



The Two-Week Shutdown

A Guide for New Rescue Dog Parents + Fosters



Congratulations on welcoming a rescue dog into your home!

The first two weeks are crucial for setting up your new family member for success. This guide from your friends at Fluffy Dog Rescue will help you navigate this important transition period.

What Is the Two-Week Shutdown?

The Two-Week Shutdown is a decompression period that gives your rescue dog time to adjust to their new environment in a controlled, low-stress way. While two weeks is a guideline, some dogs may need more or less time depending on their background and personality.

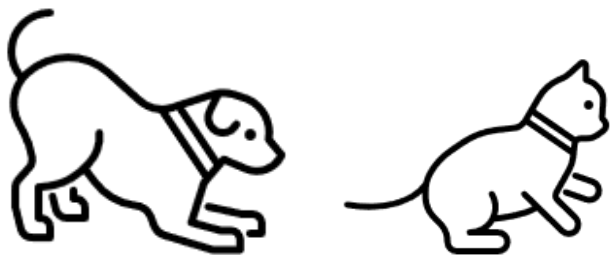
Think of it this way: Imagine being dropped into a new family that speaks a different language, immediately being introduced to all their friends and relatives, and being expected to act perfectly normal. Overwhelming, right? That's how your rescue dog feels when thrown into too many new situations too quickly.

DO:

- Keep your dog leashed to you when not in their crate
- Exercise them in your yard using a long lead (20+ feet)
- Use the crate as a safe space (20-30 minutes initially)
- Wait for calm behavior before letting them out of the crate
- Let them earn privileges gradually
- Establish yourself as the decision-maker

DON'T:

- Take them to pet stores, dog parks, or other homes
- Allow unrestricted interaction with existing pets
- Give unstructured affection or baby talk
- Allow furniture privileges initially
- Put your face in their face
- Let them go through doorways ahead of you



For Homes with Existing Pets

- Initial meeting should occur in neutral territory
- Separate pets for the first 48 hours
- Start with short, supervised interactions (10-15 minutes)
- Keep all dogs leashed during initial interactions
- Remove toys until relationships are established
- Gradually increase interaction time

Signs of Success

You'll know the shutdown period is complete when your dog:

- Follows a consistent routine
- Shows relaxed, confident behavior
- Tolerates crate time well
- Looks to you for guidance



Remember:

While this process may seem restrictive, it's a small investment that builds the foundation for a lifetime of trust and good behavior. Stay patient and consistent – your efforts will be rewarded with a well-adjusted, happy companion.

For More Information

Your friends at Fluffy Dog Rescue have curated a collection of informational resources to help guide prospective adopters, fosters, volunteers, and supporters. Find them at fluffydog.net.