

Written by Nadine Bubeck

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The new school year calls for new just-about-everything...right? Last year my son was into dinosaurs, and this year, it's all about "Star Wars." He's outgrown outfits, so it's time to re-stock. And now, his little brother is embarking on preschool, so that means more stuff. Stuff. Yep, our house is full of it.

Here's my it-list for 2017 back to school must haves. Sure, I cover the basics- backpacks, etc, but I also included some unique finds you never knew you needed.

Let's start with the obvious. For backpacks, I turned to [Jet.com](#). I searched for "Star Wars" and Mario backpacks, and the online marketplace delivered. I needed a toddler backpack from the Dark Side, so I was easily sold on "[The Force Awakens](#)" model- both affordable and high quality. And since my husband is gently pushing our boys to gravitate toward Mario, I decided to succumb to my boy mom-esque and go for this \$15.99 [Super Mario Brothers](#) backpack and lunchbox set. Plus, Jet.com is integrated with [TeacherLists](#) for back to school, making school-swap browsing easy.

While we're on the topic of lunch-gear, I searched for functionality and practicality, and found it with [Nalgene](#). The company offers a fabulous [Lunch Box Buddy](#), an organized lunchtime concoction that keeps food chilled and protects sandwiches from getting smushed. It has an adjustable ice pack and built-in "plate;" simply flip the lid and serve. Best of all, it's dishwasher safe. And to accompany your baby's buddy, opt for the [Kids OTF](#). The glorified, durable water bottle has a one-handed opening, leak-proof design, and is strategically 12-ounces for little hands. Nalgene even offers [sippy cups](#) for preschoolers. Plenty of designs to choose from.

Next, something I'm very excited to put into play: [My Tot Clock](#). My 4-year-old has decided 6am is an adequate wake-up time, and while I'm all about his early morning spirit, it's too darn early for mama. My Tot Clock is an all-in-one sleep aid, alarm clock, nightlight, and timer for children ages 2+. It teaches little ones when to sleep (blue light) and when it's OK to get out of bed (yellow light). It also plays bedtime stories, lullabies, music, and white noise (like ocean sounds). In addition, it has a light blue light for nap time, a red light for timeout, and a green light for any positive timed activity. Perfect for those young enough to start learning a daily routine, but not old enough to be able to tell time. Too good to be true? You may as well give it a whirl. The company guarantees better sleep or your money back.

Another techy must-have is an adorable [My Audio Pet](#)- a cute, tiny and very powerful blue tooth speaker. Adorably designed in an assortment of animals (I like the owl and fish), these mini speakers might be small, but they sure are mighty. They're easy to operate and connect via Bluetooth with ease. Crystal clear sound and really cute for a back-to-school teacher gift- kids will love jamming to their audio pals in the classroom!

Onto clothing... let's start with [FabKids](#), my choice for fab footwear. I feel like my boys outgrow shoes nearly every month, so I turned to the stylish digital "system" to help me select kicks that won't break the bank. The website allows you to shop the site for instant gratification or subscribe via a monthly service. Plus, if you join as a VIP, you'll get exclusive discounts- and I'm talking 40% off regular prices.

And another cool website for online shopping: [Wee Blessing](#). The company provides an easier way to shop for the over-busy mama. (Amen!) From newborns to 14 year olds, Wee Blessing offers customizable boxes tailored to their kid's taste, age, budget and lifestyle. Your package will contain 4 outfits personally picked based on your online style profile (name brand clothing!). Keep what you like and return what you don't want for free- no catch.

For infants embarking on daycare/preschool, treat their precious feet to the best baby shoes ever, courtesy of [Robeez](#). My pick: [The Brainy Bear Baby Shoes](#) made of non-slip soft suede. (And for girls, [this adorable pink design](#).) Flexible and non-constricting, these kicks promote good balance and unrestricted growth while providing stylish protection. Peruse the shoe site for additional options for infants, babbies, pre-walkers and toddlers.

For moms who love to online shop, there's a new app that offers live auctions where consumers can score deals on just about everything. [Tophatter](#) is pretty cool, offering jewelry, electronics, beauty products, fashion and beyond. Like a virtual mall, Tophatter allows shoppers to avoid the crowds and snag great sales anytime, anywhere from the convenience of their smartphone.

If you need some room-revamping for fall, turn to [Sprout Kids](#); it's a mega modern company that showcases unique items for the modern child. Considering my 4-year-old needs some private work space (hard to dodge his 2-year-old brother), we thought it would be nice to get him a mini-sized desk. Sprout Kids offers a really cool contemporary [kids desk with storage](#) in a few color combos (my pick: grey and white). The desk and chair is the perfect size for a growing toddler/young child; plus, they can stash their supplies under an easy-lift storage area. Sized for ages 3-8, this piece is made of wood and constructed with no tools. Plus, the furniture is easily washable.

## Mom's Moment: Unique B2S Essentials

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Another treat for fall: a new ride from [GT Bicycles](#). GT has developed a new line of kids' bikes that utilize its Legit Fit system, designed specifically for growing shredders. The Legit Fit system flaunts kid-friendly narrower cranks, proper gearing and improved body positioning for little bodies. My pick: the Boys' Grunge (available in girl styles, too). Available in different wheel sizing for different heights. Noted features include an alloy frame and coaster brake.

I'm also a big fan of stimulating toys- stuff that both educates and entertains your little ones. A favorite company of mine that does this is [Learning Resources](#)- their stuff is high quality, durable and extremely desirable for kids and parents. Since my boys are into puzzles, I totally swooned over the [Magnetic U.S. Map Puzzle](#) for grades PreK+. This fun, interactive puzzle map helps little learners learn geography-state names, landmarks, plants, animals and more. Each of the 44 pieces matches an outline to help children put the correct piece in the correct spot. Great for working on fine motor skills. \$19.99 well spent- I promise!

Finally, had to include something for mom, and for that, I chose convenient items to get organized. [Stor-All Solutions](#) is one of those websites that will make you OCD...in a good way. They offer stackable storage (ideal for toys and art supplies), storage baskets (for just about anything), space saving compression bags (for those with too much bulk), desk organizers (to de-clutter bills), and more. I'm a big fan of the colorful options, but more so, the practicality of each offering. So splurge on getting organized, mama! Happy back-to-school, 2017!

[Nadine Bubeck](#) is a TV personality, [fashion designer](#), author, blogger, and Scottsdale-based blessed boy mom.