



Bringing Home A New Baby

So, your cat or dog has always been your “baby”, but now, there’s a human infant coming home with you. What can you do to ease the transition and help your pet(s) adjust to the new brother or sister?

- Before the baby arrives, introduce items that smell like babies—baby wipes, baby powder, a clean diaper—to your household. Let your pets investigate the items under your careful watch. For your pets safety, do not leave the items out when you’re not able to supervise.
- Record a friend’s baby crying, cooing, and talking. Play the tape for your pets often.
- Involve your pets as much as you can with the new baby. Allow your pets to sniff the baby and watch you care for the baby. The more they are involved, the faster they will accept this new little person as a part of the family.
- Whenever the pets are around the baby, praise them and give them treats. This will help them associate the new baby with good things. (“Every time I’m around this new baby, I get a treat... I sure do like this kid!”)
- Install a screen door or baby gate on the door of the baby’s room. This will keep pets out but allow them to feel involved.
- Don’t discipline your pets for acting jealous. Instead, smother them with love. Make time—at least 20 minutes—every day to spend with your pets one-on-one. If your pets have special treats or favorite places they like to go, indulge them!
- Watch for a change in your pet’s eating, eliminating, or behavior. This is a big change and it can be very stressful for your pet. If you are concerned about a change in your pet’s behavior, consult your veterinarian.

Be patient! Remember, it always takes time to adjust to a new roommate!

Strengthening the Bond Between Pets and People

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