

# Keeping your toddler safe around dogs

As a parent or carer it's important you put steps in place to ensure your child and your dog can live happily together. Making sure your young child knows how to behave around your dog and others will help to keep them safe.



## In the house

- Encouraging gentle interaction from your child is important; no pulling, grabbing, hurting or sitting on your dog
- Ensure that your toddler doesn't attempt to snatch your dog's toys. If the dog takes an item belonging to the toddler encourage him to exchange it for another toy or treat.
- Avoid your child wandering around with food or allowing your dog to beg at meal times
- Keep rules consistent, even for visitors

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## Out and about

- Never allow your child to approach a strange dog. Remember, not every dog is like your dog at home.
- Supervise your toddler during doggy play time, as there is a higher risk of them being knocked over
- Keep your toddler safe in their pushchair by teaching your dog to walk calmly on a lead next to you, never tie the lead to the pram
- Avoid busy dog parks that may excite your dog or put your toddler at risk



# Doggy Dos and Don'ts

Remember every dog is an individual. Knowing what your dog likes and dislikes will help keep them a happy and healthy member of your family.

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## Do:

- give your dog quiet time. An indoor kennel or baby gate is a valuable tool.
- avoid 'rough play' with your dog as this may encourage unwanted behaviour, and teach them to play appropriately with toys
- reward good behaviour and calm interactions
- remember your dog has needs too – attention, walking and playing are key to their happiness
- learn about your dog's body language so that you can understand when he's feeling relaxed and happy or tense and uncomfortable

## Don't:

- leave your dog alone with your child
- force a dog and toddler relationship, this will grow naturally over time
- leave any doggy dangers lying around - nappies, small toys and certain foods can be hazardous

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