



# 10 Tips to Help Your New Dog Adjust to Your Home

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Getting a new dog is an extremely rewarding experience, but just like bringing any pet home there's going to be an adjustment period. And like us our dogs love having a routine, so being consistent during the first few will be an important part of helping your dog adjust. Whether you just got a new puppy or adopted an older dog you can expect them to take a few days to settle in. These tips will help make that transition easier on your dog. Here's how to help your new dog adjust to your home. These tips will help your new dog settle into their new home, and they'll increase the bond you form with your new dog. It might take a day or two, or it might take months — each dog comes with their own personality and experiences. Going from the shelter environment to a home is a big transition, so don't be discouraged if your dog takes awhile to get comfortable in your home.

## 1. Give Your Dog Time to Decompress By Starting Slowly

- You can help your new dog adjust to your home by taking it slow. He'll appreciate some one on one time getting to know his new family and surroundings. Let him explore the house and yard at his own pace.
- Some dogs take awhile to adjust to new settings, and sometimes that can be exhausting for them. If you adopted your dog from a shelter realize that he just came from a noisy and stressful environment; your quiet and cozy home is likely the first place he's gotten a good sleep in awhile.
- Don't over stimulate your dog during the first couple days. If your dog is a bit standoffish just let them check things out for themselves. If they come up to you for attention by all means be as affectionate as they seem comfortable with.
- Not all dogs bond immediately with a new owner – don't take it personally. They're in a brand new environment getting used to new sights, smells, and sounds. It can be a stressful time for your new dog so try to make them as comfortable as possible by keeping things calm and positive.

## 2. Give Your Dog His Own Space

- One way you can help make your new dog more comfortable is by providing him with his own comfy bed or safe spot where he can retreat to when he's tired or overwhelmed. Some dogs need a little extra time to just chill out every once in a while, especially with all the stress of being in a completely new environment.
- If your new dog isn't in the mood to cuddle or play you can give try giving him something to do on his own by offering a food dispensing toy or stuffed Kong. By offering yummy treats in a Kong you're showing your new dog that you're the provider of awesome things. It's a simple way to build trust, and if your dog is feeling uneasy in his new situation he might appreciate having a nice treat on his own.

## 3. Be Prepared For Stomach Issues When Changing Diets

- Diarrhea is common among newly adopted dogs, either from stress or sudden dietary changes. You can ask the shelter or rescue which food your dog has been eating to help prevent an upset stomach from a sudden change in diet. If you're not a fan of the brand they've been feeding you can switch but you may want to consider slowly transitioning them over to a new food by mixing some of the old in with the new.
- Stress from moving into a new environment can cause diarrhea in newly adopted dogs. Ease their stress by taking things slowly the first week and giving them time to adapt. If your dog has diarrhea for more than a few days consult your veterinarian.

## 4. Dogs May Lose Their Appetite in New Surroundings

- The stress from being in a new environment can cause dogs to lose their appetite. If you've adopted a shy dog they might need a few days before they're comfortable enough to eat a normal meal. A new diet or change in food can also cause a dog to refuse to eat. A dog won't starve himself; as long as your dog is healthy he'll learn to adapt to his new diet.
- If you're concerned about your dogs appetite offer them a piece of high value food such as chicken or ham. If they'll readily eat high value food they're likely just going through an adjustment period. If your dog won't take high value food after a day or two it's time to check with your veterinarian.

## 5. Make It Easier In The Long Run By Keeping Your Routine

- Dog's thrive on routine, and the sooner your new dog learns how your home functions the more comfortable he'll be. You can help your new dog adjust to your home by: Feeding at the same time every day, going outside for potty breaks consistently, going for your daily walk at the same time, and going to bed around the same time each night. This also includes exercise time, cuddle time or any other daily games or activities he'll be involved with. He'll feel more secure once he starts learning your routine and what is expected of him at any given time.
- Many owners want to spend as much time as possible with their new dog, and that's wonderful. But try to incorporate at least some of your normal activities into the day during those first few weeks to help your dog adjust to what will become his normal routine.

## 6. Supervise Your New Dog

- If your dog is already crate trained you might want to consider leaving him crated while you go to work, and this is especially true if you have other animals at home. Some dogs can become destructive or overly anxious when left alone.
- If you're not sure how your new dog will react when left alone crating is a good way to have some peace of mind while you're at work. Just remember to introduce your dog to their crate slowly, and make it a positive experience for them. When introduced properly a crate becomes a relaxing place for your dog.

## 7. You May Have a Few House Training Issues

- Puppies will need to be house trained, but you can also expect a few house training issues with newly adopted dogs as well.
- You and your newly adopted dog aren't automatically going to be on the same schedule, so be prepared for a few accidents during the first couple of weeks. Your new dog might be getting fed more than usual and he very well might be drinking a lot more. Make sure you take him out regularly to decrease the likelihood of any accidents.

## 8. Beware of Escape Attempts

- When going outdoors keep your new dog on a leash at all times. When in a new environment some dogs will have a tendency to try and run away or escape. Don't leave your new dog unsupervised in a fenced yard since dogs can dig under or jump over fences. Until you know your dog is comfortable with you and will come back when called it's best to keep them leashed at all times when outdoors.
- Be sure to supervise your new dog when outside until you're confident they won't try to escape. Many dogs are able to jump 6 foot fences, and a lot more can dig under them. When dogs enter a new environment they can become stressed out & fearful, and that can lead to escape attempts.

## 9. Don't Overwhelm Them if They're Anxious

- It's tempting to introduce your new dog to all of your friends & family right away by inviting everyone over, but make sure your dog is comfortable in your home first. Some dogs can get overstimulated and excited by all that excitement, and some are extremely nervous around strangers. If your dog shows any signs of discomfort take it slow. Make sure they have access to their own safe space or area that they can retreat to if they get overwhelmed.
- The same goes for trips to the park or store. Until your dog is comfortable around you take it easy when introducing them to new areas.

## 10. Be Patient With Your New Dog

- Imagine yourself in your dog's shoes (or paws) for a moment – surrounded by strangers in a new place where everything is unknown. It's a bit scary to say the least. Your dog might adjust within days, or it may take weeks. Each dog is an individual with a history all their own. Some dogs came from a nice loving home and might find it easier to adapt – others have been waiting for years at a shelter.
- Take it slow and make it easier on them by giving them space when needed. Give them some time to settle in and get comfortable with their new surroundings. It may seem like a slow process, but it won't take long until your adopted dog becomes your new best friend.

**Please don't be discouraged if your new dog doesn't warm up to you on his first night home. Just like us dogs have their own personalities, and some of them are much more reserved and cautious than others. Each dog is different, they come with their own experiences and personalities. Your dog might adjust to his new home in an hour, or it might take months. Give your new dog some patience, a steady schedule, and his own space and he'll start to feel settled in his new environment. Your new dog will be your best friend before you know it!**