

Wendy Bellissimo (left) designed nurseries for both of Brooke Shields's daughters.



10 tips for the perfect nursery

1 think long term
“Try to choose things that will take them into the toddler years and beyond,” says L.A. nursery designer Wendy Bellissimo. One example? Skip the changing table by placing a changing pad on the top of a waist-high dresser.

2 choose textiles first
“You’re going to build off of your bedding—that’s where you get your colors from, and if you have a theme it will come from your bedding,” says Bellissimo.

3 experiment with color
“Creating a memorable nursery means stepping outside of what’s

predictable,” say Serena Dugan and Lily Kanter of Sausalito, Calif., baby bedding designers Serena & Lily. Or for a clean, modern look, try going white, says N.Y.C. designer David Netto: “Let the color come later with all the stuff.”

4 mix it up
If you love both modern and vintage looks, “work in a piece of modern art, framed in an ornate antique frame to pull it all together,” advise Dugan and Kanter. “The only rule when designing a nursery is that the space should feel special to you.”

5 splurge or save?
Splurge: A cushy upholstered glider “where you can

catnap during the 3 a.m. feeding,” say Dugan and Kanter.

Save: The crib. “If you’re on a tight budget, you can go for a less expensive crib but still invest in the bedding,” says Bellissimo.

6 design with safety in mind
Keep bedding to a bare minimum. No pillows, no bows, no blankets. (The American Academy of Pediatrics advises parents to instead keep babies warm with wearable infant sleep sacks to reduce the risk of sudden infant death syndrome.)

7 let there be dark!
“When creating window treatments, put a blackout roller shade behind a more transparent fabric shade,” advise Christiane Lemieux and Jennifer Chused of dwell-baby bedding. “The heavy-duty blackout shade at nighttime will get you that extra half hour in the morning!”

8 get a baby’s-eye view
“Make sure you have a bookshelf for all the books and toys that are within easy reach for the baby,” says Bellissimo. “Get down on the ground and think about being on the child’s level.”

9 don’t forget storage
“A lot of parents don’t think about how much stuff a baby accumulates,” says Bellissimo. “You really want to make sure you have adequate storage space ahead of time, because it’s going to make you feel so much more prepared and ready for anything.”

10 design the nursery to suit your taste
“Most babies don’t have an opinion about their surroundings,” say Dugan and Kanter. “And later they’ll have plenty to weigh in on, so enjoy this luxury!” Adds Bellissimo: “You want to love this room too.”