

NEW DOG ADJUSTMENT TIPS

CONGRATULATIONS, you have decided to adopt a new family member! Here are some tips we hope you will find useful. Remember that your new dog is NOT the same as your old dog, other dog or the great dog you had before. Each dog has a unique personality. Be patient and willing to go slow. Dogs have feelings, fears and insecurities too. Your dog is thrilled to have a new home and a family of his/her own but doesn't know what the rules are or what to expect. Please understand that your dog may be excited, anxious, or even scared just as you might be in a new situation where you want to fit in and be accepted.

ALL DOGS HAVE BEHAVIOR PROBLEMS AT FIRST. *Do not expect to have the perfect dog with little to no effort or adjustment.. Some are escape artists, others have separation anxiety, some may dig, some may jump up on you or cry & whine, some get into the trash or chew your belongings. Each has his own personality, just like us. Teach your pet what you expect by positive reinforcement, not by hitting or yelling.*

SUPERVISE PET...DON'T GIVE THE RUN OF THE HOUSE. *Your dog does not know your house and will need to learn where to relieve themselves even though the pet has been housebroken before in another home. Expect a few accidents for a couple of weeks. The dog will also not understand what areas or items are "off-limits" unless this is established and reinforced*

HAVE EQUIPMENT READY. *Collar, leash, dishes, brush/comb, treats, bed, toys & adequate shelter from the elements if the dog is to be left outside for more than a short time*

STICK TO A SCHEDULE. *Pets will like the structure of knowing when he can eat, go walking, to the bathroom, go to bed and get up. Schedule time each day.*

MAKE SURE PET HAS ADEQUATE WATER, FOOD, SHADE/WARMTH.

Do not plan to leave the pet in the yard or in a space separated from people. Your pet is a domesticated animal and needs companion & interaction with people. Dogs are very likely to escape from a yard or run away when they are new to an environment and do not understand that this is their new home

PUT ID TAG ON YOUR DOG. *If he/she gets out, your pet will not know how to get home. It may take several months to learn that they belong to a home. Be sure to transfer the microchip information for your dog to your name.*

GIVE PET TOUR OF THE HOUSE, YARD AND NEIGHBORHOOD. *The pet will settle down more quickly if pet knows the territory and where a safe place is. Make sure your yard is escape proof and everyone keeps the gates and doors CLOSED. Put LOCKS on gates to prevent carelessness. Pet theft is also rampant. Never leave your pet tied outside in front of a business or in a car where the pet is accessible and can be stolen*

HAVE A CALM, QUIET ATMOSPHERE. *Pets need time to adjust to all the new experiences. Pets will be confused. Provide a radio or TV when away from the house.*

INTRODUCE YOUR DOG SLOWLY TO OTHER PEOPLE, CHILDREN AND PETS. *Make it on neutral territory & be positive and respectful of the dog's fears and insecurity. Give the pet a special place to eat, sleep and keep a special toy. Allow the pet an opportunity to bond with a "leader" and other "pack members" and learn what is expected before introducing to guests or visitors to the home.*

SELECT A VETERINARIAN. *Make sure you have all of the medical records in the vet's office and keep up to date the needed shots.*

SOMETIMES A DOG WILL BE DEFENSIVE OR AFRAID AND APPEAR AGGRESSIVE. *Many times it is because the pet is hurting or distressed and cannot tell you. Respect the pet's space; do not approach during food or while the pet has a treat. The pet does not know you at first and is afraid of losing his or her treasure. NEVER bother a sleeping dog. If you must approach a sleeping dog, call the dog's name first to signal your presence. A growl is a warning that you need to stop what you or doing or the dog will feel the need to protect him or herself. Take a deep breath, keep still, and do not force a dog into a position where they will feel threatened.*

BE AWARE OF SEEMINGLY HARMLESS HOUSEHOLD ITEMS *These may include foods, cleaning products or certain plants. They can become deadly for a dog, so keep them away. Plastic bags, sugarless gum, cigarettes, nicotine patches, alcohol, products containing lye, medicines, caffeine, pesticides, soy, bread dough, salty foods, cured meats, avocado, onion, garlic, nuts, grapes, raisins, chocolate & very fatty foods can be lethal.*