



Welcome Home, Pup!

Brought to you by Dogs are Jerks. Because we know it's important to have a sense of humor when sharing your life with a dog. Follow us on Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/DogsAreJerksEJ>

You're excited to bring your new family member home! We're excited to help you get off to a great start.

There are countless things to think about when you bring your new family member home. We have created this guide to help ease the transition for you and your dog. Whether you've had a lifetime of dogs or this is your first dog and whether you're bringing home a puppy or an adult, having a solid plan will help everyone navigate the addition of your furry friend go smoothly and thoughtfully.

Before we dive into some specifics, we'd like to remind you that just like any new relationship, you and your dog are going to grow together. A relationship built on trust, kindness, and respect is your goal. Since our dogs don't have language and can't let us know when things are confusing or scary, it's going to be your job to be the observer. By compassionate observation, you will be able to adjust the pace of learning to suit the needs of your individual dog. Just like humans, dogs are individuals and need to be treated as such. Your new dog may be totally

different from your last dog, or your neighbor's dog, or what you expected having a dog would be like and that's ok. You have the awesome opportunity to create a bond and relationship with your new pup that is special and unique.

Crate Training

Crate Training is something that is recommended for ALL dogs of all ages. Even if you don't plan on crating your dog regularly, working with them to have positive associations with the crate will come in handy in more ways than you think. Here are some of the benefits:

- Helps with potty training
- Helps with sleep training
- Is a safe place for your puppy or dog when you can't supervise them
- Gives them a calm place to retreat to should they need it. It can be a place to chew a bone, take a nap, or just relax if the house is hectic
- A dog who is comfortable in a crate will have an easier time at a vet. Should the need arise for an overnight visit or they become injured and need to be confined, they will already see the crate as a positive place.
- Traveling with your dog becomes easier. You can crate your dog while in a vehicle to keep them safe and relaxed. Sleeping in an unfamiliar place can be stressful for some dogs and having the comfort of a familiar safe spot is important. It makes vacationing with your dog much easier for everyone
- Peace of mind for you. As you teach your dog that a crate is a place where great things happen, you also know they are safe while in there.

A few things to remember:

- Take off your dog's collar or harness each time they are crated. It can be a potential hazard for your pup if a collar or tag becomes hooked anywhere in the crate.
- Never use the crate as a place of punishment.
- Choose the right size. Your dog should be able to stand up, turn around freely and easily. If you are using the crate to assist with potty training, remember too much space can be a negative thing.

Getting started with crate training Some dogs are going to hop right in and love it and others are going to need some gentle convincing that great things happen in a crate. To introduce the crate, keep the door open. I often will use a bungee cord to ensure the door stays open, as to not surprise or frighten a more timid dog or puppy. Give your dog a chance to check out the crate with no pressure. A great way to build positive associations is tossing yummy snacks in there often. Any dog who learns that tasty things can be found inside the crate is more likely to go explore the area on their own.

Make it fun Regardless of the age of your dog, they love extra fun toys and treats. To ensure that the crate equals good things in your dog's mind, begin giving exciting toys and treats there. This can be a tasty antler, a filled kong, or anything your dog seems to naturally enjoy. Once your pup is comfortable exploring the crate, you can begin giving these items and

closing the door. Every dog is different so remember that some dogs may instantly be comfortable in there, and others might take a little while to get there. Either way, be sure to only open the crate door to let them out when they are not barking or crying. We don't want them to learn that being loud gets them out. That game never ends well for the humans.

Remember: Observe your dog and adjust what you're doing according to their comfort level. You and your pup are building a relationship built on trust and moving at the speed that they need will let them know you can be relied on.

Sleep

For all of you who are bringing home a puppy, it's a lot like having a new baby. While there aren't any bottles involved you should expect you will not be sleeping through the night for quite some time. And like a new baby, they have to use the bathroom A LOT. Puppies can hold it 1 hour for every month they are old. That means if you get an 8-week old puppy they can only hold it for 2 hours so you should expect to be up 4 times a night taking them outside to potty.

We recommend sleeping in the crate for a few reasons:

1. They will be less likely to have an accident since they can't wander off to pee somewhere and won't want to pee where they sleep.
2. They often feel more secure in a crate. People have compared it to a den or cave or just a place to retreat to. For some dogs, you can partially cover it with a blanket to help enhance the feeling of security.
3. It will reinforce the work you've been doing to help make the crate a safe, happy, relaxing place to be.

When (not if) your puppy gets up crying that they have to go to the bathroom, be sure to take them right outside for a quick, low key potty break. Be sure to put them right back to bed. Middle of the night potties are not the time for snuggles, pets, love, or play. If possible, keep the lights low or dim. We KNOW you want to do all these things (who doesn't want to snuggle and love their new pup) but to help keep a consistent schedule, night time should be for sleep. You don't want to create a nocturnal puppy because lack of sleep for dogs, or humans, just isn't any fun.

We also know that it's the cutest thing ever to have your pup sleep in your bed: RESIST THE URGE. Everyone will be so much happier if they have their own beds, especially in the beginning. So when potty training, or introducing a new dog let them become accustomed to having their own sleeping space. Every home is different and it's up to you to find the right sleeping space for your dog. Some families have one crate and keep it in a common area (oftentimes the living room). Some families may have a crate in the bedroom only for sleeping. If you have an adult dog who doesn't need to be crated, giving them a cozy place to sleep is

essential. A dog bed can be placed anywhere in the home that works for you and your dog. Find what works best for you and your pup.

Potty Training

There are two keys to successful potty training: Consistency and Patience.

Creating a routine with your new puppy is important, this is how they learn what's expected of them. Depending on the age of your puppy, will determine how long he or she can hold their bladder. Generally speaking, a pup can hold his or her bladder one hour for every month of their age. If your pup is 3 months old, then the expectation is they can hold their bladder for 3 hours.

Potty training is interactive, and your pup needs you to guide them. This means that you go outside with them *each and every time* to observe and praise them. This is true for adding a dog of any age into your home. What will differ is how long you have to do this. Puppies might take several months and an adult dog might only need some positive reinforcement a few times.

A common mistake people make is not going out with your dog when you begin potty training. You absolutely need to get out there, so you know what's going on. People are always saying that their dog went outside for a half-hour and then came into the house and had an accident. Being outside is a fun place and many dogs will get distracted when out in a yard, so it's up to you to observe and praise. Then when you come inside, you know that your pup is ready to have some free time in the house.

Crate training will help with potty training because it helps solidify that routine. Every single time the dog comes out of the crate: out you both go. Make that a habit and your pup will soon learn what's expected of him. If your dog didn't go potty when you were outside, it'll be your job to keep a very close eye on her when you go inside. Don't leave him or her unattended and be on the lookout for signs they might be getting ready to go. If they begin pacing or sniffing one spot repeatedly, that's your sign that it's time to get back outside.

Most dogs and puppies have pretty predictable times when they need to eliminate, so if you watch closely, you'll be able to observe their patterns. Some common times for dogs and puppies will need to go outside are: after waking, coming out of a crate, after mealtimes. If you can't seem to find a pattern of when your pup is needing to go, try to make a quick note of his successes and failures. After a day or two, you can usually pinpoint any adjustments you need to make.

One final note: potty training is a lifetime skill for a dog, so it's your job to make it stress-free and fun. Please remember, your dog is never doing anything to make you upset, so treating them with compassion during this time is so important. Smacking them, rubbing their noses in their mess or other negative measures only erodes the bond you are building with your dog and in some cases, causes a dog to regress or become fearful about the whole situation.

Training

This is SO important and one of the top things to plan for when getting a dog because it takes time and money. Every dog needs training to become a member of a home and society. Spending the time and effort to train your dog is a worthwhile investment. Your dog won't be the only one getting trained though, you will too! A good trainer will provide you with new skills and insight for interacting with your dog.

We recommend that everyone enroll in at least one basic class with their dog. You will learn the basics but what's most important is that you reserve 30-60 mins a week to bond with your dog in a structured setting. Not all classes and trainers are created equal but we only recommend training with humane methods. Here's a great article about how to choose a trainer or facility.

<https://www.whole-dog-journal.com/training/a-guide-to-choosing-the-best-dog-trainer-for-you-and-your-dog/>

While weekly training classes are great, you will also need to include short at-home sessions. Your dog at any age will learn best in short, five-minute intervals. Think of your weekly training class as a chance for you to learn how to teach your dog, and the short bursts at home for your dog to have the training reinforced.

Here are some [simple exercises](#) you can do with your dog at home. Remember: keep it short, keep it fun and make it so your dog looks forward to these sessions. Keeping things simple and fun will solidify the bond with your dog, teach them desired behaviors, and keep their minds engaged. That little bit of mental stimulation can help curb anxious and bored behaviors.

Things you need:

1. [Treat pouch](#), you can wear this thing around the house and reward them for doing good things
2. Small, soft, treats. Choose things that aren't crunchy or require tons of chewing. Easy food items can be cut into small training treats. Some of our favorites are string cheese, hot dogs, meatballs, food logs.
3. [Clicker](#) which is super popular for reward as well

Feeding

Options on how and what to feed your dog are endless. We understand that nutrition is a personal choice. We highly suggest that you talk to your veterinarian about the foods they recommend. Your vet can also guide you if your dog has allergies or sensitivities. There are tons of different options for dry food, raw food, and wet food. Each dog is an individual and each of them will have specific needs and requirements. Breed, activity, growth, and metabolism all

come into play with exactly how much you should feed your dog. We suggest partnering with your vet to ensure your dog is getting appropriate nutrition and serving sizes.

Your vet is the best resource on what to feed. We can help you with HOW to feed. Puppies often get fed 3x a day which often gets cut down to 1x to 2x a day when they reach adulthood. We don't recommend free feeding for a variety of reasons. If you have multiple dogs in a house, it can create tension. It also doesn't allow you to control and observe how much a dog is eating. Your dog should be given the food, given 5-10 mins to eat it and if it's not finished the bowl should be taken up until the next mealtime.

While we respect that there are many ways to feed a dog but there are some things that you should avoid at all costs:

- DO NOT, we repeat DO NOT stick your hand in your dog's bowl while they are eating or "show them who's boss" by taking the food away while they are eating. Seriously. It does absolutely nothing besides create stress. At best, you show your dog that you are a bully. At worst, it creates a dog who begins to resource guard. For some reason, this old, outdated training advice won't go away but we're here to tell you, it's not cool. Just imagine: You're at a lovely restaurant and your date begins to touch your food or takes your plate just because he can. You would think he or she is nuts and depending on how hungry you were, you might react violently to this assault. It's the same for your dog
- In multiple dog households, feed your dogs in separate areas. No one wants to eat with someone else hovering or licking their chomps in close proximity. Allow each dog to have a peaceful mealtime on their own, and when the dogs are done eating be sure to pick up the bowls and put them away till it's time for the next meal.

Some people have used hand feeding to help create a bond with their pup. For dogs who don't have any quirks with food, it can be a nice way to bond by hand-feeding a meal or two per week. Measure out your pup's meal and instead of putting it in a bowl and placing it down, you take a handful and let him or her eat it out of your hand. You can change things up and ask for a sit if your dog has that skill mastered. If your dog is overly anxious, possessive or you are still building trust it might not be the best option. Here's an article to give you some insight into whether hand feeding is right for you and your dog.

<https://positively.com/contributors/the-hand-that-feeds-there-are-better-options-than-hand-feeding/>

Exercise

The amount of exercise a dog needs each day is influenced by several factors. The age of the dog, the breed/s, physical abilities all come into play, but all dogs need daily physical activity. Puppies are like babies and they sleep a lot but they still need the chance to move and explore their world in a variety of ways.

How your dog likes to exercise might vary throughout his or her lifetime. As a puppy, a short leash walk and playing in the back yard might be enough, adolescents often need more vigorous activities, and seniors still need to move too. A senior dog may not want to hike miles and miles, but getting off of your property for an adventure is good for the mind and body.

A good rule of thumb is a ratio of five minutes exercise per month of age (up to twice a day) until the puppy is fully grown, i.e. 15 minutes (up to twice a day) when three months old, 20 minutes when four months old, etc. Once they are fully grown, they can go out for much longer. If your puppy starts to slow down after longer than this you know why.

The possibilities of when, where, and how to exercise are endless. As you get to know your dog, you will find what makes them tick. Some dogs love adventures where they can sniff new smells, others might love to swim or retrieve. Some social butterflies might love a walk downtown to meet new friends, and others may revel in a walk in the woods where there's not another soul around. Whatever the activity, be sure that you are including the dog's needs and wants, as well as your own. You might have pictured having a dog that walked to the coffee shop with you, enjoyed sitting and meeting strangers, and getting lots of pets. If your dog ends up enjoying that, wonderful. It's also important to adjust your activities should your dog not be the social butterfly you expected. Note how happy and comfortable your dog is in whatever activity you offer and be open to new things if you both aren't having a good time.

Leash Walking

Leash walking sounds so simple, slap on a leash and go for a stroll. Images of an attentive dog walking at a human's side, leash slack, everyone happy are what come to mind for most people, but more often than not, this is pretty far from reality for both the person and the dog.

Before we get into the specifics of leash walking, we should discuss why it's an important skill to master. The world is a fun place to explore and the concept isn't exclusive to humans. You may have a backyard that your dog can run around in, but imagine if that is the only place you ever went outside. It would get pretty boring, pretty fast. We humans got a glimpse into how it feels to be stuck at home during Spring 2020. Getting off of your property allows for your companion to sniff, explore, and experience a variety of experiences.

Humans and dogs experience the world very differently and it's important to note these differences. Humans experience the world mostly through sight and a pleasant walk includes a steady pace and lots of observation. Dogs use their sense of smell and their noses to experience the world around them. So a walk should encompass some training so your dog knows not to lunge and pull but in return, you need to give them ample opportunity to literally stop and sniff the roses. Allow them to make the choice of where, how long, and when to explore.

So that means grab some treats and make your dog walk beside you, stop, sit, back up, lay down, and other fun exercises. But, there should be time during the walk where the dog just walks and can stop and sniff and not be regimented, yet still understand that they are attached by a leash, and can't run willy nilly.

With so many options for what to use to walk your dog, it can be overwhelming. We recommend [this harness](#). Harnesses are very foolproof as you cannot harm your dog with one the way you can with some collars that aren't properly used. Keep in mind with back closure harnesses, your dog will want to pull against them. Think about what sled dogs wear to pull a sled...a back harness. A front lead harness is the simplest, most user-friendly way to get out and go with your pup.

Play

We know you know that you have to play with your dog and it's important to let your dog play with other dogs. So what are some appropriate play activities you can do with your dog?

Human on Dog Play: As a human, playing chase and tug of war are good things but make sure you have a toy with you. Dogs do not have opposable thumbs so they use their mouths to hold things, having a toy will help keep your hands free from puppy nips. Just make sure you win sometimes in tug of war and do some of the chasing. We will talk more about specific games you can play in the training section because training CAN be considered play and not boring. Mental stimulation is just as important as physical stimulation

Dog on Dog Play: The most important thing when your puppy is playing with other dogs is that they take turns. Some puppies will bark, growl, etc. some of that is OK, let's be honest, some humans are more vocal than others. If one puppy is 'taking charge' it's important to stop play for a bit and let them settle. We don't recommend having toys or food involved with a trainer to help guide the management of that.

Mouthing/Nipping/Biting

Puppies are a lot like human babies. As they are learning about their environments, they explore it using all of their senses. Mouthing and biting is a common way to explore the world, and it's totally normal. Of course, just like with humans, we learn that there are acceptable norms. I've seen lots of toddlers putting everything they find in their mouth, but few adults explore the world like that. Puppy biting, chewing, and mouthing is something that almost all of you will experience but there are lots of great ways to work through it.

Your dog or puppy is likely using his mouth as a way to engage with you. Since we want them to learn alternatives try these steps.

1. Stop the fun. If a dog uses his or her mouth to engage with you, stop playing, stop responding and if necessary, walk away. Be sure to resume the fun after a short break. If they use their teeth again, stop the fun. We want to repeat this so that they learn that using their mouth on a person, means playtime ends immediately.
2. Be consistent. This might be a redundant theme here, but puppy nipping can't be cute and fun some of the time and unacceptable other times. A dog using its mouth needs to have the same result every time. And remember, it doesn't mean get mad and yell. It just means that action on the dog's part results in an action from the human.
3. Give your dog an alternative. Dogs are going to want to play using their mouths, so it's your job to give them safe options. Get to know your dog and find out what toys make them happiest. It could be a tennis ball, a stick, a rope toy, or something soft. Once you know what they like and you can see they want to play, be sure to engage in play with items that are safe and appropriate for them.

Dogs need to chew for a variety of reasons. Puppies who are teething get some relief, and dogs use it to destress, so having a variety of good chewing opportunities allows them to meet those needs. We must remember that it's our responsibility to provide our dogs with what they need to satisfy their needs, so what your old dog might have loved, your new dog might not so be sure to provide lots of different textures and materials.

If you're ever unsure or uneasy about the way your dog is using his or her mouth to communicate, don't hesitate to call a qualified positive based trainer right away. Good management is best learned before it escalates.

Socializing

Socializing your dog seems like it should be a no brainer. Bring your dog everywhere, let it meet everyone, and everything and you'll have a socialized dog. Right? Wrong!!

Socializing to dogs has a different meaning in pets than in humans. In the dog world, socialization refers to making our dog feel comfortable living in a human-centric world. It means exposing them to and helping them be comfortable with a variety of sights, sounds, smells, and experiences. When it comes to you and your dog, socializing should be thoughtful. No matter the age of the dog you are adding to your home, it's important to use those observation skills that you have been developing. We want to make sure that new experiences are low stress and rewarding for your dogs. It's better to proceed slowly and ensure success rather than carelessly toss your dog into a situation that may frighten him or her.

One of the first things we think of when socializing dogs is dog-dog socializing. The best way to do this is through controlled interactions. Don't just bring your new pup to a dog park with a bunch of unknown dogs and let them figure it out. Create opportunities for short, positive experiences that have a high chance of success. Some examples would be to plan a walk with

another known, friendly dog where the dogs can enjoy some interaction with each other in a controlled way. Or a one-on-one playdate with another known friendly dog. Enroll in a training class where your dog will be able to see, sniff, and observe lots of other dogs in a safe setting. If your dog is happy and enjoying these interactions, you can begin to expand his or her social circle, and if your dog seems anxious about it, that's a sign to you to proceed at a slower pace.

A great way to socialize your dog is to get out in the world. A walk or hike in a new area allows your dog to explore and observe. This doesn't necessarily mean interacting with new people or animals, it can just mean allowing them to be exposed to different things, and allowing them to make the choice of whether to interact or not.

Remember: socializing isn't just exposing a dog to something, it's helping them make positive associations with it. If your pup is showing signs of being uncomfortable, always allow them to opt-out. Then get creative and think of ways to reintroduce things in a positive manner. Small successes lead to the greatest outcomes.

Top 10 Must-Haves

So what do you need? We have put together a list of stuff to get you started with easy Amazon shopping and be sure to be logged in to Amazon Smile to donate back to your rescue when shopping.

1. [Leash](#)
2. [Harness](#)
3. [Martingale Collar](#)
4. [ID Tags](#)
5. [Crate](#)
6. [Bed](#)
7. [Food](#)
8. [Chews](#)
9. [Food Bowl](#)
10. [Treats](#)

Some other things to consider: [car travel](#), [gates](#), outdoor fencing, [toothbrush](#), [brush](#), [shampoo](#), [nail clippers](#), [toys](#) and the list goes on...

REMINDER: make sure you get started on [flea/tick](#) and heartworm prevention (RX only) ASAP, speak to your vet

Final Thoughts

Puppies go through many stages, just like kids. Your tiny 10 lb puppy will not be that forever. They will change, develop, and grow up to they are about 3-4 years old which is when they reach adulthood. And just like raising a kid, it's going to take a ton of patience. You can do this. Seek help when you need and reach out, don't let a bad situation get worse.

We want you to live in harmony.

Ready to Really Rock This New Dog Thing?

If you are ready to dive deeper and work with us in a small group environment, we offer a 6 week virtual course with weekly posts on various topics and weekly, recorded zoom calls where we will present various topics, bring in experts and do Q and A. Sign up [HERE](#) with a discounted price of \$39 for a limited time PLUS drop your rescue name in the notes and we will donate 10% of proceeds back to the rescue. If you have any questions, email Dogsarejerksej@gmail.com