



We continually update our skills and knowledge so that we stay current with the best practices that can help you and your dog.

# cheerfuldogs chronicles

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Issue 76

## Living With Dogs: A Coffee Date With Your Dog

Sitting with your family at a local cafe, your favourite canine pal lying calmly at your feet, is a dream of many dog lovers. As with many dreams, however, things don't always go as planned. If your dog brings chaos to every outing - barking, knocking over staff, lunging at passing dogs, stealing food from the table - you may need to go back a few steps.



Firstly, it's worth considering whether this is something your dog will really enjoy. Some dogs are calm as cucumbers in any location and just love being included in the party. Others find it incredibly stressful, and a busy cafe environment may be too stimulating for them. The dream of the perfect cafe dog is compelling, but sometimes we have to put these dreams aside for our dog's wellbeing, as well as our own stress levels.

If you do bring your dog along for a cafe outing, set them up for success. Bring a mat for them to lie on, as well as a tasty chew so they have something to keep them occupied (if they're prone to guarding, leave the chew at



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### Dog quotes

“The dog has seldom been successful in pulling man up to its level of sagacity, but man has frequently dragged the dog down to his.”

James Thurber



## ... coffee date

home). Aim for quiet times of the day and keep sessions short. Rather than sitting down for a long and leisurely brunch, start with a coffee - you could even bring a takeaway cup so you can make a speedy exit if needed. Build duration over time and keep an eye on your dog's body language throughout - if they're restless, trying to hide and vocalising, it's probably time to call it a day.

Still a little nervous? Practise at home! Set up a cafe-like scenario in your house or yard and invite friends over to build in new distractions. Put your dog on lead and replicate what you would love to see out in the real world - lots of rewards for calm behaviour and for staying in one place beside you. If you have willing family members, you could ask them to come and 'take your order' at the table so you can reinforce your dog for not jumping up on them.



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## Tips & Tools: How to please your vet

**Appointment decorum.** Be on time for your appointment and, if it's your first, be early so there's time to fill out paperwork. If you can't make it, call and let the vet clinic know.

**Injury prevention.** Nobody likes to get bitten or scratched, and your vet is no exception. Always mention in advance if your dog tends to get nervous or cranky during vet visits.

**Ignore your mobile.** The vet clinic is not the place to return phone calls. If you're in mid-conversation when called in, excuse yourself, hang up, and give your full attention to the vet.

**Good communication.** Be prepared to describe your dog's symptoms and behaviour. Has anything unusual happened? Tell the vet. Draw a diagram if that helps make things clear - vague communication is a pet peeve of most vets. It's also a good idea to take notes or ask for written instructions.



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