



Surrey  
Environment  
Partnership

# Cloth Nappy Trial Kit Information Pack



# Contents

Why use cloth nappies? .....	2
How does the trial kit scheme work? .....	3
Cloth nappy types explained.....	4
Washing guidelines .....	7
Frequently asked questions .....	8
Helpful advice .....	9

## Welcome

Welcome to the **cloth nappy trial kit scheme**. The scheme allows Surrey parents to borrow a free cloth nappy trial kit, which can help them make an informed choice about using cloth nappies and which types are best for them and their baby.

## Why use cloth nappies?

### Environment

It's estimated that **each baby will use over 4,000 nappies from birth to potty**; research from the Environment Agency has shown that you can **halve your weekly rubbish** by using cloth nappies.



### Money-saving

It is estimated that disposable nappies can cost between £210 and £450 a year, depending on the brand, with most children potty training after 24 months. If using cloth nappies, you can typically buy enough to last from birth to potty for between £80 and £350. While the initial outlay for cloth nappies is higher than disposables, the savings become apparent over time. Although it can be considered expensive to start using them, **savings over two years can be anywhere between £80 and £700**.



Also, provided your nappies are well cared for, they will easily last the distance for at least two children, so the savings will continue to stack up!<sup>1</sup>

### Ease

**Cloth nappies really couldn't be easier to use!** All-in-one nappies (where the absorbent and waterproof parts come together) are much like disposables, simply fitting around your baby's waist with Velcro or popper fastenings. With modern washing machines and detergents there's also **no need to soak nappies** and it's unlikely you'll need to add more than one extra load every couple of days.



<sup>1</sup> Costs may vary depending on items, these are guidelines.

# How does the trial kit scheme work?

## Arranging your trial

To arrange a trial, contact a trial kit host through the [Surrey Environment Partnership website](#) and agree a convenient time for you to collect the kit.



The kit includes a range of cloth nappies and although we are unable to guarantee a specific brand, **all the main nappy types are included** so you can make an informed choice based on the trial.

Note: you must live in (and pay your council tax to) a Surrey district or borough council to receive this service. Check if your address is in Surrey using the [UK Government website](#).

## What's in the kit?

Each kit holds everything you need to trial cloth nappies. There are a range of cloth nappy types including:



Flat nappies and all-in-ones



Shaped nappies and waterproof wraps



Pocket nappies and boosters



We also include disposable and washable liners, washable wipes, nappy sanitiser, wet bags, a laundry mesh and a nappy bucket.

### Help and support during and after your trial

Your trial kit host is a keen advocate of cloth nappies and most have many years of experience using a range of nappies themselves. If you have any questions during or after your trial **your kit host will be more than happy to help.**

### After your trial

#### Feedback

Please let us know how you found using the kit and whether you plan to continue using cloth nappies or not. Email us on [comms@surreyep.org.uk](mailto:comms@surreyep.org.uk).

#### Spread some “Nappiness”!




Following your trial, you may find yourself a keen cloth nappy user and if that’s the case why not help us to encourage others to make the switch?

The demand for trial kits in Surrey is at an all-time high and we need more volunteers to host kits and give advice to other parents. If you think you may be interested in volunteering, please email [comms@surreyep.org.uk](mailto:comms@surreyep.org.uk).





## Cloth nappy types explained

The table below explains the differences between the various types of cloth nappies along with the advantages and disadvantages of each type.

Nappy type	Description	Pros	Cons	Cost <sup>2</sup>
<b>Terry squares</b> 	A flat square made of terry towelling, which requires folding and a fastener to form a nappy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Very economical and versatile</li> <li>✓ Muslin squares (or burp cloths) can be used in the same way</li> <li>✓ Quick to dry</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Require folding</li> <li>✓ Other people caring for your baby may not be able to use them</li> <li>✓ Need to purchase waterproof wraps</li> </ul>	From <b>£1-£3</b> per square and from <b>£2-£12</b> for waterproof cover – nappy fasteners are also needed
<b>Prefolds</b> 	A flat square made of several layers of cotton, which is stitched into three sections - the middle section has more layers than the others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Slots into a waterproof cover so no need for a separate fastening</li> <li>✓ Cheaper than shaped nappies</li> <li>✓ Not as bulky as other nappies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Can be prone to leaking as the nappy does not wrap around baby</li> <li>✓ Need to purchase waterproof wraps</li> <li>✓ Require folding</li> </ul>	From <b>£1.50-£4</b> per nappy and from <b>£2-£12</b> for waterproof cover
<b>Fitted (shaped) nappies</b> 	Nappies that are shaped to fit around your baby and come in different sizes including birth to potty options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ No need for folding</li> <li>✓ Easy to add boosters if needed</li> <li>✓ Sizes mean a better fit for baby – especially newborns</li> <li>✓</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Can be expensive if buying separate sizes</li> <li>✓ Birth to potty options can be bulky on newborns</li> <li>✓ Need to purchase waterproof wraps</li> </ul>	From <b>£5-£15</b> per nappy and from <b>£2-£12</b> for waterproof cover

<sup>2</sup> Costs may vary depending on items, these are guidelines.

<p><b>Pocket nappies</b></p> 	<p>Shaped nappies that have an absorbent inner layer and integrated waterproof outer – the inner layer is entirely removable to aid washing and drying</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Very easy to use</li> <li>✓ Easy to add boosters if needed</li> <li>✓ Dry quicker than all-in-ones</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Can be expensive</li> <li>✓ Birth to potty options can be bulky on newborns</li> <li>✓ Take longer to dry than terry squares and prefolds</li> </ul>	<p>From <b>£8-£18</b> per nappy with boosters available from <b>£2-4</b></p>
<p><b>All-in-ones</b></p> 	<p>Shaped nappies that have an absorbent inner layer and integrated waterproof outer</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ The easiest nappy to use</li> <li>✓ Easy to add boosters if needed</li> <li>✓ Easy for other carers to use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Can be expensive</li> <li>✓ Birth to potty options can be bulky on newborns</li> <li>✓ Can take a long time to dry and some brands may have a more limited life if tumble dried regularly</li> </ul>	<p>From <b>£8-£18</b> per nappy with boosters available from <b>£2-4</b></p>

The prices in the above table are approximate and many retailers offer starter packs and bulk discounts, which can reduce costs.

Before you begin your trial, you may already have an idea of which nappy type you would like to use but we recommend you try as many of them as you can – you may be surprised by which type you choose in the end!

**NB:** Terry nappies are one of the more complex types of nappies to use as they require folding. There are various methods for folding them and a wealth of information, including nappy folding video tutorials, is available on the internet.

## Washing guidelines

### Do's and don'ts

- DO** make sure you wash the trial kit nappies before you use them
- DO** store the nappies in a nappy bucket with lid until you have enough for a full washing load
- DO** tip any solids down the toilet before putting the nappy in the bucket
- DO** use an eco or non-biological detergent – biological detergents will damage the nappies and some babies are sensitive to these detergents too
- DO** wash the nappies at 60°C
- DO** use an intensive wash cycle if your machine has this option – it will ensure the nappies are well cleaned and rinsed
- DO** hang nappies outside or on an airer to dry – try to avoid tumble drying



- DON'T** use EcoBalls/Soap Nuts or similar on the trial kit as some nappy manufacturers do not recommend them
- DON'T** use fabric conditioners or chemical sanitisers (eco-friendly sanitisers are fine) – fabric conditioners reduce the absorbency of cloth nappies
- DON'T** be tempted to use an eco-cycle or quick wash - these settings won't guarantee the nappies are fully cleaned and rinsed
- DON'T** use bleach on the nappies – hanging them out in the sunshine will reduce stains and keep them bright!



## Frequently asked questions

### What's the best type of cloth nappy to use?

This very much depends on what suits you, your baby, your washing and drying arrangements, and your budget. There are many types of cloth nappy: from simple wrap-around cloth nappies, to shaped all-in-one nappies, to two-part nappy and waterproof wrap combinations. Each type is included in your trial kit – so give them all a try and see which one you prefer to use.

### How many cloth nappies will I need?

You will usually need around 18-20 sets to have enough to use while you are washing others. Depending on which type of cloth nappy you use (two-part or all-in-one) you will need different supplies of each component.

### Do cloth nappies leak?

Once you have the right fit and type for your baby, a cloth nappy will not leak any more than a disposable. Take care to allow for growth spurts and check your baby's clothes don't alter the fit of the nappy and that they remain absorbent after repeated washing.

### Will using cloth nappies create lots of washing?

Many types of nappies don't need washing at every change. You can either replace an absorbent pad, flush a disposable liner down the loo and replace the nappy with a clean liner or replace one part but keep the waterproof wrap in a two-part system.

When you do need to change a nappy, place the dirty one in the waterproof sealed bucket. This can then be emptied into the washing machine when you're ready to do a full load. This should add no more than one load to your normal routine every couple of days.

Washing your cloth nappies at 60° with a non-bio detergent will get them fresh, clean and ready to use again. No need to boil wash or soak. It is best to line-dry rather than tumble dry your nappies to preserve their absorbency.

### Will cloth nappies smell?

Cloth nappies will not smell any more than disposables. In fact, washing the nappies means the end of smelly nappy bins at home as soiled biodegradable liners can be flushed down the toilet when you change the nappy, so the laundry you create smells less than traditional disposable nappies.



## Helpful advice

### Volunteers

Our cloth nappy trial kit hosts are a great place to start if you have any questions about cloth nappies. They have plenty of experience using cloth nappies. Your kit host will provide you with their contact details when arranging your trial, so feel free to contact them if you have any questions.

### Where to buy

The aim of the trial kit is to allow you to make the decision which nappy type and brand are best suited to you and your baby. Unfortunately, we can't recommend any one brand or retailer.

### Other useful links

There is a wealth of information online about cloth nappies. The following links may be useful for you as a starting point, both during your trial and in the future should you decide to continue using cloth nappies.

[The Nappy Lady](#)

[The Baby Centre](#)