

Humane Society of West Michigan

Here are some Do's and Don'ts to get you started on the right foot.

DO's

- Show your new dog what to do. Show him where to go potty; show him where his food, water and bed are; and praise him for everything he does that you like.
- Reward good behavior with praise and small food treats.
- If your dog knows "sit" have him "sit" for every-thing (feeding times, doors opening, leash, etc.) If he doesn't, just wait for a calm moment when he is standing nicely and not jumping up, etc. and reward the calm behavior.
- Use a regular "flat" collar and keep his leash on, even in the house at first, to aid in moving him off the couch or out of the kitchen, off guests, etc.
- When he eats dinner, have him wait or sit first. Once he's begun eating, move away from the dish and do not disturb him.
- Supervise, supervise, supervise every interaction with kids and current pets.
- If the dog is crate trained, please use the crate for calm containment. Have him sleep in the crate at night. Ask for your advice if he is not crate trained.
- Go for long, on-leash walks for the purpose of exercise.
- Start a training class with your new dog.



DON'TS

- Don't use punishment. It is best to teach appropriate behaviors and reward them every time.
- Don't wrestle or "roughhouse" with your dog.
- Don't allow too much freedom. Keep him on a leash at first (even inside your home, especially with kids or cats present).
- Don't bathe or groom your new dog right away, and especially do not try to trim his nails right away.
- Don't overwhelm him at first by having a party, inviting relatives/kids over, etc.
- Don't take him to the dog park right away (even if he is good with other dogs).
- Don't physically force your dog to do anything. Use your leash and treats to lead or lure him where you need to go.
- Do not let kids crowd the dog, take him for a walk, hug or pick up the dog and do not allow any unsupervised interactions.
- Don't overwhelm your new dog by going to crowded places such as markets, parks, schools, etc. Find calm and quiet places to begin with.

