

# Your dog and your new baby

If you've a baby on the way, now's the time to start preparing your dog. Gradually introduce changes in your home and routines, using rewards your dog enjoys, to help them cope well with the new arrival.

## Things to start early

- Think about how your walking times or routes might differ and start to introduce changes
- Get your dog used to being by themselves in another room, either with the door closed or with a safety gate
- You could make them their own quiet space away from the main living room.

## When you have baby things

- If you've been given or bought any baby things, set them up as soon as you have them so your dog can sniff and get used to them
- If you have a pram, you could practice with your dog walking alongside it
- Try using a doll as a pretend baby. Praise your dog or give treats when they keep their paws on the ground around the doll
- If you have a phone to play baby sounds on, this can help your dog get used to new noises

## Baby's arrival

- Ask a family member to walk the dog before you bring the baby home, so they're relaxed
- Say hello to your dog first. Then introduce the baby in a quiet room
- Give your dog lots of treats for good behaviour.

## At home with your baby

- Always stay with your baby when your dog is there
- Avoid putting your baby down on the floor or in a Moses basket on the floor
- If you have a crib downstairs, use a safety gate or keep it where your dog won't be able to knock it over.

## Still worried?

- If you're worried by the way your dog is with your child, talk to your vet. They'll check your dog's health and can refer you to a qualified animal behaviourist.
- Visit the [Animal Behaviour and Training Council](#) website to find a qualified behaviourist near you.

