

TIPS FOR BRINGING YOUR NEW DOG HOME

First 3 Days: Decompressing

Dogs often need 48 to 72 hours just for their "stress hormones" to return to baseline. During this time, they may feel scared, overwhelmed, and unsure of their surroundings. Keep things calm and predictable.

First 3 Months: Feeling at Home

Your dog is now likely feeling more comfortable in their environment. They may feel safe enough to be themselves and have likely built a solid foundation of trust with you. This is the time when their full personality starts shining through.

First 3 Weeks: Settling In

By now, your dog is likely getting more comfortable. Their true personality, including any behavioral quirks, starts to emerge. Any initial anxiety has probably faded. Continue building your relationship through play, reward-based training and shared experiences.

Individual Differences

While the "3-3-3 Rule" is a great guide, each dog is an individual with a unique background. Some dogs may take much longer than three months to feel fully at home. Patience is the most important tool in your kit.

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Create a Safe Space

Choose a low-traffic, quiet area (like a quiet corner of the living room) away from the "hustle and bustle" of the house. Provide a crate with the door left open or dog bed, water bowl and some toys. Make sure everyone in the household knows that when the dog is in their safe space, they are "off-limits" for petting or interaction.

Doggy-Proofing

Focus on "doggy-proofing" your home: Use baby gates, crates and leashes to prevent mistakes, rather than scolding your dog for exploring their new world.

The Power of Routine

Predictability helps create a sense of safety. Establishing a consistent feeding and walking schedule can help lower anxiety and stress.

Choice-Based Interaction

Encourage family members to let the dog initiate physical contact rather than reaching into the dog's personal space. Utilize the 3-Second Rule: Pet the dog for three seconds, then stop and move your hand away. If the dog nudges you or moves closer, they want more. If they look away or walk off, they've had enough.