



Congratulations on your adoption of one of our beautiful Maremma Sheepdogs. The following is a guide to help your dog settle in to his/her new home, and general information on the breed to ensure a successful rehoming.

Maremma are not a typical dog. They are an ancient breed bred to be independent and to think for themselves, a necessity to be successful Guardians. They view us as equals and developing mutual respect is paramount. If they respect you, they will work with you and for you.

You need to be the "Shepherd", the one that guides/leads your dog in appropriate behaviour. The "Shepherd" is kind and expresses appreciation and affection and is consistent in guiding appropriate behaviour and has clear boundaries. Firm, but never harsh. A dog that does not look to you for guidance is a dangerous dog and countless Maremma have lost their lives because they are confused in their role. A Maremma that trusts and respects their owner is secure and content in your partnership. This is crucial to ensure your dog accepts visitors, new animals and willingly abides your direction

Many of our dogs have experienced stress or trauma prior to coming in to our care and each dog has his/her own requirements which would have already been discussed. We have worked on building confidence and trust and rehabilitated inappropriate behaviour in a nurturing environment. Your Maremma has been exposed to and assessed with chickens, goats, sheep/lambs, horses, cows, multiple dogs of different breeds and sex, people/strangers and occasionally children. We have carefully matched this dog to your home environment.

It is important that you understand it takes time for your dog to adjust to their new environment. The first few days/weeks some dogs may be overwhelmed, insecure, not wanting to eat and may shut down. Spend time bonding with your dog and establishing a routine. Walk the property boundary with your dog on lead two to three times a day. It helps with bonding and knowing property boundaries reduces the dog wandering on to neighbouring properties.

Have a safe place for your dog, where he/she can feel secure that is escape proof in the first weeks, especially when left alone. This can be a secure fenced area with a shelter, a room in the house or a dog run. Introduce your dog to all animals and poultry on lead to prevent any unwanted behaviour (chasing, mouthing). Spend time with your dog sitting quietly with stock /chickens and other pets in the first few weeks especially. Praise your dog when calm and relaxed. Intense staring, barking or lunging is not acceptable and more time needs to be spent supervising on lead. If you are concerned about any negative behaviour, or just need advice, please contact us straight away for guidance and mentoring.