



# Baby Bargains Press Kit

**Retail price: \$18.95. 8th edition**

**Publisher: Windsor Peak Press**

**Available in bookstores nationwide.**

**Web: [www.BabyBargains.com](http://www.BabyBargains.com)**

**Contact: Steve Freeman, publicity director**

**Toll-free (800) 888-0385**

**Direct: (303) 442-879**

Editor:

**\$6600.**

Yes, that's the *average* cost of raising a baby until age one. Add in day care and the total can soar above \$10,000. But do new parents have to shell out those big bucks to get quality products for a newborn?

No, of course not! Consumer advocates Denise and Alan Fields have launched a crusade to find the best deals for new parents, inspired by the birth of their own sons Ben and Jack. The result: **BABY BARGAINS**, a national best-seller since it was first released in 1994. **BABY BARGAINS** now has over 700,000 copies in print.

Now the Fields are back with a revised 8th edition: **BABY BARGAINS** is completely revised and expanded. In bookstores nationwide, the paperback (\$17.95) features 600 pages of ideas on raising a child without going bankrupt:

- **The 7 Most Ridiculous Baby Products.** The Fields' hilarious list of strange but true money-wasters is on the inside front cover (and reprinted in the press kit).
- **The Top Baby Bargains.** Check the list for tips on getting baby products at 40%, 50% and 60% off.
- **Expanded reviews and name brand critiques.** The new 8th edition features 37 more brutally honest reviews of name-brand cribs, car seats, strollers & more. We've also got new sections on playpens, bottles and formula.
- **E-Mail from the Real World.** Check out our new feature: reader suggestions for the best shower gifts and feedback on how products work with "real" babies.

The Fields and **BABY BARGAINS** have been featured on Oprah, DATELINE NBC, The Today Show and in dozens of newspaper and magazine articles. Thanks for your interest in our book! Contact us at 303-442-8792 or email [authors@BabyBargains.com](mailto:authors@BabyBargains.com) if we can help with your article, TV or radio show.

Sincerely,

Steve Freeman  
Publicity Director  
303-442-8792

# The 7 Most Ridiculous Baby Products

What's a new parent to do? Stores, catalogs and friends insist you must have *this* product or *that* item for your baby, or, frankly, *you* are a very bad parent. Yet the \$7 BILLION dollar juvenile products industry has churned out some incredibly stupid items over the years. From our paperback book **BABY BARGAINS** (\$17.95), here is our Wastes of Money Hall of Fame:

- 1 Gucci's white mink coat for baby.** Chase away baby's chill for just \$4250! Too much? How about a \$1500 baby leather jacket or \$90 baby booties, all with that Gucci logo! Don't forget to get that \$800 Gucci diaper bag or baby carrier.
- 2 Casablanca Plume wrought iron crib.** Why buy a normal crib when you can have one topped with ostrich feathers? By Bratt Décor; price: \$1050.
- 3 Aromatherapy for tots.** "Fussytime Calming Baby Bath Aromatherapy" by Baby Spa, \$8.30 for two ounces. Got a cranky baby? Use the "pure essential oils of Roman chamomile and lavender to help calm overtired or colicky babies."
- 4 Cashmere baby blanket.** Just \$390 from Vermont luxury linen maker Anichini.
- 5 Estee Lauder's Origins Natural Resources diaper "balm."** Let Estee Lauder chase away those diaper rash blues for just \$10 for a 3.50 oz tube!
- 6 Titanium stroller.** Steel strollers are so yesterday. Why not go titanium? Maclaren's "TI Techno" boasts a titanium frame and a leather seat for \$1500.
- 7 Baby perfume.** Is your infant a bit stinky after that diaper change? Spritz them with Musti, a \$27 bottle of French cologne for babies.

# Top 10 Baby Bargains

*Reprinted from BABY BARGAINS (Windsor Peak Press, \$17.95) • (800) 888-0385*

- 1. Surf for diaper savings.** Diapers4Less ([www.diapers4less.com](http://www.diapers4less.com)) sells diapers at just 17¢ a diaper, which is 30% less than most grocery stores. A case of 204 small diapers was \$35 including shipping. Save even more if you sign up for their regular shipping program.
- 2. Craigslist.** From gently used baby clothes to gear, parents are finding a treasure trove of bargains online at Craigslist. Another good source: FreeCycle, which lets parents unload unneeded baby gear for free.
- 3. Consider GAP and Old Navy for maternity.** Both the Gap and Old Navy have added maternity to their web sites at great prices. Sample: \$24 poplin tops and \$38 for maternity jeans---that's half the price of mall maternity shops. While Gap maternity is only sold online, you CAN return any items that don't work directly to the stores.
- 4. Get a discounted car seat.** We found insurance companies that offer discounted car seats to parents that attend a parenting class.
- 5. Forget fancy bedding sets.** Winnie the Pooh bedding can run \$300 a set. Our advice: skip the Pooh sheets and instead buy solid-color bedding. Then decorate the nursery with themed accessories and other items. You'll save 60% or more. A simple set of sheets and cotton blanket runs a mere \$50. Another piece of wise bedding advice: skip the frills like diaper stackers, dust ruffles, matching curtain valences and the like.
- 6. Wear it again, Sam.** Second-hand stores that specialize in children's clothing and equipment are a bargain paradise. We've seen \$25 outfits for as little as \$5 and other items like mobiles, bassinets, toys, and more baby necessities at discounted prices. Another great source: garage sales. Check out page 90 for eight shopping tips to getting the most from such sales.
- 7. Discover hard-to-find outlet stores.** Psst—hear about the great baby clothes outlet store where everything is 50% off? Or the one that sells brand-name crib bedding at a fraction of retail? We sure did—and we've compiled the most complete list of the best baby stuff outlets in the U.S.
- 8. Rent that formal dress.** Invited to a wedding and you're eight months pregnant? Why buy a formal dress for \$200 when you can rent one? We found that many maternity shops will rent you their formal dresses for one time occasions at one-third the cost of buying.
- 9. Shop the baby “mega-stores”—but don't forget that local mom-and-pop shop.** Sure, stores like Babies R Us, Baby Depot and Buy Buy Baby offer great deals on everything from furniture to strollers. Yet don't forget about local baby stores . . . they can be just as competitive as the chains on price, plus they'll have a human there to answer questions.
- 10. Travel in coach.** Is that fancy \$900 European stroller really worth it? We found several knock-offs of a famous Dutch stroller that sell for 70% less.

*Baby Bargains • Windsor Peak Press • \$17.95 • In bookstores nationwide or call (800) 888-0385*

# Crib Notes

## Facts & Figures on Babies for 2009

- **Over FOUR MILLION babies** will be born this year.
- **What month does the Stork work the hardest?** September is the most popular month for births, followed by May, March and July. What's the least popular month to have a baby? December, followed by February and January. About 300,000 babies are born in the U.S. each and every month.
- **What state has the most babies?** This year California will see 540,000+ babies born. But the states with the highest birth *rates* will be Utah, Alaska and Texas.
- **Multiple births are up sharply.** In recent years, the US hit a record in multiple births—one in 39 babies born in the US was a twin, triplet or more!
- **Who is today's mother?**
  - **She's older.** In 2009, the median age of today's first-time mother is 28—and nearly a quarter of all births are to mothers in their 30's—that's up 6% since 1960.
  - **She works.** 59% of moms with children under one year of age work outside the home. 68% of new moms have attended or graduated from college.
  - **She's having her first baby.** About 40% of all births today are firstborns—in the original baby boom in the 50's, that number was just 26%.
  - **She's spending more money.** 15% more money is spent on firstborns than on later offspring. The media household income for first-time parents is \$32,609 and more than half (56%) own their own home.
- **How much does raising a baby cost today?** Today, the average cost to raise a baby to just age one is \$6600—and that doesn't include prenatal care, delivery costs or savings for college tuition. When you factor in those costs, the total is \$9,000 to \$14,000, according to the *Wall Street Journal* and government statistics.
- **How much money is spent each year on babies?** The juvenile products industry is a SEVEN BILLION-DOLLAR business—which includes cribs, car seats, strollers, toys, bedding and more. And that doesn't include clothing—infant sleepwear alone is another \$1.1 billion business, according to the Consumer Products Safety Commission. What's the grand total for baby expenditures? When you factor in disposable diapers, baby food, and all the clothing, you're talking about a \$24 BILLION industry.
- **What's the hospital bill?** According to a recent study by the New England Journal of Medicine, the average hospital charges for having a healthy baby run \$9845. Add multiple babies and the tab skyrockets—twins cost \$37,947 and triplets \$109,765. And that doesn't cover the pre-natal costs, which can add another \$1500 to \$3000 to the medical bill.
- **How many moms breastfeed baby?** 57% of mothers start breastfeeding, but only 20% are still nursing six months later. By contrast, in Scandinavia, 90% of moms start breastfeeding and over 50% continue for six months or longer.

# FOUR TRUTHS ABOUT BUYING FOR BABY THAT NO ONE TELLS YOU

## # 1

Babies don't care if they wear designer clothes or sleep on designer sheets. Let's be realistic. Babies just want to be comfortable. They can't even distinguish between the liberals and conservatives on Jon Stewart's "The Daily Show," so how would they ever be able to tell the difference between Laura Ashley crib bedding and another less famous brand that's just as comfortable, but 50% less expensive? Our focus is on making your baby happy—at a price that won't break the bank.

## # 2

Your baby's *safety* is more important than your *convenience*.

Here are the scary facts: 70,000 babies per year are injured by juvenile products, according to government estimates. Each chapter in *Baby Bargains* has a section called "Safe & Sound," which arms you with in-depth advice on keeping your baby out of trouble. We'll tell you which products we think are dangerous and how to safely use other potentially hazardous products.

## # 3

Murphy's Law of Baby Toys says "Your baby's happiness with a toy is inversely related to the toy's price."

Buy a \$200 shiny new wagon with anti-lock brakes, and odds are baby just wants to play with your keys. In recognition of this reality, we've included "wastes of money" in each chapter that will steer you away from the money pits.

## # 4

It's going to cost more than you think.

Whatever amount of money you budget for your baby, get ready to spend more. We've discovered the average cost of having a baby today is \$6600! And that doesn't even include prenatal care, the actual delivery cost or day care. Sorry, that's all extra. That cost figure is based on buying brand-names at full retail prices. But we found dozens of alternatives for new parents that could save up to 50% of the costs.

# Top 9 Smart Baby Safety Tips

- 1. OLD CRIBS ARE DEATH TRAPS.** According to the US Consumer Product Safety Commission, “the major (safety) problem for babies is with old cribs, in which we have 50 babies a year die.” The best advice: pass up that hand-me-down.
- 2. AIRBAGS AND CAR SEATS DON’T MIX.** A recent study showed that infants could be seriously injured or killed if their *rear-facing* infant car seat was hit full force by an air bag. Once again, the problem was with *rear-facing* car seats placed in the front seat of a car with air bags. The best solution: the safest place for car seats is the center of the back seat.
- 3. LIMIT THE POSSIBILITY OF SUDDEN INFANT DEATH SYNDROME (SIDS).** Recent studies have determined that placing young infants face down in soft bedding may contribute to SIDS. Keep soft quilts, sheepskins, and pillows out of the baby’s crib and play area.
- 4. AVOID THE SHELVING AVALANCHE.** Shelves and bookcases are useful for storing lots of Junior’s stuff but they can be pulled over easily by a budding young climber. Anchor the shelves to the wall to prevent this disaster.
- 5. WALKERS ARE ACCIDENTS WAITING TO HAPPEN.** A walker suspends your baby above the floor, enabling him or her to “walk” by rolling around. The only problem: babies tend to “walk” right into walls, down staircases, and into other brain damage-causing obstacles. It’s a scandal that walkers haven’t been banned by the government. **AN AMAZING 20,000 INJURIES PER YEAR ARE DIRECTLY ATTRIBUTED TO WALKERS.**
- 6. STRAP YOUR BABY IN.** What causes the most injuries with high chairs? Babies who are not strapped in the chair—sadly, four to five deaths occur each year when babies “submarine” under the tray.
- 7. USE YOUR CAR SEATS CORRECTLY.** The government estimates 80% of car seats are installed incorrectly. While new car seat design rules have been proposed to help remedy the problem, they won’t take effect for several years. Meanwhile, parents must be diligent to make sure the seat is installed properly.
- 8. DON’T TRUST YOUR STROLLER’S BRAKES.** The best stroller models have brakes on two wheels; cheaper ones just have one wheel that brakes. Yet, even with the best brakes, don’t leave the stroller on an incline. Many accidents occur when the brakes fail.
- 9. MOUNT THOSE BABY GATES.** Install baby gates at the top and bottom of stairs. Consider mounting gates into the wall because a toddler’s weight is enough to push down a “pressure mounted” gate—and tumble down the stairs after it.

# About the Authors

Denise and Alan Fields are the best-selling consumer writers one TV reporter described as “Ralph Nader meets Generation X.” Their no-nonsense guides to life’s milestones (getting married, buying a new home and shopping for baby) have sold a combined 1.6 million copies and catapulted the Fields to appearances on Oprah, The Today Show, DATELINE NBC, Good Morning America and 20/20.

Their first book, BRIDAL BARGAINS, is still the country’s top-selling book on weddings, with over a quarter million copies sold since it’s debut in 1990. The book’s exposé of rip-offs and consumer abuse of engaged couples was hailed by the *Wall Street Journal*, who said the Fields “are stirring up a commotion in the bridal industry.”

The Fields next book, YOUR NEW HOUSE, was inspired by the couple’s own experience building a new home in Monument, Colorado. “This book is, by far, the best book available on how to buy or build a new home,” raved syndicated columnist Robert Bruss, imploring his readers to buy the book. And they did. This prompted the *San Francisco Examiner* to pick the book as “one of the Top 10 Best Real Estate Books for 1993.” And again in 1996.

What’s the Fields’ formula for success? The couple combine their own experiences with extensive research and interviews with thousands of consumers nationwide. By assembling an “editor’s panel” of industry experts and veteran retailers, the Fields combine the sage advice of real-life consumers with “behind the scenes” industry insights—the results are books packed with money-saving tips and smart shopper savvy.

BABY BARGAINS continues this tradition. The Fields’ latest consumer guide was inspired by the birth of their sons, Ben and Jack. The Fields scoured the country for the best deals on cribs, bedding, maternity clothes and more. Next, they interviewed more than 1000 first-time parents across the country, who provided insights into which baby products were best buys—and which were wastes of money. BABY BARGAINS’ editor’s panel of juvenile products retailers provided crucial safety and technical background for the book’s extensive list of recommended brands and products.

The brand new, 8th edition of BABY BARGAINS adds more than 60 pages of new material, including in-depth reviews of playpens, bottles and formula brands. The Fields uncover a scandal with child safety seats and have added “e-mail from the real world” to the book—uncensored comments from readers about their experiences with different products, catalogs and store.

The Fields other parenting books include TODDLER BARGAINS (for children age two to five) and BABY 411, a book for first-time parents co-authored with an award-winning pediatrician (Dr. Ari Brown).

The Fields have been writing together since 1987, since meeting in college in Colorado. Their first book was a local how-to guide for engaged couples in Austin, Texas. Alan Fields has a bachelor’s degree in business from the University of Colorado and a masters in business administration from the University of Texas at Austin. Denise Fields holds a bachelor of arts degree from the University of Colorado.

The Fields live in Boulder, Colorado with their sons, Ben and Jack.

*Baby Bargains • Windsor Peak Press • \$17.95 • In bookstores nationwide or call (800) 888-0385*