BIRTH PLAN CHECKLIST

The decisions, in the order they come up

Ten things to talk through before you write a word of the plan. Tick each one when the two of you have discussed it, even if the answer is "not sure yet".

TandemBirth
tandembirth.com/birth-plan-checklist

1 Where, and with whom

Everything else depends on the setting and the people.

- [ ] Hospital, birth center or home, and the transfer plan if not a hospital
- [ ] Provider or practice, and who covers when they are off
- [ ] Who is in the room: partner, family, friend, doula
- [ ] Who waits outside, and who is told afterwards

2 The room

Small things you can control.

- [ ] Lights, sound, music, your own clothes
- [ ] Moving around, shower or tub, positions
- [ ] Students and visitors
- [ ] Photos and video, and who takes them

3 Labor and comfort

Preferences, not promises.

- [ ] Pain relief: what you want offered, what you want to ask for yourself
- [ ] Monitoring: continuous, intermittent or wireless, if your situation allows
- [ ] IV or saline lock, eating and drinking, per the birth place's policy
- [ ] What helps you when it gets hard, so your support person knows

4 How decisions get made

The part most plans skip, and the part that matters most when things change.

- [ ] How you want options explained and how much time you want
- [ ] Who asks the questions, and which questions (what, why, what if we wait, how long do we have)
- [ ] Who speaks for you if you cannot
- [ ] Your thoughts on induction or augmentation if it comes up

5 The birth itself

- [ ] Pushing positions, coached or with your own urges, a mirror or not
- [ ] Who announces the sex, who cuts the cord, delayed clamping
- [ ] Skin to skin right away, quiet first minutes

6 If a cesarean happens

Decide now, calmly; it is hard to decide then.

- [ ] Your support person with you, and with the baby if the baby leaves
- [ ] Drape lowered or clear, skin to skin in the operating room, your music
- [ ] Who tells you what is happening, and how

7 Your baby

- [ ] Feeding: breast or chest, formula, combination; lactation help
- [ ] Baby stays with you; exams in your room when possible
- [ ] Newborn medications and screening: what you have decided, what you want to discuss with the baby's doctor first
- [ ] Circumcision, cord blood, other wishes

8 The first days

Plan postpartum alongside the birth, not after.

- [ ] The first 72 hours: who does meals, nights, visitors, other kids, pets
- [ ] Your support network, and the backup person
- [ ] Appointments and leave for both of you
- [ ] What your care team told you to watch for in you and the baby, and who to call

9 Communication

- [ ] How you want information given: plainly, to you first, to your partner first
- [ ] A word for "give us a minute" and one for "I want to change the plan"
- [ ] What the team should know about you: history, a past birth, a loss, what you are nervous about

10 Write it, share it, keep it short

- [ ] One page. Tick boxes and short lines, not paragraphs
- [ ] Review it with your provider around 34 to 36 weeks
- [ ] Three printed copies in the bag; one on your phone
- [ ] Your support person writes their own one-pager: what they do, not what you want

Not medical advice. A birth plan is a conversation starter, not a consent form or a contract. The free two-person planner at **tandembirth.com/planner** asks these questions one at a time and builds the plan, a care-team quick reference, your provider questions and a private plan for your partner. No account; answers stay on your phone.