

Reusable Nappies Vs Disposable



Having a baby will turn your world and house upside-down. And between sleepless nights and your new hectic routine as Mum or Dad you may get a moment to notice how quickly the dustbin gets filled up. The biggest culprit? Nappies.

Not only are disposable nappies expensive and messy, they're also bad for the environment. Nearly three billion nappies are thrown away in the UK every year. The vast majority of these - 90% according to DEFRA - end up in landfill. And now, more and more often the lack of available landfill space means our rubbish is incinerated, emitting harmful gases including CO2 into the atmosphere.

But there is a greener alternative to nappies: choosing to use reusable ones. Here we look at the benefits of reusable nappies, so you can make the right decision for you, your child and the environment.

Reusable Nappies: The Facts

There are several advantages to using reusable nappies that make them better for the environment and a more affordable alternative to packs of disposables ones:

Natural

It's great to know that with reusable nappies, you can be confident that your baby is dressed in natural and soft-to-the-touch material that they'll feel comfortable in. Disposable nappies on the other hand are made using a variety of man made products, including plastic and adhesives, and some nappies include chemicals to assist with absorbency – not good for baby or the environment. Reusable nappies are made from natural fabrics. And, even better, you can select organic cotton nappies; so you can be assured that the cotton has been grown using environmentally friendly and sustainable methods.

Greener

Of course, it's not hard to understand what's good about reusable nappies – the key is in the word reusable itself! Washing your child's nappies and using them again is a much greener practice than sending nappies to landfill. Each time you reuse you're cutting down on the staggering eight million nappies that are thrown away every day. The plastic in disposable nappies can take hundreds of years to decompose.

Cheaper

Any parent will know that nappies are an expensive business. Using home laundered nappies on the other hand can save £500 on the cost of keeping a baby in nappies, according to calculations by the Women's Environmental Network. This saving takes into account the energy and water used during washing the nappies in a washing machine, and even the depreciation in value of the washing machine itself over that time. They suggest that keeping a baby in reusable nappies will cost around £50 in material – around the same as it costs for just seven weeks' worth of disposable nappies.

Green Nappy Tips

There are plenty of other ways to think green when it comes to nappies. Of course it's not possible to actively reduce the number of nappies your baby needs, but there are a few pointers that can curb your carbon footprint and reduce energy consumption:

- Use organically sourced nappies.
- Avoid using a tumble dryer; dry nappies outdoors instead.
- Wash soiled nappies at 60 degrees, and wet nappies at a lower temperature where possible.
- Only wash a full load, otherwise switch to a 'half load' cycle on your washing machine.
- Invest in an energy efficient washing machine.

