

## FAQ's – water birth

### We have had our pool delivered, should we set it up?

We would advise making sure the box has all its contents and that the hose fits on your taps. See below (pools may vary dependent on type and size ordered)



(The Liners are included with all of our pools.)

You can inflate the pool to see how long it takes, where it will be best placed etc. To avoid infection, it is recommended that the liner is NOT opened until you are in labour and are going to be using the pool. If you have cats or small people in the house, it may be best to leave the pool deflated until you start your labour, this will avoid damage from sharp claws, toys etc. Your pool will come with a thermometer, but you may want to purchase a fun, floating thermometer (like a duck)



so that the temperature is constantly visible and can be adjusted when necessary. These are inexpensive and a good investment for your new little one's bathtime.

### We have modern taps, and the hose adaptor won't fit, how do we fill the pool?

With increased choices in bathroom and kitchen fittings, a common problem is managing to get the hose attached to a water source. Never fear though, you can place the pump into a sink or bathtub of water, and it will pump it into the pool using the hose. It is slightly slower, depending on your home water pressure, but still effective.

### I'd love a pool for my home birth, does the water stay warm?

Due to the volume of water the pool can stay warm for a couple of hours but once the temperature starts to come down it can be harder to maintain the warmer temperature. This can be easily managed by your midwife and therefore doesn't need to be a problem. Timing is key and your midwife will advise you when

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the best time to get into the pool will be. Entering the pool too early in your labour may relax you so much that your labour slows or stops.

The water temperature for labour can be adjusted to your comfort using the hose provided and if it's getting too full and needs to be emptied a little before adding more hot water, this is easily achieved by a clean bucket or two. Once the time gets closer to your baby being born, the water temperature should be at 37°C. Your midwife is experienced and will know when to adjust the temperature so no need to worry. A thermometer will be used to check the temperature at regular intervals.

## How do we empty the pool?

The pool comes with a pump which is placed in the bottom of the pool and the water is extracted via the hose into the nearest sink/toilet/drain.



Once the majority of water has been extracted and no longer reaches the pump filter, the pool/liner can be carried outside to be emptied into a drain or the garden. We have a useful video on our website showing pool set-up for a home birth and you can watch it here.

<https://youtu.be/VHxk69050yg?t=12>

## I like the idea of being in water for labour, but I don't want my baby to be born in the pool, can I get out for the birth?

Yes of course, the buoyancy of water is an excellent form of relaxation and pain relief. When the time comes, your midwife will assist you to adopt a comfortable position for birth on 'dry land' if that is your choice. A large warm and cosy bathrobe or dressing gown is ideal to have on hand as you may feel chilly once you've exited the water.

## What should I wear in the pool?

You should wear whatever you feel most comfortable in. Most people tend to go with a bikini or tankini style top, with or without bottoms, but whatever you decide to wear will need to be easily removable when

wet. Also, remember that whilst a big baggy t-shirt may seem like the most dignified item, when it's wet the extra material may make you feel quite chilly.

## How will my baby breathe under water?

Your baby won't take its first breath until he/she gets the 'trigger' of the change in temperature of air on their face as they're brought up to surface. This is why it's so important that the water temperature is kept at 37°C, which is the same temperature as your body. Oxygen is still being provided by the umbilical cord from the placenta and newborn babies have what is commonly known as a 'dive reflex' which means that instead of inhaling fluid, they swallow it. Interestingly, babies have this ability until around six months of age.

## Resources:

<https://privatemidwives.com/resource-library/>

<https://evidencebasedbirth.com/waterbirth/>

<https://waterbirth.org/>

<https://www.nct.org.uk/labour-birth/different-types-birth/water-birth/howlabour-water-or-have-water-birth>