



Your mini guide to packing your hospital bag

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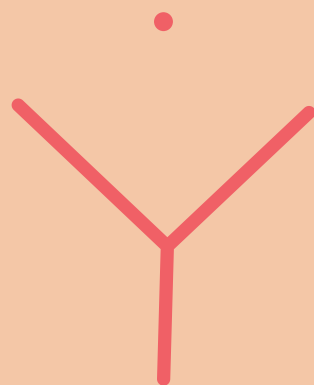


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Preparing for the birth of your baby, especially your first, can be a confusing time. With so many different products on the market it's difficult to know what you really need. So Lesley Gilchrist Co-Founder and Registered Midwife has put together her 'expert hospital bag hacks'.

At My Expert Midwife, we have a collective 40+ years experience of pregnancy and birth, we know exactly what you'll need for your labour and birth; and not just for you, but for your partner too. Let's start with the practicalities. In labour you don't want to have to think about anything other than your labour, so all our hacks make sure that it's as easy as possible.





Lesleys Tips



Clothing + Footwear

- Buy dark clothing, including your underwear and nightwear
- Buy a size of underwear larger than you need and make sure that they reach your belly button
- Wear flip flops in the shower

Helping Baby to Bond

Babies will quickly become accustomed to your smell so you want to avoid any shower gels, soaps or body lotions that may interfere with that – buy unscented, if you can. It's also a good idea to wash your baby's clothes before they wear them to remove manufacturing chemicals and let them attract your own and household friendly bacteria. You can do this with their baby blanket too – you could even sleep with it to help it absorb your scent.





How to Pack your Bags

Making things Easy to Find

When you're in labour or have just given birth it's your partner that needs to find everything. As midwives we've come up with a simple way to make this as quick and easy as possible. You will need:

Large weekend bag

This will be your bag. When you pack this bag it's important that you pack the items as they appear on the checklist; the items at the top of the list go at the bottom of the bag – what you need first will be at the top.

3 smaller bags

Disposable or reusable shopping bags or large freezer bags work well for this, especially if you can write on them:

1. Labour & Birth Essentials
2. After Birth Essentials
3. Baby Essentials



Baby's Changing Bag

This helps you to keep your baby's items separate and therefore easier to find.

Packing Light – The Essential Extras Bundles

There's not much room in hospital room so packing light will help you find things whilst also leaving you with plenty of room. You want to pack for a 24 hour stay, if you end up staying longer your partner can replenish from your 'essential extras bundles' at home; this also helps your partner ensure that they are bringing in exactly what you'll need and want. Leave in piles or in bags and one for each day – you shouldn't need more than 3 days' worth though.

- Towel
- 3 pairs of pants
- 1 comfy and supportive bra
- 8 sanitary pads
- 2 nighties/pyjamas
- Breast pads
- Change of clothes
- 8 nappies
- 3 sleep suits
- 3 vests
- Cotton wool



Drinks and Snacks

Because your body works hard in labour it can't digest food well. It's best to keep food to what's easily digestible; bananas and crackers and, if you're not diabetic, keep up your sugar levels too.

Here are some great additions for you:

- Coconut water – this has everything that your body needs in a liquid
- 3 x 500ml Sport Drinks – noncarbonated and isotonic to help replace what your body loses through sweat and energy
- Glucose tablets
- Boiled Sweets
- Gum Sweets (jelly babies etc)
- Bananas
- Crackers and other snacks
- Sandwiches – for both you, if you want to eat them, and your partner
- 6 x 500ml bottles of water and drinks for your partner



You may not have quick access to snacks and drinks in hospital, especially your partner, so you're best to bring some with you. You can pre-prepare sandwiches and freeze them and keep bottled water in the freezer too, that way you'll have delicious, cold water during labour.

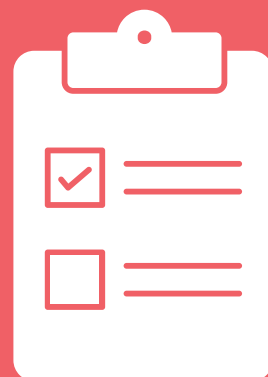


Leaving for Hospital

There is nothing more distracting for women and their partners during labour worrying that you've left something at home or forgotten to switch something off. Our 'Checklist' takes away that worry. When you're packing your hospital bag you can start making that list and keep the list on the inside of the door that you'll leave from. An example would be:

- Hospital bags into car
- Blow out candles
- Lock back door
- Let neighbours know
- Feed the dog
- Switch off oven
- Stop running the bath
- Change for parking

You'll keep adding to this list as you get closer to your birth and when you're in labour at home your partner will begin working through the checklist until it's complete. Take the checklist with you to hospital to reassure you.





My Hospital Bag CHECKLIST

My main bag

- Change of clothes x 2
- Nightclothes x 2
- Dressing gown x 2
- Big pants x 6 pairs
- Maternity/nursing bras x 2
- Socks x 3 pairs
- Slippers x 1
- Flip flops x 1
- Garment if using the water pool (crop top or tankini)
- Toiletries (toothpaste, toothbrush, hairbrush, makeup, shower gel, shampoo, flannels, hand sanitiser)
- Pack of maternity pads
- Breast pads and/or nipple balm
- Gadgets and chargers
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My labour + birth bag

- Absorbent maternity pads or pants
- x 3 Pants x 2 pairs
- Comfortable nightwear x 1
- My Expert Midwife Spritz for Bits and Spritz for Clean Hands
- Massage oil
- TENs machine
- Heat Pack
- Flannel
- Lip balm, or use My Expert Midwife No Harm Nipple Balm
- Hairbands and ties
- Battery operated fan
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My baby bag

- Baby grows x 4
- Baby vests x 4
- Baby hat and mitts x 1
- Baby blanket x 1
- Nappies x10
- Cotton wool or water wipes
- My Expert Midwife No Harm Bum Balm
- Muslin clothes x 5

My partner's bag

- Gadgets and chargers
- Money – change/bank cards
- Jumper or sweatshirt
- Snacks, biscuits, cereal bars, chocolate, rice crackers etc
- Drinks – freezing will keep them cold for longer
- Sandwiches



Notes

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