

Congratulations on making the decision to rehome a dog from:



Taking on a rescue dog is a big commitment and it is important to remember that dogs end up in rescue centres through no fault of their own. The chances are that the dog that you have chosen came to us a stray. Therefore, we probably know very little about it, except for the assessments that we have undertaken whilst it has been with us at the kennels. It is possible that your new dog could have been abused previously, abandoned on the street to fend for itself, or already have had several previous homes.

Your new dog's previous experiences, having been in kennels and now going to a new place with unfamiliar people mean that he/she is probably extremely stressed. At this stage, the dog will not look to you for guidance or understand that you have any right to control its behaviour. Nor will he/she know your boundaries regarding acceptable behaviour. A bond of trust between you can only develop with time.

Although you are planning to give your dog a new home for life, please remember that for a few weeks, your dog will be confused and have no idea what is happening. Your new dog deserves to have a happy and secure home for the rest of his/her life and following some simple advice will give you both the best opportunity of building a long and happy relationship together.

Your new dog needs time to get used to the new surroundings and routine but most importantly to you.

- Allow your new dog time and space to settle in. Initially, introduce him/her to part of the house, maybe the kitchen or wherever you intend to leave them overnight or whilst you are out.
- For a few days, avoid games, visitors and anything that appears to get your dog over excited.
- Do not 'over fuss' the new dog. Allow them to come to you in their own time. Remember that everyone is a stranger at this stage and your dog needs to learn who they can trust.
- Keep walks short and slow and stick to a familiar route for the first week. This helps your new dog to feel secure as things become familiar to him/her.

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- Do not have any expectations of your dog and do not expect them to behave and react in the same way as your previous dog did. Every dog has their own personality.
- Consider using an indoor kennel/cage in order to give your new dog a place that is comfy and secure (staff can advise you about the best ways of introducing one to your dog).
- If your dog behaves in a way that you consider unacceptable or appears fearful of something, do **NOT** shout, panic, become angry, give eye contact, physical contact or verbal reassurance. All of these things can reinforce the behaviour and make matters worse. Ignoring the undesired behaviour is the most effective way to teach your dog that you do not like it. Either turn your back on the dog or remove yourself briefly from the room.
- It will take some time for your new dog to understand that your house is its new home. Even though he/she may be housetrained, expect that accidents may occur in the early weeks. Take the dog into the garden at regular intervals. Praise the dog each time it goes to the toilet in the garden or whilst out on walks. Ignore any accidents or scent-marking. This will settle down in time and telling the dog off can make the problem worse.
- In the first few weeks, do not expect your new dog to be able to cope with obedience training or to remember everything that you have taught him/her. Just like humans, dogs do not learn or remember well when stressed. Training can come later once they have settled in. Remember that dogs do not speak English. Whilst they may be able to learn a few words it will largely be your tone of voice that they react to. Do not bombard them with lots of commands – they will not understand and this can increase their stress levels.
- Some dogs can become very insecure and worry when they cannot see you. It is important that you teach them to cope with being left alone. Do not allow your dog to always follow you from room to room and only leave the dog initially for short periods of time. If it is apparent that your dog is stressed by not being able to see or be with you, contact us as soon as possible so that we can give you advice on how to deal with this. If your dog cries, barks or whines when left, it is very important that you do not try to give reassurance or always return to your dog as this can make the behaviour worse.

Imagine a young child being taken from its home, parents and everything that is familiar to them. Now imagine them being moved from home to home, each with a new group of people. Every time they learn to trust someone they are moved yet again. This is very likely what has happened to your dog and it gives you some idea how stressed, confused and disorientated they may be. Be patient and if you have concerns about any particular behaviour, please contact Dun Roamin as soon as possible. Getting things right in the early days and seeking help could prevent the trauma of your dog having to be re-homed yet again.

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