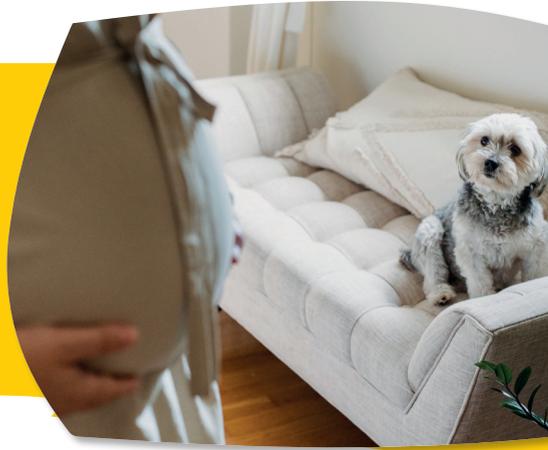




Be Dog Smart

A baby on the way is exciting times for all involved. Sometimes all this excitement can become stressful for a dog if not managed properly. The ideal time to prepare your dog for a new arrival is before the baby is born. Here are some of our **Be Dog Smart** tips to keep your new arrival and four-legged friend safe and happy.



Before Baby Arrives

-  Train your dog using positive training techniques. Be sure your dog understands basic commands such as “sit”, “stay” and “leave it”.
-  Make a dog friendly, indoor safe zone or a quiet spot for your dog. Begin to reduce the amount of time spent with your dog as they will naturally receive a little less attention when your baby arrives.
-  Familiarise your dog with baby crying sounds and baby products. Allow them to sniff and inspect buggies, car-seats, blankets, changing bag, etc.
-  Bring your dog for a health check up for peace of mind to ensure your dog has a clean bill of health and is up-to-date with vaccines, wormer and flea treatments.
-  Set ‘out of bounds’ zones before the baby arrives, this is the perfect time to put up baby gates to allow your dog to get use to them and so they know which rooms are off limits such as the nursery or your bedroom. The earlier you begin this training the better.
-  If your dog sleeps in your bedroom, slowly transition them to where they will sleep once the baby arrives. Put a baby gate up and have the dog sleep outside the gate, with the bedroom door open, for a few hours at a time and build this up eventually to a full night. You may also decide to progress to a different location. Again build this up.

When Baby Arrives



-  **Always** bring home a piece of the baby's clothing from the hospital before the baby arrives home so your dog can get use to your baby's scent.
-  **Always** make sure the first introduction is a calm and positive experience for your dog when the baby arrives home.
-  **Always** praise and reward your dog for good behaviour around the baby. This will reinforce the positive association in your dog's mind.
-  **Always** exercise your dog adequately and daily. This will make for a happier dog and calmer house.
-  **Never** leave your dog and the baby (or any child) unattended. Supervision is always priority.
-  **Never** shout at or scold your dog if they approach the baby in the wrong way so they don't associate the baby with a bad thing.
-  **Never** place your baby on the floor with your dog. Dogs do not know to be careful and may innocently hurt your child.
-  **Never** leave things to the last minute and assume your dog will adjust. Do the responsible thing and prepare & train your dog for your new arrival.

**Remember - if you are struggling, seek professional advice.
Visit www.apdt.ie to find a qualified trainer.**



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