

## **Tips for Introducing your new dog to your environment**

*By Jeff Coltenback*

1. Allow the dog to inspect your home. Dogs will sniff and inspect the new surroundings. Some dogs may even mark their new territory. This is very normal. However, supervision is suggested to keep an eye on the pet as it checks out its new surroundings.
2. Walk your dog around the neighborhood as often as possible and as immediately as possible. Walking will familiarize your dog with its new environment and promote your relationship with your pet.
3. Minimize overwhelming interactions with new people at first. Too much stimulation too soon could cause anxiety. Give your new pet a few days to decompress and settle in. Introduce your pet to new people slowly. Many rescue animals may feel overwhelmed with all of the new changes to its life. When you do socialize your dog, use treats and a lot of positive reinforcement to ensure your pet makes positive associations with new people.
4. Crating your new rescue dog is suggested. Although many adult dogs may already be housebroken, it is safer for the dog to be crated when unsupervised. Destructive or chewing behaviors could also be present. Crating keeps your dog safe and your house destruction-free.
5. Begin daily training with your new pet immediately. See Jeff Coltenback's leadership tips for more information.
6. Establish rules and boundaries for your new dog. Setting rules initially is ideal. Waiting to do so could allow the dog to develop unwanted habits.
7. Abandon the word "empathy" from your vocabulary as it pertains to your new dog. Do not feel bad for his past. If you want the dog to have a great future, forget about his past. Dogs live here and now. Focusing on the moment is best for your new pet!
8. Love your new dog; at the right time. Try not to reward excited behaviors or states of mind. Always offer love and affection when your dog is calm and relaxed!

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