










ADOPTING A DOG

THINGS TO CONSIDER WHEN ADOPTING

-  Which adult(s) will be responsible for feeding, walking and taking care of the dog?
-  Am I able to provide a home and care for his or her lifespan?
-  Can I afford to care for a dog? (it's estimated that a dog's care costs about \$1000 per year)
-  Am I strong enough to physically manage this dog on a leash?
-  Does this dog's energy level match my lifestyle? Do I want a jogging buddy or a binge-watching buddy?
-  If I live in an apartment, does my lease allow me to have a dog?
-  Am I ready to spend time and build a relationship with my dog?

BRINGING YOUR DOG HOME AFTER YOU ADOPT, LET YOUR DOG REST!

You are excited about your new dog, and may be tempted to show them off to family and friends, or take them on a fun outing. Please wait a few days. Remember, your dog does not know an adoption has taken place – he or she is probably thinking, 'Now what?' So keep things calm – take them on walks, show them where they sleep, where they eat and drink, and where they potty. They will probably want to take a long nap after all the excitement of meeting new people and settling into a new place!



DECOMPRESSION

The shelter is a stressful place and your dog also be nervous moving to a new home. Everything is new to the dog, including you! **GO SLOW.** The first few weeks will be about decompression and establishing routines. Keep the routine simple and consistent to establish trust. Some dogs may need more than a few weeks to de-stress—that's okay!

DON'Ts

- No crowded areas, no dog parks, no coffee shops, no parties, no pet supply stores, no vet unless urgent.
- Don't coddle. It overwhelms the dog and promotes separation anxiety
- Don't put your face in the dog's face or hug them.
- Don't spend 24/7 with your dog, not even on day 1.

DOs








- Create and consistently enforce house rules starting on day 1.
- A drag leash (3' leash with handle cut off) can be left on shy dogs during the first week to enable handling without grabbing the dog by the collar.
- Short walks in quiet, calm areas.
- Ignore the dog so they can take in their new environment; let the dog come to you for interaction.
- Pay attention to their body language so you do not overwhelm your dog.



THE RULE OF 3'S

3 DAYS	3 WEEKS	3 MONTHS
TO DECOMPRESS	TO LEARN YOUR ROUTINE	TO START TO FEEL AT HOME
Your new dog may feel overwhelmed, scared and unsure. Your dog may not want to eat or drink, and may sleep a lot. They also may test the boundaries and it's important to start kindly, consistently communicating the house rules (example: are they allowed on the couch?)	Your dog is starting to settle in and feel more comfortable. Your dog is figuring out your house and a new routine. Your dog's true personality may start to come out, as well as behavioral issues.	Your dog feels completely comfortable and knows this is his or her home! Your dog settles into a routine, and continues to bond and build trust with his or her new family.

TO BUY FOR YOUR DOG

-  **COLLAR** – We recommend a martingale collar (make sure your equipment is securely fitted). A securely fitted harness can be used for small dogs in addition to the collar and tag.
-  **LEASH**
-  **CRATE** – For crate training or traveling. Metal wire crate, sized so your dog can stand up, turn around, lay comfortably
-  **FOOD AND WATER BOWLS** – Feed morning and evening, keep a full water bowl always accessible
-  **FOOD** – Dry and/or wet food
-  **POOP BAGS**
-  **NAME TAG** – Your dog is most prone to escape in the beginning, have a tag on always and remember to update the microchip company when your address, email or phone number change.

More tips at
Fear Free
Happy Homes
fearfreehappyhomes.com

POTTY TRAINING 101

Potty training should be done with positive reinforcement only (petting, 'good dog!', treats). You can help your dog be successful by making sure they have an opportunity to potty a few minutes after eating, first thing in the morning, and last thing before bed.

HOW TO POTTY TRAIN:

Show your pet where they are expected to go potty.

Wait patiently and when they go in the right place, reward them with praise and pets.

WHAT IF THEY HAVE AN 'ACCIDENT'?

First of all, there probably will be. Your dog is learning. Please be patient.












If you catch them in the act, you can give them a little bark to interrupt them - 'Hey!' and then calmly escort them to the correct potty spot. If they go there, reward them with praise and pets.

If you don't catch them in the act, clean it up with an oxygenated cleanser. There is no point showing it to them - they don't remember and will not understand what you are telling them.

CRATE TRAINING/HOUSE TRAINING

SHOULD I CRATE TRAIN MY DOG?

Crate training is not for everybody, but some dogs and dog guardians find it helpful. A potential benefits of crate training is that a crate can be a 'den' for your dog where he or she can feel secure. Crate training can also be useful if your dog is destructive when left alone, if you need to separate your pets when you're out, or if you ever plan to travel with your dog. Not all dogs are crate trained, and some are only crate-trained until their family knows they can safely be left to roam freely. You can decide what is best for your dog based on their needs and your needs. It is important that the crate is NEVER used as a punishment, and dogs should not be left in the crate for long periods without a break.

-  Set up in common area but out of the way avoiding areas where people will walk directly toward the crate.
-  Cover the back half with an old sheet or towel so the dog has the option for privacy.
-  Dog should be able to stand up, turn around and comfortably lay down in the crate without extra space when house training.
-  The dog should not be crated more than 4-5 hours per day. Dog can be crated at night for approximately 8 hours.
-  Allow this to be a safe space for the dog to retreat to when overwhelmed or when unsupervised.
-  To help them get used to it, allow them to go in and out freely and place treats or toys inside to encourage them.
-  Use towels or an old blanket for bedding in place of a fluffy bed until the dog is crate trained to avoid shredding.
-  The crate may be slowly phased out once the dog is able to be left out without destructive behavior or accidents. The crate can remain if your dog prefers the crate as a safe space.
-  Make the crate a positive experience by feeding the dog their meals, bones, or treat filled kongs in it.
-  Kid free zone. This is your dog's space.
-  **Never use the crate as punishment.**



BODY LANGUAGE

Dogs use body language to “speak” especially when feeling stressed. It's important for humans to listen to these cues – when we don't listen, we risk them escalating behaviors to protect themselves, us, or their resources. This is often what leads a dog to bite!



LOW STRESS, DOG MAY NEED SPACE OR A BREAK



Lip licking



Yawning



Avoiding (turning head or whole body away, sniffing the ground)

MODERATE STRESS, CONSIDER REMOVING DOG OR TRIGGER FROM ENVIRONMENT



Hypervigilance (looking back and forth, very attentive to the environment)

Tail is wagging quickly or just the tip is wagging

Body is stiff



HIGH STRESS (WARNING SIGNS), REMOVE DOG OR TRIGGER FROM ENVIRONMENT IMMEDIATELY

Hard stare, not looking away

Freezing/body is stiff

Teeth bared



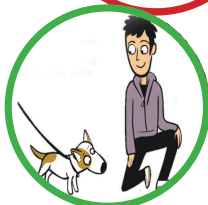
Snarling

Growling

Artist: Lili Chin

GREETING A DOG DO'S AND DON'T'S

- DO keep eyes soft and keep eye contact brief.
- DO wait for the dog to approach you.
- DO offer treats by tossing them to the dog, or offer them on a flat hand to avoid being nipped by an excited dog.
- DO scratch on chest area. If the dog approaches with loose body and wagging tail, offer a brief chin or chest scratch. If they approach cautiously, don't touch.
- DO turn your body to the side keeping your arms by your side.

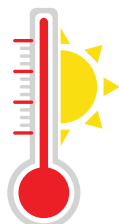


- DON'T stare at the dog or hold eye contact, to them this means confrontation.
- DON'T walk to the dog or extend your hand out to greet the dog.
- DON'T reach hand above dog's head or body, the dog can feel overwhelmed.
- DON'T hover over the dog. Frontal approach can be scary.

INDOOR & OUTDOOR SAFETY TIPS

OUTDOORS:

- Chaining dogs outside for more than 3 hours per day is illegal.
- Make sure fences are secure and without gaps.
- Cover soil near fences so the dog can't dig underneath.
- Provide plenty of water, shade and shelter at all times.
- Check to make sure plants in your yard aren't poisonous!
- Before walking your dog, place your hand on sidewalk/street for 7 seconds – if it's too hot to keep your hand there, don't walk your dog on it!
- Be careful of extreme temperatures; if it's too hot or cold for you to be outside for a long time, it's too hot or cold for your dog. Never leave your dog alone in a car if the temperature is over 70 degrees!



Safe space
Give your dog a bed or crate that's all their own!



INDOORS:

- Store all chemicals, medications, cleaners, plants and food out of reach.
- Make sure trash and recycling are locked or securely put away.
- Keep electrical cords tucked away.
- Always have water available.
- Until you are sure they will be safe and not destructive if allowed to roam throughout the house.
- Make sure your dog always wears a collar and tag.

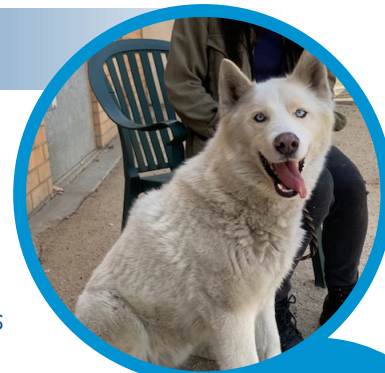
Poisonous for dogs:

Grapes, Raisins, Onions, Chocolate, Caffeine, Alcohol


INTRODUCING YOUR DOG


DOG TO PEOPLE

After settling in for a few days, start socializing your dog with other people by day 3 so your dog does not become anti-social. Dogs may see your house as "their territory", so always greet your guest outside, with your dog on leash. **Ask your guest to FULLY IGNORE the dog** and go for a short walk. Then, have your guest walk inside first, then you, then the dog enters last. Keep your dog on-leash and continue to ask your guest to ignore the dog. If your dog seems comfortable (see "Body Language" section), follow the instructions in the "DO's and DONT's of Greeting a Dog" section above.



DOG TO CHILDREN

 An adult **MUST** always be paying attention to both the kid and dog the entire time. **Never leave your dog unattended with a young child.** Over half of all dog bites involve kids ages 5-9 years usually because the child cannot read the dog's body language and often will grab or get into the dog's space.


 Give the kids simple instructions beforehand:


- Don't grab his face
- Wait for him to come to you
- Don't put your face in his face
- Keep your hands to yourself

 Never force your dog to interact with children.

 Do not restrain or hold the dog when interacting.

 Have one adult handling the dog and one adult monitoring the child.

 Keep a LOOSE leash. Do not pull the leash tight. Pulling on the leash should only be used to remove the dog in an emergency.

 **Look for stress signals mentioned in the "Body Language" section of this handout; if you see them, separate the dog and child.** Let the dog leave if they want to!

 Keep it short. End on a positive note. Increase time over several weeks.

 Kid free zone – establish a safe space for the dog to retreat.



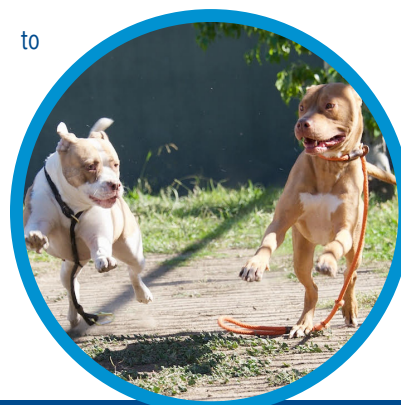
Warning:
If the dog stares,
growls, or bares
teeth, separate him
from the child
immediately.

DOG TO OTHER PETS

Even if your shelter dog is known to be friendly with other pets, remember that just like people, not all personalities will get along. Set them up for success by taking it slow.

Here are some tips:

1. Allow your new dog a little time to decompress before meeting other pets, especially if your new dog is nervous.
2. Let pets sniff each other through a door or a gate before introducing 'in person' – swap blankets so they can get used to each other's scent.
3. Introduce dogs on neutral ground, such as a street or park that your current dog does not identify as 'theirs'.
4. Walk dogs together but at a little distance from each other and don't pressure them to sniff or meet.
5. If they seem open to it, let them sniff each other's rear ends (avoid face to face at first).
6. Look for relaxed body language before each step involving more contact - low tail positions, open mouth,



Remember,
calm energy from
people will help
calm the dog.

HAVING FUN WITH YOUR DOG!

Go on a walk! Remember that your dog explores the world through their nose, so they will appreciate if you let them stop and sniff things.

Give them something to chew. Dogs need to chew, and you'll want to provide them with things they are allowed to chew on.

Have other toys. Some dogs like to chase balls, some like a toy that squeaks, some like to have a toy they're allowed to rip apart. Experiment with toys and you'll soon learn what your pup likes.

Stimulate their mind. Some dogs will enjoy treat puzzles or an agility course.

Have a playdate! If your dog is friendly with other dogs, a supervised playdate in a safe area is a great way to allow them to run off a lot of energy!

Most dogs like to cuddle and be pet. It strengthens your bond, and relaxes you both!