



We are professionally trained to help you enjoy peace of mind while your dog enjoys his walks. Yes, even while we stop to pick up his poop.

# cheerfuldogs chronicles

Certified. Force-free. Dog-centred

Issue 30

## A World of Dogs: Knowing Your Dog Inside Out

Many mutt owners have played the guessing game at one time or another. Where did that short, curled-up tail on an otherwise shepherd-like dog come from? Those gangly legs on a Beagle cross? The wide bully-breed smile on a wirehaired Terrier? Or feathering on a Boxer? Well, for a decade now, a tool has claimed that it's possible to get the answer. DNA tests to determine canine genealogy are now available. They're not 100% scientifically accurate, so you won't be able to prove your dog's ancestry in a court of law.

Early testing covered anywhere from 39 to 68 breeds, but today that number has expanded to more than 350. And where before a blood sample had to be collected by a veterinarian, all that's required now is a mouth swab — a process you can carry out at home. The swab is placed in a collection bag which is sealed and mailed off,

along with payment, to a laboratory. Two to three weeks later, a link to your dog's ancestry report arrives in your inbox. Aside from revealing the origin of physical traits, some people believe that such a report might offer useful clues about behaviours like digging, barking, and herding. If they discover their dog has hound parentage, for example, engaging in tracking, trailing, or other scent activities might make him more content. The argument is that dogs given an outlet for their innate abilities may become calmer and better behaved in general.



cont.

## ... DNA tests

For some people, finding out the answer is worth the cost of the test. For others, playing guess-what-my-dog-is is part of the charm of having a mutt. Some people give canine genealogy tests as a present — something a little different for the dog lover who has everything. If you have a curiosity itch to scratch, money to spare, or fancy a unique gift idea, don't just pick any old company online. Do some careful research first or ask your veterinarian to recommend a reputable testing service.



## Living with Dogs: A Walk In The Park: Strolling With Dog & Baby

Walking with your dog and your baby can be a relaxing experience — if you are well prepared. To ensure the safety of your baby, yourself, your dog, and anyone coming into contact with your dog during a stroller walk, ask yourself the following:

**How is your dog with strangers?** The only thing that attracts more adoration than dogs or babies is a dog *and* a baby, so friendly strangers are likely to approach. If your dog reacts to people in any kind of threatening way, assess whether it's worth the risk. Is your only option in a high-traffic area? Save your walks for when you and your dog can go solo; that way you can focus completely on your dog.

**Does your dog react to bikers, scooters, and kids playing?** Some dogs like to chase moving objects or people. If this is your dog, managing a stroller can be challenging. The same goes if your dog is reactive on leash, i.e. lunges and barks at other dogs. In both cases, consider taking the stress out of your walks by working with a dog trainer on these problems.

**What will you do if your baby cries during your walk?** An unhappy baby doesn't make for an enjoyable walk and you may need to pick up your baby and soothe her. But you only have two hands. One option is to bring a baby carrier along, use a hands-free waist-worn leash, and push the stroller. This will only work if your dog is a well-mannered walker and doesn't pull, though, so spend some time refreshing your dog's loose-leash walking skills.

**A big no-no:** Never tie your dog to the stroller — it simply isn't safe.



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