, MD, FAAP (<https://www.aap.org/en-us/professional-resources/publishing/Pages/Jennifer-Shu-and-Laura-Jana.aspx>) serves as the medical editor of HealthyChildren.org and provides oversight and direction for the site in conjunction with the staff editor. Dr. Shu is a practicing pediatrician at Children's Medical Group in Atlanta, Georgia, and she is also a mom. She earned her medical degree at the Medical College of Virginia in Richmond and specialized in pediatrics at the University of California, San Francisco. Her experience includes working in private practice, as well as working in an academic medical center. She served as director of the normal newborn nursery at Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical

Center in New Hampshire. Dr. Shu is also co-author of *Food Fights* (<https://shop.aap.org/food-fights-winning-the-nutritional-challenges-of-parenthood-armed-with-a-bottle-of-ketchup-2nd-e-2/>) and *Heading Home with Your Newborn* (<https://ebooks.aappublications.org/content/heading-home-with-your-newborn-2nd-edition>) published by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP).

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