

Pushchairs

NEED TO KNOW

Pushchairs can be divided into three main types: strollers, all-terrain and travel systems. While most pushchairs fall into one category, some straddle more than one type. For example, a three-wheeled pushchair with pneumatic wheels that can be used with a car seat falls into both the all-terrain and travel system categories.

STROLLERS

Strollers are generally the cheapest type of pushchair. They are ideal for day-to-day use, as they are lightweight and portable, and the best ones can be folded using just one hand. Some models aren't suitable for newborns, and many aren't ideal for bumpy journeys as they have hard plastic wheels and no suspension.

ALL-TERRAIN

All-terrain pushchairs are typically three wheelers with pneumatic tyres, good for bumpy terrain. They are bulky compared with strollers, and aren't ideal around town because they can be unwieldy on steps and kerbs.

TRAVEL SYSTEMS

Travel systems are versatile but pricey pushchairs that can be used with a car seat and/or carrycot, but these aren't always included in the price. Some car seats and carrycots slide on to the chassis, others clip on or are fastened with Velcro. Travel systems generally have four wheels and are large, even when folded.

FOLDING MECHANISMS

A good folding mechanism can be the difference between a simple one-handed motion with your baby on your hip or having to put your baby down while you struggle with clips, catches and buttons. One of the easiest strollers to fold and unfold is this Micralite – it's quick, easy and can be operated with one hand. Also good is the Maclaren (2) – all you do is kick up one catch, release a lever and it simply folds down; the clip to secure it closed clicks automatically into place. Other easy folders are the Maclaren (5) and Jané (7) Best Buys, and the very basic Bettacare (23).



Strollers

MODEL

- 1 Micralite Fastfold
- 2 Maclaren Quest Sport
- 3 Jané Energy
- 4 Mamas & Papas Pulse Buggy
- 5 Maclaren Volo
- 6 Mamas & Papas Pliko Urban
- 7 Jané Rocket
- 8 Mothercare Jive
- 9 Cosatto Olympus
- 10 Graco Mirage
- 11 Maclaren Techno Classic
- 12 Mothercare Citilite
- 13 Dorel Go
- 14 Cosatto Miami
- 15 Inglesina Espresso
- 16 Quinny Zapp
- 17 Graco Citisport
- 18 Mothercare Reno
- 19 Britax Vista
- 20 Chicco Caddy (CT 0.6)
- 21 Bugaboo Gecko
- 22 Emmaljunga Cerox Sport
- 23 Bettacare Rio

a Suitable from birth only when used as a travel system or with a carrycot

BEST BUYS

Our Best Buys are easy to push, steer and fold, comfortable for your child and suitable for day-to-day use. Non-Best Buys fall down on one or more of these criteria. Ergonomists used the pushchairs in different situations, and a panel of parents took them out for a spin. They were also tested for safety at a laboratory. Best Buys have the approval of both experts and parents.

STROLLERS

The Micralite (1), £170 from John Lewis and Mothercare, and Maclaren (2), £100 from Mothercare, are both small, light and easy to manoeuvre, even in tight spaces. You can fold them away using just one hand, and the Maclaren has a clip that holds it closed when folded, plus a carry handle. Neither is suitable from birth. However, the Newborn version of the Micralite (£280), which has a carrycot, can be used from birth. It also fits our Best Buy Maxi Cosi Cabrio car seat, which you can buy separately. The basket under the Micralite is small and hard to reach, while the Maclaren has lots of storage space.

The Jané (3) is a lightweight compact stroller that can be used from birth. The larger wheels mean it manages bumpy terrain and uneven ground better than other Best Buy strollers. It folds and unfolds easily enough, although the clip that holds it closed when folded can catch





USING THE TABLES

We tested the best-selling pushchairs from leading brands. We've tested only travel systems that can be used with car seats that score 50 per cent or more in our annual test of child car seats. Performance ratings are based on the results of our expert assessment and user trial.

Specification

Price For Best Buys we give the cheapest widely available high-street price. Prices for other models are a guide to what to pay. Online prices are in *italics*.

Weight Pushchair only, without accessories.

Car seat

Available These pushchairs can be used

with a car seat. **Included in price** Some car seats are included in the price, others are sold separately.

Performance

Day-to-day use How well the pushchair worked overall, including the harness, child's comfort and enjoyment, cleaning, brakes and storing it.

Public transport

Considers folding, weight and whether there is a carrying handle. **Moving** How easy the pushchair was to handle, including weight. **Storage** How useful the storage space is. **Reclining** How easy the seat is to recline and adjust. **Folding** How easy the pushchair is to fold and unfold.

SCORE

Ignores price and is based on:
Day-to-day use 40%
Moving 25%
Folding 20%
Reclining 15%

KEY

★ ☆ ○ ● ●
Best —————> Worst
■ Best Buy

Specification						Car seat		Performance						Score
Price (£)	Weight (kg)	No. of wheels	Use from birth	Pneumatic wheels	Adjustable handles	Available	Included in price	Day-to-day use	Public transport	Moving	Storage	Reclining	Folding	(%)
170	7.4	4		✓		✓		○	☆	★	○	☆	★	81
100	6.1	4						☆	★	★	☆	☆	★	80
90	7.2	4	✓					☆	☆	★	☆	★	☆	78
90	5.9	4	✓					☆	☆	★	○	★	☆	77
50	4.2	4						☆	★	☆	○	n/a	★	75
200	9	4	✓		✓	✓		☆	○	☆	☆	★	☆	74
80	5.7	4						☆	★	☆	○	☆	★	73
35	5	4						☆	☆	☆	○	○	☆	70
85	7.2	4	✓					☆	○	☆	☆	☆	☆	68
50	7.5	4	✓					☆	○	☆	★	☆	○	67
170	7.9	4	✓		✓			☆	☆	☆	○	○	☆	67
90	6.2	4	✓		✓			☆	○	☆	☆	○	☆	67
40	7.5	4						☆	○	○	●	☆	☆	66
45	6	4						☆	☆	☆	●	☆	☆	65
120	8	4			✓			☆	○	☆	☆	○	☆	65
150	7.8	3	✓ ^a			✓		○	★	☆	●	n/a	☆	63
100	6.2	4	✓		✓			○	○	☆	☆	☆	☆	62
50	7.1	4	✓					☆	○	○	☆	○	☆	61
90	6.9	4						☆	☆	☆	○	●	☆	59
45	5	4						☆	○	☆	●	○	○	57
470	9	4	✓	✓		✓		○	●	☆	●	○	●	52
375	12.1	4	✓ ^a		✓			○	●	○	●	○	○	48
25	4.3	4						○	★	●	●	●	★	47

TYRES

All-terrain pushchairs, like this Quinny Best Buy, typically have pneumatic tyres, the same as on a bicycle, which give a smooth ride on bumpy surfaces. However, they can be a real headache if you get a puncture. We tested three travel systems and two strollers with pneumatic tyres, too. The tyres arrive flat and need pumping up, which you can do with a normal bicycle pump. Pumps are supplied with the Bebecar (26), XTS (30) and Quinny (43). It's worth keeping a puncture repair kit on hand if you opt for a pushchair with pneumatic tyres, and you'll have to let down the tyres if you want to take it on a plane.



ACCESSORIES

Most pushchairs, such as this Maclaren (2), come with a rain cover, which is an essential piece of kit. Some accessories, such as a bag to store your folded pushchair in or a toe warmer for your baby, are practical and worth considering. Others, like drink holders or plastic storage containers on the handle bar, can be badly designed or simply get in the way.



**BEST
ON
TEST**



**24 Quinny
ALL-TERRAIN**

CAR SEATS AND CARRYCOTS

We've tested only pushchairs that fit car seats that do well in our child car seat tests. All the travel systems on test, most all-terrain pushchairs and a few strollers can be used with a car seat. In all cases it is easy to attach and detach the car seats from the frame. In some cases the car seat is included in the price of the pushchair, as with this Mothercare, which comes with the Travel Tot Deluxe car seat (below). Some travel systems can also be used with carrycots – handy for getting your baby in and out of the pushchair when they're sleeping. The Chicco (39), Graco (40) and Mamas & Papas (41) travel systems all have one included in the price. For the most part, using carrycots with the pushchairs was straightforward, with the exception of the Bugaboo (21), which has several Velcro straps that need doing up every time you want to attach or remove it.

**BEST
ON
TEST**



**32 Mothercare
TRAVEL SYSTEM**



All-terrain

MODEL

24 Quinny Speedi SX

25 Britax Trekker

26 Bebecar Racer AT

27 Graco Expedition

28 Babystyle Cyclone

29 Bettacare Jog About

30 XTS Twister

31 Emmaljunga Scooter

a Suitable from birth only when used as a travel system or with a carrycot

Travel systems

MODEL

32 Mothercare Trenton

33 Mothercare Maxim

34 Graco Mirage Travel System

35 Mamas & Papas A3 Pramette

36 B  b   Confort Trophy Air 6

37 Graco Mosaic

38 Babystyle Bayamo

39 Chicco Trio CT 0.1 Synthesis Complete

40 Graco Quattro Tour Deluxe

41 Mamas & Papas Signature

42 Britax Zeta

43 Quinny Buzz

on other bits of the pushchair. It costs £90 from independents.

The **Mamas & Papas (4)** can be used from birth. It's a bit awkward to adjust the recline of the seat when your baby is in it. There is a decent amount of storage space and a handy pocket on the hood to store the rain cover. It costs £90 from Mamas & Papas.

The **Maclaren (5)**, £50 from John Lewis, Mothercare and Toys R Us, is a basic functional stroller that can be used for babies over six months. It is lightweight and easy to move around obstacles, with good storage space. It folds and unfolds easily, and folds down to a compact size. The backrest has just one position and the seat is made from a durable mesh that is easy to clean but may not be to everyone's taste – one parent remarked: 'The seat is like a starched net curtain'.

The **Mamas & Papas (6)**, £200 from Mamas & Papas, is slightly larger than the other Mamas & Papas Best Buy (4), can be used from birth and has decent storage space. Despite its size, it is easy to push and turn, and folds down

to a compact size. As one of the heavier strollers on test, it isn't ideal for carrying on and off public transport. It can be used with a Primo Viaggio car seat, which is sold separately.

The other **Jané (7)** Best Buy, £80 from independents, has a sun/rain visor and can be used from six months. Its compact size means it's easy to manoeuvre, and it has decent storage space. It folds and unfolds easily enough although, like the other Jané Best Buy, the clip that holds it closed when folded can catch on other bits of the pushchair.

The **Mothercare (8)** is another basic functional stroller, which can be used from three months. It is lightweight and folds down easily to a compact size. It has decent storage space too, but some parents didn't like the bright pink colour. It costs £35 from Mothercare.

ALL-TERRAIN

Both all-terrain Best Buys are large three-wheeled pushchairs that can be used from birth. They have pneumatic tyres and the front wheel can swivel or be locked straight. Folding and

USING THE TABLES

Notes for these tables are on p53.

SCORE

Ignores price and is based on:	
Day-to-day use	40%
Moving	25%
Folding	20%
Reclining	15%

KEY

★	☆	○	◐	●
Best —————> Worst				
■ Best Buy				

Specification						Car seat		Performance						Score
Price (£)	Weight (kg)	No. of wheels	Use from birth	Pneumatic wheels	Adjustable handles	Available	Included in price	Day-to-day use	Public transport	Moving	Storage	Reclining	Folding	(%)
240	11.6	3	✓ ^a	✓	✓	✓		☆	◐	☆	☆	○	☆	77
200	12.5	3	✓	✓		✓	✓	☆	☆	☆	★	☆	☆	71
400	17.5	3	✓	✓	✓	✓		○	☆	☆	☆	★	○	63
80	8	3	✓			✓	✓	☆	◐	◐	☆	☆	☆	63
230	15	3		✓	✓	✓		○	☆	☆	☆	○	☆	62
130	12.5	3	✓					○	○	○	○	★	○	61
240	13.3	3	✓	✓		✓		○	☆	☆	○	○	○	59
180	16.5	4			✓			○	◐	○	☆	☆	○	57

Specification						Car seat		Performance						Score
Price (£)	Weight (kg)	No. of wheels	Use from birth	Pneumatic wheels	Adjustable handles	Available	Included in price	Day-to-day use	Public transport	Moving	Storage	Reclining	Folding	(%)
240	13.7	4	✓			✓	✓	☆	◐	☆	★	☆	☆	80
95	12	4	✓			✓		☆	◐	○	★	☆	☆	75
120	7.5	4	✓			✓	✓	☆	○	☆	★	☆	★	74
330	9.5	4	✓			✓		☆	◐	☆	★	★	○	74
265	11.6	4	✓	✓	✓	✓		☆	◐	☆	☆	★	☆	72
160	8.3	4	✓			✓	✓	☆	○	☆	☆	○	★	72
230	12	4		✓	✓	✓		○	○	☆	☆	★	☆	70
400	10.2	4				✓	✓	☆	◐	☆	○	☆	★	68
260	13.2	4	✓			✓	✓	☆	●	☆	★	☆	★	68
425	10.8	4	✓		✓	✓		☆	◐	☆	☆	☆	○	64
185	9.8	4	✓			✓	✓	☆	○	○	○	★	○	63
300	11.9	3	✓	✓	✓	✓		☆	○	○	○	☆	☆	63

unfolding are straightforward. The **Quinny (24)**, £240 from John Lewis and Toys R Us, is the best of the bunch and suitable from birth if used as a travel system with a carrycot. You can adjust the height of the handles, and it has bicycle-style handbrakes. Storage isn't generous, though, as the underseat basket is quite small. Also, adjusting the seat angle can be tricky when your child is seated. It can be used as a travel system, and fits our Best Buy Maxi Cosi Cabrio car seat and the Dreami carrycot, both of which you have to buy separately.

On the **Britax (25)**, handle height isn't adjustable, but the handles are covered in foam for extra comfort and it has lots of storage space. You don't have to remove the front wheel every time you fold it, but doing so lets you fold it as small as possible. And it's easy to do, since it has a quick release lever like on a bicycle. It costs £200 from independents, and includes a rain cover and Best Buy Britax Tot Premium car seat. It can't be used with a carrycot.

TRAVEL SYSTEMS

The two Mothercare Best Buys are large, sturdy pushchairs. The **Mothercare (32)**, £240 from Mothercare, includes a Best Buy Travel Tot Deluxe car seat. It is also compatible with a carrycot that can be bought separately. The **Mothercare (33)**, £95 from Mothercare, also fits the Best Buy Travel Tot Deluxe car seat but it is sold separately. It is not compatible with a carrycot. Both can be used from birth, are easy to push and have generous storage space. Both also have a parent's tray with a bottle holder. The pricier model (32) also has a clock and temperature gauge, plus a removable child's tray. However, it's one of the heaviest on test, and is big, too.

The **Graco (34)** can be used from birth and is small and light compared with the other travel systems, and easy to manoeuvre. It is also very easy to fold and has generous storage space. The swivelling front wheels help movement in tight spaces. It costs £120 from Argos – a Graco Auto Baby car seat is included in the price. It doesn't fit a carrycot.

The **Mamas & Papas (35)**, £330 from Mamas & Papas, is a large travel system with lots of storage space that can be used from birth and makes light work of rough terrain. It's bulky, and one parent commented that 'the folded pushchair is too long to fit into my boot'. It is easy enough to unfold, but needs quite an awkward two-handed twist of the wrist to get it to fold down. It can be used with a Primo Viaggio car seat, which is sold separately.

Parents liked the fact that your child can face either you or the street in the **Bébé Confort (36)**, £265 from independents. It can be used from birth and fits the Bébé Confort Window carrycot, which is included in the price. The six pneumatic tyres mean six chances for a puncture, but they do give a comfortable ride for your child, even on bumpy ground. It doesn't



25 Britax
ALL-TERRAIN



34 Graco
TRAVEL SYSTEM



33 Mothercare
TRAVEL SYSTEM



35 M&P
TRAVEL SYSTEM



36 Bébé Confort
TRAVEL SYSTEM



37 Graco
TRAVEL SYSTEM



38 Babystyle
TRAVEL SYSTEM

fold down very small. It fits the Bébé Confort Creatis car seat, which is sold separately.

The other **Graco Best Buy (37)** can also be used from birth and is one of the narrower travel systems, easy to use indoors and in tight spaces. The brakes, praised by parents, were easy to apply and release. It costs £160 from Toys R Us. A Graco Auto Baby car seat is included in the price. It does not fit a carrycot.

Your child can also either face you or the street in the **Babystyle (38)**, £230 from independents, suitable from six months. Suspension helps to give a comfortable ride, but it is wide and only just fits through a standard door frame, and it doesn't fold down very small. It is compatible with the Best Buy Maxi Cosi Cabrio car seat and Snuggly carrycot, but neither is included in the price.

WHICH? EXTRA

Many of the pushchairs in this test can be used in conjunction with a child car seat. For general advice and information on child car seats, plus the latest Best Buys, see www.which.co.uk/childseats