



Your New Dog

Advice from Dr. Patricia McConnell

Go home. Encourage new adopters to take their dog straight home. As tempted as they may be to stop for pet supplies or show off their new pup to friends and family, the sooner they get the dog home, the sooner they can all settle into their new lives. Providing calm and routine will make that happen a lot quicker.

Leash up. It is critical that new adopters keep their dogs on a leash at all times during transport. Suggest that they bring someone along to help with the dog in the car, especially if the dog is not going to be crated--and tell them to be prepared for the possibility of the dog trying to bolt once the door opens.

Enjoy the outdoors. Once they're home, adopters should remain outside with the dog on leash until she urinates and, ideally, defecates. From day one the dog will start to learn where she is expected to relieve herself.

Control the environment. Inside the house, adopters should keep the dog on a leash for a while in order to slowly introduce her to the new environment. Once the adopter is comfortable, the leash can be removed.

Introduce slowly. If possible, introduce the dog to each family member separately. That way she'll have the opportunity to get to know the sight and smell of each individual without being overwhelmed.

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Single meeting to relationship building (Dog to Dog meetings)

First impressions aren't everything.

Dogs are social animals. As such, an initial reaction does not necessarily predict the future relationship because a relationship is something that develops over time. Did you ever have an experience where you didn't like someone the first time you met, but the more you learned about him, the more you were intrigued? Dog to dog relationships are no different. Likewise, a first good impression does not guarantee they will become best friends.

What's a proper introduction?

How they meet also affects the outcome. A gradual and low stress introduction would be to walk them together; initially at a distance and reducing the distance over time. Handling the leash loosely will allow dogs to move without too much restraint. Limiting their choices and movements tends to have negative effects. Soft body postures are good signs just like how your body will relax when you smile.

Managing at home

There are areas of conflict in a home. Doorways, where they eat, sleep or that special spot next to you can all be considered valuable real estate and all dogs want to be the first to claim it.

All toys should be picked up prior to multiple dogs entering a room or being left alone in a room, until you know they can play well with others.

Do not feed them side by side or from the same bowl, until it has been determined that food is not a resource that one might want to protect.

You may want to support each dog's role while teaching them that good things happen to those who wait. You may also want to teach them that good things happen when the other dog is around.