

# Twins! Double the Fun



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As the grandma of twin girls, who will have their first birthday in a few weeks, I have been reflecting on how unprepared we were when we found out that our daughter would be giving birth to twins. After our initial shock and excitement, we needed to prepare a plan to adequately care for these precious bundles of joy along and their three-year-old brother. First, we read books about twin care to understand what was happening in the babies' development. Our daughter also collected all of the hand-me-down clothes and baby gear that was offered from friends. She strategically planned on how to fit two babies in a smaller bedroom with all of the required gear. The following is a list of life-saving products that helped us care for our little granddaughters in their first months of life:

Basic gear – This includes safety car seats, bassinets or mini cribs, a changing pad or table, and containers in which to store clothing and supplies.

Mini cribs that have mattress with adjustable height settings are safe for children from newborn to age two. Once the babies start to pull-up and walk, the mattress can be lowered to minimize the likelihood that the child will climb out of the crib. Mini cribs do not take up much room. Our granddaughters have their mini cribs next to each other for playful socializing during sleep times.

Pod loungers for babies – These plush loungers provide the proper support for infants in the first three months for feeding, sleeping, and watching their world of family and play. Although the babies were held securely, we needed to ensure that an adult was supervising them at all times.

4moms mamaRoo baby swings – These powered swings provide babies with lots of variation in motion, speed, and soothing sounds to rock and keep babies asleep for up to the first six months of life.

Humidifier – During the winter months, we used a humidifier to help the babies breathe when congested with colds.

Lots of bottles and nursing gear – We found that preparing all feeds for a day in a batch would ensure minimal waiting at feeding time when mom was busy.

Soothing sounds and music – When babies are awake, they love to listen to music and soothing sounds. Our granddaughters would literally rock their bodies to the beat of the music, even when they were young infants!

Twin strollers – A twin stroller can provide safe outside protection for our precious granddaughters. They never tire of sitting in their stroller and watching their older brother play with his toys

outside or help with the family garden. Once the babies were six months old, we were able to use an umbrella twin stroller for our outings. I now take the babies on weekly excursions to the park, shopping, and for walks with friends. The umbrella stroller is easy to store in the trunk of a car. Toys and stimulating items – Per the August 23<sup>rd</sup> blog, we described a variety of toys and objects that babies can use for playful activities. We create infant stimulation areas within a room. A few books that can be used for turning pages and chewing in one area, toys that respond to a baby's touch in another area, and make-believe play toys in yet another area. We construct obstacle courses with large objects around the various play areas to stimulate our granddaughters' large muscle development.

When I reflect on my twin granddaughters' development during their first year of life, I continue to be amazed at how they interact with each other in their daily activities of breaking into a locked cabinet, feeding each other, sharing pacifiers, and exploring toys while still maintaining their individual personalities. They still like to be dressed identically in public as they love the attention that they receive. They also support each other when one is distressed or the distress may soon be shared with both of the girls crying for comfort. Our granddaughters love to pull at each other's bodies, swipe pacifiers, grab food, and take toys from each other with little objection from the other. Sometimes they might fight over toys. We encourage them to share and take turns, but they really don't care as they are best friends. Twins are much easier to care for

as they entertain each other without much adult interaction! Although double the work, we marvel at how much fun twins can be in their development. They confuse us with who they are on any given day as they progress in their developmental milestones with alternating rates of accomplishment. Happy birthday little ones! Thank you for being such special treasures in our lives.

Happy twin care!

Mary Ann

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