

Adoption Timeline

TIMING	OBJECTIVE	TASKS	FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS
1-3 Months	Learn about adoption	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Join an adoptive parent support group. 2. Read adoption books and magazines. (See pages 90) 3. Attend a pre-adoption information session hosted by local adoption agencies or conferences. (Find a pre-adoption information session and a support group near you on www.adoptivefamilies.com.) 	Minimal
	Make preliminary decision about type of adoption	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. See Decision Matrix on pages 92-93. 2. Review country overviews in this Guide. 	Understand financial implications of types of adoption. See sample budgets on page 95.
3-6 Months	Choose adoption service providers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Interview local homestudy agency or social worker, adoption agency for child placement, and/or attorney (See pages 96-97). 2. Complete application procedures. 	Agency application fee (\$0-\$600) or attorney retainer (typically \$1,500-\$5,000) due at this time. After retainer is disbursed, attorney fees will be due monthly.
	Begin process of locating your child	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If domestic, consult your attorney regarding legalities of independent adoption in your state and draft "dear birthmother" letter (see pages 29-33). 	None
	Prepare adoption budget	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. See sample adoption budgets on page 95. 2. Understand the adoption expense tax credit. (See www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/i8839.pdf.) 	None
6-9 Months	Complete homestudy	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Discuss homestudy questions with your spouse/partner/family members (See pages 98). 2. Collect documents (references, birth certificates, tax returns, marriage certificate, divorce documents) 3. Work with your homestudy provider on tasks specific to his or her process. 	0-\$200 for copies of documents
	Begin adoption process	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. For international, prepare dossier and file U.S. visa paperwork 2. For independent, begin networking and advertising activities to identify birthmother. 3. For domestic agency, prepare dossier for birthmother review. 	Typically one-third to one-half of parent preparation fee due at start of homestudy, half due at end. With international, visa and documentation fees average \$1,000-3,000. If agency adoption, half of child placement fee is due at this time.
9-12 Months	Receive child referral (international) or birthmother selection (domestic)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Arrange for referral documentation review by adoption medicine specialist. 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 	If agency, final half of child placement fee due now. Birthmother's medical, legal, living, and/or counseling expenses will be paid from this time until birth of baby.
12-24 Months	Placement of child or birth of baby	Enjoy! You are a new parent!	Outstanding agency fees, if any, and travel expenses, if any, due now. International fees and expenses due now. If independent, birthmother's hospital expenses due now (baby's medical expenses likely covered by your medical insurance).
18-30 Months	Finalization of adoption	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Arrange for post-placement reports, as required. 2. Select attorney for final court hearing, or learn how to represent yourself. 	If foster adopt, assure that adoption assistance agreement is in place before finalization and check the availability in your state of reimbursement for one-time expenses. Post-placement fees average \$300-\$1,000; finalization costs with attorney are typically \$500-\$2,000.