

beginners guide to CLOTH DIAPERS



prepared by Bailey Bouwman
www.clothdiaperpodcast.com

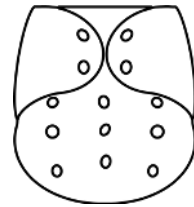
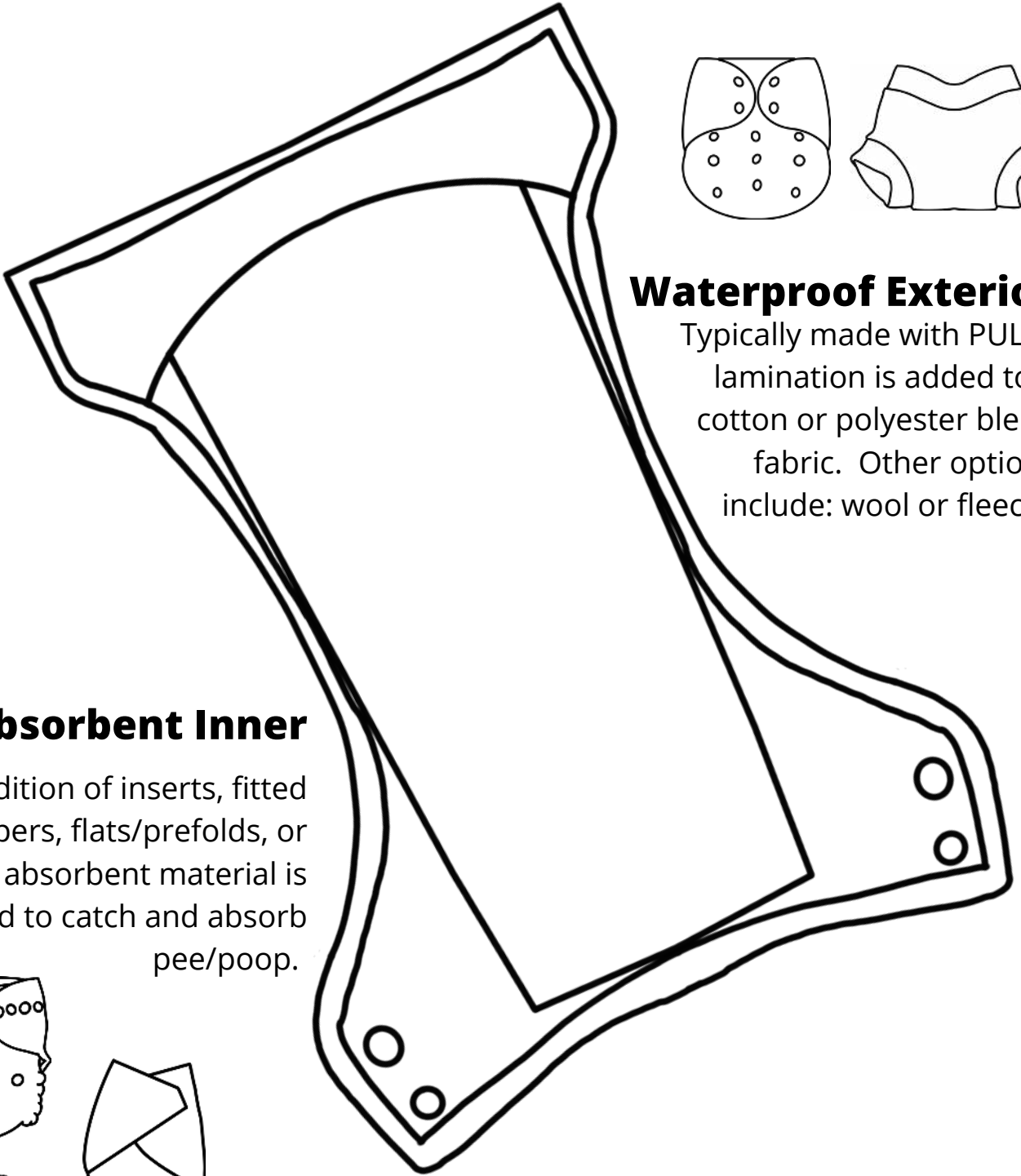


My name is Bailey Bouwman. I am a cloth diaper educator, consultant, advocate, author, podcaster and more. My babies have grown but my passion for cloth diapering as an avenue for sustainable community development continues. I spend my days working with parents and brands to build a stronger industry and encourage the simplicity of cloth diapering. I live and play on the traditional unceded territory of the Lheidli T'enneh First Nations in Northern British Columbia, Canada.

This guide to cloth diapering was developed for cloth diaper curious as a companion to the webinar on cloth diapers



Bailey Bouwman

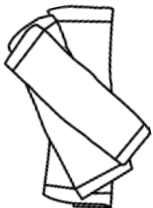
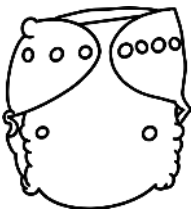


Waterproof Exterior

Typically made with PUL, a lamination is added to a cotton or polyester blend fabric. Other options include: wool or fleece.

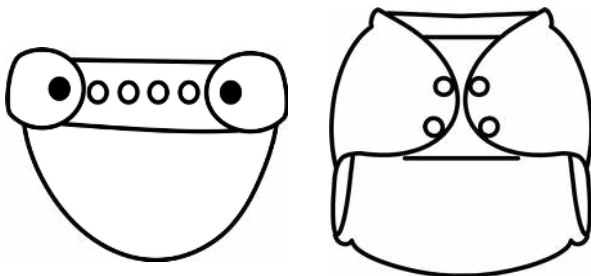
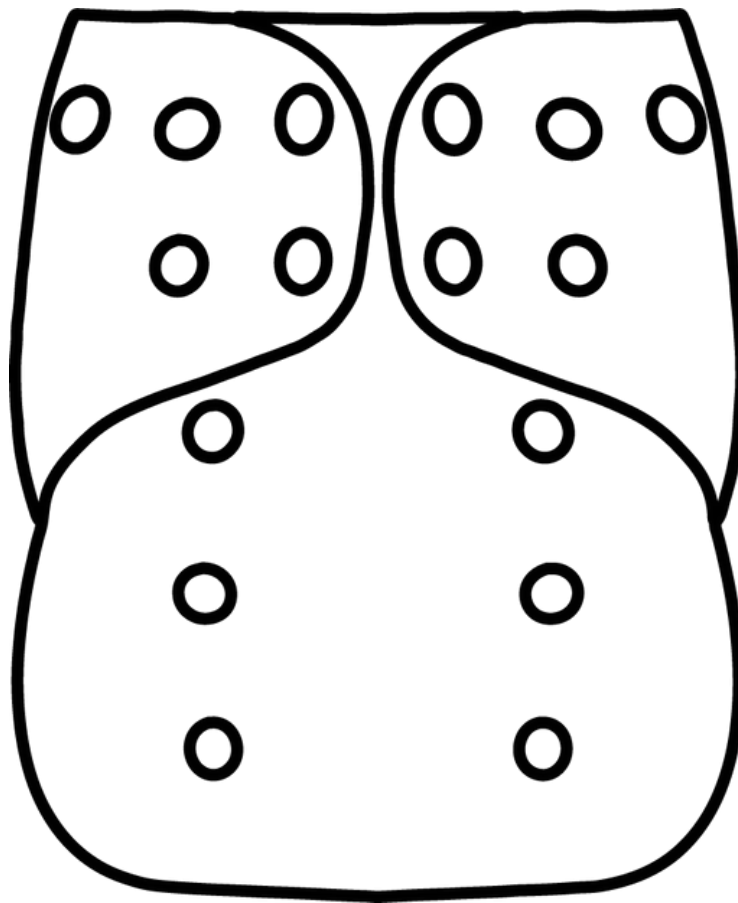
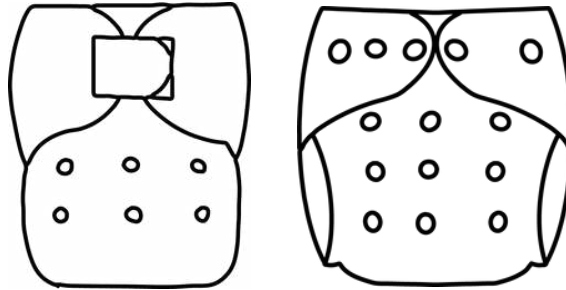
Absorbent Inner

The addition of inserts, fitted diapers, flats/prefolds, or sewn in absorbent material is added to catch and absorb pee/poop.



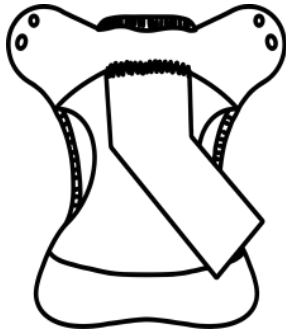
Waist & Hip Snaps

Fastens the diaper around baby's body, securing it in place for a snug fit. Hook & Loop options are available.



Rise Setting

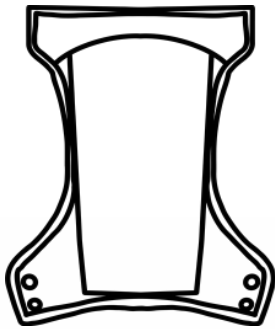
Snaps located in the middle of the diaper to adjust the length of the diaper for different sized kids.



All In One Diaper

A pre-assembled diaper with sewn in absorbent core and waterproof exterior.

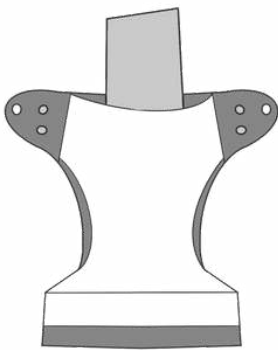
More expensive product that is used once before laundering.
Many different variations, including easy to launder & absorbent.



Cloth Diaper Cover

A waterproof exterior designed to keep everything dry; pair with inserts, fitteds, flats or prefold.

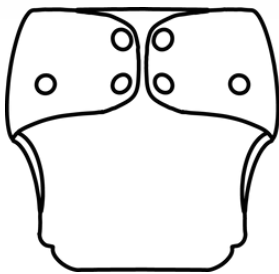
A lower cost two step diapering system. Covers can be re-used multiple times before laundering. Available in PUL, wool, or fleece.



Pocket Diaper

A diaper shell featuring a waterproof exterior and an inner layer with an opening for absorbency.

A simple two step diapering system that involves matching inserts with diaper shells. Lower cost single-use washable diaper.



All In Two Diaper

A term used to describe a diaper that can be used in different ways.

Usually features snap-in inserts, and/or a pocket opening.

Other Types of Cloth Diapers

Swim Diapers, Training Pants, Newborn Cloth Diapers

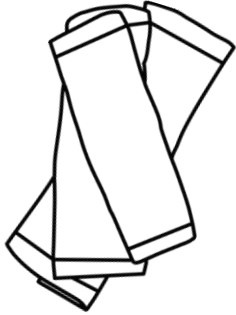




Inserts

2-6 layers of textile sewn into a pad for absorbency - added to pockets or covers.

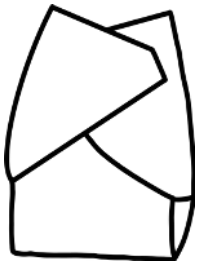
A wide array of products including sizing, textile blends, and quality. Long ones are called snake inserts, and boosters are small.



Prefolds

Multiple layers of absorbent material sewn into a rectangle that is then folded in thirds for use.

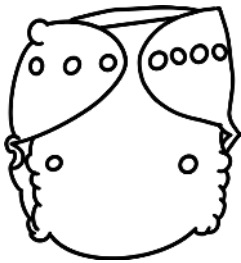
Higher end prefolds are called trifolds, classic birds eye cotton variations are still used and loved by diaper services.



Flats

single layer of natural fibre that is folded for use.

Old school, but many modern versions exist using stretchy material and other variations including different cuts and shapes.



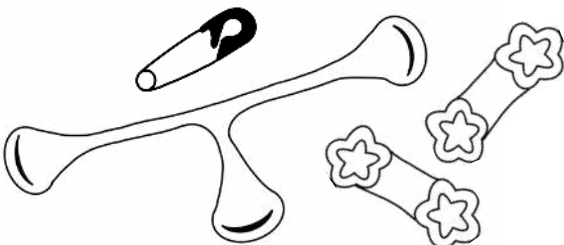
Fitted Diaper

absorbent material sewn into a contoured diaper shape with elastics and fasteners

another classic style diaper that has many variations, it isn't waterproof, but provides a full body coverage.

Other Types of Absorbency

Boosters & Doublers, Preflats, and Fixed Flats.



Fasteners: Diaper Pins, Boingo, Snappi & belts are used to hold prefolds, flats, and/or fitted diapers closed around baby's body. **This is an optional way of diapering.**

Types of Textiles

Microfibre

Low Cost
and variable quality

Quick Absorber
Great for quick peeing

Synthetic
Short lifespan 1-3 years

Compression
hello leaks with added weight

Cotton

Low Cost
most often as prefold/flat

Slower Absorber
depending on weave

Natural Fibre
many options available, influences cost

Different Weaves
means different experiences

Mid Cost
varies depending on GSM

Quick Absorber
dependent on weave & quality

Highly Processed
requires carbon disulphide

Compression prone
looser weaves are finicky

Bamboo

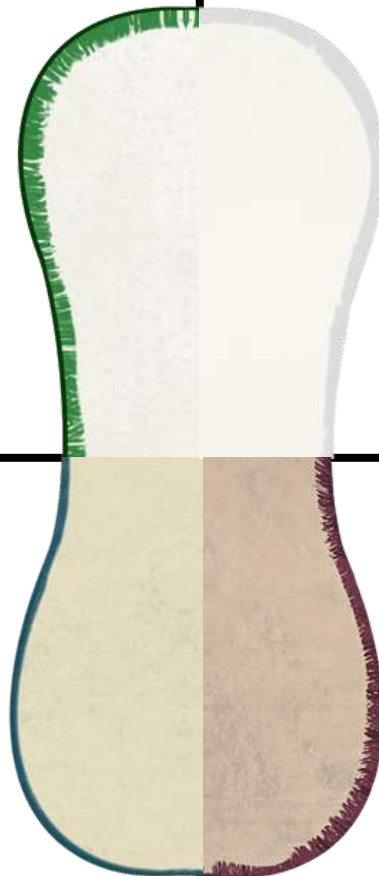
High Cost
Most expensive \$/oz

Slowest Absorber
but not drastically slow, just marginally

Blended
highest ratio is 60% hemp/cotton or bamboo

Least Compression
excels at holding onto liquids

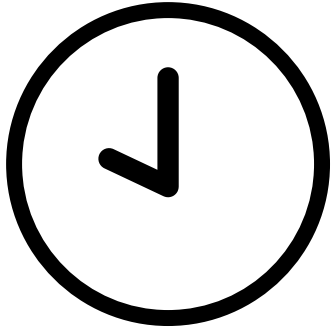
Hemp



you think these are the things you need to know about textiles...

but the weave, weight, and design of an insert tells the story of effectiveness.

Focus on finding a combo of quality and price; sometime repurpose what you have.



Change every 2 hours

Best practice recommends a cloth diaper lasts two hours during daytime use. Cloth diaper parents change diapers more often than disposable users



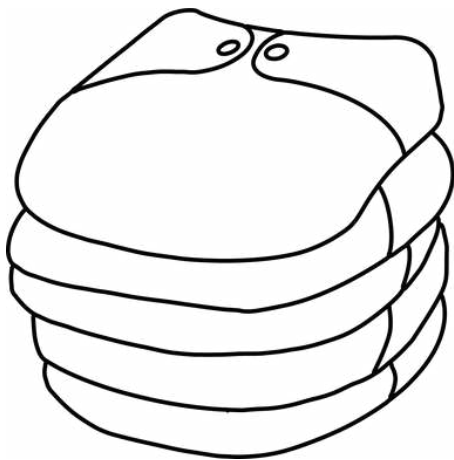
Wash every 2-3 days

Washing diapers regularly improves the cleaning, decreases risk of mold, and reduces textile breakdown. But sometimes, you need to do you and finding a wash routine that is SUSTAINABLE for you and your family is key.



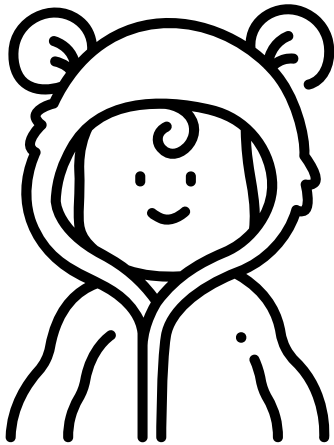
At any Budget

Seriously, the beautiful thing about cloth diapers is you are in control of the cost. The average 2-3 day stash of pockets is likely to cost \$300-450 USD. But you can spend more or less, picking up stashes for under \$200 or excess of \$1000.



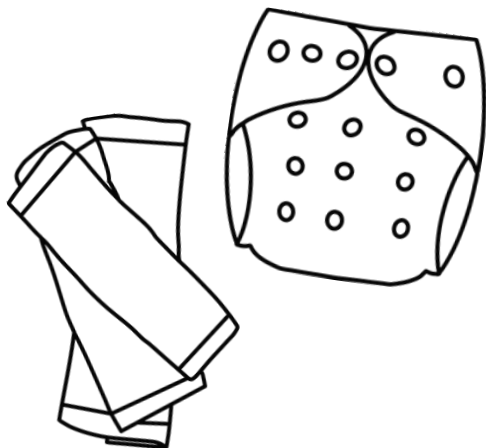
Start with just one cloth diaper

Or a day's worth of cloth diapers. You don't have to go full time, all in. It's okay to part-time diapering, or take a trial run.



6-12 diapers per day

Younger babies use more diapers per day compared to older toddlers and those nearing potty learning. If you choose elimination communication, maybe even less. Expect about 8 diapers per day, 7 day and 1 night.



3:1 Inserts to Cover

Cloth diaper covers can be reused until soiled, on average this is three diaper changes - three swaps of the insert, prefold or flat.



Baby Boutiques

Local maternity, baby, or childrens stores may carry a selection of cloth diapers. Inquire or search within local spaces.



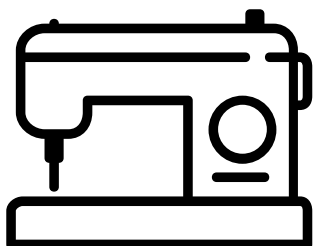
Cloth Diaper Retailers

Speciality online shops that carry a wide selection of cloth diapers, and other items.



Online Retailers

Cloth diapers are available through online retailers like Amazon, Etsy, AliExpress, and other generalized online shops.



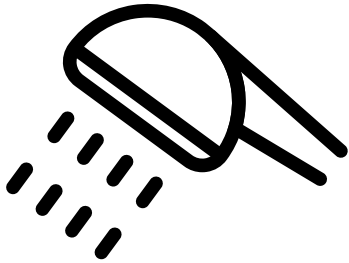
Local Makers

Seamstresses around the world craft custom products from home. Find them at craft fairs, online marketplaces, and more.



Facebook Groups

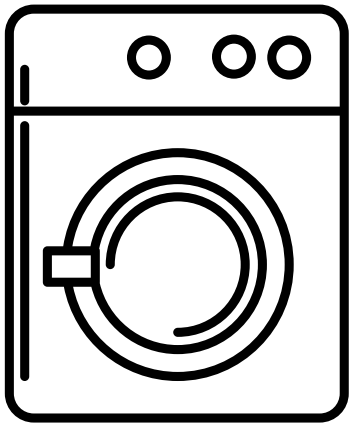
Marketplace, or buy & sell groups on Facebook for cloth diapers and baby items is a great place to find second-hand diapers.



Rinse Poop

Poop doesn't go in the washer, and needs to be removed by spraying, dunking, or using liners.

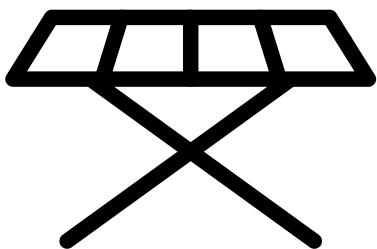
Exception: breastfed poop.



Wash Diapers

Place soiled diapers in the washing machine.

- Optional prerinse cycle, 15-20 minutes, warm or cool with small amount of detergent.
- Wash Cycle - longest cycle with heavy agitation for dirty laundry, typically cottons cycle. This can be warm/hot water with a detergent, as indicated by the detergent manufacturing for the size of the load. This cycle should include a rinse.



Dry Diapers

Diapers can then be dried by hanging to dry, or tossing in the dryer. The dryer will break down textiles quicker than hanging to dry, but is a viable solution to quicken & soften dry times.

AGITATION

This is the key part of washing diapers - it's the swishing, flopping and movement of diapers to clean the textiles. It's impacted by load size, water quantity, and the machine cycle.

BLEACH

Disinfecting bleach can be used sparingly. Soaking in bleach may damage elastics and PUL. Some brands recommend regular bleach washes for synthetic fibres. Bleach can help kill smells.

OXIBLEACH

Oxiclean, and other oxygenated bleaches, are a simple additive that can help boost a detergent's performance and clean diapers. It's one of our favourite additives to recommend because of its effectiveness and simplicity of use.

DETERGENT

Detergent: You can use ANY detergent free of fabric softeners to wash cloth diapers.

Not all detergents work for all families, water qualities, and situations. And sometimes you may need to increase or decrease detergent for your water, load size, and soil.

Plant based detergents work best with natural fibre diapers. Synthetic fibres NEED synthetic detergents.

POOP REMOVAL

Inadequate poop removal can impact the smells and effectiveness of cleaning diapers. There are different ways to do this and changes may improve the wash performance.

WATER SOFTENER

Water softeners such as Calgon and Borax may be required for extra hard water. Many detergent brands recommend adding more detergent to combat hard waters. Water softeners can be an expensive addition to laundry.

RLR, MIGHTY BUBBLES

Two common laundry products used to reset diapers. These products are best used according to the package.

Alternatives: a double scoop of Tide can be just as effective; or even adding a scoop of oxiclean.

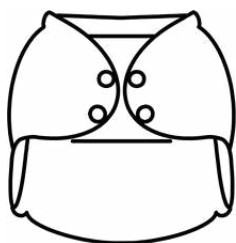
FABRIC SOFTENERS & DRYER SHEETS

Fabric softener is a big no. It coats the fibres of the textile for softness. If fabric softener or dryer sheets are used, just launder again. Repeated use builds up and impacts absorbency.

CLOTH DIAPER CHECKLIST

- ☐ Cloth Diapers
- ☐ Inserts (if needed)
- ☐ Dirty Diaper Storage (Pail or Bag)
- ☐ Wipes (Cloth or Disposable)
- ☐ Night time diaper
- ☐ Fasteners (if flats or fitted)
- ☐ Poop Removal (Sprayer, Liners)
- ☐ Skin Care (Diaper Balm, Wash)
- ☐ Changing Pad and Travel Wet Bag
- ☐ Swim Diaper

Cloth Diaper Links



The Cloth Diaper Quiz

Simple quiz designed to help new parents find the best diaper for their family.

<https://www.clothdiaperpodcast.com/cloth-diaper-quiz/>



Cloth Diaper Podcast

Available on Apple, Google & Podbean, sharing stories from families around the world

<https://www.clothdiaperpodcast.com/cloth-diaper-quiz>

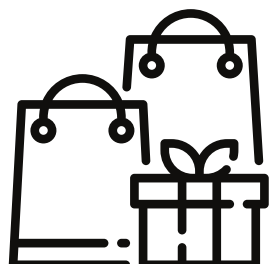


The Cloth Diaper Book

Updated book on everything cloth diapers.

Available in B&W on Amazon, or colour through Barnes & Noble and other retailers.

<https://www.clothdiaperpodcast.com/book/>



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