



To walk with a dog... is to share his world. What sights and sounds he encounters. What past and present smells he reads. To stretch his legs, to bask in the sun, to discover and wind his way through this brave new human world.

cheerfuldogs chronicles

Certified. Force-free. Dog-centred

Issue 14

Living with Dogs: First Days Home with Baby

In the early days when you have just brought your baby home, it's common to feel more vulnerable than you have at any time before. This is a natural reaction—blame it on your maternal instinct and the hormones coursing through your body on a primal quest to make you protect your child at all costs. If, during this time, you suddenly find yourself thinking of your dog less as your beloved furry friend and more as an animal with large, gleaming teeth, accept the feeling and give things time to settle.



Dogs in Action: Military Dogs

Dogs around the world have followed warriors and soldiers into combat as far back as history records stretch. The Egyptians, Greeks, Persians, Romans and many other early civilizations used dogs as sentries or on patrols. Some early armies even brought dogs into battle. Today's active service dogs are highly skilled and valuable. Their primary jobs are to detect bombs, landmines, weapons, and drugs — and their 98% accuracy (on average) makes them priceless companions for modern troops. Many dogs also track enemies (or lost friendlies) and protect assets and personnel.



cont.

.... Home with Baby

One good strategy to cope with stress about your dog's presence is to put her in a room with a goodie so she's occupied and you can focus on your baby. And don't feel guilty for "banishing" your dog to a dog-zone. Instead, consider it a favor to her. She picks up signals from you at hectic and stressful times and it's much better for her if she gets to be away from the chaos with a favorite treat like a bully stick or a stuffed or frozen Kong. You can also use food-dispensing brainteaser toys like treat balls or Seek-A-Treat.

When you feel up to it, start to find creative ways to include your dog while your baby is awake. Time with the baby should be fun for you both. The goal is for your dog to associate the baby with good things — to that end, it helps to pay less attention to your dog when your baby is not around. That way you can also rest when your baby rests as you're supposed to. During this period of adjustment, keep in mind that some things may make your dog uncomfortable: the baby startling, the shrill crying of a newborn, visitors coming and going. Expect a reaction, keep calm, and give your dog something to do to take her mind off the all changes.



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cont.

... Military Dogs

To qualify for training as a military canine, dogs must have a keen sense of smell and be physically powerful and healthy, easy to excite about the next challenge, and strongly motivated by rewards. Even so, only around half of initial canine recruits — whether at land, air, or sea facilities — make it through training. The breeds and mixes most often used for military work are German Shepherds, Labradors, and Belgian Malinois.

Interesting fact: Trainers use a specialised vocabulary of cues to avoid confusing the dog in tense battlefield conditions where people might shout words otherwise common in dog training, like "stay," "come around," etc.



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