



Nurturing Your Journey

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A GUIDE FROM MY DOULA DAWN

The Ultimate Birth & *Postpartum* Prep Checklist

Your Step-by-Step Guide, Bump to Baby

"What am I forgetting?" "Am I really ready for this?" Pregnancy, birth, and postpartum come with a million decisions — and it's easy to feel overwhelmed by all the advice, checklists, and must-haves. This guide walks you through exactly what to prepare, and when.

WHAT'S INSIDE

- ✦ Pregnancy prep & birth plan essentials checklists
- ✦ A realistic hospital bag list (don't overpack!)
- ✦ Postpartum recovery must-haves
- ✦ Newborn care essentials for the first few weeks



GETTING STARTED

Pregnancy Prep Checklist

- ☐ Choose your birth team — OB, midwife, doula (know your options)
- ☐ Take a high-quality prenatal vitamin
- ☐ Create a birth plan — but stay flexible
- ☐ Attend a birth class (not just the hospital's class)
- ☐ Understand common interventions & your choices
- ☐ Research pain relief options (epidural, breathing, hypnobirthing, etc.)
- ☐ Plan for postpartum recovery — it's not just about birth
- ☐ Prepare for breastfeeding (lactation support, pumping, bottles?)
- ☐ Pack your hospital bag by 36 weeks
- ☐ Install the car seat — have it checked by a certified tech
- ☐ Stock up on freezer meals or easy snacks

✦ Need help making a birth plan? Grab the Birth Plan Template guide at mydouladawn.com.

✦ BIRTH PLAN ESSENTIALS CHECKLIST

- ☐ Where will you give birth? (Hospital, birth center, home)
- ☐ Who's on your birth team? (Partner, doula, midwife, OB)
- ☐ Pain management plan? (Epidural, nitrous, hydrotherapy, breathing)
- ☐ Labor preferences? (Movement, positions, eating/drinking)
- ☐ Pushing preferences? (Coached vs. spontaneous)
- ☐ Immediate post-birth preferences? (Skin-to-skin, delayed cord clamping, golden hour)
- ☐ Newborn procedures? (Eye ointment, vitamin K, hepatitis B)
- ☐ Emergency plan? (What if you need a C-section?)



PACK SMART

Hospital Bag Checklist (Don't Overpack!)

✦ FOR YOU

- ☐ ID, insurance card, birth plan
- ☐ Comfy labor gown or robe
- ☐ Lip balm & hair ties (labor must-haves!)
- ☐ Snacks & electrolyte drinks
- ☐ Nursing bra
- ☐ Breast pads
- ☐ Loose, comfy going-home outfit
- ☐ Extra-long phone charger

✦ FOR BABY

- ☐ Car seat — installed!
- ☐ Going-home outfit (bring two sizes)
- ☐ Blanket for the car ride home
- ☐ Newborn hat & mittens
- ☐ Diapers
- ☐ Wipes (hospital provides some)

✦ **Dawn's Tip:** Most hospitals stock more than you think — pads, diapers, swaddles, and basic toiletries are usually provided. Pack the comfort items that make the room feel like yours, not a whole nursery.

AFTER BABY ARRIVES

Postpartum Recovery Must-Haves

Support your healing and comfort after birth.

- ☐ Peri bottle
- ☐ Maxi pads or adult diapers — expect heavy bleeding
- ☐ Witch hazel pads for healing
- ☐ Sitz bath & Epsom salt
- ☐ Nipple cream for breastfeeding comfort
- ☐ Belly binder for extra support
- ☐ Lactation support lined up — consult or resources ready
- ☐ A plan for rest — you'll need it

♦ NEWBORN CARE ESSENTIALS

Learn what to expect and prepare for the first few weeks.

- ☐ Master diaper changes — it's a skill
- ☐ Understand newborn sleep — it's not what you think
- ☐ Know when & how often to feed baby
- ☐ Have a plan for baby's first pediatric visit
- ☐ Learn about normal newborn poop stages — so you don't panic

♦ **Remember:** You don't have to have every box checked to be ready. Preparation is about reducing the unknowns you can control, so you have more capacity for the ones you can't.

Work with Dawn: Visit mydouladawn.com to book a free 15-minute call or get the Newborn Sleep Blueprint.