

Give Baby Shower Invitations That Allow People to Help

My best friend and her husband are expecting their first child this winter. I offered to throw them a baby shower. They were a little wary at first. They are pretty non traditional and did not want to obligate people to buy them a lot of stuff. "I do not want our friends to think we are opportunists, just because we give them all baby shower invitations," they said. I understood their sentiment, as I too do not like the concept of the 5 bridal showers some brides throw that always seem to make guests fork out more than they are comfortable with. I also know that baby showers represent something altogether more fulfilling emotionally than the average greedy bridal shower. A good number of newlyweds are older than their counterparts of 20 years prior. Most of them are well established in their careers and already have everything they need for their homes. Unlike when the bridal shower was first created, many couples do not need assistance with the basic things needed for a house. Guests receiving bridal shower invitations should be asked to help celebrate, not reach into their pocketbooks. Friends and family will always want to give gifts anyway, but you want them to feel unencumbered and inspired when doing so.

My friends who were against the idea of a baby shower were afraid of those same bridal shower expectations. I assured them that guests receiving baby shower invitations would be the same people who were overcome with a desire to help as soon as they heard the news of the pregnancy. Expectant first time parents do not have diapers, cribs and baby clothes hanging around the house, regardless of how much money they make. Being pregnant with your first baby, can make you run and hide with confusion over how to prepare. By getting your friends and family together for a baby shower, you allow them to offer advice and give you items that will make your life so much easier. I had no idea what a Boppy pillow was before our baby shower, and it turned out to be the thing I relied on most (next to my husband) for the year after we had our first child. A good number of other guests who will be sent shower invitations may not know the first thing about being pregnant or bringing a baby home. You have now given them an excuse to buy something adorably printed with little doggies from Baby Gap.

I came up with an idea that was well received by my friends. Their guests received shower invitations that asked them to attend a "Knowledge and Myths" party. Guests were asked to contribute some kind of baby safety item (outlet protectors, baby gate, baby monitor, etc) and some kind of nursery supply item. Additionally, ahead of time, I sent an e mail to all those who received shower invitations requesting that they send me their favorite bit of helpful parenting advice and the silliest piece of advice they ever received. I took all the tidbits, had them professionally printed and bound, and gave them to the expectant couple. The books were a big hit and my friends adored that everyone shared such helpful information and entertaining tales. They were, of course, now stocked with diapers, cream, magazines for labor and delivery, swaddling blankets, lullaby CDs, etc. The shower invitations did not leave anyone with an obligation to purchase anything beyond the theme. I think all the guests, however, happily brought additional baby gifts. But everyone seemed to enjoy offering support, advice and humor to the expectant couple. And that is the whole reason my friends wanted to get everyone together to help them celebrate such an exciting time in their lives.

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About the Author

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