



Dog and Baby Safety: Creating a Safe Home for Your Family's Newest Member

Bringing a baby home is a huge transition for your furry friend. It can be overwhelming thinking about where to start when introducing the two. Check out our blog post on Dog and Baby Safety for guidance and important safety reminders.

Why Dog and Baby Safety Matters



The Reality Every Family Faces

Over 90% of families with dogs welcome a new baby, but even well-trained dogs can react unpredictably to infants. Serious injuries, though rare, often involve family pets reacting to unfamiliar baby behaviors.

Understanding canine behavior and baby needs helps prevent accidents and builds lifelong bonds between your furry and human family members.

The First Meeting: Introducing Your Dog to Your Newborn Safely

Controlled Environment

Your dog should be behind a barrier when first introducing to your baby. This allows your dog to see the baby but not initially approach. This can help create curiosity without overwhelming your dog and keeping everyone safe.

Scent Introduction

Let your dog sniff the baby's hospital blanket. This familiarizes your dog with the new scent in a non-threatening way. It is also a great time to practice calm behaviors around this scent.

Supervised Contact

It is **CRUCIAL** to always supervise all interactions closely. Never force your dog to have contact or leave your baby and dog alone. Reward your dog for calm and gentle behavior around the baby.

Managing Daily Life: Creating Safe Spaces and Routines

Safe Zones for Everyone

- Designate places in your home where your dog can retreat away from the baby chaos such as a place mat or bed.
- Use crates and baby gates to provide safe zones for both your dog and infant when you cannot be present.
- Provide food and water for your dog in areas inaccessible to the baby to prevent any resource guarding.
- Keep your dog's toys and baby's toys in separate areas to avoid confusion or potential resource guarding.
- Consider getting a stuffy for your baby to practice safe interactions with a dog.



Pro Tip: Maintain your dog's exercise and normal routine to reduce stress and jealousy during this major life transition.

Recognizing Stress and Warning Signs in Your Dog

Stress Signals

Subtle early signs: lip licking, yawning, turning away, or furrowed brows

Later warning signs: showing of teeth, growling, and biting

Avoid Punishment

Never punish your dog for showing stress signals. If you notice any of these stress signals, calmly redirect your dog to a safe space. Punishing your dog for expressing they are uncomfortable can lead to escalation in warning signs.

No Licking or Mouthing

Never allow your dog to lick or mouth the baby. These are exploratory behaviors that can escalate quickly and unexpectedly.

Constant Supervision

Always supervise interactions between your dog and baby. Once babies become mobile, they become more unpredictable with sudden movements and sounds. This may make a dog who was previously comfortable uncomfortable.

6 Safety Rules Every Parent Should Know

1

Never Leave Unsupervised

Never leave your baby and dog alone together, even if it is only for a moment.

2

Floor Safety

Don't put your baby on the floor near your dog. Have a designated area for your baby to have floor time that the dog is not allowed.

3

Teach Gentle Touch

Once your child is old enough to have safe, supervised interactions with the dog, teach them gentle touch and how to have respect for animals.

4

No Rough Play

Never allow your baby to hit, pull ears, or sit on your dog.

5

Food Bowl Safety

Keep your dog's food and water bowls out of your baby's reach. Feed them in their own designated area away from your baby to prevent resource guarding.

6

Use Barriers

Use baby gates to control access and use as a barrier between baby and dog zones in the house.



Your Next Steps: Building a Safe, Happy Home for Baby and Dog

Start Early

Begin training and preparation before baby arrives. Don't wait until the last minute to establish routines and boundaries.

Get Professional Help

Consult with a trainer if you have any concerns about your dog's reactions or behavior.

Trust the Process

With patience, care, and boundaries, your dog and baby can become lifelong friends.