

HOW TO SET DOG OWNERS UP FOR SUCCESS

TIPS FOR A BETTER ENVIRONMENT FOR YOUR DOGS

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW WHEN YOU ADOPT A DOG FROM A SHELTER

Ask questions! Where did my dog come from? What was their situation prior to coming to the shelter? What sort of family did they have? Have they been tested with children and other pets? What is their energy level like? Do they have any health issues and have they been vet checked? Some of the questions will be impossible to answer, but it's good to ask as much as you can, especially for dogs who are not puppies.

These questions will help to determine if this is the right dog for your family, as well as your lifestyle. Be sure to research your rescue and ensure they are reputable and caring – not all shelters and rescues are ethical! These simple steps will help set you AND your new dog up for success in both your home and in public/social settings.

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW WHEN YOU ADOPT A DOG FROM A BREEDER

Similar to adopting a dog from a shelter, ask questions! You can ask about the temperament and genetics of the parents (ask to see them too!), if the parents and puppies are health checked, if they come with paperwork from a recognized kennel club, if the puppies are registered and microchipped... You can also ask about their tolerance of other dogs so far, if they have been exposed to children, or how they behave around other small animals such as cats.

Also, do some research on your breeder – while many breeders are extremely ethical and reputable, there are others who are NOT. These breeders, commonly known as “back yard breeders”, do not do reference checks, background checks, nothing. If your breeder only cares about being paid - steer clear!!

WHAT AN OWNER SHOULD KNOW WHEN YOU PICK UP A DOG WHO HAS BEEN DETAINED IN A SHELTER

It is extraordinarily important that owners understand that ALL DOGS who have been in a shelter require **DECOMPRESSION TIME** when released. Depending on how long a dog has been detained, the individual circumstance, and what shape they are in when released, all dogs will have different requirements for this decompression period.

No matter how awesome you think your dog is (and of course they are that awesome), shelter life is not easy on a pet, especially a pet who is pampered and spoiled in your home with your family. Unlike humans, we are unable to explain to dogs why they are suddenly not at home in their fluffy beds and find themselves instead in a cold cage surrounded by weird smells, scary sounds, and strange people. The fact is that no matter how amazing and caring the staff at the shelter are with your dog, it is not the same as the care they receive with you - a responsible and loving owner.

While every situation is different, it is important to listen to your dog and have the ability to read your dog's body language. They will tell you if they are uncomfortable or if they are good to go. Ask for some tips from your local shelter, a local rescue, a dog trainer, or another animal professional who can guide you on ways to ensure your dog transitions back to their normal life safely and quickly.

WHAT AN OWNER SHOULD KNOW ABOUT THE BREED OF THEIR DOG

Does your area have BSL? What do your local animal control bylaws say about dog ownership of certain types of dogs? Preparing for questions about your dog's breed will help to save you from guaranteed heartache, and will help to keep your dog safe. Always ensure your dog is registered, up to date at the vet, and that you have paperwork (CKC, AKC, ABKC, UKC), DNA results, and/or DMV confirmation to prove breed. This is especially important in Ontario for any dog in the Bully family of dogs. **Responsible ownership is ALWAYS the key to success!**