

Guide to a Healthy Nursery

Paint and Finishes

- Three Choices
 - Natural Paint – made from natural raw ingredients such as chalk, clay, milk casein, etc.
 - The Real Milk Paint Company at www.realmilkpaint.com
 - Anna Sova at www.annasova.com
 - EcoDesign’s Bioshield at www.bioshieldpaint.com
 - Zero VOC Paint – VOC’s with 5 grams/liter or less
 - Note that adding pigment can bring the VOC levels up to 10 grams/liter
 - Yolo Colorhouse at www.colorhouse.com
 - Harmony by Sherman Williams at www.sherwin.com (look for the Green Sure logo)
 - Benjamin Moore Pristine EcoSpec at www.benjaminmoore.com
 - AFM Safecoat at www.afmsafecoat.com
 - FreshAire Choice at www.homedepot.com
 - Low VOC Paint – To meet EPA guidelines, a low VOC paint must not contain VOCs in excess of 200 grams/liter and stains no more than 300 grams/liter
 - Benjamin Moore Aura at www.myaurapaints.com
 - Evermore at www.homedepot.com
 - Duration Home at www.shermanwilliams.com (look for the Green Sure logo)
- Paint Strippers
 - Very dangerous chemical called methylene chloride that is a potential carcinogen. There are some safer alternatives such as:

- Citristrip at www.citristrip.com
- Soyclean at www.soyclean.biz
- Real Milk Paint Soy-Gel at www.realmilkpaint.com
- Important Facts to remember
 - The best paint for your health and the environment are Natural Paints
 - Even zero VOC paints have toxins so be sure to open windows and allow the room to dissipate for at least a week or until you can't smell any odor.
 - If you are pregnant, have someone else do the painting for you and stay out of the room until the paint odor is completely gone.

Rugs

- Why Avoid Carpet
 - If possible remove wall-to-wall carpet that tends to trap allergens and opt for floors made of wood, cork, or bamboo. New carpet will emit VOCs from the applied chemicals and adhesives. A child is closer to the floor and would be more susceptible to the vapors. Not to mention that a rug traps dust, mold, and other hazards that are tracked into the home. If you just have to have carpet ask the company that you are purchasing it from to lie out the rug and air it out. During the installation ask for low voc adhesives or have the carpet tacked down.
- Better Options
 - Wood (salvaged or from a sustainable resource), Bamboo, or Cork
 - Throw Rugs – If you want some carpeting opt for 100% wool throw rugs that are durable, natural, and biodegradable.
 - Carpet Tiles – A relatively new product on the market are carpet tiles like Flor by Interface, Inc. The carpet comes in modular tiles that can be used, picked up and moved with ease. If your child has a spill you can simply pick that tile up and

wash it in the sink. If the stain does not come out, no problem put down a replacement tile. The company is environmentally conscious and offers a carpet-recycling program. Many of the styles are made from recycled or renewable sources.

Furniture

- Cribs, Dressers, and Storage
- Look for furniture made with solid wood (preferably FSC-certified wood)
- If the furniture contains pressed wood such as particleboard, medium density fiberboard, or other composite woods, ask if it is made with urea-formaldehyde free binders. If you absolutely have to buy one of the more inexpensive cribs that typically contain composite woods, purchase a sealer like Safecoat? Safe Seal to seal in formaldehyde off gassing. Unless a crib manufacturer states that the furniture does not contain composite wood, you should assume that it is used in the panels and in the drawers.
- Wrought-iron cribs are also an option when finished with non-toxic finishes.
- For the safest furniture look for pieces that are Greenguard certified through the Greenguard Environmental Institute. For a list of products and guidelines go to www.greenguard.org.
- Look for zero or low voc finishes, stains, and adhesives
- Mattresses
- Conventional mattresses are constructed with polyurethane foam that by law must contain fire retardants. They are also typically wrapped in vinyl/PVC, which contain Phthalates.
- Look for organic cotton, natural wool or natural rubber. To meet the fire regulations companies use wool, which is a natural fire retardant or other non-toxic means such as

FlameBreaker? by Naturepedic?, which is Baking Soda, based. The mattress is Greenguard Certified.

- Upholstered furniture –Options are limited
- Problem
 - Most upholstered furniture is made with polyurethane foam treated with fire retardants to meet safety guidelines and covered with fabric that in many times is treated to be stain resistant.
- Solutions
 - Solid hardwood rocker made with solvent-free water based adhesives with an organic seat cushion.
 - Green Upholstered Furniture – High End
- Unfortunately, there are not a lot of affordable options in this category. At GreenPea Nursery, we offer chairs that can be covered with organic fabrics or that will transition to another room extending the useful life. If you are willing to spend the money, you can have an earth friendly, healthy rocker/glider for your baby's room. Typically, these chairs are made with FSC-Certified wood frames, latex foam cushions wrapped in organic cotton with wool batting which is a naturally fire retardant and anti-microbial. Solvent-free, water-based glues. Fabrics such as organic cotton, organic wool, or hemp.

Lighting

- Choose handcrafted heirloom quality fixtures for your child's room or lighting that will easily transfer to other parts of the home as your child grows.
- CFLs
- Although CFLs are a great choice for your lighting and better for the environment, we don't recommend them for your baby's room. The risk of breaking a bulb is small but it is not something that you would want to happen in your child's room.

- Once your child gets mobile, you may also need to think twice about which lamps you put CFL bulbs in. Keeping the lamps out of reach from little hands.
- If you do decide to use CFLs make sure to practice safe clean up practices. Energy Star has guidelines for cleaning up after a CFL bulb breaks. Go to www.energystar.gov/ia/partners/promotions/change_light/downloads/Fact_Sheet_Mercury.pdf for more information.
 - To summarize: Leave the room after opening a window for 15 minutes or more; shut off the central air forced heating system; scoop up fragments with stiff paper or cardboard and place them in a glass jar with a metal lid or in a sealed plastic bag; use sticky tape to pick up remaining pieces; wipe with damp paper towels; place towels in plastic bag; do not use a vacuum or broom on hard surfaces; on carpet vacuum the area and remove the bag or empty the canister in a sealed plastic bag; if clothing or bedding come in direct contact with the broken glass or mercury-containing powder you should throw them away
- You can take unbroken bulbs for recycling to the Home Depot or go to www.earth911.org to find other locations.

Wallpaper

- Conventional wallpaper is not the most environmentally friendly product nor is it a healthy option for a baby's room. Typically wallpaper contains vinyl in the paper itself or in the backing. Vinyl or PVC is a harmful chemical and classified by the EPA as a known human carcinogen. The inks used to create the patterns are typically pigments, solvent carriers, toners and emulsifiers. If that is not enough to make a new mom cringe, there are also adhesives that emit VOCs.
- Fortunately, the wallpaper industry is starting to make some changes. You can now find low-VOC wallpaper paste and many companies are making paper that can be removed

without the use of dangerous solvents. Sherman Williams has a new line called Easy Change which is non-vinyl, breathable, will not separate, easy to remove and washable. There are plenty of adorable options for a nursery.

- For the most environmentally friendly option, look for wallpaper that is made from recycled or natural material, vinyl free, uses vegetable-dye ink, or water based, non-toxic inks.

Bedding

- Avoid fabrics that have been treated with chemicals for their ability to resist static, stains, shrinkage, or water. Permanent press fabrics are intended to resist wrinkles and hold their shape. This also requires a chemical finish.
- Avoid synthetic fabrics such as poly-blends, rayon, acetate, and triacetate. These fabrics require chemical finishes.
- Look for natural organic fabrics such as cotton, hemp, bamboo, or silk.
- Make sure to launder bedding at least every two weeks above 130 degrees to kill dust mites.

Please note that the company's mentioned are examples only and should not be considered product recommendations or endorsements of GreenPeaTMNursery.