



# Preparing Your Dog for Baby

Bringing home a new baby is exciting — and a major transition for your dog. Preparation is key. The goal is to create structure, establish boundaries, correct unwanted behaviors, and build calm independence before baby arrives.



## BEFORE BABY ARRIVES ♥ Use this time to set your dog up for success! 🐾

### 1 Reintroduce Structure & Independence

- Crate at night, when you are gone, and during the day when you are home.
- Daytime crating builds calm independence and prevents over-attachment.
- Practice Place or long Down-Stays both near and away from you daily.



### 2 Correct Unwanted Behaviors Now

- Address barking at noises, movement, or visitors.
- Eliminate jumping before baby arrives.
- Stop counter surfing and attention-demanding behaviors.



### 3 Establish Clear Household Boundaries

- No bolting out doors — practice threshold manners.
- No access to nursery unless invited and supervised.
- Baby toys are NOT dog toys — reinforce Leave It.



### 4 Desensitize to Baby Sounds & Equipment

- Play baby crying sounds at a low volume and reward calm behavior.
- Practice obedience around stroller, bassinet, and swings.



### 5 Walking Skills Before Baby Arrives

- Teach loose-leash walking — no pulling or forging.
- Your dog walks with YOU — the stroller is background noise.
- Practice in different environments and around distractions.



### 6 Teach Calm Coexistence

- Practice holding a doll while your dog remains on Place.
- Reward neutrality around baby-related activities.
- Build calm, relaxed behavior in the presence of baby items.





# Bringing Baby Home and Beyond



The first few weeks at home are a big adjustment for everyone. Continue to use structure, supervision, and clear boundaries to help your dog adapt successfully.

## 7 Ongoing Management

- Always actively supervise interactions between dogs and babies/young children.
- Maintain structure, boundaries, and routine.
- Use crates, baby gates, or separate rooms when you cannot give your full attention.



Supervision does not replace physical separation. Even well-trained, gentle dogs should never be left alone with a baby. If you cannot actively monitor the interaction, separate them using a crate, baby gate, or separate room.

## 8 Introducing Baby to Your Dog

- Allow your dog to calmly sniff and observe the baby from a distance at first.
- Keep the initial greetings short and positive.
- Reward calm, relaxed behavior.
- Do not force interaction — let your dog approach at their own pace.



## 9 Continue to Reinforce Good Behavior

- Use Place, Down-Stays, and calm behavior around baby-related activities.
- Reinforce Leave It with baby toys, blankets, and other items.
- Keep greetings calm — no jumping.
- Provide mental and physical exercise to help your dog stay balanced.



## 10 Watch for Signs of Stress

Give your dog space if you notice any of these signs:

- Panting (when not hot)
- Lip licking
- Yawning
- Looking away
- Ears pinned back
- Tucked tail
- Moving away
- Whining or pacing



These signs can be subtle and may mean your dog needs a break. Remove them from the situation and give them space.

## 11 Create Dog-Only Spaces

- Give your dog a safe, quiet area to relax where they won't be disturbed.
- Use a crate, gated area, or separate room.
- Make sure they still get one-on-one time with you, away from baby.



A well-prepared dog, a safe environment, and realistic expectations help create a positive and happy home for your growing family!