



CONGRATULATIONS!



Ten easy steps to ensure your new shelter dog's transition into your home is a successful one!

1. Bring your dog **STRAIGHT** home after adopting. Also, avoid stopping at “dog-friendly” stores, dog parks, or even going for a walk. The shelter is all your new dog has known for possibly a year or more. Too much excitement and stimulation could spook them. Remember you are a stranger to them.
2. Do not introduce anyone (e.g. neighbors, relatives, and friends) to the dog for at least a week. Your new dog needs time to acclimate to its new routine, surroundings, and to establish a relationship with you. When your dog is finally ready to meet people, always let him or her approach the dog. Never allow strangers to hover or stand over your dog while meeting him/her.
3. Once you bring your dog home, take him/her straight into your fenced in yard, and let them explore. If you do not have a fenced-in yard, leash-walk them around the area. If using a tie-out, refrain from using it until you know they will not escape. After they eliminate, bring them into house.
4. Let him/her explore the house. Keep him/her on a leash because if they get too excited and start knocking things down or try and “mark” you can correct the behavior.
5. Take your dog to the yard they will be using to eliminate. Stay outside with your dog for ten to fifteen minutes to get any idea of how often he/she will need to go out. When your dog does eliminate outside, have treats ready and praise him/her for their correct behavior. Your dog will quickly learn this is where they go to eliminate.
6. For any new dog, it's recommended you take him/her out every half hour to reduce any chance of accidents. Depending on how well your dog is adjusting, you may increase the time. **NEVER PUNISH YOUR DOG FOR ACCIDENTS.** Accidents will happen. Clean it up and put the soiled rags or paper towels outside where they go. Rubbing your dog's face in it or scolding them will only make them afraid of you and afraid to eliminate in your presence.
7. Get a crate. It will be useful at some point whether your dog is still being potty-trained or when you need to leave. Reinforce with zip-ties if you think your dog will escape.
8. Set up the crate like your own fort or cave. Make it comfortable with bedding, a bucket or non-tip bowl for water, toys, rawhide, or a frozen, peanut butter stuffed Kong. Always give them a treat when they enter the cage and lie down. Do not talk to them as you leave as it could get them excited.
9. Also, put a sheet over the crate. Leave one side open for breathing and to see. This will make your dog feel safe. When you want to put them to bed, put them away when you're gone, or host a party you can put them in their safe place.
10. **HAVE FUN!** After you and your dog establish a relationship, it's safe to socialize them. Training, exercise, and playing will keep your dog physically and mentally satisfied!