



## ✧ Highlights ✧

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## LIVING WITH DOGS

### Dog – Child Etiquette

The risk of being bitten by a dog is low compared to other common causes of accidents, in or out of the household, but that's no consolation to those who find themselves on the business end of a pair of canine choppers. Kids especially are vulnerable. They tend to get excited around dogs and might approach too suddenly, shout too loudly, or dish out well meant but unwanted hugs. To keep kids safe, here's a primer on what to teach them:



**Don't know the dog? Avoid.** Lesson number one for kids is to avoid dogs they don't know. Never approach an unfamiliar dog, especially one who's tied up or confined behind a fence or in a car, regardless of the dog's size or overpowering cuteness.

**Know the dog well? Respect the space.** Just like people, dogs have personal space we should respect, particularly during dinnertime, naptime etc. Tell your kids not to approach, touch, or try to play with any dog sleeping, eating, or chewing on a toy or bone. Mommy dogs with puppies are also best left alone. This goes for both strange and well-known dogs, even your own.

**At all times: Let the dog choose.** "How should a child approach a dog?" is really a trick question. Because they shouldn't. A guardian may say your child can greet an unfamiliar dog, but it should still be up to the dog to choose whether she wants to be petted. How? Let the dog approach. This goes for dogs your child knows well too. The likelihood of any kind of incident between dogs and your child is greatly reduced by following this one simple rule.

Finally, if you're the guardian, be your dog's advocate. Even if you know your dog to be friendly, always let your dog choose whether to approach for a pet and respect her wishes when she doesn't.

"Every dog  
is a lion at home."  
- H.G. Bohn

## DID YOU KNOW?

### These Unusual Doggie Products?

**Potty-training doorbells.** These are portable, wireless doggie doorbells that—with some training—allows your dog to alert you when she needs to go outside. (Example: Pet Chime)

**Protective eyewear.** With shatterproof, anti-fog lenses that block ultraviolet light, these goggles for dogs protect eyes from trauma, reduce glare, and can relieve light sensitivity. (Example: Doggles)

**Umbrella.** If your four-legged friend loathes rain, a raincoat is not the only solution. Dog umbrellas attach to your leash and form a protective cocoon around your dog. (Example: Pet Life Pour-Protection Umbrella)

**Note:** All these products would require training before you jump in. You'd need to teach your dog to ring the doorbell and most dogs would need desensitization to things like protective eyewear and umbrellas.



## A WORLD OF DOGS

### The Many Benefits of Dog Sports

If you think of the practice of dog sports as a competitive and fairly serious business, you're only about 10 percent right. Just as in human athletic pursuits, the vast majority of dog sports enthusiasts are hobbyists; happy amateurs not much interested in ribbons or plaques. So what hooks people? The numerous benefits two- and four-legged sportsmen alike reap.

For starters, a quick alphabetic inventory reveals something for every ability and temperament: agility, caniscross, disc dog, dock diving, earthdog, flyball, freestyle, herding, lure coursing, mushing, nose work, rally-o, tracking, treibball, and weight pulling. An exhaustive list would be much longer, of course, and still wouldn't include the many fun, creative activity classes trainers, dog facilities, and dog groups might offer.



On the two-legged side of the benefits scoreboard, consider the ageless appeal of all this variety. We expect kids to enjoy playing sports with furry friends, but don't underestimate the delicious challenge to an analytical adult of helping her dog herd a group of uncooperative sheep into an enclosure. Or the allure of canine freestyle to an artistic soul, whether 23 or 53. Retirees with time on their hands can cherry-pick a dog sport that offers community as well as activity. Pile on the advantages of mental and physical exercise—at whichever level suits—and it's a no-brainer.

Of course the positive effects on dogs double up as human perks. First, a tired dog is a good dog. Burning off excess energy through regular activities, preferably exercising both mind and body, is key to a happier, healthier, and more polite dog. If Fido is blissfully conked out after a morning's rally-o, he is less likely to scavenge the trash. Also, dog sports involve cross-species collaboration and therefore boost communication skills on both sides. One common side effect of this is that dogs start to pay more rapt attention to their humans; another is increased confidence. Fun on the field has transformed many a dog from jittery to jaunty. Best of all perhaps is the deepened relationship that often results—something many cite as their chief reason for taking up a dog sport.

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## DOGS IN ACTION

### Tips for Running With Your Dog

If your dog is healthy, loves to run, and is capable of running a respectable distance, you have the makings of a wonderful running partner—whether Labrador or toy poodle mix. Dogs don't mind if you rouse them at the crack of dawn and never fuss about runny noses or side stitches. But unless you happen to share your life with a born side runner (like Dalmatians, once bred to run alongside fire engines), you may have to teach your dog the human version of running. Dogs like to go faster than people, check out interesting smells along the route, and chase the occasional squirrel up a tree.

If you haven't done so already, the first step is to teach your dog good on-leash manners during walks. Then proceed to walks interspersed with periods of jogging and finally graduate to full runs. Build distance and time slowly—in increments of 10 minutes, for example—to ensure your dog's muscles and connective tissue have time to adapt to the challenge without injury. Don't be discouraged if your dog is distracted or lags behind; give her time to figure out what she's supposed to do. Running steadily without pause isn't immediately logical to a dog, but if you're patient she will catch on soon and likely love it.



## HEALTHY DOG

### Lyme Disease in Dogs

Lyme disease is a tick-transmitted disease most prevalent in the northeast, the upper Midwest, and the Pacific seaboard states, but found throughout the U.S. Awareness is important, as dogs are 50 to 100 times more likely than humans to come into contact with disease-carrying ticks. Common symptoms include lameness, fever, lethargy, and swollen lymph nodes. Ticks must be attached to your dog for 48 hours for him to contract Lyme disease, so daily checks and quick removal ups your chances of keeping your pooch healthy.

To remove a tick, put on gloves, dab the area with rubbing alcohol, then use a pair of tweezers to grab the tick as close to your dog's skin as possible (if you accidentally leave parts of the tick behind, it can cause serious problems). Pull straight up; don't twist or jerk the tick. Disinfect the area, and sterilize the tweezers. Monitor the bite site for the next few weeks. If you see redness or swelling, visit your vet right away.

## DOG IN THE SPOTLIGHT

### The Afghan Hound

This sleek, silk-coated aristocrat of the canine world was originally bred for life in rough mountainous terrain, but now spends more time at the doggie equivalent of the runway: the dog show. Afghans, like other supermodels, require a great deal of grooming and maintenance. A sighthound bred to catch deer, gazelles, and leopards, the Afghan boasts a top speed of 40 miles an hour and a 270-degree field of vision. The stunning exterior and strong personality of Afghans have inspired writers and artists all through history, not least Picasso, who depicted his beloved Afghan Kabul in both paintings and sculpture. Appropriately, the human companion of Prissy the Afghan in Disney's *One Hundred and One Dalmatians* is an artist. Who better to appreciate a dog as graceful as a ballet of swans?

To re-home an Afghan, search online for a rescue group near you.



## OUR SERVICES

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### A Greener Home For A Healthy Dog

Chemicals and toxins in your household—from furniture polish to bug bombs—may put your dog at risk. Long-term exposure to many cleaning solutions can cause cancer or damage your dog's liver or central nervous system. Greener cleaning can help:

**Pest control.** When possible, stick to natural methods like sticky or non-lethal traps. There are many options for each type of pest, e.g. tannic acid to combat dust mites and brewer's yeast to fight fleas.

**Carpets & flooring.** Choose safe, low-toxicity materials made from natural fibers with little or no chemical treatment or opt for eco-friendly flooring like hardwood, cork, bamboo, or tile.

**Cleaning.** Nix air fresheners (a big air polluter) and use baking soda to neutralize odors, and natural oils like vanilla and lavender to make your home fragrant. Stick to green all-purpose cleaners.



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