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Cloth Diapers Vs. Disposables: The 4-Month Mark

Jun 18, 2012 / By [Julia Scott](#) / [Comments](#) 10

I was so convinced that cloth diapers would save me money – thousands of dollars, in fact – that I blogged about the [cloth diaper savings](#) months before my first baby was even born. Talk about cocky!

Now that my little girl is four months old, it's time to crunch the numbers and prove once and for all which is cheaper – cloth diapers or disposables! (Oh, and while you're at it, skip these [baby gear spending traps](#)!) I vowed to [never shop at Babies R Us](#) again, so I compared prices at [Diapers.com](#) and [gDiapers.com](#).

Babies basically have loose stools for the first few months of life, so changing a newborn 16 times a day is not unheard of. Slowly, frequency begins to consolidate, reducing to as few as 8 diaper changes a day by four months of age.

First month – 16 diapers a day x 30 days = 480 diapers

Second month – 14 diapers a day x 30 days = 420 diapers

Third month – 11 diapers a day x 30 days = 330 diapers

Fourth month – 8 diapers a day x 30 days = 240 diapers

That's a whopping 1,470 diapers!

Disposables

A box of 276 Pampers Baby Dry diapers (size 1, 8-14 pounds), costs \$50 on [Diapers.com](#). Size two diapers come in a box of 246 and also cost \$50. Delivery is free. My daughter is chunky, so she would have hit size 2 at four months. Here's the math:

First three months – 1,230 size one diapers or five cases of diapers at \$50 per case = \$250.

Fourth month – 240 size two diapers or one case of diapers at \$50 per case = \$50.

If you estimate using two disposable wipes per change that comes to a total of 2,940 wipes. A box of 384 Pampers Sensitive wipes costs \$17, adding up to eight boxes of

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Cloth

We use the gDiaper system, which has a colorful outer shell, a nylon pouch that acts as a liquid barrier, and a cloth insert. All three parts are washable, though most of the time you only need to wash the cloth insert. Because newborns need so many changes, we purchased 18 sets of gDiapers, plus extra cloth inserts, so we had 24 total. In retrospect, we could have gotten away with 12 sets, instead of 18.

18 sets of gDiapers size small at \$15 each = \$270.

Four packs of cloth inserts (six in each pack) in size small at \$25 each pack = \$100.

My daughter grew out of size small by the end of the third month, so we had to purchase a set of medium gDiapers. She was pooping only once a day and peeing a handful of times, so we purchased fewer sets.

12 sets of gDiapers size medium at \$15 each = \$180.

Three packs of cloth inserts (six in each pack) at \$25 each = \$75.

We bought two packs of Charlie Banana organic cloth wipes (10 in each pack) at a total cost of \$29.

We quickly discovered that cloth diapers are not as absorbent as disposables, so to help her sleep through the night we stuck in a biodegradable gDiaper liner underneath the cloth insert. We have spent an additional \$90 on these biodegradable liners.

My total cost for the first four months of cloth diapers comes to \$744.

Who's the big winner? Disposables!

The catch is, I won't have to spend another penny on diapering until my daughter hits 28 pounds! And we expect her to be about a year old when happens. Meanwhile, the next eight months of disposables would cost us another \$622, including wipes.

So, the first year of cloth diapers will cost us \$744, including wipes. The total cost of disposables will be \$1,058. We have not broken even yet, but we will in about eight more months. For this kind of money savings, I can wait!

Julia Scott writes the [money-saving blog](#) BargainBabe.com.

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