



A Guide to Successful Adoption of your Rescue Dog

When you adopt a rescue dog (that is not a puppy) here are some pointers to consider to smooth the dog's adaption to your home and family.

The dog has to be given time to experience their new environment and get to understand your expectations/rules.

Prepare for pick up

Transporting your dog home:

- Bring a lead, seat belt clip and harness, crate (if one will fit in your vehicle), covers/bed for upholstery.
- If travelling a long distance water, a bowl and poo pick up bags.
- Resist giving lots of cuddles.

Arriving home

- Take the dog for a calm walk around your property on a lead.
- Consider taking the dog outside on lead for a few days.
- Do some basic training (on lead) in your front and back yards.
- Recall training helps with bonding with your dog.
- Keep your voices calm and body language calm and confident.
- Introduce family members slowly.
- Don't over stimulate the dog.
- Don't allow people to cuddle or be 'in the dog's face'.
- Don't introduce to neighbours/visitors straight away - do this gradually.
- Teach your dog the "bed command" – use this command when people come to the door, or whenever something new happens as it is good to have a reliable "bed command" for your dog to go to the bed for various reasons.
- Observe your dog's behaviour to determine if you need to change what you are doing to reduce stress levels, your dog will be noticing new sounds, smells, various other new things that they have to get used to.

Feeding

- Think about where you want to feed your dog and feed it there.
- Some dogs can cope with changing from one type of food to another in a day, and others need to slowly transition to the new food. The rate of transition will depend on your dog ie 10% a day, or Day one: 75% old food/25% new food, Day two: 50%/50%, Day three: 25% old food/75% new food, Day four 100% new food.
- Don't feed multiple dogs together to start with. You may have to feed in separate rooms initially.

Training

- Set aside time to do basic training multiple times a day for the first four weeks,
- Start with walking your dog in front of your home, then gradually increase distance from home for walks. It is more important to ensure your dog is calm and responsive to you and loose lead walking, than going for long walks at the start.
- Ensure all adult family members take control of the lead and do some basic training on the first day to help with bonding.
- Be consistent with commands and routines to help your dog learn what is expected of them.

Walks

- Allow your dog to settle in with you and your family before taking for walks.
- Follow the above training steps above, and only take for walks then your dog walks nicely on a lead and you have full control of your dog.
- This may take up to two weeks depending on the dog.

Please contact us early if you have any questions or issues with your new dog.

Some things you might notice

- Your dog initially not wanting to show you affection - this may happen as they have to feel they can trust people first and recall training is the best way to improve this.
- Allow your dog to come to you instead of anyone going to them. Don't stand over them if they are resting.
- They may not want to eat much, this may last a few days. Remove food if not eaten after 10 minutes.
- They may have some diarrhoea initially - obtain vet advice as needed.
- They may have accidents in the house - various reasons for this. Make sure you schedule regular visits to outside eg hourly.

Some Suggestions:

- Schedule rest periods
- Try to have a calm house
- Schedule some days off work following adoption of your new dog
- Gradually increase the time away from the house to reduce separation anxiety