

Bringing A NewPuppy/Dog Into The Home

Set Rules At The Beginning

In order to have a well-balanced Puppy/Dog, we have to teach house rules, and set boundaries and limitations from the start. The message your sending your dog the moment she enters your home is critical, because it establishes the ground rules in your dog's mind. If you just let her run in the door, the message is, "Here! Everything is yours, and you can do whatever you want."

By opening that door, you've told your dog, "There are no rules, boundaries or limitations." You know where that goes: She eats shoes, won't be housebroken, constantly begs, climbs on the furniture, jumps on people... And then you visit my website, trying to find out what is "wrong" with your new dog!

The process of bringing your new dog into the home for the first time should be very deliberate and specific. Here are the eight essential steps:

1. Remain Calm.

When you pick the dog up, everyone must be calm.

It can be tempting to greet the new dog with excitement, but this isn't the time to do it. Accept the dog into your space, but don't give more than a minimum of attention or affection yet. You've just removed the dog from a place that's familiar and taking her to somewhere entirely new.

Remember: To remain calm the entire process.

2. Take a Walk. ...

When you get home, keep your dog on the lead, because you're now going on a walk through her new neighborhood. This serves two purposes: It helps drain her excess energy and makes her calm, and gets her used to new smells, sights, and sounds.

3. Introduce Your Home. ... After the walk, keep your dog on the leash to properly introduce her into your house, unit, etc.

Bring the dog to the front door, don't let her enter first. If you can, get her to sit as you open the door. Then, you enter first, not letting her follow until you invite her in.

4. Take The Guided Tour. ...

Once inside, keep your dog on the lead and walk her from room to room. Do not let her sniff or wander around. Use the lead to keep her beside you. Spend a few minutes in each room before moving on to the next, and make sure you go first each time into the next room.

Every door is an opportunity to establish leadership, you go first, the dog waits you invite her to enter or exit.

Be consistent! Don't let the dog follow you into the next room until you give permission. If you have a backyard, patio, or other outside area, treat it the same.

5. No Sound, No Touch, No Sight. ...

During the guided tour, don't speak and use only body language or simple sounds, like "hiss!" With a finger snap, to communicate or correct. Your dog is overwhelmed right now, so the less stimulation, the better. This will help keep her focused on you.

6. The Feeding Area. ...

Once you've completed the guided tour, bring the dog where the food and water will be and offer a reward with some water and a few bits of food, but not a whole bowl yet; your dog is still on her leash, remember?

7. The Dog's Bed. ...

If you have a special place you'd like the dog to stay when she needs to be out of the way of household activities, take her there. This is where you can finally let her off-lead.

That place can be where her bed is, or a spot in the corner of the living room where you want her to lie, or her crate. By letting her off the lead here, you're telling her, "This is yours." Don't be surprised if she decides to settle down and ignore the family for a while. This doesn't mean she hates her new home. It means that she has found her place in it.

8. Exude Calm-Assertive Energy.

Once you've completed the above process, establish yourself as the Pack Leader by going through the rest of your day exuding calm-assertive energy. Everyone in the household should ignore the dog. You can acknowledge the dog if she joins you, of course, but don't go overboard with affection yet.

Just as you're still getting used to her in the house, she's getting used to being in her new house. You've gone a long way already toward teaching her that this is your territory and you make the rules. Now, she's going to observe so she can figure out what the rules are, and who's who in her new pack.

If you've gone through these eight steps, you will have claimed your territory, allowed your dog into it, and established who the Pack Leaders are.

Stay calm and assertive!