

If Your Baby Must Travel in Wartime

United States. Children's Bureau



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United States Department of Labor, Children's Bureau

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If your
baby
must travel
in wartime

IF YOUR BABY MUST TRAVEL IN WARTIME

Have you been on a train lately? The railroads have a hard job to do these days, one they are doing well. But before you decide on a trip with a baby, you should realize what a wartime train is like. So let's look into one.

This train is crowded. At every stop more people get on—more and still more. Soldiers and sailors on furloughs, men on business trips, women—young and not so young—and babies, lots of them, mostly small.

The seats are full. People stand and jostle one another in the aisle. Mothers sit crowded into single seats with toddlers or with babies in their laps. Three sailors occupy space meant for two. A soldier sits on his tipped-up suitcase. A marine leans against the back of the seat. Some people stand in line for 2 hours waiting to get into the diner, some munch sandwiches obtained from the porter or taken out of a paper bag, some go hungry. And those who get to the diner have had to push their way through five or six moving cars.

You will want to think twice before taking your baby into such a crowded, uncomfortable place as a train. And having thought twice, you'd better decide to stay home unless your trip is absolutely necessary.

But suppose you and your baby *must* travel. Well then, you will have to plan for the dozens of small but essential things incidental to traveling with a baby and equip yourself to handle them.

Going by Train?

Unless you appreciate the fact that babies and toddlers are very special people with very special requirements, you are in for a lot of trouble if you attempt a train trip with them. Planning should be done well in advance.

Take only what you must

You will need to make your train reservations early. Select the first or middle of the week for traveling. Stay off trains on week ends or holidays. Travel then is like a bargain-counter rush.

Travel arrangements of any kind are hard to make nowadays. Railroads are geared to military needs and civilians take what is left over.

If you are going on a very long trip, try by all means to arrange for a stop-over or two with relatives or friends. It will give you a chance to rest and get things in order again.

When you travel by coach.

If you are traveling by coach, let us hope you are in one of the up-to-date coaches with comfortable reclining seats rather than in one of the not-so-modern coaches found on other trains.

If it is a de luxe coach and if your child is 2 or 3 years of age, you may be able to get a seat reservation for him. Otherwise you will have to hold him on your lap.

Remember, too, if you have trouble, that the Travelers Aid is always willing to help. Its workers can help you locate friends or relatives. They can help you if you lose your tickets or your money, or if any similar emergencies occur while you are en route. They can get a doctor for you if you or your baby become ill. They can tell you of good restaurants to eat in or of places where you can rest or feed your baby. You can even arrange by telegram with the Travelers Aid to have someone meet you at the station from which you are leaving or at which you are arriving to help you. If you are a serviceman's wife, the USO can help you, too.

Plan well and travel light.—After you have made all your travel arrangements, gather your forces at home. Write out in detail your youngster's schedule and list the food, clothes, and other supplies needed.

Travel light, so far as your own personal belongings are concerned, lighter than you've ever imagined you could.

Your aim is to take on the train enough for essential comfort and not one item more.

Limit yourself to one dark dress or suit. Many mothers have found an apron a convenience, one that could be slipped over their dresses when they were caring for their babies. Additional clothing for yourself can be checked and sent on ahead.

Clothes, diapers, and such.—Carry an abundance of changes for the baby or toddler. But plan to dress him simply in clothes that are easy to put on and take off.

Remember weather may change and many trains are air-cooled. So take along a warm outer garment, preferably a sweater, and a blanket for the baby.

Unless your baby has completely mastered the art of keeping dry, use disposable diapers if you can possibly get them. If you cannot get them, then the next best bet is a supply of standard diaper linings—specially treated papers about the size of ordinary cleaning tissues, used with cloth diapers.

Many mothers prefer to use cloth diapers at night. Some babies become badly chafed if only paper diapers are used. Used cloth diapers can be wrapped in wax paper and repacked in your suitcase or put into a waterproof bag.

If your baby is sufficiently trained to use his own toilet seat, by all means take it along. He is less likely to be frightened if there is this one familiar thing in his strange surroundings. Some toilet seats come with a carrying case. If the one you have did not, then use a canvas laundry case or a shopping bag for this purpose.

Pack the baby's clothes, diapers, and blankets into a special suitcase or bag. Keep it unlocked and easily accessible on the train.

Milk for the baby.—If your baby is breast-fed, feeding him is relatively easy. Food for babies who are not breast-fed presents a difficult problem.

Week ends are worst

Trouble ahead!

For traveling, the simplest formula is one of evaporated milk. Milk can be obtained in small cans, and an individual feeding can be made up when feeding time comes. Then no refrigeration is needed. For such a feeding you will need to carry the following equipment, all of which should be assembled in one container, such as a heavy shopping bag or a medium-sized duffle bag:

Bottles and caps—boiled and ready for use.

Take enough for all feedings during the trip, plus some extras for water.
Wrap each bottle separately.

Nipples—boiled and put in a boiled jar with a lid.

Can opener (or some other instrument to open small cans of evaporated milk).

Milk in small cans.

The cans should be washed off before you leave home.

Vacuum bottle containing boiled water.

Sugar or syrup may be added to the water if desired.

Funnel—to put water into bottles.

This should be boiled and wrapped in clean paper.

If your baby has not been on evaporated milk, and your doctor agrees that it is satisfactory for him, you should introduce him to it, several days or even a week before you start on your trip if he gets used to new things slowly.

Before you leave home, you can prepare the mixture of hot boiled water, with or without sugar or syrup, and carry it in a vacuum jug on the train. Then mix this mixture and the evaporated milk as you need it. Your doctor will tell you the correct proportions.

Usually the hot water in the vacuum bottle, when added to the milk, will make the feeding the right temperature for the baby. Carry small cans of milk, using whatever is needed for one feeding only. Perhaps you can drink what is left in the can yourself or give it to a fellow traveler. Do not save it to use later.

The one thing you cannot do is to run the risk of giving your baby

contaminated or sour milk. *Never attempt to carry the milk warm in a vacuum jug.* If you do, the bacteria that are present in milk will multiply many times, with the result that when the milk is fed to the baby, it will make him sick.

You can carry boiled nipples in a jar, as already suggested, or you can use nursing bottles with caps that make it possible to reverse the nipples into the bottle and thus keep them sterile.

Water for the baby.—For baby's protection, it is very important that you do not give him water that has not been boiled. Usually it is better to take several bottles of boiled water from home even though you may find it possible to obtain boiled water on the train. Or plan to use the boiled water from the vacuum jug.

Other food for the baby.—Orange juice and cod-liver oil usually cannot be carried conveniently. There is no harm in letting your baby go without these during the time when you will be traveling.

Unless your baby is on a special diet, don't load yourself down with canned foods under present traveling conditions. Your baby can get along for a few days on his milk. Plan to use as little food as you think you can get by with.

If your baby is a hearty eater and you fear that he will miss his cereal, then carry dry ready-prepared baby cereal, to which you can add hot water from the vacuum bottle. You will need to take a dish and a spoon in the shopping or duffle bag. Foods that require heating will have to be omitted. Some children do not object to cold food. If yours does not, and if he has a big appetite, you can take canned vegetables or fruits, which he can eat from the can. Take rusks or crackers along for emergency use.

In planning these solid foods, remember that nothing can be heated except by the addition of hot water from your vacuum jug, and that no utensils can be washed on the train.

Boys in the bleachers

Food for young children.—Meals for toddlers are not so much of a problem as meals for babies are.

Packing a lunch of customary foods will not be difficult for the short trip. This may include bread-and-butter sandwiches, wrapped in wax paper; cookies

or crackers; canned tomato or fruit juice; and canned evaporated milk. (Several large paper bags to be used as “waste baskets” are a convenience.)

But for a long trip you may have to rely on getting your meals in the diner even though this is more expensive. Some railroads, however, don't serve meals to civilians until after servicemen are fed, so you may need to take along some food even though you are planning to use the diner. Be sure to go to meals early.

Most little children are thrilled at the idea of eating on the train and tell about the experience for many days afterward. For a toddler's diet the railroads even now can usually supply cooked cereals, baked potatoes, green vegetables, well-cooked meats, fruits, and milk.

Some dining cars provide half portions for children, but if they don't, no one will object if you order a meal for yourself and give part of it to Junior. But in case you are unable to get into the diner, it is wise to take some simple things for your toddler and yourself to eat.

Fun in the diner

Keeping baby clean.—Mothers sometimes attempt to bathe babies on a train in the washroom basins. Don't do it. It isn't sanitary. It is better to let your baby go unbathe during the trip than to run the risk of infection. Clean his face and hands off with cold cream and cleansing tissues and let it go at that.

Solid food and solid comfort

When changing diapers, use oil and cotton and cleansing tissue. Change the baby where he lies instead of trying to take him back to the dressing room.

Keep handy at all times a small emergency diaper kit in a rubber-lined bag, so you can stop anywhere and take care of the baby if necessary.

Keeping baby comfortable.—Adjustable canvas seats are available, chiefly for use in automobiles, but they are very helpful for train travel, too. They are light and can be folded and put in a suitcase. Some come in their own carrying cases. They give the child a restful change from the car seat.

Sleeping in the coach.—If you travel by coach, the chances are you are going to have to sleep with your baby cradled in your arms. You may be able to rent a pillow, which will make the night more comfortable for you and your baby.

In most coaches lights are turned down at night and often babies sleep undisturbed. The night trip will be harder on you than it is on the baby.

When you travel by Pullman.

There is far more space and better service in Pullman accommodations, and if there is any way that you can manage to have them, you should do it for your own and your baby's sake. Accommodations on the Pullman are worth the extra cash, if you have the cash.

Even though you may be unable to reserve a lower berth in advance, it may be possible to arrange with the Pullman conductor to exchange your upper for a lower. The greater convenience of a lower berth is worth the extra cost.

If your baby is very tiny (under 3 months), he can travel by basket if you go by Pullman. For your baby's food, it is wise to use an evaporated-milk formula as described on pages [6](#) and [9](#). For any type of travel this formula is probably the safest and the easiest.

For a short daytime trip or an overnight trip, you may be able to arrange ahead of time to keep the bottles in the refrigerator of the dining car. If you do so, you must be very sure, though, that the dining car is not to be taken off the train at any point before you reach your destination. If you can safely use the refrigerator of the diner, you can prepare your feedings before you leave. Chill them thoroughly, carry the bottles containing the milk mixture in your sterilizer, and as you board the train, hand it to the porter to put into the refrigerator. When baby is ready for food, the porter will heat a bottle and bring it to you. Don't forget to include a few bottles of boiled water in your quota of bottles.

If you are traveling in the Pullman, you can put the baby or young child to bed at his regular time and expect him to sleep soundly until morning.

Don't do it! It isn't sanitary!

It's harder on you

If your baby is very young, you may use the basket for sleeping purposes. Berths are wide and long and you can keep the baby, basket and all, with you at night. Change and feed the baby in the berth each morning before getting him up.

Put the older child in the half of the berth next to the window, carefully padding the window sill and window with a pillow to prevent head bumping and in winter to keep the youngster warm.

Carry along a waterproof sheet to give the porter when he makes up the berth. If the child is under 4, this is a wise precaution even though he may be perfectly trained at home.

Entertaining the young child.

Little children get tired on a long trip, and who can blame them? You can keep them entertained if you take along a few carefully selected toys: Colored crayons, pencils, tablets, a favorite doll, and story books. A familiar toy should be included, as new ones are not so comforting.

Children like books under such circumstances, and you should have several small ones with you. Books about trains and engines will be good fun.

Keep a small toy or two in your purse for odd moments—when you are waiting for your meal in the diner, for example, or when you are waiting for a train. It is a good plan to have a pencil handy and paper for you to draw on to amuse your youngster, or for him to scribble on if he is old enough. Another good thing to have with you is a small cloth picture book that can be rolled up into a compact cylinder.

Fellow travelers.

Most people like children, so don't get too upset if Jimmy talks with his fellow passengers. Many grown-ups find an alert, friendly child a delightful diversion on a long and tiresome trip.

Almost always when you tell the person to whom the child is talking, "Send Jimmy back if he annoys you," you get the assurance, "He's perfectly all right. I enjoy talking to him." Accept such statements at their face value. Don't cramp Jimmy's style "in winning friends and influencing people."

There are times, although they will be rare, when you may need to curb Jimmy's friendliness—when he shows too much interest in an obviously undesirable or uninterested person. Bring him back to your seat to hear a story or to eat an apple and then keep him busy until he forgets about the stranger.

Too much is enough

A time to make friends

You will need to keep your eyes glued on overfriendly grown-ups who in a burst of enthusiasm may give your youngster candy or other undesirable food. Many adults are thoughtless about food for children, and if you are unfortunate enough to meet one of these individuals, you will need to be tactful but firm. You can't afford to run the risk of having a sick child.

Many times people will offer to carry your suitcase, to watch one child while you attend to another, to carry your toddler into the dining car, or to keep an eye on your sleeping baby while you go to the rest room.

Journey's end

Use good judgment about accepting such offers to help you. They are usually made in good faith and with the best intentions in the world. And you'll certainly need some help if you're traveling with a youngster in these days of overworked train crews and few redcaps. But don't ever leave your baby with a stranger in a railroad station, and do hesitate to leave him with a total stranger on the train. Don't leave him for very long with anyone; he may be frightened when you go away. Don't trust your baby to anyone who has a cold or any other visible illness that the baby might catch.

Going by Bus?

As a rule busses are even more crowded than trains, and there is far less space. And traveling by bus with a baby or young child requires even better planning than travel by train.

There are a few things you will need to know about bus travel before you start out. Busses make 15-minute rest stops every 2 hours and 40-minute to 1-hour stops three times a day for meals. Any child who occupies a seat is required to have a half-fare ticket even though he is under 5.

By all means plan your trip for the first or the middle of the week, avoiding the week-end travel peak if at all possible. If you are going on a long trip, plan stop-overs that will break your journey. Everything that was said about clothes, supplies, and equipment for traveling by train coach will be needed when you travel by bus. If anything, your things will need to be packed even more compactly.

If your baby is breast-fed, traveling will be easier than if he is not. You will need to plan with your doctor about putting your baby on an evaporated-milk formula if he is bottle-fed. Remember, too, that you will have to count on preparing his feedings during rest and meal stops.

Emergency supplies of food for yourself and your young child will be necessary even though you hope to buy your meals on the way. Restaurants in bus depots are overcrowded and you may not be able to get food in the time you have.

For a short trip you had better plan on carrying food for yourself and your youngster.

Going by Car?

Families going to strange cities to establish new homes are still able to obtain gasoline with which to travel by car. A few tips on automobile travel may therefore be of value.

Proper care of your baby when traveling by car can be summed up in this way: Clean milk, clean water, clean food, and as little change as possible from the regular schedule to which he is accustomed.

Most young children enjoy riding in an automobile although they do get tired and bored on long trips. There are many things that you can do to make traveling by car easier.

When your baby is small, take him in his carrying basket, if you have one, and put him on the back seat in a coach or sedan or on the back ledge of a coupe, if it is wide enough. Small canvas hammocks that fasten onto the back of the front seat may still be available and are a real boon to the baby who must travel. If your baby's crib fits into the back of the car, you will have it ready for him to sleep in when he reaches his new home.

When your baby can sit up, there are canvas seats available that hook over the top of the car seat. These will keep the child comfortable and erect and allow him to look out the window without stretching his neck.

The young child can take his afternoon nap stretched out on the back seat and covered with a light robe or coat. Plan your packing of luggage with this in mind.

The baby's food must loom large in your plans if he is not breast-fed. You will either have to find a place each night where you can prepare his feedings and devise a way for keeping them on ice and heating them while you travel, or you will have to put the baby on the evaporated-milk formula described on pages [6](#) and [9](#). If you plan to prepare his usual feedings you must take along all the equipment to do it.

Small portable stoves using canned heat can be used to heat the feeding, or you can stop in restaurants and ask a waitress to have the bottle heated for you. The important thing is to have a feasible plan worked out for doing it. Cereal,

canned food, and oranges may be obtained along the way.

When stopping for meals, be sure to select good places where well-cooked food can be obtained for young children. Be certain that the milk served the youngsters is pasteurized. And insist that the milk be served directly from the bottle (opened at the table).

Order sensibly for the children, getting them the same type of meal you would supply them at home.

By all means carry your own water, and for the baby or young child it should be boiled. Give the youngsters a drink from your own supply before stopping for food. Don't let them drink water from drinking fountains, hotels, or tourist homes. This does not mean that the water may not be all right; it is merely a precautionary measure against digestive upsets.

If you are traveling by car, you will be able to take along the baby's own toilet equipment, and remember to carry it with you into rest rooms, hotels, or tourist homes.

Don't attempt to drive too many miles in one day when a baby is a passenger. Babies require many stops, and rest periods for a toddler should be frequent.

Plan to stop each night by 5:30 or 6 o'clock. This will give you time to select a hotel or tourist room and get the baby or toddler comfortably to sleep by his usual bedtime.

If toddlers are part of your carload, you will have amusement problems. Gather together a number of small toys and place them in a box of their own. If yours is a two-seated automobile, allow the youngster to change his seat often. Sometimes he will enjoy riding in the front seat; at other times he will want to play with his toys or take a nap in the back seat. It will help to keep him amused if you can think up stories to tell him about the things he sees along the way—the children, the cattle, the trains, and the factories. Songs you know by heart will be used many times over, too.

A job this traveling with babies in wartime! Certainly not something to attempt lightly. But if you must travel with your baby, you'll be doing a real war service if you make it as painless as you can to the transportation system, your baby, and yourself.

The Bureau gratefully acknowledges the work of Mr. Gluyas Williams, who illustrated this booklet as a contribution to the war effort.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

FRANCES PERKINS, *Secretary*

CHILDREN'S BUREAU

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