

HOW TO: Choose The Right Pram

A pram is one of the biggest purchases you will make ahead of having a baby. A good quality pram should last from when your child is born to when they are about three and no longer need a pushchair or pram – ideally, you should be able to use it for your next child, too, so look for a model that works for every stage. Babies should be able to lie flat in a pram for the first few months, while slightly older children can sit upright. How do you know which pram to buy? These are the questions you need to ask before choosing a pram, and we've put together a list of some of the best prams of 2021.

What is a travel system?

A travel system is a pram-car seat combo. They usually come with the pram frame and seat, a car seat, and some come with a bassinet or carrycot (sometimes at an additional cost) – all the components are compatible with each other so you know they will work together smoothly. The real value in a travel system lies in easily being able to move your baby between the car and pram without disturbing them if they are sleeping.

Should I order a travel system or a pram?

If you do not want to buy a travel system, you can buy a pram and car seat separately. Although you are generally advised to buy components from the same brand, many companies sell clip-in adapters that make their car seats compatible with other prams so you can mix and match different brands to build the travel system you want. If you have decided to buy a travel system, start by selecting the car seat you want as that is the most important component.

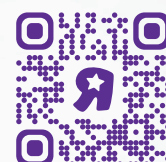
What is the difference between a pram and a stroller?

Although a lot of manufacturers use the terms stroller and pram interchangeably, prams are usually designed to accommodate a child from newborn stage to when they're around 36 months. Strollers are usually basic, lightweight and compact pushchairs designed to carry toddlers.



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What to consider before buying a pram?

Practicality. Ask if the model of pram you are interested in offers both rear-(parent) facing seating for the first few months, and forward-facing seating options for when your child is older. If you want the pram to last you through the first 12 months and until they are older, check that the seat (or the accompanying bassinet) offers reclining, sleeping and sitting positions.

Guarantee. Does the pram come with a guarantee, and does it cover the wear and tear of the fabric or the replacement of worn or punctured wheels? Ask if the pram will need to be serviced regularly and ask about the availability of spare parts like wheels. If you plan on having more children, does the pram you are interested in offer the possibility of adding an additional seat to make it a double pram?

Baby's comfort. It is important your little one be comfortable in their pram so check the suspension system, and how well-padded the seat is. Are there different-sized cushioned inserts that you can remove as your baby grows? If there is a compatible car seat or bassinet, do they slot in quietly and smoothly? Does the pram come with a shade canopy? Is there a rain cover?

Your comfort. It is not just your baby's comfort you need to think about, but the comfort of whoever will be pushing the pram, too. If you and your partner are different heights, it is useful to find a pram with a height-adjustable handlebar. And check that you will have enough legroom while pushing.

Function. No matter what type of pram you choose you need to take it for a spin before buying. Is it heavy or does it manoeuvre easily? Can you steer it easily in tight or crowded spaces? If a pram is not easy to use, is too heavy or doesn't suit your lifestyle, it's a big-ticket item that just won't be used. If you're having twins do you want them to sit side by side or tandem?

Wheels. Where will you be using the pram? If you will be using the pram predominantly on flat, smooth surfaces like in malls, then you could opt for a lighter model with smaller wheels, while you will need a pram with larger wheels in order to navigate rougher terrain like pavements, curbs or gravel roads. If you plan on jogging, choose a purpose-built running pram. They have three large wheels and the front wheel can usually be fixed in place so that the pram holds steady at high speeds. Look carefully at the wheels; are they inflatable or solid? Keep in mind that Inflatable wheels can be punctured but solid wheels will eventually wear out with use.

Suspension. Much like it works in a car, suspension in a pram gives your baby a smoother ride over bumpy terrain. Not all prams are fitted with suspension so check the specs before purchasing – sometimes this may be listed as a 'shock absorption system'.

Safety Does the pram have an adjustable 5-point harness? Make sure to look at the brakes and locks thoroughly and check the frame of the pram to see if there are any sharp edges or places where little fingers might get caught. Where is the brake pedal situated? Some prams have a foot pedal while others position it on the handlebar.

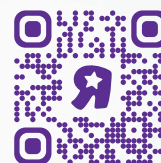
Size. How big is the pram, both folded and unfolded? How difficult is it to collapse and unfold? Can you easily lift it by yourself? Could you do it while holding a baby? How much does the pram weigh? Will it fit through an average-sized door and in the boot of your car? Check the upper weight limit – that will give an indication of how long you will be able to use the pram for.

Bonus features. Does it come with additional storage, like a basket under the seat to stash groceries, or can you purchase separate accessories like handlebar bags, cup holders or a mosquito net?



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When should you order a pram?

A lot of moms-to-be wonder at what stage in pregnancy they should buy a pram. You should aim to have your pram at home – and to be familiar with how it works about three weeks before your due date. If there is a waiting period for delivery, you will need to take that into consideration. You do not want to take delivery too early as often the warranty period is taken from the date you took possession of the pram.

Notes:



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