you won’t be around babies very long before a diaper change is necessary. Babies seem to be wet a great deal of the time, but you can understand why since they are on a liquid diet for the first few months!

Babies need about four dozen diapers in their first wardrobe. An average young baby uses at least 63 clean diapers a week. The necessity for diapers usually tapers off to a couple a day at nap time and nighttime soon after baby reaches 2 years. Ordinarily, children gain bladder and bowel control during the day by age three and are completely toilet trained (both day and night) by age five. Each child is different, so the use of control muscles develops at various ages. It is pointless, and even injurious, to begin toilet training before the child is able to learn.

We don’t know how diapers were fastened before safety pins were invented, but everybody was likely keeping them on somehow. Diapers were always white and were called three-cornered pants. Today babies wear white or colored diapers, or diapers with plaids, polka dots, or flowers. They are made from four types of cotton fabric—birdseye, gauze, knit or flannel—-in the form of rectangles, squares, contour shapes, or prefolded with extra layers of fabric in the center. Sizes are generally 20 by 40 inches or 27 by 27 inches. There is a panty diaper available that simply snaps on. Disposable diapers are very convenient for general use and especially for travel. If you are taking care of a baby who wears disposable diapers you need to know how parent(s) dispose of them. Certain cities have regulations regarding disposal.

Diapers are folded into different shapes depending on the size of the baby, the size of the diaper, whether baby is a boy or girl, and whether baby sleeps on the back or stomach. Every baby will wear diapers folded in various ways as the age and size changes.

Every parent has a favorite way to fold diapers. Usually they are folded in the shape they are to be used right after being laundered. When you are caring for a baby, find out how the mother wants the diapers folded each time you are responsible.

**Why are diapers folded a certain way?**
Diapers are folded so that they:
- Provide for absorption of moisture in the right place
- Have as little bulk as possible between the legs
- Will not slip off easily
- Are comfortable and easy to clean

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**C A R I N G  F O R  B A B I E S**

Diapering Baby

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Diapering Baby

How diapers are folded

Methods for folding a 20 by 40 inch diaper

A

1. Spread diaper flat. Fold A over B and C over A.
2. Fold 1/2 of the end over so there are six layers on one part of the diaper, three on the other.

B

1. Spread diaper flat. Fold A over B and C over A.
2. Turn sides in at an angle.
3. Turn up 1/3 of length.
4. Place diaper under baby.
5. Gather center portion at the crotch. Pin corners together at hips.

C

1. Spread diaper flat.
2. Fold C to within 7” of A.
3. Fold one thickness C to within 3” of fold B.
4. Fold A to B.
5. Fold the end up 1/3. Place greatest thickness at the back for girls, in front for boys.

D

1. Fold diaper in half.
2. Fold A over to BC; fold D to line EC.
3. Fold C to line F.
4. Fold corner G over F.
Diapering Baby

Methods for folding a 27 by 27 inch diaper

1. Fold A to line BC. Fold D to line EC.
2. Fold C to F.
3. Fold comer G over F.
4. Place the folded diaper on the baby.

Getting a diaper on baby

When you are caring for a baby, ask the parent to show you how he or she changes baby's diaper. You may have some practice diapering a doll but that is easy compared to a squirming live baby. The older baby gets, the more skill is needed on your part.

Here are some helpful hints:

• Have all supplies within reach:
  a clean folded diaper
  a place to put pins
  facial tissue or cotton swabs
  oil or powder
• Lay baby on a flat surface
• Stand close to baby so your body will keep baby from falling off the surface.
• Keep one hand on baby at all times. If you are right handed place baby's head near your left elbow.
• Remove pins from the diaper. Place them out of baby's reach. Grasp baby's ankles with your left hand. Raise the buttocks slightly and fold the top part of the diaper over the lower section. Lower the buttocks onto the clean part of the diaper to protect the surface you are working on from being soiled. After cleaning the baby, remove the used diaper and put a clean one in its place.
• Hold your fingers between baby's body and the diaper. Place pins crosswise with the points toward the outside. If they come unpinned they won't stick baby's tummy or thigh. Also, if your fingers fit easily between baby's diaper and tummy, baby will be more comfortable.
• The thickest part of the diaper is placed in front for boys and in back for girls unless she sleeps on her tummy. Baby boys are apt to spray, so put an extra diaper or cloth on the penis while you're cleaning these areas.
Diapering Baby

Keeping baby clean
After a wet diaper, dry the diaper areas or cleanse with a bit of baby oil on a cotton swab. If parent uses powder, dust on a small amount before putting on the dry diaper. Find out what mother or father does with the soiled diapers. Most parents keep them in a covered pail of water.

Changing a diaper after baby has a bowel movement takes a bit more skill. If you unpin a diaper and discover baby has had a bowel movement, pin the diaper back up and make sure you have all the needed supplies handy plus a pan with warm water and a soft cloth or a pre-moistened wipe.

To begin, open the diaper and wipe as much of the stool off the buttocks as possible while you grasp baby's ankles and hold the buttock up out of the diaper. Next, fold the top half of the diaper over the soiled part and finish cleaning baby thoroughly. When the stool is wiped off, wash baby with warm water, dry and put on oil or powder. Keeping babies clean is very important because urine or stool left on them is irritating to their tender skin.

Soiled diapers are rinsed out before they are placed in the diaper pail. Ask the parent how he or she wants you to do this. Most parents hold the diaper firmly at one end and swish it around in the toilet. Hold the diaper out of the toilet and flush it. Rinse again, wring it out and place it in the diaper pail. Hold tight to the diaper so it doesn't get flushed away and clog the plumbing.

At your club meetings
Demonstrate three ways to fold diapers.
Demonstrate diapering on a doll.
Discuss special safety measures to be used when diapering a baby.
Discuss how and why diapering methods change as baby gets older.
Ask a mother or father to attend your meeting to demonstrate diapering and to discuss procedures.

Between club meetings
Ask to see three different kinds of diapers in your local shops. Compare appearance and price.
Practice folding diapers six ways.
List safety precautions you would take when diapering a baby.
Practice putting a diaper on a doll.
Ask a parent with a baby to help you learn to put a diaper on the baby.

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