

What to consider when choosing a daycare

Wondering how to pick a daycare to look after your baby? We have put together a list of some things to consider when choosing a daycare, from childcare costs to location.

- Find out early what the waitlists for daycares are like in your community. Some areas have waiting lists that are one year or longer, so don't delay.

- Consider the location of the daycare. Will it be more convenient nearer home or your place of work? Consider the time it takes you to get there and how you would get there.

- Talk to other parents using facilities close to you and find out their experiences. Check out online forums to see what local parents think.

- Make a shortlist of daycares you are interested in and try to schedule a tour through as many of them as possible.

- Consider taking your child on these daycare visits too, if you can and if it's permitted.

- Take note of how you and your child are greeted at the daycare.

- Observe your child's reactions to the staff, setting, and other children.

- Consider if the other children seem settled and happy.

- Consider if the staff are attentive to the children and to each other.

- Ask what activities your child might be involved in during the day.
- Ask if the daycare keeps records of the children. Could they show you an example?
- Ask what provisions are made for naps or quiet time.
- Ask about meals and nutrition and how they deal with specific dietary requirements.
- Ask about diapering, toileting, and potty-training policies.
- Consider that you and your child might need time to adjust to childcare arrangements.
- Ask about staff ratios. Are they in line with government guidelines? What happens when staff are off sick or on vacation?
- Ask what safeguards are in place for other people picking up my child.
- Ask about the childcare costs and what subsidies are available from your local governments.
- Check with an accountant about how to claim childcare costs on your yearly income tax forms.
- Find out what the daycare's daily hours are and if there is extra cost for earlier or later pick-up times. As well, ask what the fees are if you are late to pick up your child.
- If you're returning to work, [read our tips for going back to work after a baby](#) [1].

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Links

[1] <http://www.nestlebaby.ca/en/node/2851083>