

# Taking a Cruise with a Baby: What You NEED to Know

If you're thinking about or in the planning stages of booking a cruise, and you've got a child under the age of two, read on to learn more about how you can make the experience of cruising with a baby go by without a hitch.



## Can Babies Under 6 Months Go on a Cruise?

Generally speaking, babies under six months of age cannot go on a cruise.

Your child needs to be at least six months old before they can board most cruise ships. For trans-ocean cruises and remote itineraries, or cruises lasting longer than 15 days, babies must be at least 12 months old at embarkation. Some cruise lines also enforce the 12-month-old restriction if a cruise has more than two to three consecutive days at sea.



## Required Documentation

Another critical piece of advice: apply for your infant's travel documents several months ahead of your travel date.

### Passports

Every person, regardless of age, must have a passport to travel internationally. It must be a full passport; a passport card cannot be used for international travel.

### Other Documents

Cruise lines, the U.S. Department of State, and many countries recommend, and in some cases, require that you carry notarized statements showing permission to travel with a child.



## Routine Immunizations

The CDC does allow routine immunizations to be given at the minimum age and dose intervals in the event of travel.

### Travel Immunizations

Depending on your destination or ports of call, your baby may need several travel-specific vaccines.



## Deciding Cruise Duration

Cruise lengths vary from a short 3-day trip to standard 7-day cruises to the big ones that last 15 to 20 days or more.

Duration is a matter of preference and budget, certainly, but your baby's age may also determine the cruise length you choose. As stated earlier: most cruise lines require a baby to be at least 12 months old if the trip has 2-3 consecutive days at sea, crosses an ocean, or travels to extremely remote locations.



## Choosing Cruise Accommodations

If you've ever traveled with a baby, you know they come with a lot of baggage: clothes, diapers, food, toys—just to name a few things. If your budget allows, consider booking a larger room with pull-down beds or a family cabin that offers a second room, additional sleeping area, or even another bathroom.



## Purchasing Cruise Tickets

Frequently, the major cruise lines have "kids travel free" deals or offer discounted fare to guests staying in a room with two full-fare paying customers. So, be on the lookout for these deals and book your cruise accordingly. (Keep in mind that you will still be required to pay taxes and port fees, even if your child's ticket is free.)



## What to Pack for Your Baby

These are must-haves to bring along:

- What to Pack for Your Baby
- Sleeping Cribs
- Strollers
- High Chairs and Booster Seats
- Baby Food and Formula
- Diapers and Baby Wipes