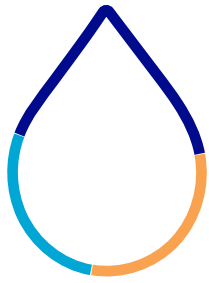


Breastfeeding + Work

# Your Survival Guide to the First Year



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There's nothing like having a baby to prove that you can't control everything, and going with the flow is critical to surviving that first year. But so is having a plan. So we made one that sets you up for breastfeeding success when you return to work.

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## 1. Before Your Maternity Leave

### ● Know your breastfeeding rights.

The federal PUMP for Nursing Mothers Act requires employers to provide breastfeeding employees with break time to pump milk at work and a private, non-bathroom lactation space.

### ● Talk with your manager and/or HR.

Ask about your workplace lactation accommodations. Find out where you will pump, how far it is from where you work, and if there's access to a fridge.

### ● Pick out your breast pump.

Most breastfeeding employees can get a pump covered by health insurance, but plans differ from provider to provider, so call your insurance provider to learn more.



◆ Many states have additional protections.  
Visit [mamava.com/breastfeeding-laws/at-work](https://www.mamava.com/breastfeeding-laws/at-work) to learn more.

## 2. On Your Maternity Leave

### ● **Build your freezer stash.**

Start pumping two to four weeks before you return to work to stockpile frozen breast milk. Depending on your baby's nursing schedule, it's often helpful to pump one hour before breastfeeding or one hour after.

### ● **Read a book.**

Jessica Shortall's *Work. Pump. Repeat.* delivers tried-and-true, practical tips for pumping at work. *The Fifth Trimester* by Lauren Smith Brody draws honest and fun advice from 800 moms.

### ● **Practice packing your pump bag.**

If possible, pack an extra set of flanges, valves, and tubing to leave at work.

Get baby used to taking a bottle *before* you go back to work.

## 3. Power Couple Tips for Making It Work at Home

Juggling two jobs and two kids in daycare isn't easy. Here are some helpful tips to manage the mayhem from one couple.

### **Set consistent patterns.**

Divide, conquer and be clear about who's doing what. For instance, one parent can be in charge of breakfast and the other prep lunches.

### **Hold a standing meeting.**

Make time on Sunday evenings to plan meals and coordinate work and drop-off and pick-up schedules.

### **Keep your eyes on the prize.**

Balance structure with spontaneity to make space for the right thing, at the right time—like an impromptu family hike, even though it's dinner time.



# 4. Pack Your Pump Bag Like a Pro



Returning to work after baby can be a mixed bag of emotions—excitement, sadness, maybe even a smidge of #momguilt. (Smudge that out!) The last thing you need is to worry about what to put in your pump bag. So we've created this essential pump bag packing checklist for you.

*a 2nd set is handy!*

- 1 Pumping and tubing
- 2 Flanges, breast shields, and bottles
- 3 A hands-free pumping bra (or leave one at work)

- 4 A small cooler with a freezer pack
- 5 Milk bottles
- 6 Large zip-top plastic bag for storing pump parts between sessions
- 7 Your phone - with the Mamava app loaded!
- 8 A big scarf in case it's cold
- 9 Bra pads

- 10 A photo of your babe to help you relax and let down
- 11 Healthy snacks
- 12 Water bottle to stay hydrated

- 13 Wipes or a sanitizing spray for quick clean-up
- 14 Bottle brush and drying rack to leave at work

*nice to have!*

Replenish your supplies at [medela.us/breastfeeding/products](https://medela.us/breastfeeding/products)

## 5. Back to Work

### ● Schedule your pump sessions.

Set up your calendar with daily recurring events to pump every three or four hours. Let your colleagues know your pump breaks are non-negotiable and request that meetings not be scheduled during those times.

### ● Find yourself a bosom buddy.

Enlist a co-worker who understands your breastfeeding goals and can share helpful insights. Your best advocate: a mom who's been there herself.

### ● Prepare for shake-ups.

Returning to work can affect milk supply and everyone's schedules may feel a little off, so it might be a good time to circle back with a lactation consultant or other experts.

Supportive female coworkers can play an important role in a woman's decision to continue breastfeeding after returning to work.

*Health Communication, 2019*

## 6. Travel Like a Breastfeeding Boss

As if being away from your baby isn't tough enough, work travel when you're breastfeeding comes with some extra-special challenges. Here's what we've got for you: Gallons of empathy, plus these tips for getting your milk home to baby.

💧 **Know the TSA guidelines.** **Know the rules;** consider carrying a copy. Breast milk is exempt from the 3.4 ounce liquid rule. Let the TSA agents know you're traveling with breast milk and separate your pump and bottles (empty or full) from other liquids for screening.

💧 **Plan places to pump.** Scout spaces along your route and at your final destination. The (free!) **Mamava app** guides you to thousands of places to pump in private—never a bathroom.

💧 **Have a plan for getting milk home.** Bring a small soft-sided cooler for your milk and some zip-top plastic bags to store ice. After going through security, stop at a restaurant to fill up. Freezer packs are allowed, but must be completely frozen to get through TSA. Ask your employer if they reimburse milk shipping expenses for work travel—with a company like **milkstork.com**—because many do.

💧 **Ensure access to a hotel fridge.** Call your hotel to confirm you'll have access to a refrigerator to store your milk and a freezer for your ice packs, in your room or elsewhere.

💧 **Ask for what you need.** People don't always understand pumping. Tell travel companions and colleagues that you require predictable breaks, a private space, and time to pump.

💧 **Enjoy yourself.** Use your time away to relax and recharge. Savor a long shower. Read a book. Enjoy a full night of uninterrupted sleep. (It might even be good for your milk production!)

The free Mamava app helps breastfeeding parents find thousands of lactation spaces—not just Mamava pods!—on the go. The app also unlocks pods with a touch of a button, sends vacancy notifications, and includes words of support from other breastfeeding parents.



Free to use!

## 7. Work + Milk Supply: Find Your Flow

Managing milk supply when you go back to work can be a big source of stress. What can you do? Follow this flow.

For more helpful resources like this, visit [mamava.com/parent-resources](https://www.mamava.com/parent-resources)

start here!  
Now that you're back to work, are you worried you're not making enough milk for your baby?

NO

YES

Can you add another pump session at work?

YES

NO

Are you pumping every 3-4 hours at work?

NO

YES

Do you feel relaxed during your pump sessions?

NO

YES

Great! Try a couple of strategies—perhaps all at once.

TRY

TRY

TRY

Schedule sessions in your calendar.

Ask a coworker to help protect your time.

Work during a session if it helps.

Look at a pic of your babe.

TRY

TRY

TRY

Invite some spa vibes into your pump sessions.

TRY

Turn on relaxing sounds.

Listen to an audio book.

Is your baby happy, healthy + growing?

NOT SURE

YES

A lactation consultant can help troubleshoot your specific challenges.

Check in with a healthcare provider (baby's and/or yours) to ensure everyone is A-OK.

All sounds great! But consult a doctor or lactation consultant if you're concerned.

Yay!

Celebrate this abundance—and hang onto these milk-stoking strategies for a time you need them.

### HOT TIPS FOR MAINTAINING YOUR MILK SUPPLY

**1. Check your supplies.** A flange that's not the right size can hinder milk expression. Refer to the information that came with your pump to learn about replacing parts.

**2. Take care of yourself.** How well you eat, sleep and manage stress can impact your supply. Keep healthy snacks and water handy. Rest. Ask for help when you need it.

**3. Seek support.** A lactation consultant can help determine if you need help with your milk supply, and work with you to find ways to address the issue.

**4. Make smart choices.** Research is mixed on whether teas, bars, and other goodies touting milk-boosting benefits actually work. Check with your doctor before trying.

# 8. How Well Does Your Workplace Support Breastfeeding?

Does your workplace stack up? Score one drop for each statement you can say yes to.

check here!

1. People don't give me dirty looks when they see me putting my breast milk in the fridge.
2. My employer has an official lactation accommodation policy.
3. There is a clean, private, and designated lactation space for pumping.
4. My employer stocks our lactation space with supplies and/or pays for breast milk shipping.
5. My employer promotes and rewards a supportive breastfeeding culture and/or provides a flexible back-to-work schedule after maternity leave.



**1-2 drops:** Oh dear. It might be time to start lactivating for better support at work. Or looking for a new job.



**3 drops:** Your situation isn't the worst, but you deserve more support.



**4: drops:** Sounds like your employer is doing a good job—perhaps you can help them do even better.



**5 drops:** Take a moment to send a grateful note to your colleagues, your HR director, your boss, thanking them for creating a workplace that supports breastfeeding.