



Helpful Tips When Bringing A Rescue Dog Home

Following information can benefit both you and your new dog in several ways and will help make the first few months of transition into your home and family a more pleasurable experience for you and your new dog.

Dog behavior management is an essential component of dog training. In daily management, we control the dog's environment in such a way to stop and/or prevent unwanted behaviors until the dog is fully trained.

Suggested DO's and DON'T's:

DO

- Crate and manage your new dog according to the protocols below.
- Ignore pushy and demanding behavior.
- Be aware of giving too much attention or affection during the first few weeks.
- Have your dog earn all treats and playtime with toys.

DON'T

- Do not have everyone come to meet your new dog the minute he/she arrives. Give your new dog plenty of time and space (2-3 weeks or longer) to settle in and get to know you first.
- Do not take your dog to a dog park.
- Do not introduce your new dog to resident dogs or to any other animals for several weeks. Depending on the situation, introductions can be made after a few weeks and in some instances, it might take a few months.

Management:

- Trains the dog for what is expected of him/her which helps to alleviate fear and anxiety. This helps to make the transition into the new home go more smoothly.
- Helps the dog to see you as the person in charge.
- Helps the dog look to you as the person who will make the right decisions for him/her and keep him/her safe.
- Prevents your new rescue dog from developing new bad habits.

Training:

- Along with management, teaches the dog what is expected.
- Helps develop a relationship between you and your dog.
- Helps to build confidence in your rescue dog.
- Helps to build engagement in your rescue dog.

Not all dogs have the same temperament or behavior issues, below we will discuss the basics of management and training and will customize the protocols further for each individual dog as needed. Remember your new dog is a rescue dog and may have experienced past trauma. Patience and lots of time help build trust and a feeling of security for your dog.

Affection and Attention: During the initial management phase, the dog will be learning where his/her place is in the hierarchy of your home. Pushy and demanding behaviors should be ignored (see below) but you should also limit attention and affection during the first few weeks which will help your rescue dog understand that he/she does not have equal status with any humans in the household. If your dog is in the crate or practicing staying on a “place” you should ignore him/her unless giving a command.

Crating: Crating is a huge part of management. Crate time will depend upon your rescue dog’s temperament, how much time you put into training and whether there are other resident dogs or pets in the home. Ideally, the crate should be in a place where the dog can be part of the household, they should not be sequestered.

Resident Dogs: Regardless of how well you know your own dog, introductions of your rescue dog to any resident dogs or any other household or farm animals should be done over a period of time. This is super important, as one mistake could inadvertently cause your rescue dog to develop lifelong aggression issues towards other dogs. This is one of the biggest mistakes new owners make. Remember your new dog is a rescue dog, we do not know its past traumas, and he will need time to settle into your home.

Dog Parks: should be avoided.

Feeding: Food is a valuable resource that we can use for training, food can also help our dogs see us as the leader because food is a resource that we control. Use caution when feeding your rescue dog for the first several weeks and keep all other pets and children away from the dog while it is eating. This will allow you to understand the dog’s response to food. Again, many rescue dogs have past trauma that may be food related due to food insecurity.

Give the dog at least 15 minutes to finish, after they have finished remove the food bowl and any uneaten food. Again, leave the dog to eat uninterrupted.

Treats: Treats should only be given to the dog when earned during a training session or when you ask something of the dog.

Bones: All treats must be earned. You can give the dog a bone to chew on while he/she is in the crate. Once a dog loses interest in the bone, or you leave for a period of time, remove it from the crate. This also helps prevent resource guarding issues from starting and helps to provide a positive association with the crate.

Toys: Treat toys as if they were a library book. You own all the toys, and the dog can borrow them. For the first few weeks we recommend that the dog does not have a “toy box” with unlimited toys at their disposal, instead, give the dog one or two toys at a time and then put the toys away when finished. You can cycle through different toys.

Dogs on Furniture: At first, it is recommended that you do not allow your rescue dog to jump up on couches, beds, etc. This can cause the dog to think his/her status is equal to yours as well as start unpleasant habits.

Structure and Routine: Providing a routine for feeding, walking, training, and playing time helps build your dog’s confidence and they learn what to expect. Bull Terriers thrive in an environment that has structure and routine.

Pushy, Demanding Behavior: Pushy and demanding behavior is anything your dog does to try to get your attention. This includes, but is not limited to barking, whining, pawing, nudging, mouthing, jumping on and staring at you.

These behaviors should be ignored. Scolding the dog, pushing him away from you, giving him a command, and even looking at him/her are all forms of attention. Any behavior you mark with attention, even negative attention will reinforce the behavior, and you are likely to see more of it.

When your dog exhibits pushy and demanding behaviors, quietly turn your back and walk away. Once the dog settles, you can give him/her a command and then reward him/her with attention, this way you are giving the attention on your terms, not the dogs.

The dog will see you as the leader once you set clear limits and can effectively communicate the rules by always rewarding correct behaviors as they occur, while preventing or immediately removing the rewards for undesirable behaviors before they are accidentally reinforced. When you are consistent and stick to the plan, good behaviors become habits, and the dog will look to you for guidance.

House Training Tips: Even though your rescue dog may be a fully grown adult it may never have been house trained or ever lived inside a house. The majority of household elimination problems can be prevented with proper house training and lots of patience.

For a house-training program to be effective, it should include:

- 1) Appropriate confinement
- 2) Diligent supervision
- 3) Scheduled feedings
- 4) Adequate opportunities to eliminate outdoors

Dogs have a natural denning instinct, normally preferring safe, enclosed quarters for their naps. In the wild, a den is a secure place to get some shut eye without becoming someone else’s meal. If a dog is properly introduced to a crate he will view it as a safe refuge, from the hustle and bustle of the house, a place for peace and quiet to nap. Rest periods in snug quarters are a natural part of caring for our dog’s needs.

Crate as a House-Training Tool: Crates are virtually essential for any dog that is not yet house-trained. When of appropriate size, it serves as a comfortable, den-like bedroom, something almost all dogs naturally want to keep free of urine and feces. Any crate you use, for whatever purposes, must always be large enough for the dog to stand up without having to hunch, to lie on his side with legs outstretched, and turn around with ease. A crate used for house training must be no bigger than this, or the dog will have enough space for both a bedroom and a bathroom. Most large wire crates come with a divider panel to allow the crate to grow with the dog.

Eight hours is a good top limit for crate time in dogs over seven months of age. For puppies under seven months or dogs new to living in a home a good rule of thumb is to crate no longer than the number of hours equal to the dog's age, minus a year. If you need to leave a dog longer than the dog can comfortably hold bladder and bowels or longer than 8 hours (whichever is less), use different confinement.

Start crate training while you remain in the same room with the crated dog, frequently praising them and letting them know clearly it is pleasing you that they remain in the crate, quietly. Frequent trips out of the room with quick returns with a treat through the crate bars will condition the dog to your comings and goings. Extend your absent periods, and in a brief time, you can be gone longer. While in the crate, the dog should not be scolded except for chewing on the crate.

Some dogs will initially cry and resist when you put them in the crate, this is where time and patience come in. It is up to you to teach them to understand that barking and crying gets them nowhere – as long as you ignore it. The crate is never meant to be a place of punishment for your dog. A couple of safe toys that cannot be ingested, such as a large Kong goes a long way in helping your dog learn to be quiet in a crate

Example Schedule for Dogs to be Taken Outside:

- Upon awaking
- After playing indoors
- After any form of excitement
- After eating or drinking again 20-30 minutes later
- After a significant period of time without elimination

At the beginning of the house-training program, the dog should be taken outside more often to establish the habit, then gradually increase the time between each outing to the average age-appropriate time. Most dogs can learn to eliminate outdoors quickly, if there are too many accidents, the owner's supervisory efforts need to be improved. If you catch you dog in the act of squatting say "nope" loud and abrupt, then take him outside.

The "Nope" is to startle the dog and interrupt the behavior momentarily, but not to scare the dog away. Punishing the dog can teach him that he should not potty while you are watching. When an accident does occur, you must respond immediately, while it is happening, not later. Dogs learn by association and have about a second and a half to associate a behavior with a consequence, so unless you catch them in the act, they will have no idea why you are upset.

If your dog does have an accident, cleanup is crucial. If you do not remove the odor completely, the dog will be attracted back to the same spot.

How to Clean Up Potty Accidents on Carpet (use caution and review your carpet manufacturer's guidelines):

We have found that immediately pouring baking soda over the wet area will soak up the urine. Once soaked up, remove the baking soda. Dilute the remaining urine with warm water over the spot. Soak up the area again with more baking soda. Once soaked up remove baking soda and use some warm water on the spot. Let it dry overnight and then vacuum. Once vacuumed, apply Nature's Miracle to the area according to directions.

Signs that your dog needs to go out:

- Wandering around
- Sniffing the floor
- Circling
- They looked confused or distracted from what they were doing. Goes over to the door or area that they have soiled before

Example House Training Schedule: Your dog should not be allowed free access to the house unless you have your eyes on the dog at all times. If he has an accident because you turned your back for 45 seconds, you are conditioning him to think it is acceptable to relieve himself in the house.

Dogs MUST go out first thing in the morning. Afterwards, bring the dog inside and give him freedom, but only in the kitchen. A child's gate at the kitchen doorway is an excellent barrier to other rooms in the house. Give the dog freedom in this space while breakfast is being prepared and while you are eating breakfast. After breakfast, and when you have time to take him out, feed him his breakfast and take him out immediately. Bring him in and put him in his crate. Go about your morning routine. Around 11:00 am let him out of the crate and outside to relieve himself. Repeat throughout the day.

Some dogs need to be exercised more than others to get them to relieve themselves. Exercise will always increase the urge to GO.

Feed your dog at the same time every day and do not give them extra snacks or treats. This will help them get on a regular schedule quickly.