



# The 3-3-3 Rule Explained

## Fostering a Street Dog: Understanding the 3-3-3 Rule

So you've just brought home one of our street dogs. Maybe they came off the roads of Central Texas, maybe they were dumped and had been surviving on their own for weeks. Whatever their story, one thing is true – they've seen things. And they are going to need some time.

That's where the 3-3-3 comes in. Three days. Three weeks. Three months. It's not a magic formula, but it's a honest roadmap for what to expect when you open your home to a dog who has never had one – or lost one they trusted.

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### The First 3 Days: They're Just Surviving

A street dog who just came in from the outside world is running on pure survival mode. Their nervous system has been in overdrive – watching for threats, scrounging for food, trusting no one. Walking into a house with air conditioning and a food bowl doesn't instantly flip that switch.

Don't be surprised if they hide under the bed, refuse to eat, or seem completely unreachable. Some will pace and pant. Some will shut down entirely. This is not a broken dog – this is a dog who learned that the world is unpredictable. Your job right now is simply to prove them wrong, quietly and without pressure.

Keep the house calm. Stick to a simple routine. Don't push for connection – just let them exhale.

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### The First 3 Weeks: The Wall Starts Coming Down

Around the two or three week mark, you'll start seeing cracks of personality peek through. A tail wag. A little curiosity. Maybe they finally eat without looking over their shoulder.

This is a great time to start introducing some gentle structure — simple cues, leash manners, house rules. Keep it positive, keep it consistent. Street dogs are smart; they've had to be. They'll pick things up fast once they trust that you mean it when you say they're safe.

Expect some testing too. That's actually a good sign — it means they're comfortable enough to push back a little. Hold your boundaries with kindness and don't waver.

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## **The First 3 Months: This Is Who They Really Are**

By month three, most of our dogs have fully landed. The dog you see now — goofy, sweet, maybe velcro-attached to you — that's who they were all along. They just needed time to believe the ground beneath them was solid.

Habits are formed, trust is built, and the transformation you've helped create is real. Every day you gave them a safe place to sleep, a consistent meal, and a patient hand — that matters more than you know.

Street dogs are resilient in ways that will humble you. They've survived things most domesticated dogs never face. What they need from you isn't perfection — it's patience and presence.

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Thank you for being part of Jack Jack's Pack and for giving these babies a soft place to land on their way home. 

— *The Jack Jack's Pack Team*