

Why hand me downs are better for kids

Look, you're expected to [spend \\$242,000](#) on your newborn until he or she is 18. Don't tell me you're just going to accept this as your own fact? You can change this. Don't say no to savings. Get all the savings that you can get with hand me downs. There's no shame in that!

My wife and I used to fight all the time about it. She wanted us to give the "very best" for our kids. Of course, this means buying the most expensive things brand new. On the other hand, being the cheapskate that I am, I wanted to make use of some perfectly good stuff previously used by the older kids. Why buy a brand new stroller if we have a perfectly good stroller used by our older daughter for just a few months? Hand me downs are better for kids, aren't they? She wouldn't have any of it. Nothing our older kids had was good enough for my wife. "It's not the right color," she said. "Those shoes don't lace properly anymore," she countered. She was determined to avoid all hand me downs for our newborn.

In response I made an Excel spreadsheet with the things we bought our older kid. We spent almost \$500 bucks for the stroller she used about a dozen of times. The baby monitor for \$200, ten pairs of shoes for \$30 each, a crib for \$200 and line items for all the clothes I could itemize. The final cost was so high her mouth dropped when she saw how much we spent. She had no idea.

Now, this is not to say that it's not worth buying quality items to start. Travel strollers, for instance, have to be well researched before buying. [Going traveling](#) requires good preparations to match the good equipment. That's my point. If it's a good quality stroller it will hold up to a second or third use. Hand me downs are better for kids when the hand me downs are quality. Maximize the investment, right?

Well, guess what? My wife couldn't argue to buy another \$500 stroller, so we used it with our new baby. Again, for just about a dozen times. Imagine if we spent another \$500 for a brand new stroller? That's \$1000 for around two dozen usages. Warren Buffet is shivering over that ROI.

The lesson here is that we should've bought that stroller used to begin with. Hand me downs from thrift shops cost next to nothing, but you'll do better with [Craigslist](#) if you're looking for quality hand me downs to buy.

My kids wear second hand clothing. I remember a friend asking if I needed financial help because our baby wore previously stained clothes all the time. I almost spit my drink up when he said that. We weren't broke. It was our decision. What a jerk-off!

This is not to say that we don't buy brand new things, but only if they're needed. It's just that we don't throw out stuff that can still be used. We also don't put them up in the attic to gather dust. Buying and selling hand me downs can become a fun hobby, in fact. Here's a list of the best hand me down exchanges where parents can find quality goods for cheap:

- [Encore Baby Registry](#)
- Swap Baby Goods
- [Rocka-Buy-Gear](#)
- [Baby Outfitter](#)
- [ReCrib](#)

We spent a lot of money to make sure that we're buying things that can last for a very long time. What's the point if we're just going to throw them away just because a kid has outgrown them? This is especially true since there's a smaller kid that can benefit from them.

[Times are tough](#) and everyone, rich or poor, can benefit from some extra savings. Sure, a pair of shoes may not cost much, but these savings can add up. You'll soon find yourself with hundreds of dollars in savings that you can use in your household.