

How to prepare for birth & baby

a toolkit for expectant parents

janine-smith.com | antenatal & postnatal specialist

Hello!

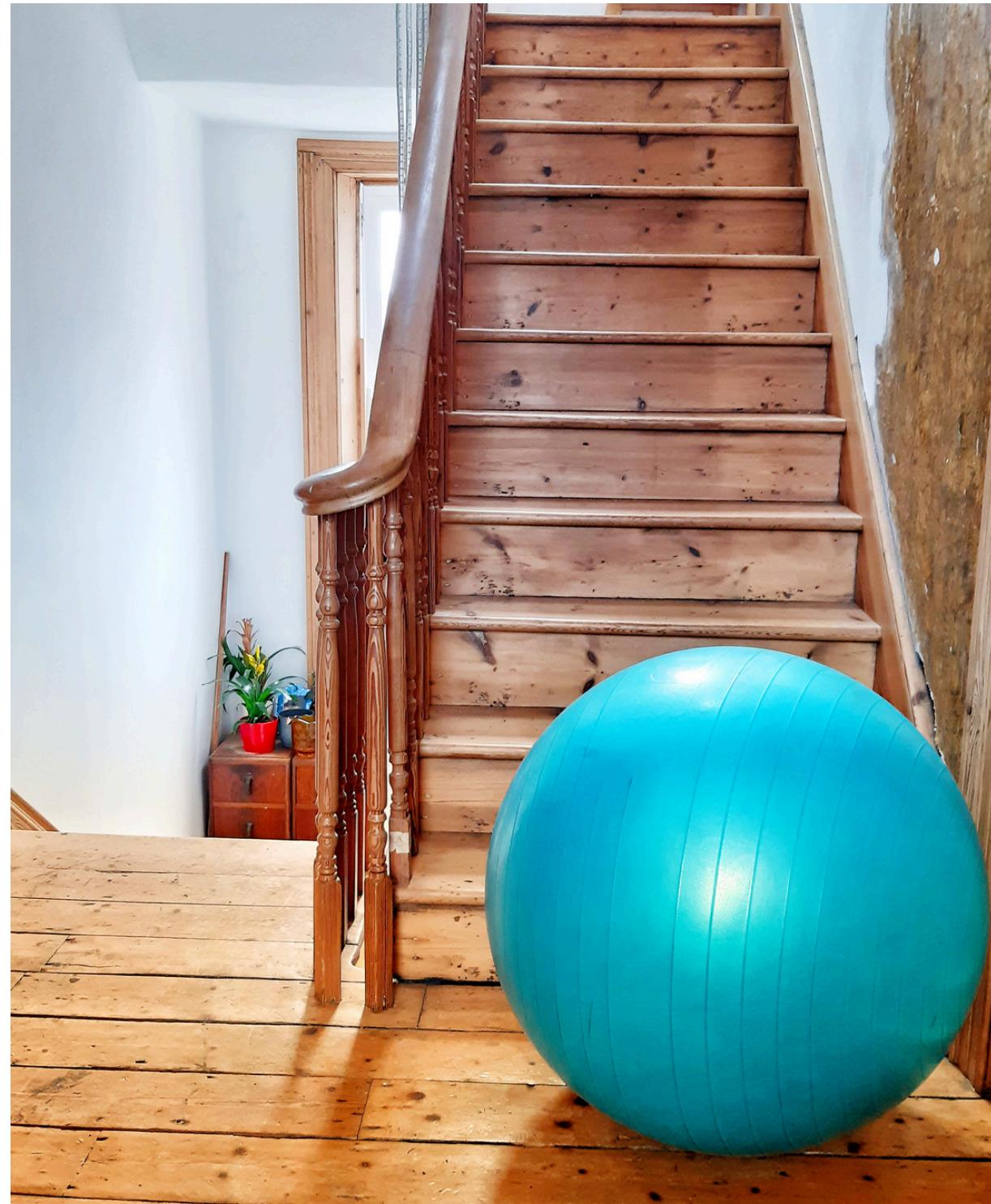
Congratulations on your pregnancy. If you are starting to think about birth and life with your new baby, this toolkit is for you.

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?



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

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 saying what you need and being assertive?

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



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

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



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.



Do you know how you
can make the birth
space work 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 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.



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

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



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
understand
what's
happening?

can you let go
of tension?

can you rest
in-between
contractions?

do you
need more
water?

could you be
more upright?

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?



How do you feel about
resting and
taking it easy?

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



What do you need to make rest happen?

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



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.



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

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



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

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



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.



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

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.

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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listen to
your
instincts

get out for
a wander

plan for rest

drink

focus on getting to
know your baby

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