

BRINGING HOME YOUR NEW DOG:

GUIDELINES FOR INTRODUCING DOGS, SAFE CHILD INTERACTIONS, AND DECOMPRESSION INSTRUCTIONS.



Bringing Home a New Dog: A Step-by-Step Guide

Welcoming a new dog into your home is an exciting event, but it also requires careful planning to ensure a smooth transition. This guide will help you introduce your new dog to your household and existing pets while also providing tips for children on how to interact with the new dog.

Preparing Your Home

Before bringing your new dog home, it's important to prepare your living space to make the transition as comfortable as possible for your new pet.

- **Designate a Safe Space:** Create a quiet and secure area where your new dog can relax and feel safe. This could be a cozy corner with a bed and some toys. It could also be a bedroom or crate! It is important that your dog has their own space where they can feel safe and decompress.
- **Dog-Proof Your Home:** Make sure all doors are properly closed and latched. While some dogs are great at staying nearby, others will take the opportunity to run free. Dogs that are decompressing will often get spooked and run when scared.
- **Arrange an Area for Bedtime:** New dogs should not sleep in the bed with you. Wait until you're fully comfortable with one another. This is for yours and the other dog's safety. Designate a crate or area for sleeping separately.
- **Plan Ahead for Outings:** New dogs should not be left unattended or alone with the existing dog in the home. If you're planning on going out, make sure everyone has a secure designated area. Pet cameras are a great option to keep an eye on things when you're not home.
- **Get a House Line:** A house line is a leash that remains attached to your new dog at all times. You don't have to hold onto it; it can simply drag behind your dog. Using a house line allows you to manage your dog safely. You'll be able to easily guide them on, off, or away from things.

Introducing a New Dog to Your Existing Dog

Introducing your new dog to your existing dog requires patience and careful management to foster a positive relationship between them.

Observe Body Language: Watch for signs of aggression or fear, such as stiff body posture, raised hackles, or growling. If either dog shows these signs, separate them and try again later.

Bringing Them Home

- **Supervised Interaction:** Supervise their interactions closely. If one dog seems uncomfortable, separate them for a short break.
- **Separate Spaces:** Initially, provide separate spaces where each dog can retreat to if they need a break. Feed separately and place two water bowls on opposite sides or in separate rooms.
- **Shared Activities:** Encourage positive interactions by involving both dogs in fun activities, like playing with toys, going for walks, or running in the yard. Always have enough toys around so that one doesn't feel left out or jealous.
- **No Bones or Chews in Shared Spaces:** These items should only be given when both dogs are in their separate areas. Once both dogs are acclimated to each other, you may begin introducing these items as long as both dogs are respectful to you and one another.
- **Give Frequent Breaks:** Coming into another dog's space can be very overwhelming for some dogs. Make sure you give both dogs plenty of breaks from each other throughout the day.

Do's and Don'ts for Children

Children should be taught how to interact safely and respectfully with the new dog. Here are some guidelines:

Do's

- **Be Gentle:** Teach children to pet the dog softly and avoid roughhousing.
- **Give Space:** Encourage them to give the dog space when it is eating or sleeping.
- **Respect Signals:** Explain that if the dog walks away or shows signs of discomfort, it's important to give it space.

Don'ts

- **Avoid Interrupting:** Children should not bother the dog when it is resting or eating.
- **No Pulling:** Remind them not to pull the dog's tail, ears, or fur.
- **Loud Noises:** Encourage quiet voices around the dog to prevent scaring it. Pushing around large toys or dropping things can scare your new dog.
- **Avoid Taking Items From the Dog:** Children should not reach for or attempt to take things that your dog has picked up. If your dog takes your child's toy, they should come tell you.
- **DO NOT LEAVE YOUR CHILD UNATTENDED WITH A NEW DOG:** Always supervise interactions between your child and your dog.

By following these guidelines, you can help ensure that your new dog integrates smoothly into your home and forms positive relationships with both existing pets and family members. Patience and understanding are key to building a harmonious household for all.

Decompression Instructions for Bringing a New Rescue Dog Home

Bringing home a rescue dog can be a rewarding experience, but it's essential to allow the dog time to decompress and adjust to their new environment. This period is critical for helping your new pet settle in comfortably and begin to trust you and your family.

Understanding Decompression

Decompression is the process during which your new rescue dog adjusts to their new surroundings. It can take anywhere from a few days to several weeks, depending on the dog's background and temperament. Patience and consistency are crucial during this time.

Steps for Decompression

1. **Create a Calm Environment:** Keep the home environment calm and quiet, especially in the first few days. Avoid having visitors or loud noises that might overwhelm your new dog.
2. **Establish a Routine:** Dogs thrive on routine, so try to establish a consistent schedule for feeding, walks, and bathroom breaks. This helps your dog understand what to expect and can reduce anxiety.
3. **Give Space and Time:** Allow your dog to explore their new home at their own pace. Do not force interactions with people or other pets. Some dogs may want to hide or stay in their designated safe space initially.
4. **Limit New Experiences:** While it might be tempting to introduce your dog to the neighborhood or take them on adventures right away, it's best to limit new experiences during the decompression period. Focus on short, calm walks around the immediate area.
5. **Provide Mental Stimulation:** Offer toys and activities that engage your dog mentally. Puzzle toys, chew toys, and scent games can help distract and calm them.
6. **Watch for Stress Signals:** Be attentive to signs of stress, such as excessive panting, pacing, or hiding. If you notice these behaviors, give your dog space and place them in a safe area, like a crate or bedroom, to calm down.
7. **Practice Positive Reinforcement:** Use positive reinforcement to encourage desirable behaviors. Praise and treats can help build trust and reinforce a sense of security.
8. **Avoid Over-Stimulation:** Keep interactions brief and positive. Avoid overwhelming your dog with too much attention or play, especially if they seem tired or overwhelmed.

9. **Gradual Socialization:** Once your dog seems more comfortable, slowly introduce them to new experiences and people. Always supervise interactions to ensure your dog is comfortable. Give your new dog frequent breaks when in new situations, especially if it involves new people or dogs in the home.
10. **Consult a Professional if Needed:** If your dog continues to show signs of extreme stress or behavioral issues, or if you're unsure about what to do with your new dog, consult a professional dog trainer for guidance.

By following these decompression instructions, you can help your new rescue dog feel secure and comfortable in their new home, setting the foundation for a trusting and loving relationship.