# Does Dog Man need to be read in order?



Does Dog Man need to be read in order? No, but it helps: each book has its own adventure and the jokes carry over. Which comic series do need order, and which don't.

No, Dog Man doesn't have to be read in order, but it is better that way. Each of the fifteen books has its own adventure with a beginning and an end, so a child handed book 7 first will follow it. The characters and the running jokes carry over from one book to the next, though, so a reader who starts at book 1 (Dog Man, 2016) and goes up gets more of the jokes. If you are buying or borrowing, start at 1; if a different one is what the library has, take it.

This question usually comes from a grown-up holding a book from the middle of the series: a gift, a hand-me-down, the only one left on the library cart. The honest answer is that it will be fine, and that the child may well want to go back to the start afterwards.

## Why order helps with Dog Man

Three things build from book to book:

- Who everyone is. Petey, the cat, starts out as the villain. Li'l Petey arrives later. A child who begins in the middle meets them as they are, without having seen how they got there.
- The running jokes. Dog Man is full of callbacks. They are funnier the second time you see them, which requires a first time.
- The newest books. Books 13 and 14 share a name, Big Jim Begins and Big Jim Believes, and a reader who reaches them in order will read them back to back without being told.

None of that stops a book from making sense on its own. That is the line between a series of episodes and a series that is one long story.

## Three kinds of series

Every series page on Peabody answers "do I need to read them in order?" for that series. Sorted, the series we list (as of 30 October 2026) fall into three kinds.

Episodes: start anywhere. Each book is a self-contained adventure with the same cast. Pizza and Taco, Babymouse, the Magic Tree House graphic novels, Lunch Lady, Diary of a Wimpy Kid and Berrybrook Middle School work this way, though Lunch Lady's last book brings back villains from the first nine, and Berrybrook's characters come back too.

One long story: start at book 1. Each book picks up where the last stopped, often on a cliffhanger. Starting in the middle spoils what came before. Amulet, Bone, the Wings of Fire graphic novels, 5 Worlds, Cleopatra in Space, Zita the Spacegirl, The Last Kids on Earth and The Bad Guys, whose books are even called episodes and run straight on.

Mixed: each book stands alone, but order pays. Dog Man is here, with Cat Kid Comic Club, Hilda, Bunny vs Monkey and CatStronauts. Captain Underpants is mostly episodes too, except that books 6 and 7 are two halves of one story and belong back to back.

## What we'd do

For Dog Man, start at book 1 if you can, and don't worry if you can't. Keep a record of which ones are read, because by book 9 nobody remembers whether Grime and Punishment came before or after Mothering Heights. (Before: 9 and 10.)

That is what the checklist on the Dog Man page is for. Tap the books your child has read, and it says which one is next. It keeps the ticks on your device only and prints as a one-page reading log with a "Finished" blank beside each title. The full list in order, with years, has its own post.

## Questions grown-ups ask

## Which Dog Man book should we read first?

Book 1, called simply Dog Man, from 2016. It shows how Dog Man came to be, and it introduces Petey.

## Can my child skip from book 3 to book 10?

Yes. They will follow book 10. They may notice characters they haven't met, and they may want to go back for 4 to 9, which is no bad thing.

## Does the spin-off, Cat Kid Comic Club, have to wait until Dog Man is finished?

No. Li'l Petey runs the club, so a child who knows him from Dog Man can start Cat Kid Comic Club any time. Its five books do build on each other, so read those in order.

Peabody (peabody.kids) is free through the end of 2026. Every series on the book series hub has the same order answer and checklist, and our library has stories for every reading level.

---

Free at peabody.kids/blog/does-dog-man-need-to-be-read-in-order