



Shorten your to-do list by taking dog walking off it with the help of a trusted dog walker to make your day smoother.

# cheerfuldogs chronicles

Certified. Force-free. Dog-centred

Issue 24

## Living with Dogs: Your Baby-Preparation To-Do List

**Firm up your dog's obedience and social skills.** Contact a trainer early in your pregnancy to get a good overview of what you will need to do. At home, practise giving your dog cues in any position: Sitting back on a couch, lying in bed, or sitting on the floor. Socialize your dog to children in a positive and controlled environment.

**Practice "baby reality".** Vary your dog's feeding times. Crate her often for short times. Vary her exercise routine. Ignore attention-seeking behavior.

**Introduce baby equipment.** Put a teddy bear in the baby's carrier and move through the house, garden, and in and out of the car with it. Practise training your dog while using the carrier. Walk your dog with an empty stroller to find out which cues your dog needs to learn before there's a baby in the seat.



### Dog Quotes

"If you think dogs can't count, try putting three dog biscuits in your pocket and then giving Fido only two." – Phil Pastoret

cont.

## ... baby-preparation

### Make baby sounds and smells commonplace.

Play a CD of baby noises to get your dog used to the sounds. Combine the sounds with yummy treats to create a positive association. Put the scent of baby lotion on the baby carrier, car seat, the teddy you carry in the sling, and any other items your dog will associate with the new baby so she learns to recognize this new, interesting smell. Bring the same lotion with you to the hospital so you can put a little on your baby's clothing.

**Last trimester logistics.** If your dog is due for her annual check-up and vaccinations, schedule the visit well ahead of time and stock up on all necessary medications and supplies. Familiarize your dog with friends that will help look after her as well as your chosen pet sitter and dog walker. Find a good and safe spot for your diaper pail.



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## Dogs in Action: Movie Star Dogs

Dogs rule the silver screen. Sure, horses do amazing things, cats can be charming, parrots add colour, and pigs might show off some of that porcine intelligence. But dogs perform like no other animal species. Why? They love the work. If the job is fun, if people pay attention to them, if there are treats and praise and play to be had, they keep going long after other animals lose all interest in the silly humans trying to get them to act funny while the cameras roll.

So, dogs have the ideal raw material for movie stardom. It still takes oodles of training to get a dog ready for the big screen. Cues have to be solid — as in pay-attention-in-the-aisle-in-the-pet-store-during-a-food-spill solid — and sometimes silent, too. Dog actors often need to react to their handler's body language rather than voice cues, and they can't be staring at the handler all the time either. That kind of situational awareness and attentiveness takes time, ingenuity, and effort to train. But what would the movie world be without Lassie, Skip, Benji, Beethoven, Hooch, and countless other canine stars? Not the same, that's what.



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