

... themselves on a budget of \$5000.

Piper says they wanted things simple and cost-effective so they painted the walls and used wall stickers — blue polka dots — to add age-appropriate detail. They are removable, the n be changed easily as the baby grows.

... we will look at moving from polka dots to a more sophisticated theme." Mrs Piper says. ... more permanent ... a bit of a nightmare, so the room will evolve as the baby grows.

... money went on a good quality cot and a set of drawers. They had a change table and, once the baby arrived, bought a toybox. ... to the Baby and Kids Company — held in Berwick, Victoria, Caulfield, Coburg, Geelong, Traralgon, Malvern and Geelong. ... way to furnish a nursery is to buy second-hand. It's where parents sell their good pre-loved baby and nursery products.

... an Morton, a new mother who is a fan of just-released book covers, has these suggestions for nursery products:

... comfortable chair for the mother.

When less is more: This DIY nursery was created with a \$5000 budget. The high costs were the cot and a set of drawers.

■ Wait until you know what type of sleeper your baby is before forking out for expensive blackout curtains.

She also bought adult-sized sheets in high-thread-count cotton and cut them down to size, giving her two sets.

Safety is also a concern when planning your nursery.

"Any window or curtain cord length should be bundled into an appropriate device and fixed to the wall where it is reachable only by adults," advises Brett Thomas, director of The Blind Factory.

The bottom of any cord should be more than 1600mm from the ground, he says. Safety devices that remove slack from cords are available from hardware and curtain stores, or for free from Consumer Affairs Victoria. Other advice on safe sleeping for your baby can be found at sidsandkids.org

The fun stuff is personalising the space, and it doesn't have to cost a fortune.

Using The Wall Sticker Company, the Pipers put Josh's name on the door and a quote on



Adding the personal touch.

the ceiling: "Cut not the wings of your dreams, for they are the heartbeat and freedom of your soul."

"It adds a bit of your personality into the room," says Mrs Piper. The Wall Sticker

Company can also transfer your own photos, or when kids get a bit older, their artwork, into wall stickers. Their nursery stickers start at \$40. Dotty Spot makes contemporary artwork for children's bedrooms, and the artwork can include their names, on canvas mounted on timber frames. Prices start at \$89.

Belly Art specialises in DIY baby and kids decorating and keepsake products. Their inkless print frame kit, which costs \$24.95 plus postage, allows you to take prints of your baby's feet or hands without ink or paint, which you can then immediately frame and pull out at their 21st birthday.

"Less is more with a nursery," says Fiona Gathercole, from The Wall Sticker Company. "Simple colours, patterns and subtle lighting will create a serene

calming environment."

Megan Morton concurs, warning against over decorating. She admits to "cushion overload" until she realised it wasn't practical and the nursery still needed to be functional.

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NURSERY PICTURE: GERRY ANGELOS

CONTACTS

- **Home Love** by Megan Morton. Published by Lantern, rrp \$55. penguin.com.au
- Free curtain and blind cord safety kits from consumer.vic.gov.au or call 1300 55 81 81.
- babykidsmarket.com.au
- dottyspot.com.au
- bellyart.com.au
- larkmade.com.au
- theblindfactory.com
- thewallstickercompany.com.au

TIPS FOR A NURSERY TO SETTLE NEWBORNS

- Ensure cots, change tables and furniture meet Australian Safety Standards and SIDS and Kids recommendations.
 - Place cots safely away from curtain cords and power plugs.
 - Create an ambient environment; soft, calming colours are best.
 - Don't confuse the nursery with a play room — nurseries should have minimal stimulation.
 - The nursery can be in the corner of the parents' room for the first six months; or the nursery should be next to the parents' room.
 - If in doubt, ask your midwife or maternal and child health nurse.
- Source: Mercy Health; mercy.com.au

Crochet blankets, rrp \$79.95, and Belle and Boo cushions, rrp \$90, from Lark.

