



# INTRODUCING YOUR ADOPTED DOG TO FAMILY AND OTHER PETS

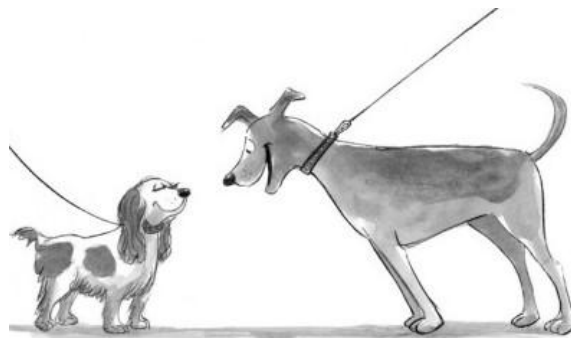
## Arriving Home With Your New Dog



- Bring your dog into your home and leave him/her alone. Briefly introduce him to the members of the household and then put him in his crate, with his meal if it is mealtime, or with a toy or bone to make him feel at home and to reinforce that his crate is a safe and happy place to be. It won't be long before your dog begins to investigate the home, he will do so when he begins to feel comfortable.
- Give your dog a few days to settle in and get to know the members of the household before you begin to invite friends and neighbours over to meet him. Life is pretty overwhelming for him after such a big change. Again, he needs to feel safe with you before he should be expected to meet even more new people.
- If you have children, don't have them invite all their friends over to meet the new dog until he has had a chance to get to know everyone in the family and feel comfortable.
- Never leave a young child alone with your dog.
- Set a routine, both feeding and out time with your dog and stick to it as much as possible.

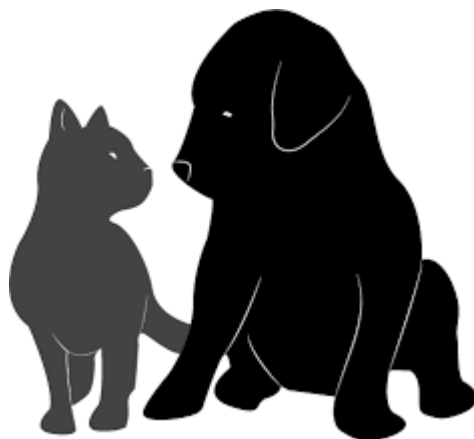
- Try to stay calm at all times. Remember, it is possible that your dog has never been in a home at all. It is certain that he has never been in your home and everything will be new and strange to him. If you maintain a calm demeanour it is more likely that your dog will too.
- Again, if you are not going to be supervising your dog, please put them in their crate. This can be with a bone, or a chew toy and possibly a comfortable blanket, make their crate their safe place. Putting the dog in a crate while you are gone will give you peace of mind knowing that they are in a safe place, away from harm, and not doing any damage to your belongings or themselves. For many dogs, a crate can also represent a safe and comfortable place to call their own and provides them with a sense of security. Dogs actually like having a "den" to cuddle up in. Crating should never be used as a punishment.
- Make sure your dog is always wearing identification.
- Never tether your dog and leave him unattended.
- Your dog will be looking to you for guidance. A calm and easy introduction into your family will make your dog feel welcome and unafraid.
- Allow time for adjustment. While it usually takes about 24 hours for a dog to settle in, it will take much longer for their overall adjustment to this new environment. Watch their behaviour closely. Remember that it can take up to a month before your dog bonds with you, so keep your expectations realistic. Begin training with some basic commands and crate training. There are some wonderful video tutorials on basic training available on You Tube.
- Your dog may have been traumatized before coming to you - you'll be teaching him that people are good and can be trusted. You should handle and work with your dog every day.

### **Introducing Your Adopted Dog to Your Other Dog(s).**



- Prepare to meet someone with your present dog at a neutral place - perhaps a park or street. Don't have too many people standing around, just you and your newly adopted dog and another person and your present dog. Talk calmly and don't attempt to hurry the introduction. Allow each dog to sniff the other. Walk the dogs a distance apart, side by side, until they relax and start to feel at ease with each other.
- When you feel comfortable enough to go into your own home with both dogs, do so naturally - do not anticipate any problem.
- Do not feed your dogs together. It is a good idea to feed your new dog in his crate initially. This re-enforces that the crate is a great place!
- It is a good idea to keep dogs' leads on in the house. This can be helpful if you need to separate them for a short time out.
- Never leave your dogs alone unsupervised. If you are going to be away, separate the dogs either by crating or closing them in separate rooms. We strongly encourage crating until you are certain they have gelled.
- If your dogs begin to posture (standing tall and straight), growl or begin to fight, do not interfere unless you think it is getting out of control. Usually a stern 'NO' will calm the situation down. Your dogs however will begin to sort out the 'pecking order' and will usually do so much more easily without your input.
- Do be alert and reintroduce your new dog gradually and calmly. Even if they got along great outside of the house, your dog may be extremely territorial in the home. A gentle introduction can avoid problems.

### Introducing Your Adopted Dog to Your Cat(s)



Before you introduce your dog to your cat, you may wish to wait a few days until you have confirmed or instilled basic obedience in your dog. You will need to have your dog under control and know which behaviours are appropriate when interacting with a cat. Allow your dog to settle down and get to know your surroundings first before you start introductions to unfamiliar animals. Introducing a cat to a dog is similar to introducing dogs to one another. Take your time and create a stress - free environment.

- Begin by keeping your cat in a different room. Allow the dog to become comfortable in his own room.
- Once the dog is comfortable, let him explore the rest of the house for short periods each day while the cat is in another room. This will allow them to pick up each other's scent.
- After a few days, allow the two to meet but keep the dog on a leash. Observe their interactions - a dog that is showing overt aggression, such as snarling, growling, baring teeth, etc., may never accept a cat. The cat and dog should be separated by baby gates or kept in separate rooms.
- If all is reasonably calm so far, walk the dog around the room on a lead, but don't let go of the lead in case the dog decides to chase the cat. On lead interactions give the cat the opportunity to approach the dog if they choose, or to find a route of escape.
- During the first few meetings, the cat and dog will probably not interact face to face. A dog is a predatory animal. It's a natural instinct for a dog to want to chase a cat. Assume the dog will chase the cat so you are prepared. Never allow the dog to intimidate the cat by barking or chasing. Each time the dog acts inappropriately (barking), let him know these behaviours are unacceptable; try using a quick sharp tone, like "Aah - Aah" to get their attention and redirect their energy. On the other hand, if the cat bops the dog on the nose as a warning, that's a good sign and should not be discouraged. When they set up boundaries between themselves, they are beginning to establish a working relationship.
- Let the cat interact with the dog on lead for about 30 minutes, then return the cat back to its safe haven and bring the dog to its dog crate or bed. Give the dog a treat and lots of praise.

- Increase the amount of time they are together a little each visit. It's important to be patient and encouraging in their interactions. If you're relaxed, they will be more at ease. Always praise friendly behaviour profusely. Don't rush the introduction or force them to interact more than either is willing.
- Pressing them to accept each other will only slow down the adjustment process. When the cat and dog seem to be getting used to each other, let the dog go, but keep his lead attached to his collar. Let him drag it around the house as he wanders, that way you can control him at any time. The cat will probably hide at first. You should use your best judgment as to when they can begin supervised sessions with the dog off - lead.

Your dog will soon settle and become a true member of your family.

