

Your Preparation Diary

Ongoing Practise

- Listen to your MP3s regularly. Use the 'Pregnancy Relaxation' track to help keep you nicely relaxed and calm and the 'Relaxed Birth' track to help you prepare for the birth.
- Practise your birth affirmations daily (listen to the MP3 or repeat them to yourself/ outloud).
- Listen to the 'Fear Release' MP3 if you feel anxious or see/hear something negative about birth.
- Practise your breathing techniques. Decide which ones feel right for you and practise these regularly.
- Plan in time to practise some of the massage strokes with your partner. Make this a regular part of your week if you have time (for example 15 mins while you're both relaxing in front of the TV or before bed, 2 or 3 times a week). Play relaxing music and use fragranced oils if you like, to make this a really pampering experience.

Then, in addition to your ongoing practise, add in:

From 30 weeks

- Practise your pelvic floor exercises daily (ideally 3-4 times a day). You can download a kegel app to your phone to help remind you and guide you through the exercises.
- Start being aware of your posture. Aim to sit upright with your hips higher than your knees as much as possible. This allows the most space for your baby to get into the right position and will help alleviate any lower back pain.
- Focus on creating anchors when you feel relaxed/listen to your MP3s. Use all of your senses - smell (candles/room fragrance), sound (music, your partner's voice), touch (a snuggly blanket, massage strokes), sight (visualisation, photos of loved ones/favourite places).
- Make sure that you are listening to your MP3s at least twice a week. Alternate between 'Pregnancy Relaxation' and 'Relaxed Birth' or use the 'Fear release' track when needed.

From 34 weeks

- Perineal massage daily (if it's right for you). Remember to set the scene (dim lighting, relaxing music, have a bath first) to help this be more comfortable for you.
- Go through your birth plan with your birth partner and discuss your options together. Make sure that you're both fully confident and familiar with all aspects of your birth preferences.
- Pack your hospital bag (aim to have this packed by 35 weeks). Refer to the packlist if you're not sure what you'll need to take.
- Hire a tens machine (if you want to use one).
- Plan your route to the hospital and visit the birth centre/labour suite for a tour if possible.

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From 36 weeks

- Listen to your 'Relaxed Birth' MP3 daily.
- If you experience any Braxton Hicks/practise contractions then use this as a time to practise your 'Waves of Relaxation' breaths.
- Read positive birth stories regularly.
- Take time to relax whenever you can - yoga classes, a long soak in the bath, a walk in the fresh air etc.
- Plan your 'pre birth project' or an activity that you can do to keep you busy and distracted in the early stages of labour.
- Set the scene at home. Whether you're planning a home birth or aiming to be at the birth centre/hospital for the actual birth, you'll be spending as much time as possible at home. Make sure that it's a relaxing space and that you have everything that you need and want to hand - music, birth ball, fairy lights/candles, yummy food treats, comfy cushions and pillows etc.
- Look after yourself. Drink plenty of water (at least 8 glasses a day). Eat lots of fruit and vegetables. Rest when you're tired.
- Remember that you can 100% do this!! Stay focussed on your ideal birth (let yourself daydream about it all going smoothly). Remind yourself that your body is designed to give birth and keep your thoughts positive.