

# Choosing a safe crib mattress.

*What I learnt from becoming a new mum.*



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**“OUR RESEARCH SHOWS MATTRESSES CAN BE A SIGNIFICANT SOURCE OF CHEMICAL CONTAMINANTS IN THE NURSERY AND BEDROOM,”**

-Dr. Brandon E. Boor  
assistant professor of civil engineering at  
Purdue University

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When my son was born, I was fortunate enough to be already educated on the potential dangers of the sleep environment and in particular mattresses composition. As a wellness architect, I had already made the swap for myself, so when looking for the best option for my newborn I put in a lot of research. Why?

Because babies spend a majority of their early life in the crib either sleeping (LOL) or crawling around (or standing and jumping as in my case #eyeroll)

Ensuring I had the safest products was a non-negotiable for all items in the nursery, but specifically the mattress because these can release up to 30 different types of volatile organic compounds (VOC's), and other potentially harmful airborne chemicals\*.

The reason for the pollution? Crib mattresses (and mattresses in general) are generally composed of a petroleum-derived synthetic material called polyurethane foam, which is held in place with adhesives and then sprayed with other chemical additives. YUM. Then this delicious toxic-soup is enclosed with a waterproof cover - which does NOT capture the off-gas, it adds to it.

\*<https://pubs.acs.org/doi/abs/10.1021/acs.estlett.5b00039>

So what's the big deal? Well, these mattress ingredients release those harmful VOC's into the air, which get into the lungs of babies (and adults) and can cause nervous and respiratory system damage.

The reason I am so passionate about the nursery is because these exposures are even more dangerous for young babies because they are in the crib for many more hours than an adult (12-14 hours) and if your baby is anything like mine; he's usually face-planted directly INTO the mattress itself - this is where the concentration of VOC's is highest\*\*

So enough of the scare tactics (I swear that is not my intention but I have been there) I'm just going to skip straight to the part where I tell you what I suggest, because in the real world we don't want to hear all about the chemicals and hazards, we just want the solutions right?



I am not sponsored by or receive any kickback by any companies, so I do not list them based on any hidden agenda (or order).. I base my decisions on what worked best for me and my family and on my research.

Before I name names, if you wanted to do your own research a quick do & don't.

1. Look for Global Organic Textile Standard, or GOTS, certification. For a company to receive GOTS certification, the mattress cannot be made of polyurethane foam or contain a number of hazardous chemicals.
2. Mattresses that naturally meet flammability regulations without the use of chemical flame retardants
3. 100% natural latex. Natural latex is a renewable material made from rubber tree sap, and (unlike polyurethane), is less likely to emit high levels of VOCs. Another benefit is it is naturally resistant to dust mites and mold, and usually much more budget friendly.



\*\*<https://pubs.acs.org/doi/abs/10.1021/acs.estlett.5b00039>



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When it came to my son's nursery mattress and furniture I went with the Kalon Studio Caravan crib. WHY? Because I liked that it was made from solid American maple, came raw (no paint), was made locally in nearby Pennsylvania and it converts to a toddler bed later down the line. Kalon Studios also make a very impressive 100% natural, organic mattress with no additives or toxins. These materials breathe and makes the mattress naturally cooling, fire-retardant and naturally resistant to mold and bacteria.

The mattress core is made from layers of organic palm coir (coconut fiber) made from recycled coconut husks and GOLS certified hand-molded natural latex derived from organic rubber trees. Both coir and natural latex are very long-lasting materials.



Another great US option is Naturepedic Breathable Two-Stage Organic Baby Crib Mattress. It is certified organic and non-toxic by the Global Organic Textile Standard (GOTS). It is composed from an organic cotton surface with 3D mesh, allowing baby to breathe, even when face down (and if your kid is like mine, this will help when they want to sleep face down). Naturepedic is never made with flame retardants or PU foam. It's allergy-friendly and made without additives like latex, soy, GMOs, vinyl or PVC, phthalates, formaldehyde, and perfluorinated compounds.

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As for an Aussie option, if I hadn't shipped my Kalon mattress from the States I would have gone to The Natural Bedding Company. They individually measure and fit a custom crib (and bassinets) mattress for your child's bed. The mattress is composed of a coir core layered with pure Australian Downs wool in a certified organic cotton cover. All their cot mattresses are tested for firmness so they comply with AS/NZS Voluntary Standard 8811.1:2013: