

I was hunched over a crib instruction manual at 9:17 p.m., fluorescent lights buzzing above me at Baby & Kids Furniture Warehouse Toronto, trying to decide if I was building a miniature IKEA set or [baby furniture at Babywarehouse](#) assembling a time machine. The parking lot outside **Babywarehouse** was half-full, a neighbour ferrying a stroller to his trunk while another woman argued on her phone about a delivery slot. It had been one of those rain-then-drizzle evenings where the car smelled like wet coat and takeout, and my patience felt threadbare.

The weirdest part of visiting three stores in one day

I started in the east end, then zigzagged through Leslieville and Bloor, ending up at a place that bills itself as a trusted baby furniture store in Toronto. Visiting multiple shops in one day felt excessive, but I wanted to see actual cribs in real rooms, not just staged photos. At the first spot, the sales rep was earnest and showed me a nursery furniture set in Toronto that matched the catalogue photo almost exactly. The wood was warmer in person. A huge plus.

At the second store, the vibe was different. It was louder, more modern, and they had nursery package deals in Toronto that included dressers & gliders at Toronto's shop price. I tried a glider and discovered my lower back hates plush cushions offered as "lumbar support." The rep quoted me a number that started with a 2 and ended with a breathless "plus delivery." I still don't fully understand how their delivery fees worked, but I got the impression that weekends are twice as expensive and you have to schedule two weeks ahead if you want white-glove.

By the third stop, I was tired and picky. The crib displays were neat, but a few had small paint chips or wobbling slats. I tapped one and felt like an amateur inspector. A dad nearby was measuring the distance between slats with a phone app. He whispered to his partner, "2.3 inches, it's okay," and I realized everyone's slightly paranoid after reading the safety checklists online.

Why I hesitated before signing anything

There were real choices to make, not just aesthetic ones. Convertibles tempted me with words like "grows with baby" and "long-term value," but they also came with more moving parts and confusing conversion kits. Some cribs came with matching dressers, which is appealing until you try to move them up Montreal Road steps. I thought about the future and whether I'd want a nursery set that pinned me into a style for years.

The price tags were weirdly specific. One crib was \$349.99, another \$1,149.00, and a nursery package deal at the middle-range store was \$1,799. I jotted those numbers in my phone, because when your partner asks "How much?" You want something resembling a fact, not a vague "a lot." The warehouse had more aggressive discounts, but they also had fewer warranties spelled out on paper. The more expensive places offered a one-year parts warranty, the cheaper ones gave ninety days. I still don't fully understand how transferable those warranties are if you move provinces.

What I actually ended up buying — and why

I left with a crib, a simple dresser, and an agreement to pick up a glider next week. The crib was mid-range in price, sturdy, and the mattress fit snugly enough that when I pressed the corner, there was barely an audible creak. I liked that it had solid assembly instructions, which mattered because I am not good at interpreting diagrams at 10 p.m.

There were practical things I learned the hard way. The mattress sizes are slightly different between brands, so even though two cribs were labeled "standard," the sheets fit differently. The mattress I liked at the store felt

different at home. I returned once to swap it, which took an hour on a sleepy Thursday afternoon, and I learned their return desk is separate from customer service. Small annoyances add up.

A short list of what I brought to each store that made differences

- A tape measure and a photo of the nursery wall with the window and radiator.
- My phone with two crib photos bookmarked for color comparison.
- A note with the dimensions of the nursery door and hallway, because I did not want to marry a dresser and then discover it would not fit through the hall.

Why the neighbourhoods and timing mattered more than I expected

Buying in the Annex versus a Scarborough big-box felt different. In the Annex, the trusted baby furniture store in Toronto I visited had a delivery team that promised to bring items up one flight of stairs for a fee. In Scarborough, the warehouse model meant you could load it yourself that night if you had a big enough car. Traffic played into it; I spent 40 minutes crawling down the Don Valley Parkway at 6 p.m. Thinking about whether the extra \$100 for delivery was worth not hauling a dresser through two sets of doors.

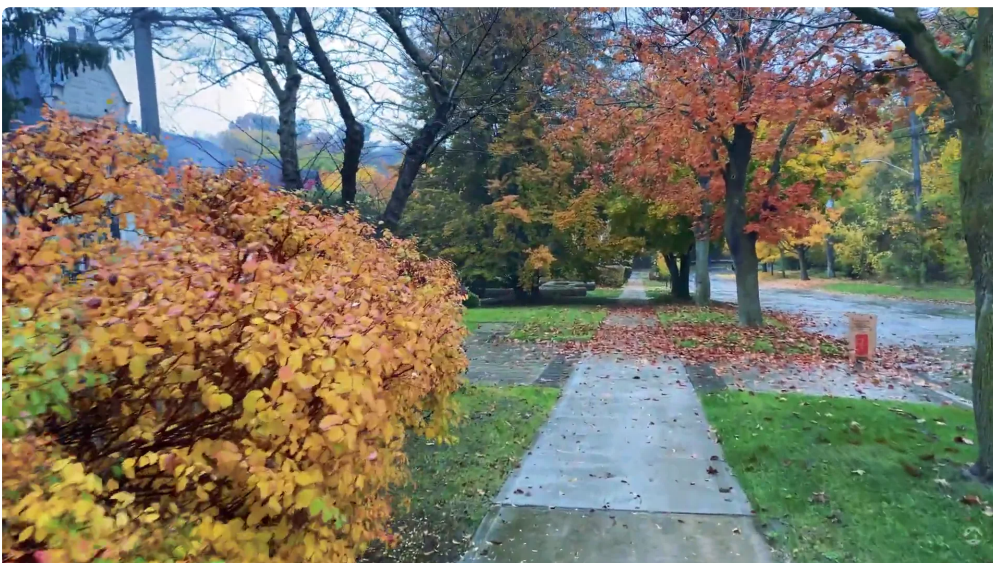
Toronto's weather shows up in these small ways. On a rainy day, a delivery window of 9 a.m. To 1 p.m. Is practically useless if you have to be at work by 10. My partner took the day off and still had to wait for a call that never came until 11:50. They arrived at noon. The mattress and crib were fine, but the driver left the packaging blocking our building's recycling bin for the weekend, and I was grumpy every time I saw the cardboard pile.

The quirks I didn't expect

- Some stores had amazing salespeople who actually admitted they didn't know the difference between two similar wood stains. That honesty was oddly comforting.
- One place offered package deals that genuinely saved a few hundred dollars if you bought a crib, dresser, and glider together. Another place's "package" was just three items bundled with no real discount.

A few practical regrets and things I'm glad I did

I regret not asking more clearly about delivery insurance. I assumed the drivers were covered for scratches; I was wrong. A minor dent took three calls to resolve, and the timeline stretched. I am glad I tested the glider in person. Online reviews raved about comfort, but my lower back disagreed until I tried three models. I am also glad I wrote down the mattress model number, because swapping that one was painless after I had the SKU.



The last thing as I wrapped the crib assembly at home, it was 11:04 p.m. And I had a spill of tea on the floor and a faint guilt about buying the glider instead of saving for something else. But seeing the crib in the nursery with a little mobile I already own made a worry ease up. Decisions are a mess, but tonight, for now, the room looks like it could be a real place for a human. I feel less flustered than I did at 9:17, and oddly proud that I made it through three stores, three delivery policies, and one late-night assembly without losing my temper.

Next steps: finalize the glider pick-up, call the store about the delivery paperwork so it is officially recorded, and ask my neighbour for help moving the dresser into the final spot. Small practicalities, all of them. They are the sort of things I'll check in my notes and maybe grumble about on a rainy Tuesday, just like this week.

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