

Top 10 Ways to Make your Baby Nursery a Safe, Healthy Haven.

- Choose a crib mattress made from untreated, nontoxic, natural materials like latex foam rubber, wool and cotton. Use a wool and cotton mattress topper.
- Buy a solid wood crib or cradle/Moses basket instead of one made from fiberboard or particleboard (which contain formaldehyde, a known carcinogen).
- Use low or no VOC (volatile organic compound) paint for the walls, or paper-based wallpaper instead of vinyl. Traditional wallpaper paste is better than self-stick, which contains high levels of VOCs.
- Install wool carpet instead of synthetic. Wool is naturally flame retardant and hypoallergenic.
- Stay away from synthetic fragrances in things like dryer sheets, air fresheners and body care products. These contain phthalates — chemicals that interfere with hormones. Use 100% essential oils instead.
- Pick all natural, non-toxic cleaning products or try white vinegar, hydrogen peroxide and baking soda. Kill odors with baking soda, lemon juice (or lemon essential oil) and water in a spray bottle. Avoid bleach, ammonia and other harsh chemicals to clean clothes, furniture and carpets.
- Stay away from plastic bottles and food storage containers — they contain chemicals that leach into food and water. Use glass or metal instead.
- Choose wooden toys with nontoxic paints and finishes; and all-natural fibers like cotton, hemp and wool.
- Don't put electric clocks or cell phones next to the baby's crib, or use electric heating pads or electric blankets in the crib — these have electromagnetic fields (EMFs) that can negatively impact behavior and health.
- Make your home shoeless — remove your shoes, especially before entering bedrooms, so you don't track in pesticides and other toxic chemicals from the outside.