

Choosing where to give birth is one of the biggest decisions you'll need to make. Our checklist helps put you in charge. To weigh up your options, tick the boxes next to the points that matter most to you. Or you could mark each point on a scale of one to five, and then tot up the totals at the bottom.

## Having your baby in hospital

### On the one hand...

- You may feel more confident knowing that doctors are readily available in case either you or your baby needs emergency treatment.
- You will be encouraged to stay at home until labour is well-established and you will need to travel to the hospital in active labour.
- There is fast access to an epidural if you want one. Gas and air, a spinal or demerol may be available.
- The health check of your newborn baby will usually be performed by a pediatrician before you go home.
- Nurses are on hand 24 hours a day to help with you the care of your newborn and support you as you get started with breastfeeding.
- Total**

### On the other hand...

- You are unlikely to know the doctor or midwife caring for you in labour. This may be different in some areas.
- You may feel more comfortable making noise in hospital – you will probably hear other women in labour, going through the same experience as you.
- You are more likely to have interventions and are twice as likely to have a caesarean. You are also more likely to use an epidural.
- There is a very small risk of hospital-acquired infections for both you and your baby the longer you are in hospital.
- Postpartum wards can be busy and noisy with between one and four women (with their babies!) to a room, all sharing a bathroom and toilet.
- Total**