

I was hunched over the backseat of my car in midtown, rain on the windshield and a crib instruction manual spread over my knees, when **Babywarehouse** it hit me: I should have asked more questions before I drove into the city. The clock said 6:12 p.m., the streetlights were already on, and Queen Street was a slow parade of brake lights. I could hear someone in the next lane trying to argue with their GPS. I had a crib partially assembled on the passenger seat, three mismatched screws, and a receipt that read "Baby & Kids Furniture Warehouse Toronto - \$349.99."

Why was I surprised? I guess because I thought buying a crib would be straightforward. It is not. Not in Toronto, not when you want something safe, affordable, and that matches the slightly vintage look you pinned at 2 a.m. While procrastinating.

The weirdest part of the showroom visit

The store smelled like new wood and lemon cleaner. Bright fluorescent lights made everything look cheaper than it felt, and there was classical music playing faintly — a strange choice for a place selling tiny beds. I picked up the name of the chain from a tired Google search: baby & kids furniture warehouse toronto. The salesperson was **baby furniture warehouse** earnest, the kind of person who knows all the model numbers. He asked, "Are you looking for a nursery set, or just a crib?" I said I wanted a crib, maybe a dresser later.

He asked me three questions I had not thought about: who will be assembling it, do you plan to convert it to a toddler bed, and where will you leave the mattress when you wash the sheets? I blurted, "Someone else will assemble it," which, in hindsight, was the wrong answer — because delivery and assembly options were two separate add-ons that were only obvious if you asked. The base price on the sticker was one thing, the final bill another. I ended up with a nursery furniture sets in toronto package that included a crib, a dresser with changing top, and delivery for \$899.99. I thought I was getting a "deal." I still don't fully understand how the in-store discounts stack with manufacturer rebates, but I know this: ask for the final, out-the-door price before you make a face you can't take back.

Why I hesitated (and the tiny things that matter)

I spent a lot of time staring at mattress depth numbers. The label said 2.5 inches, then someone pointed out a model that fit only a 5-inch mattress. My partner and I argued in the car for ten minutes about "firmness" versus "thickness" while a guy at the corner shop refilled his Big Gulp. Little details matter: mattress fit, conversion hardware, whether the crib has drop rails (most in Canada no longer do), and whether the finish is water-based. I had imagined we would pick a crib once and be done. Nope.

Also, Toronto logistics are a real thing. The warehouse was in North York, but delivery windows were weird: 8 a.m. To 6 p.m. On weekdays, which is basically "choose your kid's nap or your job." They offered Saturday delivery for an extra \$45. I took the Saturday. Worth it.

What I wish I had asked before I said yes

- Do you include the crib mattress? I assumed yes. They did not.
- Is assembly included, or just delivery? They charged me \$79 to assemble.
- Will the crib convert to a toddler bed, and do I get the conversion kit? Some cribs need the kit, some include it.
- What is your return policy if the crib has a factory defect? I learned there's a 30-day window, but you pay return shipping unless it's their error.
- Can you hold an item for me while I check ceiling height and door clearance? They said yes, for 48 hours.

A short list of what I brought to the store that I probably should have checked online first

1. Tape measure.
2. Floor plan with door widths and the window location.
3. A list of must-haves: convertibility, Greenguard certification, and no toxic finishes.
4. Phone charger and a patient partner.

Assembly, traffic, and the smell of new paint

Assembly took two hours at our apartment because the box barely fit up the stairs. The delivery guys were polite but rushed. They asked if we wanted the old cardboard taken away. I said yes, because I was still wearing the same hoodie from the showroom and it was 7:40 p.m. By then. The crib looked good, but I was sweating from lifting a mattress and from that moment of "did we do the right thing?" The mattress was firmer than expected, which was arguably better. The crib slats felt solid. We bumped the base down to the lowest setting. I read the manual again — safety first, and common sense wins.

Where I found the best unexpected help

A neighbor — someone from the co-op down the hall — popped their head in and said they bought their nursery set at a smaller shop in Leslieville. They mentioned "nursery package deals in toronto" and a place where they could swap out a dresser for a glider at an extra discount. I made a mental note: big warehouses have choices and volume, but smaller trusted baby furniture store in toronto businesses sometimes give better flexibility and actually answer emails.

The final damage to my wallet

If I had to be exact: crib \$349.99, mattress \$119.99, delivery and assembly \$124, dresser included in the bundle for \$289 because of a "package discount." Total with taxes: roughly \$940. That number feels sticky in my brain. I had budgeted \$700. Lesson learned: add 20 to 35 percent for extras and the odd fee that only shows up when you are signing the credit card slip.



A few things I still don't get, and why that's okay

I still don't fully understand manufacturer lifetime warranties versus store limited warranties. I also don't know if we overpaid for that glossy finish. I do know the crib feels sturdy, and the neighbor's baby slept through four hours of our awkward celebratory noise the first night, which felt like a small victory.

If you are shopping in and you are like me — not a pro, just trying to keep a tiny human safe — ask for the final price, insist on seeing the mattress dimensions, and bring a tape measure. Check both big places like baby & kids furniture warehouse toronto and smaller shops that offer nursery sets in toronto. Look at dressers & gliders at toronto's local stores too, because sometimes the package deals make more sense than buying pieces separately.

I'll probably go back to that Leslieville shop to check a glider. For now, the crib is assembled, the rain has stopped, and the ancient radiator in our hallway is making that comforting clank it always does at night. I slept like I was on guard. That will change, I hope, once the baby sleeps through the night. Or when I finally understand how those warranty cards work.

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