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Bringing Your New Dog Home

Congratulations, you have made a wonderful decision to adopt a dog from the shelter. We hope that you and your new dog will bond and have a long lasting relationship. To insure that you get started on the right foot we have a few suggestions.

It's important to give your new dog structure and guidance in the first few weeks. Dogs feel better when they know their place in the family.

1. Give your new dog a schedule so he/she learns when feeding time, play time, and exercise time will come.
2. Let your dog know which behaviors please you (give a treat for being good).
3. Teach your dog to "sit" and ask him/her to sit before he/she gets anything – food, attention, play, going outside. This simple practice teaches your new dog that you are the leader.

It's likely that your new dog may have a few accidents in the house the first few days, even if he/she is housetrained. To help prevent this and retrain your new dog, do the following:

1. Keep the dog on a leash when you first let him/her explore the house. This way you can interrupt any signs of elimination and quickly take him/her outside.
2. Accompany your new dog outside to the same area each time to eliminate. This will allow you to reward for eliminating outside. Use a food treat and plenty of praise to reward appropriate outside elimination.
3. Never punish a dog for eliminating inside if you did not catch him/her in the act. Simply clean the area well with an enzymatic odor neutralizer and pay more attention next time.
4. If you do catch your dog in the act of eliminating inside, interrupt the behavior by making a loud noise (clap your hands) and then urgently say "outside" and take the dog out. Don't forget to praise and give a treat for finishing outside.

Dogs that are adopted from a shelter often bond very rapidly, closely, and deeply with their new owners. This can cause a problem when you have to leave him/her alone. You must teach your new dog that you are not going to abandon him/her when you leave the house.

1. The very first day you should depart frequently. Just go in and out of the house numerous times for a few seconds and then a few minutes.
2. Do not make a big deal out of your departures and arrivals. Just come and go without saying anything to the dog.
3. Leave your dog with a food stuffed toy to keep him busy for a while after you leave.
4. Leave a radio or TV on when you are gone to keep your dog company. This may calm him/her and will also provide background noise that will block all the noises outside.

If you have any problems with your new dog or questions about training, don't hesitate to call us. We want you to form a long-lasting positive relationship with your new dog.