

Real nappies FAQs



How many real nappies will I need?

For newborn babies - 15-24 nappies

For older babies - 12-15 nappies

The above are rough estimates as factors such as washing and drying routine and facilities, how often you change the nappies, and the age of your child, can all affect how many nappies you will need.

Are real nappies better for the environment?

Yes! Every week Leicester's recycling plant processes around 84 tonnes of soiled disposable nappies. By using real nappies you will be reducing the amount of waste produced.

How much will real nappies cost?

A complete set of Real Nappies can cost approximately £250 (or up to £400 for top of the range products) which will take your child from birth to potty training. There are costs associated with washing the nappies, but even taking these costs into account, using real nappies can save you at least £500 by the time your child is potty trained. The savings really increase when the nappies are reused on subsequent children.

Can I buy real nappies second hand to save more money?

Yes. Second hand real nappies are a great way to further cut down the cost of using real nappies. Find them online or speak to a local real nappy advisor (listed on our website). Another way to save money with real nappies is to use them again for your next child.



Do real nappies leak?

All nappies leak occasionally so it is important to find real nappies that fit your baby. To prevent leaks, real nappies have a breathable waterproof cover which may be included as part of the nappy or can be bought separately.

The nappies come in all shapes and sizes – there are several lending libraries in Leicester who you can borrow nappies from to decide which nappies work best for you and your baby.



Are real nappies messy?

Real nappies have a flushable nappy liner which collects the solid waste. Remove the soiled liner and flush it down the toilet. This is much more hygienic than putting the solids in the bin.

Used nappies can be stored in a nappy bucket until they are ready to be washed. The nappies can be placed in a washable net bag inside the bucket so you do not have to pick up the nappies themselves when you come to load the washing machine.

A few drops of tea tree oil in the bottom of the bucket will diffuse any unwanted smells - plus tea tree has an antiseptic and anti fungal effect.

We recommend that you do not soak the nappies prior to washing as water activates bacteria in the urine which causes the smell.



Can I use fabric softener on real nappies?

No. Fabric softener will build up on the nappies over time making them water resistant, so reducing the absorbency of the nappy.



Can I use real nappies at night?

Yes. Real nappies are very good to use at night. However, you may need to use booster pads for extra absorbency, or you may find that you prefer a different style of nappy from those that you use during the day. Check whether the nappy is suitable for night time use before you buy.



Where can I buy real nappies from?

There are stockists throughout Leicestershire who sell real nappies. Our website lists those based locally or goreal.org is a useful source of information.



Can I send my child to nursery or a child minder in real nappies?

This will be up to the nursery or child minder as to whether they have the facilities to store the nappies during the day and whether they are able to help. We suggest that you contact your nursery or childcare provider to discuss your ideas.

How can I reduce the environmental impact of using real nappies?

The Environment Agency Life Cycle Analysis Report (2008) shows that you can reduce your environmental impact by up to 40% by using real nappies if you follow these recommended steps:

- Use an energy efficient washing machine
- Line dry nappies in the summer - the sun acts as a natural bleaching agent to remove any stains (weather permitting!)
- Dry naturally on radiators in the winter
- Reduce tumble drying - this prolongs the life of the real nappy
- Use your real nappies for your next baby, or pass on to other families when finished with
- Buy second hand real nappies - speak to a nappy advisor who can give you more information
- Wash a full load and use half the amount of soap powder you would normally use for your clothes wash
- Wash at 40 degrees, or 60 degrees if heavily soiled
- Do not use fabric conditioner as it reduces the nappy absorbency
- Do not iron nappies

