

BED BATH & BEYOND®

How to Age-Proof Your Kid's Bedroom Décor

BY [BONNIE VENGROW](#)

Nearly a quarter of a million dollars. That's how much the United States Department of Agriculture estimates parents will shell out on each of their little love nuggets before their 18th birthday. It's a staggering amount that will surprise absolutely no one who has a child. After all, a few years into paying for diapers, wipes, clothes, food, school, and babysitters and the government's \$245,000 prediction doesn't seem so far flung.

The good news? There are ways to trim costs—at least on your kid's bedroom. Unlike shoes, which will be outgrown before the soles are worn, décor can have some staying power long past the diaper stage, if you know where to focus your efforts.

To help, we turned to some leading experts on how to create a room design that will grow with your kiddo. Here are their must-try tips. (Want more ideas? Check out [this](#) handy article.)

Rethink the Bed

A crib is non-negotiable when your child is very young, but it pays to prepare now for the day when he's ready to make the move to a bed. Brooke Lange, principal at [Brooke Lang Interiors and Design](#), is a big fan of convertible bunk beds. "As kids like to jump and climb, having a sturdy bunk bed with a ladder doubles as fun and additional sleeping arrangements for sleepovers," she explains. "As your child grows, a convertible bunk or loft bed can be reassembled for your desired needs, from a desk to a couch or additional storage space."

Or, if space allows, consider adding a twin-sized bed now to the nursery, advises Amy Bell, owner of [Red Chair Home Interiors](#). "I discovered that the decorative crib bumpers that are included with crib bedding sets fit almost perfectly around the inner edges of a twin-sized iron [daybed](#) frame, allowing the bed to be comfy and coordinated at the same time," she says. "When baby is in the crib stage, mom or dad will be grateful for a comfortable place to crash when baby needs a little extra TLC in the middle of the night. When it's time to wave 'bye-bye' to the crib, the big-kid bed is already in place."

Skip the Carpet

You will realize the genius of this tip within the first month of bringing home your newborn. Yes, a snuggly soft carpet feels amazing underfoot, but let's face it, children are *messy*. "Traditional installed carpet is not sustainable for kids," Lang says. "As it gets old, you constantly have to clean it and it doesn't provide you

flexibility to customize.” Instead, look for easy-to-replace alternatives, like an [area rug](#) or removable carpet tiles.

Tame Toy Storage

Babies begin accumulating stuff from the moment they arrive, and many times before they're even born. Finding a storage solution that actually works for them is right up there with a good night's sleep as something every parent wants. The options are limitless, and no one size will fit all situations, but there are a couple things every mom and dad should consider.

First, skip the traditional toy box, which will become a veritable black hole for your child's stuffies. Instead, consider age-proof solutions like a [storage ottoman](#) (it'll double as seating when your child gets older), an over-the-door shoe organizer, an open bookshelf with bins, or shelves secured to the wall (it can later hold books and tchotchkes). “Toys on shelves are easier to find and organize, and smaller items or sets can be corralled into bins or fabric cubes,” Bell explains. “As the child grows, those same shelves can hold anything from books to soccer trophies. Wire storage cubes are great for toddlers because they are inexpensive, there is no head bump hazard, they can be reconfigured many different ways, and they can later serve as closet storage.”

Second, label everything. “Use multipurpose labels and bins with pictures and words that can be reused and changed for different purposes,” suggests Rachel Rosenthal, owner of [Rachel and Company](#).

Configure the Closet

Perhaps the hardest-working member of your child's room, the closet, is also the spot with the most flexibility. Consider splurging on a closet organizing system that can be easily tailored and customized to suit your growing child's needs. “Designing hanging storage low enough to where your child can pick out their own clothes helps establish independence and strong organizational habits early on in their development,” says Dan Moyer Jr., national director of social media for [Closet Factory](#).

Don't Commit to a Theme

Sure, baby has no choice but to accept the baby animal photos adorning the walls right now. But once she starts developing and voicing her opinions, don't be surprised if she decides to chuck Bambi for a poster of her fave cartoon character. Save yourself the headache (and cost) of revamping the whole room by sticking with quick-change art, like [temporary wallpaper](#) or stickers, or traditional-sized frames or clips that can be easily filled to suit her changing tastes.

Or, go one step further and design a neutral space that can be easily embellished (and re-embellished) in the future. "A transportation or ballerina theme can quickly get old," says Dianne de Las Casas, CEO of [Once Upon a Storage](#). "Use neutral paint and bedding and add themed items through your accessories. This way, the accessories can be easily changed out as your child outgrows the theme."