



The 3-3-3 Rule

Your Dog's Adjustment Timeline

Bringing a rescue dog home is the beginning of a journey, not the end. The 3-3-3 rule helps adopters understand their new dog's adjustment period: 3 days to decompress, 3 weeks to learn routine, and 3 months to feel at home. While every dog is unique, this timeline offers a helpful framework for managing expectations and supporting your new family member through their transition.

First 3 Days	First 3 Weeks	First 3 Months
• Dog may feel overwhelmed/scared • May not eat/drink normally • Could hide or sleep excessively • Uncertainty about surroundings/routine In the first 3 days, your new family member will likely feel very overwhelmed by their new surroundings. It is very common that they act timid around you or do not want to eat or drink. Some animals may be so stressed out that they want to hide completely. This is normal, so try not to get discouraged!	• Beginning to feel comfortable • Shows true personality • Understands daily routine • Tests boundaries • Forms bond with family This phase is when they begin to build trust with you and let their guard down more. This is also the time when your 4-legged friends begin adjusting to your routine. However, this is also the time when you may begin to see behavior issues show up. This is when you have to be a strong owner and help your animal learn right from wrong.	• Feels at home • Settled into routine • Builds confidence • Understands household rules • Develops trust • Forms secure attachment At 3 months, your pet's true personality will finally shine through. They should be completely comfortable in their new home, and they should completely trust you as an owner. They have adjusted to your routine and adapted it as their own. They're part of your family now!

Remember, this timeline varies by dog, patience is essential, consistent routine helps, prior experiences affect adjustment, and some dogs need more time. Your rescue dog needs time, patience, and understanding to successfully transition to their new home. **Find more resources at fluffydogrescue.net.**