

FREE GUIDE

The Birth Plan Guide

*Discussion prompts to think through your preferences —
and talk them through with your provider.*

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BYANAHEL.Y.COM

A NOTE FROM ANAHELY

The conversation matters more than the document.

With my first, I didn't even know this existed - and trust me when I say, it was a whole different story.

By my fifth, I've learned the real value isn't the document — it's the conversation it encourages you to have with your provider beforehand, so nothing on delivery day comes as a surprise to either of you.

Bring these prompts to an appointment around 32–34 weeks and talk through them together. Write down your preference, but also what you're open to if things don't go as planned — that flexibility can take a lot of pressure off in the moment.

What's inside

- 01 Labor Environment & Pain Management
- 02 Delivery Preferences & After Baby Arrives
- 03 If Plans Change — and how to open the conversation

Labor Environment & Pain Management

Labor Environment

- ? Do you want dim lighting, music, or a quiet room?
- ? Who do you want in the room with you — and who do you not?
- ? Do you want to move around and change positions freely, or stay in bed?
- ? Is there anything that would help you feel more comfortable — your own pillow, a photo, a specific playlist?

Pain Management

- ? Do you want an epidural, and if so, at what point in labor?
- ? Are you interested in non-medical options first — a birthing ball, shower, or breathing techniques?
- ? Do you want pain medication offered proactively, or only if you ask for it?
- ? How do you feel about interventions like Pitocin if labor stalls?

Delivery Preferences & After Baby Arrives

Delivery Preferences

- ? Do you want to see the baby crowning with a mirror, or be told when to push without one?
- ? Who do you want to cut the umbilical cord, if anyone?
- ? Do you want delayed cord clamping?
- ? Do you have a preference about an episiotomy versus tearing naturally?

After Baby Arrives

- ? Do you want immediate skin-to-skin contact?
- ? Do you plan to breastfeed, formula feed, or both — and do you want lactation support offered right away?
- ? Do you want baby's first bath delayed?
- ? Any preferences on vaccines, eye ointment, or vitamin K administered at the hospital?

If Plans Change

- ? If a C-section becomes necessary, is there anything that still matters to you — your partner present, skin-to-skin in the OR?
- ? Who do you want making decisions on your behalf if you're not able to?
- ? What would help you feel supported, not just informed, if the plan needs to change?

Roughly a third of births in the U.S. involve a C-section — it's worth having a preference here even if you're hoping not to need it.

Talking to Your Provider

The document matters less than the conversation. Bring your list to an appointment — ideally around 32–34 weeks — and talk through it together.

TRY OPENING WITH

"I've written down some preferences for labor and delivery — can we go through them together so I know what's realistic here, and you know what matters to me?"

*"The best birth plan is one you can hold
loosely — clear about what matters most,
flexible about the rest."*

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PRINTABLE BIRTH PLAN

A quick-reference page for your care team • Preferences can change as needed.

Name: _____	OB Provider: _____
Partner's Name: _____	Baby's Pediatrician: _____
Baby's Name: _____	Pediatrician Contact: _____
Baby's Due Date: _____	Prenatal Classes Attended: _____

LABOR

- ☐ Dimmed lights / calm, quiet room.
- ☐ I would like to be out of bed and change positions as much as possible.
- ☐ I would prefer to have a saline lock instead of IV fluids.
- ☐ I would like to use alternative pain relief: breathing, massage, shower, position changes.
- ☐ I will ask for pain medication if I need it.
- ☐ I would like an epidural to help cope with labor pain.
- ☐ Please offer a warm perineal compress during labor.
- ☐ Please offer pain medication if you see I am uncomfortable.
- ☐ I am unsure what I want for pain relief; I will decide when I am in labor.
- ☐ I would like to use portable music / headphones during labor.
- ☐ I would like to take photos or video prior to birth.
- ☐ I would like to use my doula for labor support.

LABOR OPTIONS

- ☐ Squat bars
- ☐ Shower
- ☐ Spinning Babies techniques
- ☐ Peanut balls
- ☐ Birthing balls
- ☐ CUB support

DURING DELIVERY

- ☐ I would like to delay cord clamping for 30–60 seconds.
- ☐ I would like my partner to cut the umbilical cord.
- ☐ I would like to touch my baby's head as it crowns.
- ☐ I would like a mirror to view my birth.
- ☐ I would like my preference regarding episiotomy / tearing to be discussed.
- ☐ I would like to bank or donate my cord blood.

POSTPARTUM / NEWBORN CARE

- ☐ Immediate skin-to-skin contact after delivery.
- ☐ If baby must be separated for medical care, I would like _____ to accompany baby.
- ☐ I would like to be discharged as soon as possible.
- ☐ If I have a boy, I would like him circumcised before discharge if my pediatrician allows.
- If I have a boy: ☐ Circumcise ☐ Do not circumcise
- Feeding preference: ☐ Breastmilk ☐ Formula ☐ Both
- ☐ Please provide lactation support / offer it right away.
- ☐ Delay baby's first bath, if possible.
- ☐ Newborn care preferences: ☐ Vitamin K ☐

Eye ointment ☐ Hepatitis B vaccine

C-SECTION PREFERENCES

- ☐ If a C-section is needed, I would like my partner present if possible.
- ☐ I would like skin-to-skin in the OR if medically appropriate. Support person / decision-maker:

OTHER REQUESTS / NOTES
