

# How to prepare for birth & baby

*a toolkit for expectant parents*

janine-smith.com | antenatal & postnatal specialist

# Hello!

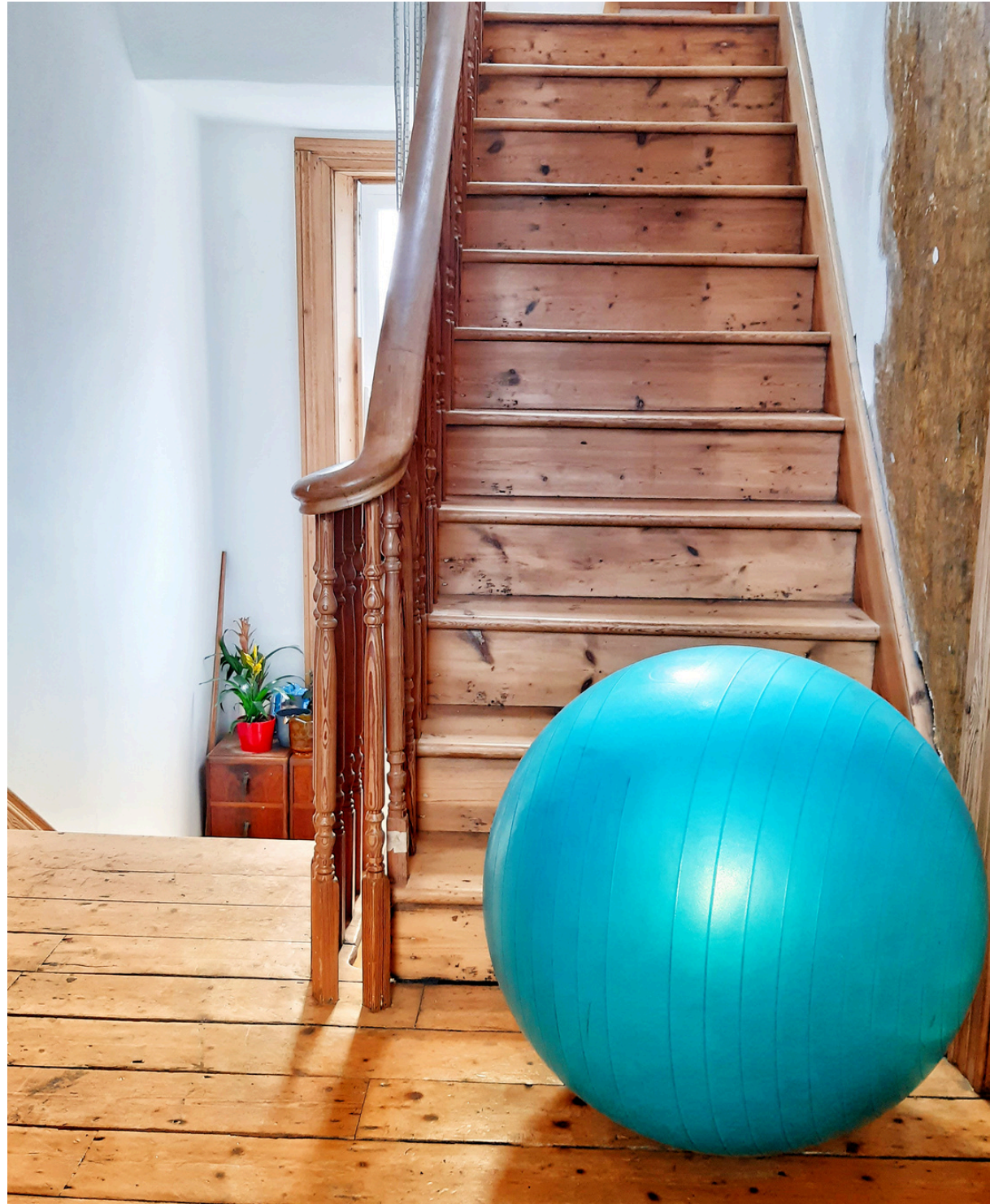
Congratulations on your pregnancy, If you are starting to think about birth and life with your new baby, this toolkit is for you.

No two births or babies are ever the same and preparation can sometimes feel overwhelming, with a lot of new information and advice. It can help to focus on:

- having an understanding of how labour, birth and new babies work
- what matters to you and thinking about what support you might need
- where the common challenges can be so you can prepare beyond your ideal birth

This a simple resource to help you prepare in a more strategic way - and it has been designed to be interactive, so you can make notes and focus on the essentials and what is important to you.

*Janine*



# For labour & birth, it helps to know...

- how birth works
- what helps during labour & birth and what doesn't
- what you can do to manage your energy, to work with contractions and to advocate for yourself
- what labour & birth can look and feel like
- more about being induced
- about having a caesarean
- what the challenges might be and how you can manage them
- more than your ideal birth

## What words describe birth for you?

Be honest and jot down the words that are relevant for you

## What are your expectations of birth?

When you think about your labour and birth, what does it look like?



What do you  
want your  
birth story  
to be?

How can you  
work towards  
this?

What could  
be helpful for  
you during  
labour and  
birth?

What might  
be unhelpful?

It can be useful to consider...

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What  
questions you  
have about  
labour  
and birth?

Is there  
anything you  
are worried  
about?

What could  
make a  
difference to  
your labour  
and birth?

How can you  
have more  
control?



Discomfort and pain are part of labour, birth and recovery so it's useful to think about how you feel about this and what you might need to manage it.

# How do you feel about working with and managing your contractions?



Having a voice, asking questions and  
being at the centre of your care  
is important.

How do you feel  
about saying what  
you need and being  
assertive?



As labour can last for several hours it can be helpful to think about how you can rest and manage your energy.

# What can you do to rest and conserve energy in labour?





How do you feel about  
using positions and  
movement?

Movement and gravity are essential  
during labour and birth so it helps to  
plan for them.



# How do you feel about trusting your instincts?

Much of labour is about listening to your body and going with what feels right for you.





It can help to think about where you birth and what you might need to be as comfortable as possible and to move as you need to.

Do you know how you can make the birth space work for you?



Do you know what could  
impact your needs and  
the decisions you make  
in labour and birth?

Your needs can change in labour so it  
can be helpful to know what could  
impact your options.





Knowing how to use your breathing so you can have focus and calm and head off any panic can make a big difference.

If you are feeling anxious, overwhelmed or panicky, what can you do to manage it?



What could help you  
to feel safe?

It's important to feel safe and secure in  
labour so you can work with your  
contractions.





Do you know what  
your birth partner can  
do to help and  
support you?

Good support can make a huge  
difference to help you feel secure,  
comfortable and less overwhelmed.

are you working  
with your  
contractions?

what do  
you need?

are you going to  
the loo  
regularly?

do you need  
to eat?

are you in a  
comfortable  
position?

do you feel safe?

# Labour & Birth Checklist

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do you  
need more  
water?

could you be  
more upright?

do you  
understand  
what's  
happening?

can you let go  
of tension?

can you rest  
in-between  
contractions?

are you  
listening  
to your  
body?

are you focusing  
on your  
breathing?



*“From antenatal care to support when your baby is here, Janine is calm and supportive. She gives confidence when you doubt everything you do!”*



# For the 4th trimester, it helps to know...

- how babies work
- what babies need
- what's normal for the first 3 months
- what the 4th trimester could be like for you
- about the importance of rest
- about your needs, your recovery and looking after yourself
- what the challenges might be and how you can manage them

When you think about life  
with your new baby, what  
does that look like?

What questions do you  
have about having a  
new baby?



How do you  
feel about  
looking after  
your new  
baby?

What could  
be helpful in  
the first few  
weeks?

What will your  
baby need?

What could  
make a  
difference to  
your baby?

It can be useful to consider...

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Is there  
anything you  
are concerned  
about?

What could  
be unhelpful?

What will  
you need?

What could  
make a  
difference  
to you during  
the early  
weeks?



Prioritising rest is really important,  
especially during those early days and  
weeks with your baby.

How do you feel about  
resting and  
taking it easy?



It helps to talk about and prepare for  
rest so you can be looked after.

# What do you need to make rest happen?





How do you feel  
about being able to  
settle and soothe  
your new baby?

This can often be about letting your  
instincts kick-in and going with what  
feels right for you.



The early baby days can be about taking it as easy as possible so you can rest and get to know your baby.

How do you feel about taking life at a slower pace with your baby?





How you can put  
you and your baby  
at the centre of  
your care?

It helps to focus on what you and your  
baby need, to get support and to find  
what works for your family.





Recovery from pregnancy and birth takes time and it helps to prepare your home so you can be as comfortable as possible.

Do you know how you  
can prepare your  
home for your new  
baby and your  
recovery?



What could help you to  
boost your confidence  
with your baby?

Having a new baby brings with it a steep learning curve and it can take a while to find your feet and to feel reassured that everything is okay.





Your expectations about life with your baby may differ from reality. How do you feel about that?

You may experience challenges you didn't expect so getting support and reassurance can make a huge difference to your mood as well as your confidence.





Using your breathing can help you to feel calmer and it can help to ease discomfort. Try to talk about how you are feeling and reach out for more support if you are struggling, or something doesn't feel right.

If you are feeling  
anxious, overwhelmed  
or uncomfortable,  
what can you do to  
manage it?

do you need  
some support  
& reassurance?

what do  
you need?

try not to  
compare

eat

keep your  
days simple

ask for and  
accept help

# Early Parenting Checklist

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drink

focus on getting to  
know your baby

listen to  
your  
instincts

get out for  
a wander

plan for rest

talk

try not to  
overschedule



## Let me quickly introduce myself...

As an experienced antenatal and postnatal practitioner, I have worked with parents, during pregnancy and throughout life with a young family, for over 20 years.

I am dedicated to providing a balance of information, support and reassurance, based on evidence and experience, so you can plan and work through the change and the challenges.

Having worked with parents for many years, I understand the different challenges, frustrations and needs. I also listen to and learn from the parents I work with so you can find what works for you and your family.

*Janine*



As antenatal & postnatal specialist, I focus on:

- strengthening knowledge
- providing insights into working with & supporting parents
- creating community & reassurance for parents