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Introducing a New Dog to a Resident Dog

1. Introduce the dogs in a neutral location (at the shelter, at a park, etc). If you have more than one resident dog, introduce them one at a time.
2. When the dogs greet and sniff each other, talk to them in a happy friendly tone of voice.
3. Introduce the dogs only for brief amounts of time, but do it repeatedly.
4. Try to keep the leashes loose at all times. A tight leash transmits your anxiety about the situation to the dogs and increases their tension.
5. Watch for any body postures that tell you that the dogs are getting tense (raised hackles, baring teeth, growls, stiff-legged gait, prolonged stare). If you see these behaviors, interrupt them by calling the dogs away from each other and have them do something else like sit.
6. Watch for dominant body postures (one dog putting his chin or neck on the shoulders of the other or placing a front foot over the other's shoulders). If the other dog submits to these postures that's fine (even if it's the resident dog), if not, interrupt them by calling them away from each other and having them sit.
7. Until the dogs are comfortable with each other do not let them together in a small space like a car or hallway.
8. Until the dogs are comfortable with each other do not leave them alone unsupervised.
9. Allow a natural dominance hierarchy to develop.
10. Whenever the dogs approach each other, speak in a happy encouraging voice. If they are behaving well together, give treats so they associate good things with each other's presence.
11. Go slowly, if they don't do well at first, separate them except during managed interactions. Make sure all interactions are positive using happy voice and treats.
12. **DO NOT USE PHYSICAL PUNISHMENT** if fighting breaks out. Try a loud noise or a squirt of water to interrupt the interaction. Then call the dogs to you and make them sit.