

Preparing Your Pets for the Arrival of Baby



Highlights

Prepare your pet for the new baby's arrival during pregnancy.
Establish boundaries in the house for your pet before the baby arrives.
Place a barrier outside the room where the baby will be sleeping.
Introduce your pet to the sound of a baby crying in advance.
Practice walking your dog while pushing a pram.

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How to prepare your pet for your new baby's arrival

There's a lot to consider when bringing a new baby into the family. Including pets in the preparation process can help them adjust. It can be difficult to predict how a pet will react, but planning ahead can ease the transition for both humans and animals.

Practical ways to prepare your pet

Before the baby is born

Enroll your dog in obedience training and discuss home preparations with a trainer.

Take your dog for walks on a lead while pushing the pram and teach them to walk at the same pace. Never tie the lead to the pram.

Share pet care responsibilities with your partner to help the pet adjust to changes in routine before the baby arrives.

Ensure your pet responds to recall commands at home and outdoors.

Familiarize your pet with the sound of a crying baby by playing recorded baby sounds at increasing volumes.

Establish areas in the home where the pet is not allowed, such as the baby's sleeping space.

Set up baby gates or barriers to restrict access to specific rooms.

Introduce your pet to baby-related scents by using baby lotions and creams.

Allow your pet to explore baby furniture under supervision.

Once your baby is born

Always supervise interactions between your pet and baby.

Allow the pet to take its time getting used to the baby.

Introduce the baby's scent to the pet using a piece of the baby's clothing or a wrap.

Keep the dog on a leash when first introducing them to the baby.

Let pets smell the baby's feet while being held securely.

Spend one-on-one time with your pet daily to prevent feelings of neglect.

Should I take my pet to the vet before my baby comes home?

Ensuring your pet is healthy before the baby arrives is essential. Keep their

vaccinations and treatments up to date. Neutering can help make pets calmer and easier to manage. Pets can also carry infections and parasites, so a vet check is advisable.

How do I introduce my newborn to my pet?

Supervision is key when introducing pets to a new baby. Even well-trained pets should never be left alone with an infant.

How to introduce my dog to my new baby

Give the dog time to adjust to the baby's presence.
Stay relaxed and reassuring during interactions.
Allow the dog to smell the baby while being held securely.
Have another adult present to help manage the introduction if needed.

How to introduce my cat to my new baby

Expect a cat to be less interested in the baby than a dog.
Let the cat smell the baby while being held securely.
Watch for signs of stress, such as hissing or scratching.
Keep the baby's sleeping area closed off, as cats may seek warm, cozy spots.

Should I make any changes to my home?

Observe your pet's behavior and establish boundaries early. Use consistent training methods to reinforce new rules. Closing doors and using baby gates can help create safe spaces for both the baby and the pet.

What if my pet feels left out?

To help your pet adjust:

Gradually reduce the attention you give them during pregnancy to ease the transition.

Encourage independent play and quiet time.

Teach your pet to sit calmly in designated areas and reward positive behavior.

Be patient and provide reassurance as everyone adapts to the new family dynamic.

Tools And Assistance

Obedience Training Classes: Help your dog learn essential behaviors and commands that will assist with adapting to the new family dynamics.

Pet-Safe Baby Gates: Install gates to safely restrict your pet's access to areas such as the baby's room.

Baby Sound Recordings: Use recordings of baby sounds to help your pet adjust to the new sounds they'll encounter when the baby arrives.

Pet-Approved Furniture and Toys: Choose safe toys and furniture that will allow your pet to explore and interact with the baby's things in a controlled manner.

Pet Monitoring Apps: Use pet monitoring systems to keep an eye on your pet's behavior, especially when you're away from home or when the baby and pet interact.

Veterinary Services: Ensure your pet is healthy with regular vet check-ups, vaccinations, and parasite control before the baby arrives.