



**Congratulations on choosing your new family member! We hope that you are able to enjoy having your dog for many years to come, and we've put together some suggestions to make your transition easier and successful.**

Your new dog should be treated as if he were a brand new puppy, even though his/her size is that of an adult. Most rescue dogs have not been someone's house pet and don't have the training and social skills to be an "instant success" in a new home. Even though foster care givers spend time and do some training, the transition to yet another new environment is going to be stressful for a dog who's already lost his home at least twice.

A crate is a must. Your new rescue needs the security of his/her own room, and you need the peace of mind that he/she isn't finding trouble, pottying in the house, chasing the cats, etc.

He/She should be fed in his/her crate. This is a great way to make the crate a "good place" and it takes the stress off of your other dogs, as well as your new rescue. Many of these dogs have come from past situations where food was not plentiful and feeding time could become very stressful; worrying about another dog taking their food.

For the first week or so, your new dog should be on a leash, even in the house, as you introduce him/her to your other pets and help him/her to learn your routine.

Your new dog should NEVER be left unsupervised in the house for the first week or even longer. It may take 3-6 months for your new rescue to be reliable when you leave the house. Leashed and with you, or in the crate are musts for this transition period.

House privileges are EARNED by behaving well. Houstraining, avoiding counter-surfing and/or food stealing, and avoiding other unwanted behaviors only happen with good supervision. The training you do initially to avoid problems will go a long way. Retraining once problems occur is much more difficult. Get started right!

Outdoors, even in your fenced yard, your rescue dog should be on leash or a long line for the first week every time he/she goes outside. Many of these dogs are escape artists and many do not know to come when they are called. These outings are a perfect time to practice calling your dog when they are on a leash and have to come to you. Plenty of praise, petting and making coming to you a pleasant experience will go a long way to building that habit.



Teaching your new dog a “settle down” is a great way to let them know when to relax and hang out with the family in “quiet” mode. The “settle down” is a 10-30 minute down stay. With leash and collar on your dog, position him/her in a down and block time out where YOU do not intend to get up for any reason.

If your new dog already knows the command, then just tell him/her. If he/she doesn't, then physically position him. Put your foot on the snap of the leash, very close to his collar. If he/she attempts to get up, you just calmly, without talking or telling him/her to lie down again, put him/her back.

This exercise does several things:

- 1) teaches your dog to relax on command for a long period of time,
- 2) teaches your dog to lie down on command, and
- 3) teaches your dog that you can and will enforce the command you gave.

**NO MATTER WHAT**, don't let him/her up until your 10 minutes (minimum) are up. Exceptions can be made, like if the house is on fire. Very important: when the 10 minutes are up, you need to give him a clear release (“OK, we're done”) and get up yourself, having him get up, too.

We strongly recommend enrolling in an obedience class. Obedience classes give you the skills to train your dog, in an environment that is distracting, challenging and where your dog can learn to behave in public places, as well as at home.

*June 1, 2018*