

# Beyond the Baby Shower

## A Practical Baby Gift Guide

*“The best gifts are the ones that get used”*

S of Beyond the Sippy Cup

I was pretty intimidated by the entire baby shower registration process as a mother-to-be. Fortunately, I had a good friend (and new mom) to help me. I would never have thought to add many of the items she recommended. In the months to follow I was supremely thankful for most of them.

I collected tons of great tips and product recommendations from other moms during my pregnancy. Unfortunately, my pregnant brain forgot most of them almost immediately. I had several epiphanies throughout the first year of my son's life. Sometimes I recalled a recommendation I had forgotten, other ideas I discovered on my very own. I can't count how many times I said to myself, "this would be a great baby shower gift!"

Growing up my mother spent hours planning unique and creative gifts, so naturally I strive to be that kind of giver. I always thought the best gifts were practical ones that got used. This is a list of some items I was grateful for (or wished I had found sooner) during my first year as a mom.

### [Snap-Closure Bodysuits](#)



Newborn and 0-3 month sizes are best as these are most useful in the 'new'-newborn stage. These nifty outfits keep nervous parents from having to maneuver a small neck-hole over a big wobbly head. A bonus is to avoid a slimy infant from head-to-toe with runny newborn poop which is inevitable when removing a standard pull-over-the-head type after a blowout.

### [Puppy pads](#)

Those cute, super soft changing pads are washable, but when runny newborn sludge leaks out of all fifteen diapers you change every day, that's a lot of washing. My friend recommended spreading out one of these on top and it was an awesome tip. They're thin but cover a lot of area and actually absorb well. When we had a blowout or the cold air caused my kiddo to 'spring a leak' before I could get the new diaper on I just threw

the whole mess away. They're also great for covering public changing tables and furniture when changing at a friends' house. One jumbo pack lasted me the first year.

### [The Good Booger Sucker](#)

I tried just about every other booger sucker out there and the ONLY one that worked for me was the one the hospital gave me. Search for a 3-ounce bulb syringe. A couple extra stashed in convenient locations will be heaven-sent when an infant has a cold (and they will; my Pediatrician told me to expect ten per year).



### [WubbaNub™](#)

Pacifiers can be wonderful, especially the first few months. Unfortunately they roll under furniture, get swallowed (or hidden) by pets, and generally just get lost. The WubbaNub™ is a safe solution to ensure one pacifier doesn't get lost. It's washable and is designed for little fingers to grip. You can find just about any animal your recipient has an affinity for.

### [Bath glove](#)

There are all sorts of special bath mitts and cute wash-cloths for babies. One of the best tips I got (from a book for Dads) was to cut the fingers off a set of cheap winter liners. They help you keep a good grip on slippery newborns and double as a soft cloth.

### [Non-Toxic Cleaning Wipes](#)

Just nice to have something around that actually cleans but you don't feel risks poisoning your child if they lick something (and they will) before it dries. The big box baby stores and many of the big box department stores now have a good selection.

### [Safety Covers](#)

Everyone thinks they can wait to baby-proof until the baby starts crawling. While it may be true in theory, in practice every baby does this at

different ages and in different ways. Some babies will roll themselves to the one cabinet you didn't want them in. A small set of outlet covers and cabinet locks will definitely get used and gives parents time to decide on a permanent solution. If you want to go all out, buy the set of magnet locks for the kitchen cabinets and a gift certificate to have a handyman install them. My brother-in-law installed mine for me and it was the best gift I received.

### [Custom Labels](#)

For anyone taking their child to daycare, they will be amazed at all the things that need labeling. Look for a kit of various types (iron on, stick-on, dishwasher safe, write-on, etc...). Oliver's Labels are great because most have a tracking number so expensive (or favorite) items can be returned. If you don't know the baby's name ahead of time, get a gift certificate.



### [No-Spill Sippy Cup](#)

Bottles are a popular gift, but everyone has their specific preference. If they're not on the registry, they're likely to be returned or donated. I could never remember which cups really don't spill. A set of these in a cabinet will hopefully prevent expensive trial-and-error (and carpet cleaning) when starting the transition to a cup. The insulated cups with a rubber valve in the lid work best.

### [Thermometer](#)

A thermometer doesn't have to be fancy so use your budget as a guide. The temporal type are easy to use but expensive, bulky, and sometimes inaccurate if a child's forehead is damp. The in-ear type worked great for me but only after his ear canal was large enough... this scared me a few times early on. The simplest digital type you can use orally, underarm, or you-know-where with a cover is both accurate and small enough to carry with you. Having an extra in the diaper bag can prevent an awkward and nervous trip home the first few times a baby feels hot. I made a couple of these trips before I got smart. Don't forget disposable probe covers, too.



### [Infant Fever-Reducer](#)

A few airline approved containers (under 3 oz.) are better than one large bottle. This enables parents to start controlling a fever right away when it's confirmed while out of the house (with

the spare thermometer you so intuitively provided). For me, this was a lifesaver when my son's fever spiked at daycare. I was able to administer it before heading to the pediatrician's office 45-minutes away. Remind them to store it away from extreme temperatures (check the bottles for limits).

### [Spray Sunscreen](#)

This can be a lifesaver either when an outing is sunnier than expected or to re-apply sunscreen on a squirmy toddler. There are lots of kid-safe versions and even a few organic brands make spray-on. For an added bonus throw in some kid-safe bug spray for those pesky mosquitoes.

### [Boogie Wipes®](#)

The name is cliché and I know it seems like overkill to have a different type of wipe for everything. I like these because they are milder on the nose than regular baby wipes, and the smell made my little boy want to wipe his nose all by himself. More importantly, the moisture means you actually get those sticky boogers around their nostrils off better than with regular tissues.



Need a small gift? Combine the health-related items into a diaper-bag emergency kit. Use a small, clear toiletry bag so they can just pull the whole thing out at airport security.

Last-minute? You should be able to find the last six items in any big box department store and the last five in most grocery stores. Another quick solution is to purchase and print a gift certificate online for:

- ✓ [Housekeeping or Childcare](#)
- ✓ Meal Service or Meal Delivery
- ✓ [Custom Labels](#)
- ✓ Photo Book or Photo Gifts

Hopefully this list helps you find a gift that gets praise at any baby shower you attend. More importantly, I hope it earns you phone calls, tweets, or texts from the new parents all year long!

Checkout the Beyond the Sippy Cup 'Stuff We Like' page to find more ideas and related links.

Checkout the 'Beyond Childbirth' gift guide for a close friend having their first child. If you've given birth, you'll appreciate why these items will be cherished and that no one else will buy them!