

PARENT HACKS®

134 GENIUS SHORTCUTS
for LIFE with KIDS



ASHA DORNFEST
ILLUSTRATIONS BY CRAIGTON BERMAN

Parent Hacks: 134 Genius Shortcuts for Life with Kids

Asha Dornfest

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“Just . . . genius.”—*Buzzfeed*

Life with kids just got easier with these 134 ingenious hacks developed by parents just like you. Put the ketchup under the hot dog, minimizing the mess. Strap baby into a forward-facing carrier when you need to trim her fingernails—it frees your hands while controlling the squirming. Or stash a wallet in a disposable diaper at the beach—who would ever poke through what looks like a used Pamper?

All these hacks are easy to do, are boldly illustrated, and use everyday items in unexpected ways. And the range—from pregnancy and postpartum, through sleep, eating, bath time, travel, and more—covers all the most critical years when parents really need a little extra help.

Parent Hacks: 134 Genius Shortcuts for Life with Kids Details

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D.J. *Mama Bear's Bookish Den* says

This book is cute and hilarious! There are some absolute gems in here and MANY things I wish I would have known BEFORE having baby #4! I love the idea of putting the laundry basket in the bath to coral the little as well as putting a maxi-pad in undies for potty training! That is just GENIUS! (Especially for a little dude who still has accidents on long trips).

If you've got kids: check this out! The illustrations will make you smile and the info here is just great.

I received this in exchange for my review

Mary Fran Torpey says

More than any individual hack, the best part of Parent Hacks is the overall assumption that you, the reader, are a competent, loving person who could use a little help figuring out the trickier parts of child-rearing. My kiddo is older now, but I remember the moments of heart-pounding panic during my days with an infant--the (blessedly intermittent) feeling that I had no. idea. what. to. do. That overblown feeling is cultivated by many parenting authors and so-called experts: they want you to feel the panic, then pay for their advice! Asha Dornfest is different: she wants readers to feel cool, calm, and armed with as many hacks as they may need to get through the day. And bonus: not one of these hacks is advice that applies only to kids with a certain temperament, or only to adults with a great deal of time and/or money to waste.

Readers with a little one on the way will get the biggest impact from reading Parent Hacks pre-arrival, so that they can take advantage of all the tips in the pregnancy/postpartum, potty and sleep chapters. (Hack #38 would have saved me many a heart-pounding bedtime moment, in particular.) But there is plenty here for families with older kids, or even those who spend a decent chunk of time with kiddos (extended family, anyone who provides childcare). Some highlights: hack #89 made me regret donating the training potty, hack #97 made me rejoice to have (at long last!) an effective way to clean up glitter, and #122 gave me hope that we can master the toys-towels-and-umbrella schlep the next time we hit the beach. I also loved the lists sprinkled throughout the book: some are numbered meditations on a theme (e.g., 8 answers to the question "how can I help?") and others give multiple uses for one item (pool noodles, sandwich bags). Craighton Berman's illustrations are lighthearted and clear, and where they are meant to truly illustrate a hack (e.g. #57: get nonsnap pants onto a baby), they do just that, quite well.

full disclosure: I received a free pre-release copy of Parent Hacks as part of the Parent Hacks book launch kickoff team.

Mary says

Genius! Every idea has promise to help with all the work that goes with becoming a new parent. These are real bona fide shortcuts and helpful ideas, not fetishistic "make it yourself" items such as the 'living'

publications with which an exhausted new parent might be seduced and abandoned. Bonus that some ideas are not limited to child issues -- never thought of using a shoe holder for small items, but that sure enough would work for those itsy bitsy things that need a home.

Only omission is finding that 25th hour in the day, but with some much that is of use, the oversight can be forgiven.

Sarah Lee says

This is really a funny book and great for first time parents. I would buy this for people who were expecting children in the future. It would be good if you were currently a parent of children that were babies and toddlers. I docked a star because it is life with kids, which to me is all age ranges but this really only focuses on the baby and toddler years. Mine are older so there are only a couple of pages that were even useful to me. If your kids are older than 5 skip this book! For parents with babies or expecting this is a great little book giving all kinds of tricks and tips to saving time and sanity when you have babies and toddlers around! Some I already knew, some I wish I knew when my kids were babies!

Caitlin Christensen says

Very intersting tips and tidbits. Doesn't take long at all to read. I bookmarked quite a lot!

Niki Hawkes - The Obsessive Bookseller says

There are a lot of nifty ideas in this book. It ready very much like a buzzfeed list with one great idea after another. Of the 100+ ideas in here, I'll probably use a good dozen or so of them (in addition to the ones I had already been doing). Overall a great resource for parents wanting to get organized on a budget. The only thing I'll add is that it is definitely geared more towards moms than dads (with several sections on pregnancy, breastfeeding, etc) but there are still great tips in here for everyone.

My favorite: stuffing two standard sized pillows into a body pillow to make you're own pregnancy pillow. I WISH I'd read this when I was pregnant because my poor beat up body needed the support to get any sleep and I just couldn't bring myself to justify paying \$60+ for a pillow (those things are outrageously expensive). This would've been perfect lol.

Another gem: using a cupcake tray for dying Easter eggs. I don't know about you, but every time I've tried dying eggs even WITHOUT children helping, a dye cup always gets tipped over lol. Brilliant.

Libby says

I didn't remember until I started reading this that I had heard the author interviewed on NPR sometime in the last year. I thought this was fabulous, and definitely learned some ideas that wouldn't have otherwise occurred to me, even though we already have 4 kids. My favorite from the interview is the trick about

stopping the automatic flushing toilets (which struck fear into all of my older 3 until just recently) with a Post-It or painter's tape. From reading it, I loved all the organizing tips, and the many uses of unexpected objects, like painter's tape and pool noodles. I also appreciated that Dornfest explicitly said these might not work for everyone, but were tricks she (and her blog readers--and she did give credit, good job!) found useful. There were hacks I could clearly see not working for me, but just as many that I thought were brilliant. The fun narrative style also made this an extremely quick read.

Chris says

Lots of interesting ideas for parenting shortcuts. Most are good (recycle kid artwork by laminating it and using it as a placemat!), some are genius (use those silicone bracelets you still have lying around--livestrong, etc--to loop around two cabinet doors to child-proof them) and a few are duds (sorry, I'm not going to repurpose a spatula to scrape out a diaper). Good gift idea for new parents!

Elizabeth says

This book is short and sweet, but gosh darn it, it's a five star book! It meets its purpose handily. The hacks are clever, creative, and fresh, not just rehashed tips I've heard a million times before just by virtue of being a mom with parents/in-laws/friends around.

Of course, anyone who reads it will see a few tips that don't seem helpful to them, but that's the very nature of this type of thing. Not all tips will work for all people. Still, I found myself over and over saying "now why didn't I think of that?"

I love the layout. I love that it's not crammed with tiny-print lists that just overwhelm you. This format is way more usable to new parents.

I'm pretty sure this is going to be my go-to baby shower gift. (along with cute shoes because cute shoes always get an "Awww ." Oh look at that! I made my own hack! "Always give cute shoes at a baby shower if you want hearts to melt." lol)

Terry Pearson says

I won a copy and f this book in a giveaway on goodreads.

Filled with many good time saving ideas I've never thought of, I wish I had this book when my children were little. I never would have thought of tying the straps of a tank top back !

Eguerrieri says

This book is the PERFECT baby shower gift. Chock full of actually helpful tips real parents/grandparents/aunts/uncles need to know, it's way more useful than a wipe warmer! Plus, it's in a list

format and has awesome illustrations so those of us with kids don't have to commit to reading a novel to figure out a tip or two. Love this book.

Anna says

Solid gold. Some great tips even if you don't have kids.

Madison says

A good parent is always on the hunt for hacks to improve their life. While I've read of at least half of these hacks, some of them were new and worth trying. I liked the illustrations and that the hacks were divided into sections.

Favorite hack is putting a fitted sheet over the kiddie pool. Closely followed by putting catchup under the hot dog instead of on top to contain mess.

Heather says

Like any collection of hacks or tips, this book includes some no-brainers and some things that probably don't really work, but there are a lot of ideas in this one that I will actually use and will make my life easier in little ways. I also liked the fun illustrations!

Corinne Edwards says

I have five kids. My youngest two are three year old twin boys.

You can probably imagine my life.

I have followed the Parent Hacks blog for a while now, even searching specific problems to see if other parents out there have good solutions (they almost always do!). When I saw that the blog author was publishing a book, I knew I wanted to read it.

As soon as I opened the first page, I knew this book was a winner, and not just for the content. The format is genius - fun illustrations, actual highlighting to give you the gist of the idea, perfect for a parent with little brain space. The hacks are organized by topic (sleeping, feeding, traveling etc) to help if you are just thinking about a specific issue you're dealing with.

I found myself dog-earring pages with things that can help me even now with my boys. Of course, they wouldn't ALL work for me now and they don't all apply to my life now either but still, even at age 3.5, there are lots of helpful tips.

You know what I wish?

That someone had given me this book at my first baby shower, fifteen years ago. Several of the hacks in this book I already used because someone along the way gave me the tip but so many would've been helpful if only I'd KNOWN! I think this is my new favorite shower gift for a first time Mom, even just to help remind you that creativity counts with parenting - we're all winging it!

Great idea for a book and great presentation.

I'm a fan.
