



What to do for Your Dog When you are Expecting a Baby

Before Baby Arrives most likely your dog knows about the same time you do that you are expecting a new member of the family. You may notice that your dog is acting differently as he senses changes in your chemical make-up. Having a baby changes a dog's world. Even dog's that "go with the flow" can be unsettled by the change.

There are things you can do to help your dog adjust. If you have not recently gone to a **positive dog training class** with your dog now is the time to go. Even if your dog has a perfect sit, down, stay and loose leash walk. His world is about to change and it will do both of you good to brush up on skills in a more distracting environment.

At home you should **play baby noises** (crying, babbling, and laughing). If your dog reacts to these noises pair them with special treats, toys or games your dog likes or a chew bone.

If your dog is not **crate and gate trained** please, please, please, do it now. There will be times when you need to separate baby and dog and/or visitors and dog. Your dog should see this separation as a happy safe place where he can take a much needed break.

Work on your dog's **polite greeting skills** when people enter your home. There will be more and different visitors to your home once the baby is born. Your dog's polite greeting behavior should also be used when introducing baby. If your dog is excited or afraid when people enter use your crate and gate training skills. Once the people are settled have the dog come out on leash. Depending on your dog's personality and people comfort level will dictate if people should be sitting, standing, have treats or a favorite toy. It is not necessary for your dog to greet everyone that enters your home.

Carry around an infant doll in your arms, a sling and the carrier. Your body positions and language changes when you are carrying an infant. It is better to find out before the real baby is this will bother your dog. If it does work on training and polite manners.

Put the baby gear (cribs, swing, pack-n-play...) out now. This will be a change your dog has time to get used to. Also put training in place for any items you do not want your dog to touch or jump on.

If your dog is dog social **enroll him in a doggie daycare** for one or two days a week. Or start using a **dog walker and/or friend to get your dog walking.** Your dog will be getting less attention and exercise when baby arrives. This will help him to get his energy out.

Develop a plan for **how the dog will be taken care of during labor and your hospital stay.** This will need to be a flexible plan as most babies arrive when they are ready.



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Meeting Baby for the First Time

- Do have someone bring an item of clothing home that the baby has worn prior to the first meeting. Allow the dog to sniff the item, praise and give treats. The dog should not mouth or take the item.
- Your dog probably has a person that they are most bonded to in the home. Whomever this person is have a different person bring baby into the house.
- Use your polite greeting skills. However, don't make a big commotion about greeting baby. Reference the parent webinars on www.familypaws.com,

As Baby Grows

Your dog may be fine with or figure out how to cope with the infant stage but once your baby starts crawling, grabbing, vocalizing and walking dog's wonder what is happening and why this creature does not understand any dog language. **Reference the attached handout on dog body language to avoid a bite.** As well as the resources listed on this handout.

Active supervision when your child and dog are together is essential to keep both safe. If your attention is not on supervising separate the child and dog. Even dog's that appear to be tolerating interaction with children can reach a point where they have had enough.

Reference the attached Keys to Supervising Dogs and Kids.

References

Websites

www.familypaws.com

www.doggonessafe.com

Favorite Book: [Living with Kids and Dogs without Losing Your Mind](#) By: Colleen Pelar