

Havering Real Nappies Guide

Real Nappies for a real difference



Are you considering trying real nappies as an alternative to disposable nappies? If so, then this guide can provide you with the information you will need to help you get started.



WHY CHOOSE REAL NAPPIES?

Forget terry towelling, soaking, scrubbing and nappy pins...the modern cloth nappies look nicer and fit just like disposable nappies except they come with some real benefits for both parents and baby.

Real nappies' (or cloth nappies) are modern washable nappies that can not only save families a lot of money but are a natural, environmentally friendly alternative to disposable nappies.

REAL BENEFITS

Cheaper - Using real nappies as an alternative to disposable nappies can potentially save you £500, if not more, depending on the nappies you buy, and even more if used for another child.

Real nappies can be purchased for a variety of prices starting at around £6 each, or less if purchased second hand, and going up to £18, depending on the nappy you prefer.

Real nappies can be purchased from a number of internet sites, retailers and supermarkets. For second hand nappies, you can purchase these through online auction sites, car boot sales or baby based second hand goods sales.

Healthier - Real nappies are made out of natural or synthetic materials and contain less chemicals than disposable nappies, reducing the chance of developing nappy rash. When using real nappies you can reduce your baby's exposure to chemicals by using an eco-detergent, avoiding PVC-wraps, using organic cotton, hemp or bamboo products and avoid sanitizer. Tea tree oil is a good natural agent which you can use to soak in if you decide to do so.

Chemicals and gels used in disposable nappies are not subject to UK government controls or testing.

More environmentally friendly

- In the UK nearly three billion nappies are disposed of every year. That's nearly eight million a day.

By using just one real nappy per day instead of a disposable nappy, you will be saving up to a thousand disposable nappies from being sent for disposal over your child's nappy wearing life.

All types of nappies have an environmental impact during production, however, by using real nappies instead of disposable ones, you greatly reduce the amount of waste that needs to be disposed of every week.

You can further reduce the environmental impact by reusing your real nappies on a second baby or selling them on to someone else.

You can save energy by using an A-rated washing machine. It is recommended that soiled nappies should be washed at 60 degrees but nappies that are just wet can be washed at a lower temperature with the rest of your laundry. Line-dry your nappies rather than tumble drying them as this also helps save energy (see The Real Nappy Campaign).

For more information you can log onto the Real Nappies for London or Go Real national nappy campaign websites.

Easy - Real nappies are as easy to use as disposable nappies once you get started. They will normally either fasten with velcro or poppers so that they can be adjusted to fit your baby perfectly.

TYPES OF REAL NAPPIES

There are various types and styles of real nappies to choose from and these can either be sized whereby you would need to change sizes as baby grows so Small, Medium and Large, or 'Birth-to-potty' where the nappy adjusts to fit your baby as they grow so just one nappy for the whole nappy wearing duration.

Below are descriptions of the different types of nappies:

All-in-one



These are the closest type of Real Nappy to a disposable in terms of style and ease of use. They are a shaped cloth nappy with a built-in waterproof wrap and are fitted to size with either Velcro or popper fastenings. Just one item to use like a disposable and then washed as a complete nappy. These can come in two or three sizes (small, medium and large depending on nappy

brand) and so will need changing as baby gets bigger, or you can get a birth-to-potty version whereby the size adjusts to your growing baby through different levels of popper fastenings.

Pros: Easy, quick, convenient, good fitting, useful for going out or for giving nurseries or childminders to use.

Cons: Take longer to dry, if buying in sizes then will cost more than other real nappy styles, generally the most expensive type of cloth nappy.

Pocket nappies



These are sometimes also called stuffables as they are predominantly a wrap with a pocket on the inside which you can stuff booster pads into.

The inside of the wrap will normally be microfibre so that it is soft on the baby's skin and the booster pads can be a variety of different materials such as cotton, towelling, microfibre, bamboo or you can even just make up your own

inserts from absorbent fabrics.

Different booster materials have different levels of absorbency and different drying times so materials chosen should possibly be dependent on the drying facilities you have available so the speed of drying required e.g. microfibre for quick drying or bamboo for more natural but longer drying time. However, drying time will generally be quicker than an all-in-one or two part nappy as the inserts are smaller than a whole nappy and the wrap is thin.

These are very versatile nappies as you can add or remove booster pads depending on the length of time you will need absorbency for so at night time you may want to use two boosters to allow the nappy to take baby through the night. Many of these are produced as 'Birth-to-potty' so just one cover required which can be size adjusted, or you can buy them sized to fit (S,M,L).

Pros: Easy to use, wash and dry, versatile, can be prepared in advance of use so much like an 'All-in-One' nappy, widely available style at a variety of prices so can be quite cheap. Useful when going out.

Cons: Need to buy both boosters and outer wraps, lots of different brands of these and materials so can get confusing.

Two-part nappies



These are shaped cloth nappies which have a separate wrap to go on top (instead of attached like the all-in-ones or pocket style). These are neat fitted using velcro or poppers and like all-in-ones can be purchased in small, medium, and large sizes and 'birth-to-potty' so just one nappy fits all.

Pros: Easy to use, snug fit, can be quick drying depending on material of nappy, widely available to purchase, can be cheaper than other types of real nappies, long-lasting so good for a second baby. You don't necessarily need to wash the wrap every time it is used depending on how wet it is from the nappy.

Cons: Can be bulkier than other types of nappies, need to purchase nappies and outer wraps rather than one product.

Prefold nappies



These are in two parts. They consist of a piece of rectangular padded material (normally cotton) used as the nappy which is folded to form a pad shape and is then inserted into a separate waterproof wrap (the same wrap you would use for a two part nappy). The pad will fit securely into the wrap sometimes by little pouches either end of the wrap for them to slot in to.

Pros: Easy to use and can be quick drying as you just have one piece of material to wash and dry. The prefolds can be cheap and you wouldn't necessarily need to wash the outer wrap every time it is used, depending on how wet it is. Readily available to purchase in high street retailers. Versatile and can be folded in different ways for better absorbency or to tailor to baby's needs. Only need one size which can be inserted in to a Birth to Potty wrap so no need to buy more sizes.

Cons: The different types of folding techniques can be confusing. Can be bulky due to the amount of folds depending on the material chosen.

Terry nappies



Even though this is a much older style of cloth nappy, it is still effective and used by many parents. With this system, similar to that of a prefold nappy, you would just need the terry square and the outer waterproof wrap. You would need to fold the terry nappy into the correct shape for the baby and then secure it with either specific nappy safety pins or 'Nappi Nippas' which are grips instead of pins and secure the nappy snugly in three ways. You would then put the wrap over the top.

If the Terry square is folded in to a pad rather than a nappy shape then it can be inserted and secured in to an outer wrap like the prefold wraps without the need for any pins or grips.

Pros: These are probably the cheapest type of nappy to buy as you can buy

bulk packs of Terry Squares and would then just need to buy some waterproof wraps which won't necessarily need washing every time you use them. They are quick drying and can be used from Birth to Potty as with the prefold.

Cons: They can sometimes be tricky to fold in to the correct nappy shape and can be difficult to put on when baby gets older and is wriggling around more. Can be bulkier than other types of reusable nappies. Change speed is sometimes slower than other nappies.

ACCESSORIES

There are a few accessories that can be purchased for real nappies to make them easier to use, these include:

Linners – these normally come in rolls of 100 or more and are small thin squares of material that you can put on top of the inside nappy to catch solid waste. You can then flush the liner down the toilet. Alternatively, you can buy reusable liners and these would need to be washed with the other nappy components.



Nappy bucket – this is a bin with a secured lid so that smells from the nappies don't leak out. Nappies stored in these buckets do not need soaking, you can just transfer them straight from the bucket to the washing machine when you are ready to do a wash.



Mesh bag – this bag can be inserted into the nappy bucket to collect the nappies and then pulled out and put straight into the washing machine with the nappies all included.



Wash bag – this is a bag you can take out with you to store used cloth nappies until you get home.



Nappi nippas – these are nappy grips used for terry nappies or shaped nappies that don't have fastenings attached to them. They are an alternative to pins and secure the nappy from three positions.



Keep it together bag – this is like a small change bag that has a pocket for the nappies to be stored when out and about, a pocket with a cloth change mat and a wash bag for you to store used nappies.



Cloth wipes – these can be used as an alternative to disposable wipes. They can be stored in any tub and then put in the wash bag when you are out and washed with the rest of the nappy components.



Sanitizers and oils – these can be used for the nappy bucket.

HOW TO DECIDE WHICH NAPPY SYSTEM

As with disposables each type of nappy will work differently for every baby, some babies might fit better into a two-part nappy whilst other babies may get better containment from a pocket nappy.

For this reason we would recommend that you sample as many types of nappies that you can before you invest in the entire quantity required. To do this you can look for a local nappy library, ask friends or other parents in parent/baby groups if they have any you could borrow, purchase them second hand from car boot sales, baby item sales and internet auction sites. You can also purchase one of the Havering Real Nappies sample packs for just £5. These packs include two types of nappies for you to try, details of the scheme is explained further down or visit www.havering.gov.uk/realnappies

HOW MANY REAL NAPPIES DO YOU NEED?



If you wanted to use real nappies full time then you would need to purchase between 15- 25 real nappies depending on the type that you go for and the age of your baby. If you go for a two part nappy system then it is recommended that you purchase one wrap for every four or five cloth nappies as the wraps do not need to be washed after every use. It is recommended that you rotate the nappy wash every two to three days so that you always have some available whilst others are being washed and drying. If you were prepared to wash the nappies every day then you could buy fewer nappies but this would also depend on your drying facilities.

If you choose to use 'Birth to Potty' nappies then you would only need to purchase one batch of cloth nappies and so would only have one outlay of money spent on real nappies over your child's nappy wearing life which could be over three years depending on your child.

If you choose to use sized nappies then you would need to purchase more as the baby grows out of the current size.

HOW TO GET STARTED

Havering Council is offering a real nappy sample pack for just £5 to parents and carers with children under the age of 18 months. The pack contains two types of nappies for you to try and help you decide on a type of nappy system to invest in. The pack includes everything you need to try out the selected nappies.

Terms and conditions apply.

HOW TO GET YOUR NAPPY SAMPLE PACK



- 1 Either:
 - » Fill out the online application form at www.havering.gov.uk/realnappies

- » Pick up an application form from libraries, children's centres, Queens Hospital, baby weighing clinics, and some midwives and health visitors may also have them.

- » Send an online enquiry to the Recycling Team at www.havering.gov.uk/realnappiesenquiry

- 2 Fill in the Application Form and return it to us with the requested documents (copies only) or attach the documents to the online form before you submit it. Please send paper Application Forms and documents to Recycling Team, c/o **Town Hall Main Road, Romford RM1 3BD**
- 3 Once we have your application form, we will send you a voucher with a unique code along with more information about choosing your pack and trying your nappies.
- 4 You can then take your voucher and £5 to **Snazzy Gems Boutique, upper floor Romford Shopping Hall 43 Market Place, Romford RM1 3AB**

Then just try the nappies at home. You will be amazed at how easy these nappies are to use once you get into the routine!

If you're interested in finding out more about the scheme, why not come along to one of our 'Nappuccinos' to see the real nappy sample packs and learn more about the advantages of using real nappies. Details of these and forthcoming events can be found at www.havering.gov.uk/realnappies

HELPFUL TIPS

- » Using liners prevents messy soiled nappies and can be disposed of in the toilet before you wash the nappies.
- » Store the nappies in a lidded bucket, otherwise known as a 'Dry Pail'. No need to soak first.
- » Wash the nappies at 40 degrees and occasionally at 60 degrees depending on how dirty the nappy is. Use just one third of the amount of your usual washing powder and do not use fabric softener. Too much washing powder can cause nappy rash.
- » Try to wash in full loads so wait until you have enough nappies in the bucket for a full load, or add them to your other household washing. If using the nappies full time, you should be able to wash a full load every other day, depending on how many nappies you have to rotate with whilst the others are drying.
- » To avoid leaking, make sure the nappy fits well around the waist and legs. If using a two part system ensure none of the cloth is poking out of the wrap.
- » If choosing a 'birth to potty' type of nappy then it is best not to start using these until baby is around eight weeks but check the nappy fits snugly first and there are no gaps around the waist or legs. If using a sized nappy then Stage 1 is for newborns and should fit fine.



CONTACTS

Contact the Recycling Team using our online form at:

www.havering.gov.uk/realnappiesenquiry

Useful website:

www.realnappiesforlondon.org.uk

