



Reusable nappy overview

What are reusable nappies?

Reusable nappies are also known as cloth nappies, or washable nappies. They work in the same way as disposable nappies, but instead of throwing them away after use they are washed and dried and used again.



There are several different types of reusable nappies but all include a waterproof outside layer and an absorbent inside layer

Most reusable nappies come in one size that can be altered to grow with your baby and so the same nappy can be used from 12lbs to potty training



How to get started with reusable nappies



All you need to get started with reusable nappies are a few cloth nappies, something to store used nappies in prior to washing, a washing machine and a clothes horse!

While you will need around 20 reusable nappies to use them full time you can start with just a few and build up from there over time! Some people choose to use them full time, while others opt to use them only at day or only at night. Even just one reusable nappy used a day will save 365 nappies a year from landfill!



Types of reusable nappies

All in one nappies

These are the most similar to disposable nappies as all parts of the nappy are already put together (the waterproof layer and the absorbency)



Two part nappies

A two part nappy means there is a separate nappy and waterproof wrap. This type of nappy is most similar to traditional cloth nappies. These are the best nappy for night time use

Pocket nappies

These nappies have an outer waterproof and fleece lining with a pocket in which you can insert absorbent layers to customise to your baby's needs



Absorbency can be created through a variety of materials, such as microfibre, bamboo, cotton, bamboo cotton blends, organic cotton, hemp, or combinations of these materials and can be paired together to provide the desired level of absorbency.



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Nappy fitting and absorbancy

To ensure there are no leaks it is important to fit the nappy correctly! See the Cloth Nappy Library YouTube channel for a video on fitting nappies



Cloth nappies fit low (below the belly button in the front and right above the bum crack in the back) and close (tucked nicely into the knicker line) to baby's legs, but they do not need to be super tight to make them work.

Don't worry about gaps at the waist as you want to be able to fit 2 fingers in comfortably to allow baby to lean and move around, but the legs are the area that you want to ensure have a snug fit as this is where you'll see most leaks.



Pair fast absorbing inserts (eg. microfibre/cotton) on top closest to your baby's bum (inside the pocket) with high capacity inserts (eg. hemp/bamboo) furtherst away from your baby's bum. Remember that microfibre cannot directly touch baby's skin.

Add an extra layer of absorbency at the front for boys and back for girls to prevent leaks.





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How to care for your cloth nappies

Before using for the first time wash your new nappies and inserts cold **2-4 times without** fabric softener, bleach or gel detergent



If you don't prewash new nappies, they will not be absorbent enough and they will leak. Nappies reach their full absorbency by around 8-10 washes

When you take the used nappy off your baby you can flush solids down the toilet if your baby is weaned. Then store used nappies in a wet bag or bucket prior to washing.



Run nappies through a quick wash or pre wash cycle on your machine at 30 degrees to rinse off urine and any remaining solids.

Then run a long wash at **40 degrees for babies over 3 months old** and at 60 degrees for babies under 3 months old. For optimal hygiene and care nappies should be washed within 2 to 3 days of use.



You can wash nappies with your other baby clothes or towels using biological detergent and **remember do not use fabric softener, bleach or gel detergent** as this will reduce absorption.

Dry nappies on a **clothes horse** or on a **clothes line**, but not on a radiator



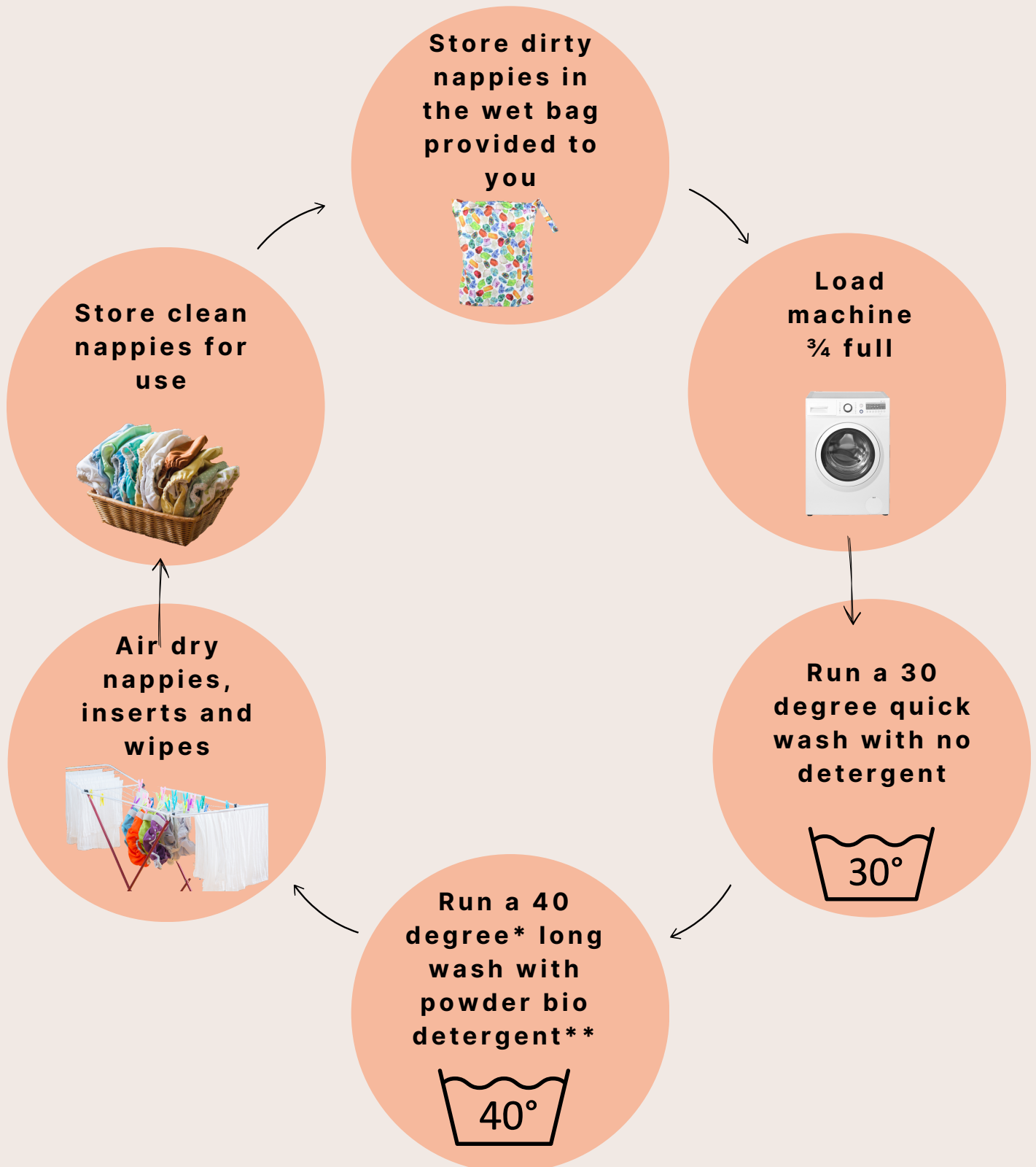
Run a maintenance cycle on your washing machine monthly.

A strip wash of the nappies is occasionally needed for ammonia or detergent building up in the nappies over time. Guidelines for strip washing can be found online.



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Cloth nappy and wipes washing instructions



***Wash at 60 degrees if baby is under 3 months**

****Never use fabric softener**



Reusable wipes overview and care guide

Reusable wipes are used in the same way you would use disposable wipes, except that you wash them and reuse them instead of throwing them away after use!



Reusable wipes are more effective at cleaning baby's bum and so one reusable wipe will do the job of 5-6 disposable wipes.

Reusable wipes come in cotton, bamboo or microfibre. However microfibre is only suitable for cleaning hands and faces and not for nappy changes.



You can either store clean wipes dry and add water as you use them. Or you can store them wet in a tub and then they are pre-wet like disposable wipes. If you store your wipes wet, remember to change the water every day or two.

To use them out and about you can pack a small spray bottle of water in your nappy changing bag to wet the wipes, or pack them wet in a small waterproof bag. Remember to take a bag also for dirty nappies and wipes.



You can store and wash dirty wipes with your used nappies. They can be air dried alongside the nappies. However you don't need to dry the wipes after washing if you are storing the clean wipes wet in a container.



Online Cloth Nappy Information Workshops

It's a great idea to attend an online workshop on cloth nappies, run by the Cloth Nappy Library. These workshops are open to everyone and cover cloth nappies use and care, with tips and tricks by experienced cloth nappy users! They also include a Q&A session so you can ask any of your burning nappy questions!



Upcoming workshops

Online workshops are held monthly. Some are held in the day while others are held in the evening to allow you to attend when suits you. In person workshops are sometimes held, depending on location.

You can attend more than one workshop. This will allow you to attend both before you begin/as you begin using cloth nappies and at any point going forward when you have questions or issues.

See the Cloth Nappy Library's [event page](https://clothnappylibrary.ie/category/events/) for dates, times and links to upcoming workshops! <https://clothnappylibrary.ie/category/events/>

For more information or to submit a question ahead of an online workshop email nappylibraryireland@gmail.com



You can also join the Cloth Nappy Chat Group (Ireland) on Facebook or WhatsApp to get support and join the large cloth nappy community! Go to <https://clothnappylibrary.ie/our-community/> to join

Once your baby has potty trained you can keep the nappies to use them on younger siblings, pass them on to friends or relatives, or donate them via the Cloth Nappy Chat Group

