



FIRST DAYS

Your new dog is going to have an adjustment period. We select for ideal temperaments, and sound nerves, but your dog is leaving everything familiar and going to a new home, with new people, new animals, and most likely new rules. There will be some adjustments.

The length of the adjustment period varies from situation to situation and dog to dog, so we cannot say exactly how long it will be before your dog feels completely at home. Your individual dog, in addition to your care and control during this time period will dictate how long it takes for your dog to settle in. These tips will go a long way to a smoother and shorter adjustment period.

First, we have not given solid meals for 6 hours prior to pickup/shipping. Your dog has had Dyne and water. This helps prevent stomach issues. If your car trip will be a few hours or less, simply leave him in his crate in the car until you get home. He is used to his crate and car rides, and will likely sleep.

If you find you must stop for bathroom breaks, common sense is a must. Unless your dog is over 17 weeks of age, you must be very careful about parvo, distemper, and other infectious diseases. Your dog has had age appropriate vaccines, but the vaccine series may be unfinished.

You should place a puppy pad on the ground, sprinkle some wood shavings on the pad, then carry your dog to the pad, let him potty, then carry him back to the car. **DO NOT LET HIM WALK ON THE GROUND.** Parvo virus can live on the ground for years, and dogs can pick up parvo simply by walking on ground infected dogs have walked on.

If you have to stop for the night, simply bring your dog's crate into the hotel room and give him a very light meal and water.

When you get home, the first thing you must do is take him ON LEAD to his designated potty area. He has been fully litter and shaving trained, so paper pellets or wood shavings will entice him to use that particular area. If he does not potty, take him into the house and crate him and try again later.

We highly recommend that for the first few days, even for adult dogs, he stay in his crate. This should be in a busy area of the house, so he can begin to observe the family, but is in a safe spot.

One person should be designated as the primary caretaker of your dog. The rest of the family should ignore the dog for a few days. Place a bowl of treats on top of the crate, or near it. Whenever this designated caretaker enters the room, he or she should make a point of giving the dog a treat.

Every few hours, the caretaker should put your dog on lead and take him to his designated potty spot. If he goes to the bathroom, he gets some ON LEAD playtime or a walk. If he doesn't go to the bathroom, he goes back in the crate for a few minutes.

After he potties, he gets "groomed". Run your hands over every inch of his body. Pick up and inspect his feet, including nails and between toes. Touch his ears. Open his mouth, and look at and rub his teeth. If he starts to act restless and squirrely, firmly hold him still until he quits moving, and continue. This does a few things. First, it gets him used to being handled and groomed. Second, as pack members groom each other, this shows him you accept him in your "pack".

Remember, a puppy can hold his bladder for about 1 hour longer than his age in months. Therefore, a 3 month old puppy can go 4 hours between bathroom trips, a 6 month old puppy can go 7 hours, etc.

If you began covering his potty area with paper pellets or wood shavings, you should not have a problem getting him used to using that area. As he begins to head straight for that corner of your yard when you take him out, you can phase out the shaving/pellets.

For the first few days, the primary caretaker controls every aspect of the dog's life. He is either on lead or in the crate. This will teach him very quickly who is in charge, and helps to speed up the bond.

After a few days, you will notice that he gets excited when his primary caretaker enters the room. When he's being walked, he will press and hug into your leg. This is what you want. This shows that he is ready to bond.

When you start seeing this, the rest of the family needs to get into the action, taking turns feeding and watering him, and taking him to the potty area.

Now, it's time to start working on house manners. Lay his pad or a towel on the floor next to you and have him on lead, tethered or held. If you are watching TV, tether him to the

couch or coffee table. If you are on the computer, tether him to the chair or desk. If he lays down on his spot, behaving himself, he gets to stay out of the crate. But if he gets restless, starts pacing, or acting rowdy, he goes back into his crate until he's ready to settle down.

This not only teaches him to lay down quietly and behave in the house, but it keeps him out of trouble and danger. If he is laying at your feet, he's not chewing up bottles of cleaners, or eating the sewing box. Just remember that if you have to leave the room, even for a second, he goes back into his crate. It does not take long for a dog to chew through a lead and be loose.

Once he reaches the bonding stage, it is advisable to set up an x-pen attached to his crate to give him more freedom, but still contained safely. Just put his bed in the crate and the food and water bowls in the pen, along with some toys.

As your dog begins to understand your rules and fully understands "No" and "Leave It", he can start getting free time in the house safely in the same room as the family. However, it is critical to keep an eagle eye on him at all times, and correct misbehavior BEFORE it happens.

It is critical to decide on and enforce rules from day one. If your dog is not going to be allowed on the furniture in the future, don't get him used to sleeping on the couch as a puppy. Yes, it's cute seeing a puppy curled up in bed with you, but are you going to tolerate a full grown dog pushing you out of bed? If no, don't get him in the habit when you first bring him home. It is not fair to him to suddenly start punishing him for doing what he's always been allowed to do.

At our place, your dog was taught to be crated in the house, or kenneled outside. He is used to both, and will accept both. He was never allowed on the furniture, he was taught to sleep was on HIS bed or in his crate. He is used to not being allowed in the kitchen or dining rooms during mealtimes and cooking.

Also, on the subject of furniture, even if you do decide he will be allowed on furniture in the future, DO NOT ALLOW YOUR PUPPY TO JUMP UP AND DOWN BY HIMSELF. Yes, our dogs are more durable and sturdy than a Chihuahua or Yorkie, but a puppy can still get hurt falling off the couch. Do not leave your dog unattended on furniture or around stairs. It is very common for puppies to try to go down stairs or jump off the couch, fall and get seriously injured. Even if they figure out how to get up and down by themselves, jumping is not ideal for developing joints. Carry him up and down stairs for the first several months.