



DOG CARE



Introducing a new dog

Introduction to the yard and house

When you arrive home put your new dog/puppy on a lead and take the time to introduce them to their new surroundings.

- It is a good idea to show them the yard first and give them a chance to relieve themselves after the excitement of the ride home.
- Walk them around the yard allowing them plenty of time to explore and sniff around.
- Remember that dogs rely heavily on their sense of smell to investigate their surroundings so don't rush this process.
- If your dog does relieve themselves in the right place, give them lots of verbal praise and a food reward never goes astray either.
- Once the yard is thoroughly explored it is time to introduce your dog/puppy to the house.
- Keep them on lead and walk around the house allowing your dog time to sniff and look around.
- If they look like they are going to relieve themselves inside in the house, react quickly and calmly by taking them back outside.
- Spend a bit more time outside and praise them if they go to the toilet in the right place.



It is a good idea to restrict free access to the house until you are confident with their level of cleanliness. This way you can keep a good eye on them and take them outside at the first sign of needing to toilet.

Meeting the family

When you first bring your dog/puppy home you will no doubt all be very excited, but it's important not to crowd or overwhelm them.

- Keep the dog on lead and introduce them to each family member one at a time.
- It is important to establish some ground rules here and teach the dog to respect everyone's personal space.
- Each person should avoid making eye contact and wait for the dog to relax or settle down before interacting.



- If the dog is excitable and jumping up, don't acknowledge this behaviour in any way (no eye contact, speaking or touching other than to gently brush off more exuberant attempts to attract your attention).
- Once the dog is calm you can make eye contact with them and call them to you for a reward and a pat.
- If the dog seems nervous allow it to approach at its own pace.
- You can sit on the floor to appear less intimidating.
- Have a yummy food reward and encourage the dog to come to you rather than you going to the dog.
- Try not to crowd a nervous dog, give them space and time to gain confidence.
- Give your new dog time to settle into the new home and routine.

Introduction to existing dog

It is always a good idea to introduce a new dog carefully and under supervision.

- Have both dogs on lead (it is helpful to recruit a friend or family member to assist with this one!) and keep some distance between the two dogs initially so that they can get used to the sights and smells.
- Gradually bring the two dogs together keeping a close eye on their behaviour.
- Watch out for signs of nervousness or bossiness.
- Try to keep the leads loose to avoid causing any pressure and move around the dogs to avoid tangling the leads up.
- You can walk the dogs in a circle following each other to encourage nose-to-tail sniffing as this is much less confrontational than direct nose-to-nose introductions.



Introduction to existing cat/s

Your cat's reaction to a new dog will play an important part in how this introduction process goes. It is important to take it slowly and carefully. You may not actually introduce them on the first day, but give each animal a chance to familiarize themselves with the other's scent. When you are ready to introduce them, have your dog on a lead so that you are in control of the situation and ensure that the cat has an escape route if it is feeling uncomfortable.

To avoid injuries do NOT hold the cat in your arms and try to take them to the dog. If the cat panics, you are likely to get scratched! Instead, allow the cat to sit where it is comfortable and bring the dog to them.

Keep plenty of distance between the dog and cat at this stage. Reward your dog with verbal praise and a tasty treat for good/calm behaviour.

DO NOT leave your cat and dog unsupervised at all during this settling in period!

If your dog shows any negative reaction or gets overexcited, take them away quietly without making a fuss and try again later when the dog has settled down. You want to show the dog that the cat is a member of the family and no barking, growling, chasing, etc. will be tolerated.

Remember REWARD CALM behaviour and REMOVE/ISOLATE the dog for negative behaviour.



Introduction to poultry, small animals and livestock

When introducing your new dog to existing animals (be they poultry, rabbits, guinea pigs, cattle, horses or livestock) it is important to do so carefully and not rush things, particularly if you don't know the dog's history and previous experience, if any, with other animals.

- Initial introductions should be done ON LEAD so that you are in control of the situation at all times. It is best to start at a distance, preferably with a barrier between the dog and other animals, such as a fence or hutch.
- Have an exit available for the other animal if they feel under pressure. Reward your dog with verbal praise and a tasty treat for calm behavior. If your dog reacts negatively (barks, growls, or gets overexcited) walk them away.
- You may need to remove the dog completely from the situation or just to a distance where they settle and stop reacting.
- Repeat the process until the dog is displaying calm behavior around the other animal.
- Even if the introduction goes well, don't leave the dog in the same area unsupervised with 'free access' until you feel completely confident. This could involve starting off with supervised time together, then being supervised from a hiding place such as a window or doorway, where your dog is unaware of your presence. This way you can observe what they will do when you are not around.

