

Written by leigh & lyn

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Here are the necessities, and we'll progress from there to the last tip that you probably won't find on other lists (but it can change your entire experience)...

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- Contact Sheet (laminated, if possible). Medical info., Home info., Your phone tree for announcing the baby's arrival, etc. Anything and everything. Just type it up and make a copy for home.

- Batteries, chargers, cameras, phones... All the electrical stuff for capturing the moments, and also for your own entertainment. You might want to toss in a portable dvd player or an iPod loaded with your fave tv shows. Some hospitals have, like, 3 channels.

- Snacks for Daddy (during labor - oh yes, most first time labors are around 24 hours!), and snacks for Mommy (for recovery!). You might want to wring his neck when you see him enjoying food while you can't eat, but you'll definitely want his energy up so he can HELP YOU!

- Music - an iPod or portable CD player. I personally couldn't stand music or any noise during labor, but it seems to help some people!

- Comfy socks. Mine were velour. Any will do.

- A Robe or Dear Johnnies (cute, personalized hospital gowns)

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- A comfy nursing bra that is easy to work!
  
- Mommy's going home outfit. Something other than your maternity wear (depressing), but still stretchy (maybe a larger size of cute sweats).
  
- Makeup/toiletries. It feels nice to be wheeled out of the hospital with your baby in your arms and some mascara and lip gloss. I should also mention that you'll want to have some stool softener. Ask one of your best girlfriends about that one! I won't go into detail, but it can be SCARY.
  
- Baby's going home outfit - HELLO! Check out [Bringing Home Baby](#) ! You'll notice there are no pants included, since newborn legs are so tightly scrunched up to their bodies (like in the womb). Go for foldover cuffs, an adjustable hat, soft cotton, tagless, snaps at the neck for getting over that big floppy newborn head, and a coordinated blanket. It's all there!
  
- Now, here's the KICKER! The ultimate tip: TREATS FOR THE NURSES. They are your lifeline at the hospital. You'll barely see the doctor. But you'll bond with those great nurses. Have enough treats for several shifts. If it's candy, donuts, or healthier fare, just have a post it on the box that says "Thanks for all you do! Love, the \_\_\_\_" They'll take such good care of you! And if there's a choice of recovery rooms, you'll be getting the best! Another sweet thing: Pre-written thank you notes. About 10. Because you can't forget the recovery room nurses. They have the joy of measuring your urine, checking your stitches, and walking your crying baby so you can sleep. As simple as: "Thanks for being a part of the most amazing time of our lives. You are appreciated! Love, the \_\_\_\_" When I went in for my second baby, some of the staff remembered us!

Happy Packing!

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