

Daycare Tour Checklist

Print this and take it with you. Note answers in the margin — trust your first-impression gut on each section.

Provider

- Name: _____
- Date of tour: _____ Person giving tour: _____
- License type (Center / Licensed Home / Registered / Listed): _____

Safety & licensing

- When was your last state inspection and what did they find?
- Current staff-to-child ratio in each room (count them yourself)
- Background check policy for staff, substitutes, and volunteers
- Medication storage and administration policy
- Emergency plan (fire, severe weather, lockdown)
- Infant sleep area: back sleeping, bare cribs, no blankets
- Sign-in and pickup process; who can be authorized

Staffing (biggest predictor of quality)

- Lead teacher tenure in your child's room
- Overall annual staff turnover rate
- Required training and how often it's refreshed
- Who covers when a teacher calls in sick

Daily routine

- Walk-through of a typical day for your child's age
- Screen time policy
- Outdoor time — and bad-weather plan
- Naptime setup
- Food: provided or brought; who plans the menu
- How they handle biting, hitting, tantrums

Communication

- Daily report format (app or paper)
- Response time if you text or call during the day
- How incidents and injuries are communicated

- Parent-teacher conferences: when and how

Illness and absences

- Sick policy — when you must keep your child home
- Refund or credit policy for illness, vacation, closures

Gut-check questions

- What's the hardest part of working here?
- Can I talk to 2–3 current parents?

Notes / red flags

- _____
- _____
- _____