

## Choosing a Stroller

Strollers can be a parent's best friend, but choosing the wrong baby stroller could spell trouble and inconvenience. How can parents choose the right baby stroller from the many available in stores and via the Internet? Strollers are available to match just about any lifestyle, so think about how you want to use the stroller first and then look for a stroller model that best fits your life and your baby.

### Safety Features Are Important

As always, baby's safety is the biggest concern. Check strollers for stability before buying, and don't forget to see if the stroller will remain upright with a diaper bag hanging over the handles! Also check the stroller harness. A five-point harness that goes over baby's shoulders is best, especially for infants or babies who are in the stroller a lot. For occasional mall trips, a three-point harness might be OK.

### Wheels and Handles

Walk your favourite strollers through the store before making a purchase. Check the height of the handles to be sure they are comfortable for you. Taller parents should look for strollers with adjustable handle heights so they don't have to stoop and good clearance around the back wheels. Choose a stroller that makes corners smoothly, especially if you'll use it in crowded places. Also try walking with the stroller at a faster pace to be sure your feet don't hit the wheels. Foam-covered handles are a nice choice for comfort.

### Convenience Features

Do you need a stroller with a basket underneath, or will you carry the diaper bag elsewhere? Some strollers come with parent organization trays, toy bars, snack and drink holders, rain hoods and more. Many of these accessories are available separately, so don't let the lack of a drink holder sway you away from a stroller you otherwise love. How the stroller folds and how much trunk space it may take are important considerations. Be sure you can fold, unfold and store the stroller easily!

## Types of Stroller

### Lightweight Strollers

Lightweight strollers have come a long way from the old umbrella stroller. This new generation of strollers under 10 kg have many of the same features as larger strollers, such as reclining seats, storage baskets and sun shades. These strollers are great for travellers and perfect for trips to the mall or zoo. Inexpensive umbrella strollers are still a great, economical choice to be stashed in the trunk as a spare, but those without a reclining seat, they can't be used with tiny infants.

### Standard Strollers

Larger and heavier than lightweight strollers, standard strollers often feature roomier seats, larger wheels, more storage space and extras like ergonomic handles. Standard strollers perform well in most conditions, and many parents love these versatile wonders. For travellers, these strollers do fold, often with nice one-hand mechanisms, but they take up more trunk space and are heavier to lift in and out. Larger strollers may be hard to handle in crowded places.

### **Jogging Strollers (All Terrain)**

Outdoorsy parents may want to consider a jogging stroller, as a backup for a standard stroller or even as an everyday stroller. Often featuring large, sturdy tires, sleek frames, hand-grip brakes and all-terrain suspension systems, jogging strollers perform well on almost any surface. Jogging strollers may not fold as easily or as flat as other strollers, meaning there may be better everyday choices for parents who travel a lot. Jogging strollers are not recommended for infants under 6 months old.

### **Travel Systems (Car Seat & Stroller in One)**

Travel systems offer convenience for busy new parents. A travel system begins with a standard stroller, but includes an infant car seat that snaps onto the stroller, allowing parents to move the infant from car to stroller easily. Most travel systems come with a car seat base that stays in the car so that parents just snap the infant seat into the base rather than buckling/unbuckling the seat into the car. Once the infant seat is outgrown, travel systems perform the same as standard strollers.

### **Strollers for More Than One Child (Double & Triple Stroller Options)**

If you have more than one child, strollers with extra capacity can make outings easier. Consider the children's ages when choosing a stroller for multiples. Some double strollers have space for a child to stand and ride, but this doesn't allow for in-stroller naps. Other models have seats for all riders. Choose seats that recline for younger riders. Side by side models can be cumbersome when walking in tight areas. Tandem models where one seat is in front of the other can cause arguments between children on who sits in front.

## **Buying Used**

If you are considering buying a used baby stroller there are several things you should take into consideration. Make sure the stroller is still sturdy, with smooth rolling wheels and secure safety belts. Be sure you closely inspect the stroller for hidden damage or sharp edges. Check the wheels, frame, fabric, and padding for cracks or splits. Finally make sure the stroller or car seat in a travel system has not been recalled for some reason.

## **Strollers at BabySafe**

BabySafe has a large range of strollers ranging from the basic umbrella fold stroller, to deluxe top of the range models. Feel free to come in to BabySafe and discuss your unique needs with our friendly staff and try out the strollers we offer.