

45 Baby Nursery Decorating Tips

A little bundle of joy will soon be joining your household. What better way is there to welcome your addition than with a beautifully decorated nursery? There isn't a nicer way, but how do you do it? What requirements does a nursery have? And most importantly, where do you start? Below are tips and ways to decorate your nursery so it is safe, friendly and soothing to your baby.



1 - To Determine Gender or Not

With the creation of ultrasounds, many expectant parents know the sex of their baby before it is born. Are you one of them? If so, that knowledge can help you design a room specifically for your baby. If not, never fear, there are plenty of gender-neutral themes and designs to use in a nursery. Even after knowing the sex of their baby, some parents choose to remain gender neutral with the theme. The ultrasound could have been fuzzy, the doctor wasn't sure, or just wanting a neutral theme for baby are all reasons to consider before making your decision. Therefore, your first decision as soon-to-be parents is boy themed, girl themed or neutral. Once you make that decision, you can move forward.

2 - Neutral, Please

You've decided to go with a neutral them for your baby's room. To begin decorating you can go one of two routes. Pick the wall color first and then look for matching bedding or two, pick out the bedding and then coordinate the paint scheme. The furniture you bring into the room can also factor into the décor, as there are many options now. Most baby furniture is made of wood that can be stained a light color, painted white, or uses its natural cherry, oak or even pine colorings.

3 - Noah's Ark

A Noah's Ark theme incorporates animals in its décor more so than religion. Either sex loves animals, and Noah was one who brought them all together. In a Noah's Ark room, the bedding, sheets, curtains and even rugs can all carry the same motif. The Noah's Ark theme can be used as the child grows up too, since any of the stuffed animals they receive growing up will match! Install a stuffed animal net in the corner for displaying all of the creatures. Paint a window or several windows with animals poking their heads out on the wall in lieu of pictures. Add a rainbow across part of the ceiling and a dove with an olive branch to complete the theme.



4 - Winnie the Pooh

This lovable old friend is perfect for anybody! Who doesn't like a fluffy hug? Winnie the Pooh motifs have many different styles to choose from in of itself. There are bright colors, pastel colors, color blocks and beige designs to choose from. Paint a huge tree on one wall and make a sign that says "100 Acre Wood" so it is just like where Pooh lives. Murals or pictures of the rest of the cast along the walls add for more color.

5 - Stars and Moons

Many nursery rhymes involve the stars and the moon. And since the stars and moon represent bedtime, there isn't a better place to use this theme. Little glow in the dark stars can be placed on the ceiling and around the room with sticky stuff. Make sure when placing the stars that they are not where they can fall into the bed or be pulled off and put into the mouth. If you don't want sticky residue, paint stars on the ceiling. Be serious and follow the patterns of the constellations. Be creative, add the planets, and give them all a happy face.

6 - Sesame Street

The characters on Sesame Street have been educating and entertaining children for decades. Their bright colors and vivid textures even aid in motor development in children! To make a Sesame Street theme, get a stuffed animal of each character. On the other hand, if you have a lot of talent, paint them on the walls imitating a scene from Sesame Street.



7-ABC

The alphabet will be drilled into their heads as a preschooler, but in the infant years, they can enjoy the pretty pictures of the letters coupled with animals or other objects. A letter theme can be easily carried from the bedding to the walls with wallpaper or a paintbrush. Make posters or paint large letters and spread them all around the room. Add words to the letters or leave them how they are – baby will learn them quickly and easily from seeing them everyday.

8 - Jungle

This is a theme you can go wild with! Use an artificial or painted tree in the corner of the room. Paint or hang jungle stuffed animals in the tree and surrounding area to make a vivid picture. Little feather butterflies from the craft store can be nailed to the ceiling and walls. Other bugs and jungle references can be painted around the room or hung up on posters.

9 - Farm

Old McDonald had a farm...EIEI...O. Every child loves the song and the images that go along with the farm. Bedding and wallpaper usually have many options depicting farm life for you to choose from. If you can't find one you like, find the trusty paintbrush and create your own décor. One wall can be painted red to simulate a barn with open stall doors with animal head peering over the top. If that's too artistic for you, buy toy tractors and stuffed animals and place them around the room with farm posters.



10 - Baby Animals

If you want animals, but don't want to commit to a farm or jungle theme, use baby animals. That way, you can use any animal from any continent or climate. From polar bears to kangaroos – you can use a baby version of it. There are usually many styles of wallpaper with baby animals to pick from. The bedding may or may not correspond, but a neutral shade will coordinate just fine. Use posters to add a realistic touch or stuffed animals to make it a whimsy room.

11 - Sea

Life is better, down where it's wetter...is from the Little Mermaid. Your baby may love to be under the sea, so come up with a nautical room. Sea animal themes can be found in wallpaper and decorations. Use blue bedding to simulate water, regardless if you have a boy or a girl. Hang posters of animals found in the sea and buy stuffed animals to match. If you feel very creative, or have a friend who is, paint a mural along the walls of swimming fish, starfish and underwater creatures.

12 - Pink or Blue?

These themes are traditionally used for either a boy or a girl. However, with today's modern thinking, some lines are being crossed and any theme can be used for anybody, it all depends on what you want!

A decorative border of colorful balloons (blue, pink, orange) with black strings, arranged in a rectangular frame around the page content.

13 - Sports

Sports themes are traditionally saved for a boy's room. With a sports theme, one sport can be focused on or it can envelop a medley of equipment. Bedding and wallpaper can contain footballs, baseballs and basketballs. Or you could paint an infield on the floor and only hang major league teams on the wall. You can even take sports one step further and use all of the teams from a particular city or state. Love Detroit – use the Lions, Pistons and Redwings logos to decorate.

14 - Cars

Cars are another fond passion for many a man. The love starts early, and even from the crib for some! Cars can be grouped into an automotive theme or one that uses any kind of vehicle with four tires and is cool. Posters, paintings on the wall and wallpaper are all ways to flesh out this theme. Add a collection of hot wheel cars, placed up out of baby's reach, can add to the car feel.

15 - Western

Western themes invoke cowboys and images of horses and cattle ranches. Paint the walls a shade of beige and add things that would be on a ranch in the west with a stencil. Items may be a mini-lariat, a cow, a horse, or even a Sheriff star. Place them randomly over the wall or in a pattern. Bedding and wallpaper can coordinate or just be a different hue than the paint. After all, the West was full of dirt.



16 - Frogs

Frogs and toads, that's what little boys are made of comes to mind when thinking about boys. A baby boy might grow up playing in the pond or ditch and find that frogs are his best friend. Start his love off early with a frog themed room. Specialty wallpaper and stencils can decorate walls and stuffed animals can give it character. Bringing real frogs is a little extreme, but could even be done if you so desired.

17 - Garden

A garden full of flowers would be perfect for a baby girl's room. Wallpaper made to look like a garden is available or you can paint your own. Make the bottom half of the room green and a lighter color for the top. Add silk flowers or save the garden until you can make the flowers with your baby's handprint. Make sure to add bees, bugs and birds, whether they are the painted form or stuffed animal form.

18 - Princess

Most little girls dream of being a princess at one point in their lives. Mothers like to carry this on for their daughters and make a castle out of the nursery. The theme can carry over to bedding and wallpaper or just with a few simple pictures hung on the wall. Paint a castle tower on one wall or a scene from inside the castle. Find a tiara and use it in a shadow box or on a shelf as a knick-knack. Who knows, it may be used in future costumes or during beauty pageants.



19 - Tree House

A tree house used to be a boy club thing, but girls are getting in to them know too. So, if you want to draw a tree house in your baby nursery, adapt it to your child. Make it a girl's only or boy's only hangout. Paint branches on the wall and what might be inside a tree house for your baby girl or boy to paint n the wall. Place animals that might be found in a tree around the room on shelves or in the toy box.

20 - Adoption

When your little bundle of love was delivered from another country, it made no difference to you. You will love and cherish them as if they came from your body. A unique way to decorate their room would be to include things from their home country. Include a map on the wall and pinpoint their birth location if it's known.



The Necessities

21 - Paint

Some good choices for paint in the neutral zone are shades of yellow, green, beige and gray. Girl shades would fall into the pink, purple and lavender spectrum. Boys' rooms are usually in one form of blue or red paint. Double check that the paint is washable, because your infant will grow fast and place fingerprints on the walls before you know it! Washable and scrubbable paint will not flake or peel off after several washings, nor should it discolor with soap and water. And if you live in an older house, make sure old paint or paint that could contain lead is covered and won't chip off. Lead paint is hazardous and needs to be properly taken care of.

22 - Wall Paper and Bedding

When browsing for baby stuff, you will be inundated with themes. And since the market for baby products is so hot, virtually any theme you choose will have all of the accessories to match. The most important to match items are the big-ticket items. Pick wallpaper that coordinates well, if not matching, with your bedding. Often times it will be the same character and color and you pick a popular theme. If you are creating your own or using hand-me-down goods, stay with like colors from the bedding to pick out a wallpaper design or paint color. A red and blue block pattern on the bedding would stand out a little too much against lime green wallpaper. Even for baby.

23 - Rocking Chair

That little bundle of love will wake up often during the night. When he or she does, they will need to be fed most of the time. To do so comfortably, pick out a nice rocking chair with back support. An even better choice would be one with a connected footstool that rocks with you. A rocking chair isn't just for breastfeeding mothers, either. Dad, Grandma, brother and sister can feed a bottle to a baby anytime in that chair.



24 - Baby Changing Table

The baby-changing table is a functional storage tool as much as it is a vehicle to change diapers on. A good changing table should be of sturdy construction and with no sharp edges. Find one that has at least one shelf for item storage underneath. Items that need to be placed on the table would be diapers, wipes, a change of clothes and diaper cream. If there is extra room, you can also place a wipe warmer, stacks of blankets, toys, extra bedding and additional changes of clothing under it.

25 - Crib

Even if your baby will sleep in a bassinette in your room to begin with, they will eventually need their own crib. A crib needs to be sturdy and have no sharp edges or objects sticking where baby can reach them. One side should lower to allow for easy pick up of your child. Bonus features could include cribs that convert into day beds and ones with teeth guards on both sides. The crib slats should be tested to make sure they meet federal safety standards for width.

26 - Round Cribs

A hot new trend is the emergence of a round crib. If there are no corners, then baby can't get hurt, right? That's what the manufacturers believed, anyway. Another belief in creating round cribs is that they allow for more wiggle room and baby isn't constrained. The round cribs still need to follow safety standards for slat spacing.



27 - Toy Box

It will begin with teething devices and then little rattles, and next thing you know you will be flooded with toys. The flood may begin as soon as your first shower, before the baby is even born! Have a safe, sturdy place to store all of the toys for your baby. A plastic one can be easily washed, just as well as a wood one. A lid to keep the toys contained works well, especially when your baby reaches toddler status.

28 - Curtains

Curtains not only match your theme, they keep out peeping eyes. They also keep out the early rays of light that can make for an early riser. If you have a room that gets a lot of sun, try room darkening curtains or shades. This will keep the room dark during day naps and allow them to sleep more comfortably, which is a plus for you too!

29 - Diaper Pail

We all think our baby is the greatest, but their diapers do smell! A diaper pail or trashcan that seals can keep the odor from spreading throughout the house. The pail should have a tight lid or seal to keep smells inside. Plastic ones tend to absorb some of the smell, so use a trash bag or liner to keep absorption rates low.

A decorative border of colorful balloons (blue, pink, orange) with black strings, arranged in a repeating pattern around the perimeter of the page.

30 - Mobile

Baby will have plenty of awake moments in their crib too. To keep them entertained, place a mobile on the side of the crib. Many styles will match your chosen theme. Mobiles should be hung securely where they won't fall into the crib if baby tugs on it. They should also be made of soft material in case they do accidentally fall in. Some mobiles have flashing lights and some play music and twirl around. Whatever you choose, make sure it's fun for baby.

31 - CD /Music Player

Music soothes any soul, as well as a fussy baby. Plug in a lullaby CD at night and leave it on repeat throughout the night. If they wake up, but do not need to be fed, the familiar music may ease them back into sleep easily. Music playing during sleep hours has been proven to increase brain development in babies. Music can also drown out any noises outside of the nursery that may wake them up.

32 - Lamps

A baby's nursery will require many visits during the night. A light besides the overhead light is needed for visits that occur other than during the day hours. A bright, glaring white light bulb is not very friendly at 3 am when you're hungry. A small, bedside lamp with a low watt light bulb is much easier on everyone's eyes and mood. A nightlight that has a sensor to turn on in the dark is also an efficient way to provide a beacon in the middle of the night.



Other Fun Ways to Decorate

33 - Twinkle Lights Around the Perimeter

A different twist on nightlights is to use strands of light. White twinkle lights can be hooked to the perimeter of the room near the ceiling to give a star like quality to the room. Twinkle lights can also be wrapped into an artificial tree or plant to give light at night and ambience during the day.

34 - Growth Chart

Your baby will grow up amazingly fast. One day they can be held in the palm of your hand and the next, they are towering over you. Buy a paper growth chart and hang in the nursery. Many growth charts are made to match a specific room theme, so you can even coordinate this into the décor of the room. Mark growth regularly so you can see how fast it really does happen! Growth charts can also be done right on the edge of the doorway, on the wall or closet. Label the child's name – you might have more than one someday – and the date.

35 - Handprints

Just as your baby grows, so do their hands and feet. To keep track of their growing stages, use their handprints in decorating. Use a portion of the wall to place handprints on randomly. Be sure to label the date so you can watch them grow. You can also incorporate their handprints into a design, like a flower garden. Change the color of the paint and add a stem. Watch your garden grow!



36 - Footprints

Footprints are just as important as handprints. They can also be done with different colored paints and made into a flower garden alongside of the handprints. Or they could be lined up with rainbow colors and formed into a rainbow. The most important thing is to use their name and date.

37 - Posters

Posters can bring art into a room, nature or even sports figures. It is also a relatively inexpensive way to bring color or design into a room. Not to mention the easy way out if you have no artistic talent and can't paint or stencil. Posters are also good in the way that when you want to change a theme, all you have to do is pull them down. They are easier to remove than wallpaper and take a lot less time than repainting.

38 - Hang Pictures of Family

No matter how close or far away your relatives live, place their pictures in baby's room. By seeing the pictures repeatedly, baby will become familiar with them if they do live far away. If they are close by and visit often, seeing the pictures will be a comfort blanket for them if they get distressed.

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39 - Name Items

If you know the sex of your baby and pick out the name ahead of time, you can decorate with it. Many accessories are painted or engraved with a specific name. Bookshelves, wall hangings, blankets and toys can be monogrammed just for the little bundle of joy. However, unless the ultrasound showed with 100% clarity that it was one sex or the other, I would hold off until delivery to place any such orders.

Safety First

No matter what the theme you choose will be, safety is your first concern. Infants, and then toddlers and preschoolers all have different awareness levels. With each level brings new risks to their safety and new precautions that should be taken in their nursery.



INFANTS

40 - Cribs

All cribs are built with slats on the sides. The slats allow for adequate circulation inside. When purchasing a crib, the slats must meet safety requirements. Can you pass a can of soda in the openings? If so, it does not meet the required spacing that manufacturers must follow. Too wide of spacing means a baby's head could be caught and they could choke or stop breathing.

41 - Bedding

Babies are small, but wondrously adept at keeping themselves warm. They do not require large, thick blankets to keep them warm during naps and at bedtime. Instead, dress them in warm sleepers or swaddle them in a flannel blanket. Place one blanket over the top of them, but make sure it is small enough that it does not cover the whole crib.

42 - Bumper Pads

Bumper pads are placed along side the slats in the crib to keep baby's head from continuously knocking in to it. Bumper pads should be made of washable fabric that breathes. The bumper pads will also need to be secured at each corner and in the center of both sides.



43 - Changing Table

You will spend much of your life in front of a changing table. To make it best for you, choose one that is an adequate height so you are not slumped over and getting an early bad back! For baby's sake, use one with a belt to fasten them down so they cannot roll off it.

TODDLERS

44 - Doors, Drawers and Cupboards

Your precious little baby can now move. And move very quickly at times. If there is an open cupboard, they will beeline right to it, especially if it is full of brightly colored cleaner bottles. In their bedroom, they shouldn't have any such pretties, but dresser drawers and closets can hold other chokeable treasures. To keep those pretties safely tucked away, invest in safety locks. There can be screwed in mechanisms under the door or handle or they make cinchers to go across doorknobs. No matter what you choose, use it.

45 - Electrical Outlets

If there is a hole, it needs to be filled, right? Or so the mind of a toddler thinks. Put an outlet cover in every electrical outlet in the house. Don't just follow this rule for the nursery, but it employ it throughout the whole house.