



Tel: 1 (246) 2624505

www.oceanacresanimalsanctuary.org

oceanacresanimalsanctuary@gmail.com

DOG ADOPTION

PREPARING AND FIRST STEPS FOR ADOPTING YOUR DOG

The first week you and your new dog spend together is exciting, certainly, but it can be unnerving. It's important to get it right. Moving to a new home with a new family can cause stress for dogs, and it can certainly cause stress for you, too. You can make the transition easier on both of you by doing a little advanced planning.

Here are a few things you should do before you bring home your new dog and some first steps you should take as they join your family.

BEFORE YOUR NEW DOG ARRIVES

Even before your new dog first sets paw in your home, you'll need to make some preparations. These steps will ensure that your dog gets the best start possible in their new life.

1. Have A Family Meeting

A dog is a big commitment, so before you take the plunge, make sure you're all together on wanting this newest member of the family. Then decide who's going to be the primary caretaker.

To avoid confusing the dog, agree the house rules ahead of time—will the dog be allowed on the bed? On the couch? Where will the dog sleep? Are any rooms of the house permanently off-limits? Include your family on the decisions so everyone is on the same page. And everyone must agree to stick to the rule.

2. Stock Up On Supplies

Buy some of the basics ahead of time, so you both and your dog can settle in without too many mad dashes to the store. Here's what you'll need to get started:

- Crate
- Food and water bowls
- Food and maybe some treats for training—talk to your vet about an appropriate diet
- Collar and leash
- Bed
- Toys, especially chew toys
- Stain- and odor-removing cleaners
- Possibly some baby gates to block off sections of your house

"Make A Difference, By Being The Difference"



Tel: 1 (246) 2624505

www.oceanacresanimalsanctuary.org

oceanacresanimalsanctuary@gmail.com

DOG ADOPTION

3. Prepare Your Home

This requires a little more work if you're getting a puppy, since they can be champion chewers and have a knack for getting into things they shouldn't. But no matter what your dog's age, you'll want to do some organizing ahead of time.

Create a temporary, gated-off living space for your dog or pup where they can't damage your belongings or eat something that will make them ill. They'll stay in this area whenever you're not with them to prevent them from having house training accidents.

Pick a room that's a centre of activity in your household, so your dog won't feel isolated, and be sure it's one with easy-to-clean floors. The kitchen is often a good choice; you can block it off with baby gates if needed. Make sure you remove anything that you don't want chewed on or soiled.

What's in your dog's area will vary a bit depending on their age and how you're house training. Puppy-proof your home inside and outside to make sure anything that could hurt your dog (medicines, chemicals, certain plants) is out of reach.

4. Arrange For Home Care

Ideally, you can take a few days to a week off work to get your new dog or puppy settled in and to start house training. It'll also help the two of you bond, which makes training easier.

If you can take time off, you'll need a back-up team in place pretty quickly. Shop around for dog walkers, or pet sitters. Rely on friends and family for word of mouth recommendations.

5. Find A Good Trainer Or Class

Group obedience classes are great for bonding with your new dog and for learning how to communicate with and train them. These classes are especially recommended for young puppies, since they give pups a chance to get comfortable being around other canines and people which is a key part of raising a safe, friendly dog.

6. Plan The Trip Home

Find a helper to come along when you go to pick up your dog. Young puppies who've never been on a car ride before may get upset. Even adult dogs can get nervous—and a terror-filled car ride can turn into a long-lasting phobia of car travel. Ask someone to sit next to your dog on the ride home, soothing them and keeping them from hopping into your lap while you're driving. If your dog is used to a crate, you can place them in the crate for the ride home. Just make sure it's secure; sliding around the backseat will make the drive more stressful.

"Make A Difference, By Being The Difference"



Tel: 1 (246) 2624505

www.oceanacresanimalsanctuary.org

oceanacresanimalsanctuary@gmail.com

DOG ADOPTION

ONCE YOUR DOG IS HOME

Now that you've made the first car ride and walked through the front door with your new dog, you'll both start an adjustment period. This time is important, as it will be your dog's first impression of their new home, so make it a good one! Here are a few tips.

1. Keep It Pleasant But Low-key At First

For a shy puppy or dog, being taken to a new place and then deluged with lots of loud, lively strangers can be really overwhelming. The first day or two, keep the mood mellow and calm. Hold off on inviting guests over until your pup settles in.

2. Introduce Your Dog To Their Crate

Crates are the best way to house train, but most dogs need a little time to warm up to them. Make sure they see them as a happy place to be, fed them in their crate and give them toys to play with in there.

3. Start Your Training

The earlier you start, the faster and easier it will be to teach good manners, and the better the lessons will stick. The two most important things to teach your dog are house training and socialization—getting them comfortable around other people and pets.

4. Set Up A Routine

A routine helps with house training and is reassuring to your dog.

Figure out a schedule for walks, meals, bathroom breaks, and exercise, and stick to it. Regular walks are not just for exercise, they're important bonding times.

5. Get Your Dog License

Getting a dog license is a legal requirement.

6. Find A Good Vet

It's especially important for a puppy's first vet visit to be a pleasant experience so that your dog learns to take trips to the vet in stride. Ask around for referrals, and schedule your first appointment. Your dog will need a check-up and possibly some vaccinations.

Your dog's first few weeks home will likely be a period of huge adjustment for both of you. You can make the transition much easier all around if you prepare your home in advance, gather a team (vets, dog walkers, and trainer) and set up a routine right away.

"Make A Difference, By Being The Difference"



Tel: 1 (246) 2624505

www.oceanacresanimalsanctuary.org

oceanacresanimalsanctuary@gmail.com

DOG ADOPTION

INTRODUCING A NEW DOG TO A HOME WITH RESIDENT DOGS

Initial interactions between resident dogs and new canines can be unpredictable. For this reason, such introductions should be approached with caution and planning. As with people, first impressions are important and can set the stage of a relationship between pets residing in the same household. There are a variety of possible scenarios that are dependent upon the age, species, temperament, pecking order status, etc. of the animals to be involved in the introduction.

If your current dog or dogs have a history of fighting with other dogs reconsider your choice to take on an additional canine family member. The happiness of your current dog may need to negate your desire to have another pet. If you are not willing to consider keeping your dog a solo pet it would be wise to speak with an expert in canine behaviour and implement the suggested behaviour modifications with your dog(s) before attempting to add a new member to the current canine or pack already established in your home. Your dog(s) considers your home to be his den. That natural territorial component combined with a history of aggression towards other dogs could set you up for a dangerous situation if these issues are not dealt with proactively.

Tips For A Smooth Introduction:

- Leave your current dog at home when you go to pick up your new dog. This is a safer idea for everyone involved. Managing the interaction of two new dogs while you are driving a car will not be possible and the confined space could make the initial meeting more fractious.
 - Recruit a helper(s) for the introduction. You should have one person to handle each dog.
 - Choose a neutral setting for the meeting. If you bring a new dog into your home before it has been introduced to your current dog(s) there could be territorial behaviour that develops into aggression.
 - Keep the dogs leashed initially but try to keep a loose lead to reduce tension.
 - Allow interaction between the dogs to progress at its own pace. Even if they ignore each other at first this is better than forcing them into a situation that causes them to become defensive or aggressive.
 - Keep initial interaction brief. Allow them to touch noses, sniff each other a bit, then separate them and involve them in another activity such as obedience exercise or play for a few minutes and then allow them another short introduction. This fragmentation of initial contact can help to prevent escalations of tension and aggression.
 - Keep your own voice and attitude and those of the other handler's positive and happy. This will help to keep everyone in the situation, humans and dogs alike, calm and productive.
 - Have treats handy and use them as rewards for good behaviour during the interaction breaks. Do not offer them while the dogs are interacting.
-

"Make A Difference, By Being The Difference"



Tel: 1 (246) 2624505

www.oceanacresanimalsanctuary.org

oceanacresanimalsanctuary@gmail.com

DOG ADOPTION

- Observe the body language of all dogs involved. If your new dog is being introduced to more than one resident dog, it is best to make separate introductions so that pairs or groups of dogs are not ganging up on the newcomer.
 - Inviting, happy body language is a sign that things are going well. Guarded, defensive body language can mean trouble. If negative body language is observed, separate the dogs and return to distracting them with other activities. Wait a little while and then try again but keep the interaction very brief. The main goal here is to prevent escalation of tensions between the dogs.
 - Continue with brief interactions until the initial excitement has worn off and greeting behaviours have dissipated. When everyone is behaving in a calm and positive manner it is time to take your dogs home.
 - When you arrive at home take your dogs for a brief walk around the neighbourhood together before approaching the house.
 - Once you have entered the house lead them around the inside of the house together. If they accomplish this calmly, let them off the leash but keep them where you can supervise them.
 - During the first few weeks after bringing the new dog home, nurture this blossoming relationship. Make sure you have removed any toys or personal items belonging to your current dog(s) before introducing the newcomer. The idea is to remove any impetus for conflict.
 - For the first few weeks each dog should have a separate area where it is confined for sleeping, meals, time-outs, and when there is no one home to supervise. This can be accomplished by crating the dogs or keeping them in separate rooms.
 - After a few weeks if everyone seems to be getting along well you can start to leave the dogs together without supervision for short periods of time.
 - If all seems well with them, slowly increase the length of time until you feel you can trust them for longer periods without mishap.
 - Do not ever leave them unsupervised with food available to them.
 - Eventually you may be able to feed them in the same area if you teach them manners for this situation.
 - If food is left in the bowls by any party pick it up and offer it again later.
 - During these first few weeks it is also a good idea to introduce variables into the interaction periods. Have people come to visit, and other families interact with the dogs during their together time.
 - If there appears to be any ongoing tension between the dogs keep their periods of interaction or hanging out together brief. Halt any escalations of temperament with a firm, consistent command and then separate them for a short period. When they behave well together praise them equally.
 - If despite your best efforts tensions between the dog members of your household persist or escalate, contact a recommended dog trainer and get professional help.
-

“Make A Difference, By Being The Difference”



Tel: 1 (246) 2624505

www.oceanacresanimalsanctuary.org

oceanacresanimalsanctuary@gmail.com

DOG ADOPTION

If the new inductee is a puppy, some slight variations to the above guidelines may need to be implemented. Puppies are exuberant in their actions and interactions and are not often experienced enough to recognize and consequently respect the warnings of older members of their species. This is a good reason to leave puppies with their mother as long as possible as she will teach them species specific manners and the ins and outs of interacting with their own species. If you have the choice of taking a puppy from its mother at 8 weeks, or 10 or 12 weeks, go with the longer period. Just a couple of weeks can make a huge difference in teaching a puppy positive social interaction within its own species.

Dogs are communal animals and generally enjoy the company of others of their species. If the initial introduction period is managed in a calm, well planned manner, your new family member will likely bring much joy to all your human and canine family members.

In rare instances, your dogs may not achieve a relationship in which they can be trusted to stay alone together or even to tolerate each other for more than brief periods. Be willing to accept this possibility and have a plan now that you have committed to this new family member. There are creative ways to live with dogs that cannot get along.

"Make A Difference, By Being The Difference"