

# Adoption Timeline

TIMING	OBJECTIVE	TASKS	FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS
1–3 Months	Learn about adoption.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Join an adoptive parent support group.</li> <li>2. Read adoption books and magazines.</li> <li>3. Attend a pre-adoption information session hosted by a local adoption agency or a conference. Find a local meeting or a support group at <a href="http://www.buildingyourfamily.com">www.buildingyourfamily.com</a>.</li> </ol>	Minimal
	Make preliminary decision about type of adoption.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. See the adoption decision matrix from BYF.</li> <li>2. Review country overviews.</li> </ol>	Understand financial implications of type of adoption. See sample <a href="#">cost breakdowns</a> .
3–6 Months	Choose adoption service provider.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Interview local homestudy agency or social worker, adoption agency for child placement, and/or attorney.</li> <li>2. Complete application procedures.</li> </ol>	Agency application fee (\$100–\$600) or attorney retainer (\$1,500–\$5,000) is due at this time. After retainer is disbursed, attorney fees will be due monthly.
	Begin process of locating your child.	If domestic, consult your attorney regarding legalities of independent adoption in your state and draft adoption profile.	None
	Prepare adoption budget.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. See sample adoption <a href="#">cost breakdowns</a></li> <li>2. Understand the adoption expense tax credit (see <a href="http://www.irs.gov">www.irs.gov</a>).</li> </ol>	None
6–9 Months	Complete homestudy.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Discuss homestudy questions with your spouse/partner/family members.</li> <li>2. Collect documents (references, birth certificates, tax returns, marriage certificate, divorce documents).</li> <li>3. Work with your homestudy provider on tasks specific to his or her process or your adoption route.</li> </ol>	\$0–\$200 for copies of documents. \$1,000–\$3,000 for the homestudy fee.
	Begin adoption process.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. For international, prepare dossier and file U.S. visa paperwork.</li> <li>2. For independent, begin networking and advertising activities to identify birthmother.</li> <li>3. For domestic agency, prepare profile for birthmother review.</li> </ol>	Typically, up to half of the parent preparation fee is due at the start of the homestudy. With international, visa and documentation fees average \$1,000–\$3,000. If agency adoption, half of child placement fee is due at this time.
9–24 Months	Receive child referral (international) or birthmother selection (domestic).	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Arrange for referral documentation review by adoption medicine specialist.</li> <li>2. If independent, make arrangements for payment of birthmother expenses, per your agreement and as allowed by state law. Make payment arrangements with medical providers.</li> </ol>	If agency, final half of child placement fee is due now. Birthmother's medical, legal, living, and/or counseling expenses will be paid from this time until birth of baby.
12–30 Months	Placement of child or birth of baby.	Enjoy! You are a new parent!	Outstanding agency fees, if any, and travel expenses, if any, are due now. International fees and expenses are also due now. If independent, birthmother's hospital expenses are due now (baby's medical expenses are likely to be covered by your medical insurance).
18–36 Months	Finalization of adoption.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Arrange for post-placement reports, as required.</li> <li>2. Select attorney for final court hearing, or learn how to represent yourself.</li> </ol>	If adopting from foster care, ensure that adoption assistance agreement is in place before finalization and check the availability of reimbursement for one-time expenses in your state. Post-placement fees average \$300–\$1,000; finalization costs with attorney are typically \$500–\$2,000.