

Bringing Your New Dog Home

Key Points & Vital Advice

- Count on a dog marking or having accidents the first few days, even if he was housetrained. Have pet-specific cleaning products on hand. Also be prepared for other transitional behavioral problems - read this guide cover to cover now, before problems occur.
- Along with the rewards of having a dog come responsibilities - daily care and exercise, medical visits, obedience training and many years of commitment. Make sure you're ready.
- Owner knowledge and training is the key to a successful adoption. It's all up to you. No one training approach is right for every dog. This guide reflects a variety of approaches based on positive reinforcement - the essence of effective training and behavior modification.
- Keep an ID tag attached to a snug buckle collar on your dog at all times.
- During the transition period, a dog needs time to adjust to the rules and schedule of your household. And he needs your leadership! A dog is a pack animal looking for guidance, and it is up to you to teach him good, acceptable behaviors. If the human does not take charge, the dog will try to.
- A dog cannot do damage unless you let that happen. Watch your new dog during the transition period. When you can't supervise, keep her in a kitchen, crate or other secure area with chew toys.
- Keep dogs on-leash when outdoors in unfenced areas. Otherwise, you'll have no control if your dog obeys instinct and chases a squirrel into the street...tussles with another dog...or runs after a child.
- Supervise even when the dog's in a fenced yard. If there's a way to escape, most dogs will find it.

Remember: Many adopted dogs have not had the luck to be socialized yet. Their baggage may include unacceptable behavior. Re-educate your dog with the help of books and qualified professionals.

- Don't kiss your dog or place your face at the dog's eye level before you've begun obedience training and established yourself and other humans in the home as higher up in the hierarchy. Dogs often perceive a face placed at their eye-level as a threat, and then bite.
- Beware of letting your dog on your bed or furniture if you haven't established all human family members as the leaders ("alpha"). Dominance-related problems often arise when a dog is on a higher physical level. Dogs don't seek equality; they seek and need leadership.
- Don't issue a command unless you are in a position to enforce it. Telling a dog to do something, then not guiding him to obey if he chooses not to, teaches him to ignore you.
- Beware of sending mixed signals that bad behavior is cute or entertaining.

• **Teach dogs good house manners from the start.**

For the first few days you have a dog, keep him or her in the same room with you - so that if the dog needs to potty, you can rush him outdoors...and so that if he engages in unapproved behavior, you can instantly correct the dog and substitute a more positive behavior. For example, removing the shoe from his mouth, then substituting a toy and praising.

- Do not keep dogs in dark, damp basements, garages, or non-family areas; this thwarts your efforts to raise a socialized, well-behaved, house-trained animal.

- Avoid using overly desirable treats such as rawhides or pig hooves. Dogs will often fight with each other over them, and even attack people they perceive might desire their treats.
- Play nice: Don't play tug-o-war, rough-house, or engage in other combative play. These practices encourage aggression and teach your dog to challenge you.
- Avoid separation anxiety-related problems by practicing the tips in this guide as well as consulting other sources at the end of this guide.
- Start day one by teaching your dog appropriate behavior through consistent, positive reinforcement.
- Realize there is always a solution to any problem - read and consult trainers.

• **Changing a dog's name:** A dog can learn a new name quickly if you use it consistently. Start by linking it with the previous name.

Shopping List

Bring when picking up the dog:

Buckle collar: leather or non-stretch material. Make sure it is "2-fingers" snug and can't come off.

ID tag: attached securely to collar.

Training (slip) collar, harness or head collar: Measure the neck and add 3 " for the proper length - just long enough to fit over the head. Learn how to put it on right. Good alternatives include neck/body harnesses and head halters, which are fitted.



Leash: strong clasp and thick leather or double-ply woven for your comfort.

Note: use another person or a crate/carrier to transport a puppy to contain any "accidents."

Supplies to have ready at home:

Crate: an invaluable tool, especially at the beginning. Avoid crating a dog for more than 5 hours. Place safe toys inside. Folding crates are also ideal for traveling. If the dog chews on crate bars, get the Vari-kennel or airline crate. Make sure the crate is large enough for dog when full grown; you can block off part for a pup. You can mail-order crates from Dog's Outfitter 1-800-367-3647, Foster & Smith 1-800-826-7206 and R.C. Steele 1-800-872-3773.

Baby gates: a good confinement alternative. Make sure dog can't get head/paws caught in gate, can't chew through or knock down the gate or jump the gate.

Bedding: easy to clean, thick enough for comfort.

Puppy pen: helpful when you want a pup confined but not crated.

Water and food bowls: use stainless steel or ceramic with no painting in the inside. Plastic can absorb bacteria and smell.

Flea comb: check for fleas, and comb to aid the skin. Good "shedding" control, too.

Brush: brush daily; good for skin and can be better than bathing.

Grooming supplies: get the right tools for your dog if you're going to bathe, clip claws and cut fur yourself. Different coats require different brushes.

Pet-specific cleaners: such as Simple Solution or Nature's Miracle, available from pet supply stores. They remove pet stains and odors.

20-foot leash: good for training the "come" command.

Feeding, nutrition & toys:

Food: gradually change over to the food of your choice. Use a good grade of dog food. Premium dog food can lead to lower vet bills. Dry food is good for teeth and digestion. **No table scraps:** feeding table scraps encourages begging. It's your job to keep food out of reach.

Biscuits: avoid those with food coloring. Use to reward good behavior.

Low-fat plain yogurt, grated organic carrots and parsley: good daily diet supplements.

Organic apple cider vinegar: a little added to water bowl daily can help digestion and deter fleas.

Rescue Remedy (available in health food stores): calms when traveling, nervous or injured.

Toys: use safe chew toys, such as non-rawhide-based chew-strips. Soft toys are good for some dogs, but others will pull them apart, so remove if this happens.

No rawhide bones: they can be rough on digestion, cause choking - plus rawhides, pigs hooves and other too-highly covered treats can incite dogs to fight over them.

Beware of hooves and hard-packed chews/bones that can crack teeth.

No chicken bones: they splinter and can cause internal injuries.

Getting a dog license:

Contact animal control in your area to license your dog. You must have a rabies certificate. In some jurisdictions, proof of spay/neuter reduces the license fee.

Dogs don't come pre-programmed. In your dog's previous life, he may have been encouraged to jump up on people, steal food, or play too rough. Use clear, simple, consistent commands and positive reinforcement. Reward good behavior with treats, hugs and a happy voice. Use corrections sparingly.

The First Day

Dogs thrive on routine, so orient your new companion to your schedule. As long as you are consistent and provide leadership, the dog will adjust.

By the way, your dog will explore everything, so **puppy-proof** your house (place shoes inside closets, put electrical cords out of reach, move prized objects to higher ground).

The earlier you train and make lifestyle rules, the easier your dog will be to handle and the fewer problems you will have. And when you do encounter problems, you will be much better able to resolve them.

- Eric Lundquist, trainer/behaviorist

Getting acclimated/housetraining helpers:

When you bring your new dog home, leash-walk so that he can take in the smells of the turf and relieve himself. Pick a special place and encourage him to **potty** there. Be patient; it may take 10 or 15 minutes. Always praise warmly when he relieves himself in an approved spot.

Next, enter the house and show him around. Keep him on **leash**. If he lifts his leg, give him a quick leash correction (yank on the leash and release) and tell him "No" to disrupt the action, then take him outside immediately. Offer him a treat for going in the right place.

Remember, your dog will be excited and anxious about his new home. Don't be surprised at panting and pacing, housetraining accidents, excessive drinking or chewing, or gastric upset. In addition, any dog,

especially a male who was not neutered early, is likely to mark new territory - especially if other pets have lived there. Tell every member of your family to resist the temptation to overwhelm a new dog. Give him some time and space to get settled.

Next, take him to his **crate**. Encourage him to sniff around; reward him with small treats for entering and staying in the crate. Keep soft bedding and safe toys in the crate; rotate the toys for variety.

Crate facts. Housetraining problems are the top reason people give up dogs. Crates aid in housetraining because of dogs' den instincts - they avoid messing where they sleep. Crating is cruel only if the dog is physically uncomfortable or if left too often or too long. Limit crating to 4-5 hours maximum a day.
Important: Teach your dog that good things come in the crate. Place appealing toys in the crate; feed in the crate. Stay in the room awhile and praise when the dog rests calmly in the crate. Resist letting the dog out if she cries. However, if she has to relieve herself, honor that. Over the transition period, gradually open the crate door and increase the number of rooms to which she has access.

After the house tour, take him outside to potty again. Be sure to take him to the same spot.

Important: If your dog is not housebroken, **begin housetraining** now (see [Housetraining](#) section). Stay tuned in and responsive to your dog's signals of when he needs to go. The more vigilant you are now, the more reliably housetrained he'll be later.

However, having a few accidents the first week does not mean a dog is not housebroken. Excitement can lead to accidents. In addition, males tend to mark in the house the day or two. Once he begins to settle in, and you begin educating him in acceptable behavior, he will relax and behave.

Using a leash indoors during the transition: For the first couple of weeks, leave a leash attached to the dog's buckle collar while indoors with you, so you can stop him immediately if he starts doing something you don't want - such as lifting his leg, chewing on a chair leg, jumping on the couch, or signaling aggression towards anyone in the household.

Warning: Don't leave a leash attached when you're not there; the leash could get caught on something or chewed up. Never leave a choke collar on a dog when indoors or out in the yard, or he could be strangled if caught on a drawer pull or fence post.

Timing is everything. When a correction is timed perfectly with the offending behavior, it will redirect your dog's focus for a fleeting moment. If during this incredibly brief window of opportunity you can insert or re-insert your command, you can often change your dog's focus. If the correction or the re-command is not done with close-to-perfect timing and technique, it has little effect, other than to desensitize the dog to further corrections.

- Eric Lundquist, trainer/behaviorist

Introducing Your New Dog to Other Dogs

Before bringing a new dog home, be sure all animals are healthy, have current vaccinations and test negative for parasites. Realize that even if the dogs met successfully on neutral turf, things are different when you bring a new dog home. Make sure there's another person at the homecoming so the dogs can meet on-leash outside.

I use the Gentle Leader **head collars**; my clients call them power steering for dogs. They make a dog feel more calm and safe. The dog slows down and learns quicker. [Particularly for strong dogs] I have an additional collar on for back-up; I attach the leash to both the head halter and the training collar.
- *Cinimon Clark, positive-method trainer/behavior counselor*

Prior to the introduction, leash-walk the new dog outside. Then bring out the other dog(s) on leash, preferably with choke/slip collars to provide full control. Make sure you are relaxed, so you don't telegraph anxiety through the leash. Avoid keeping the collar pulled tight, since "restraint frustration" elevates tension and the risk of aggression. The dogs will be more relaxed knowing they have some room to maneuver. Watch carefully so you can make a leash correction if necessary.

Make the meeting fun with a walk and some treats (timed to reward good, relaxed behavior). Introduce gradually, making sure the animals are calm. Pet the resident dog, assuring that everything's OK. If it's not OK, suspend introductions and resume the walk. Be careful to reward only good behavior.

Keep the dogs within sight of each other. (For more than two dogs, introduce each to the newcomer one at a time.) If the animals are receptive to each other, praise each one and reward them with treats and petting to show that good things happen when they are together. If there is a negative reaction, move back to the distance at which neither reacted. Watch for warning signs such as fur raised on the back, staring or stiffening up. If one dog reacts aggressively, don't punish the aggressor; instead, take him in a neutral or less valued area to settle down and ignore him. If both dogs act aggressively, remove each to different, neutral areas. Try re-introducing later in the day.

It is essential to use a **positive vocal tone** at any meeting with another animal or person. People have a tendency to be silent and not express happiness or enthusiasm - yet that is exactly what the dogs need to hear. They need to know that their leaders are confident.
- *Melissa Berryman, trainer/counselor*

When correcting unacceptable behavior, timing is critical. Do not wait for the lunge; at the first hint of aggression, such as a stare, correct with a firm "No" and a quick (but not punishing) leash correction, and redirect the dog's attention to you. You must **keep control** at all times and show the dogs YOU are the alpha. Don't be alarmed if they don't warm up to each other immediately. Either dog may engage in aggressive posturing, barking, marking, housetraining accidents, and possessiveness over toys and people. (If this persists beyond a week or two, consult a specialist.)

When the dogs come inside, a fight could break out, so leave the **leashes on** for quick control if needed. Keep all toys and treats out of sight until everyone is comfortable. An added advantage to having two people present when introducing dogs is that one can focus on praising each one. However, if you're alone, you can tie one dog's leash to a doorknob or sofa leg at a length that allows the animals to sniff each other at a safe range.

The resident dog might be insecure about his place in the pack. Reassure him, but do not let him misbehave or mistreat the newcomer. Resist the temptation to spoil either dog or to allow bad habits you'll have to break later. Trainers often advise to greet, pet, feed and play with the senior dog first.

The more socialized both dogs are, the less time it will take for them to become friendly. Try not to be nervous, or your dogs may sense the tension and even defend you from the other dog. To avoid injuries, keep new pets separate from others when you aren't able to supervise. (Some owners find it's best to continue to keep dogs separated at mealtime, and to keep toys off the floor, to prevent fights.) You might

crate the newcomer in a family area. Avoid keeping him in a highly coveted area, such as near the other pets' food bowls.

Acclimation can take days or weeks. Be sure to give each pet 10 or 15 minutes of quality time alone with you each day - play, brush, massage, practice rewardable skills. Once the animals react well to each other, remove the leashes. Keep watch, and keep a spray bottle or whistle on hand to interrupt the pets if they begin to stare or otherwise misbehave. Continue rewarding good behavior with praise and kibble. Always let your dogs know what you expect of them, and they'll be responsive instead of confused.

Socialize your dog. Start when she is a young puppy, so she feels at ease with other people and animals. Expose your dog to a variety of situations gradually and under controlled circumstances. Be cautious; don't put your dog in a position where she feels threatened. Teach her to not be nervous in these situations.

Socialization is critical - and is more than exposing the dog to new experiences. The owner must act as leader in all situations, as the dog will be gauging the owner's reactions. Remain confident and relaxed, which also allows you to be sensitive to cues from the dog. If a dog does not sense his person can handle a situation, he may try to take charge or react in the only way he knows how - which might be barking, growling, lunging or trying to bite in an attempt to control the environment.

Breaking up a fight: Pour water over the dogs. Keep a bucket of water handy. Turning on a hose works best.

Introducing Your New Dog to Cats

You'll need a highly controlled environment to introduce your new dog to a cat. It helps to have two people so that one person can hold the new dog while the other praises each animal.

Keep the dog on leash. A chase may ensue only if the cat runs, but dogs with a stronger prey drive pose a greater threat. Firmly correct your dog at the first hint of undesired behavior, and don't unleash her around your cat until they are interacting calmly.

While you shouldn't keep the pets entirely apart, make sure you are supervising when they are in the same room in case trouble breaks out. Warning signs in cats include a direct stare, elevated hindquarters, and fur standing on end. If the pets seem to be accepting each other, praise each animal and reward them with treats and petting.

Litterbox accidents are likely, since cats will be disturbed about the newcomer. Your cat may hide or seek higher ground for days or weeks until she is ready to accept the dog. Make sure she has places to retreat that the dog cannot access. Also be sure to block the dog's access to the cat's food and litterbox. You can attach a bell to the new dog's collar to keep track of his whereabouts.

Be careful not to praise undesired behaviors. For example, petting and soothing an agitated or growling animal will reinforce the wrong response. Reward only calm, desirable or at least neutral behavior.

A dog with a high prey drive can be taught to coexist with cats; this requires concentrated practice involving the assistance of another person. First, you must train your dog to understand and obey the "Leave it" or "No" command. Put a training collar and leash on the dog and place him in a sit/stay. The

other person stands at a distance, holding the cat. Do a firm leash correction at the start of any suspicious behavior and firmly state "Leave it" (or "No"). Praise and treat your dog for remaining calm and in the sit position. When the dog behaves, the other person can move closer; praise or correct the dog as needed. Continue for 15 minutes and try to end the training session on a positive note.

Training a dog to leave small animals alone requires patience, as it can take weeks. For the animals' safety, don't leave them alone together, and separate them at mealtime.

Leadership Tips:

- * Dogs are not little humans; they are predatory pack animals who follow a leader.
 - * Leader dogs need to know that their owners are better leaders, and flight dogs need to know that they will be protected when their environment scares them.
 - * To be a true leader, give constant feedback and keep control at all times.
 - * If a newly adopted dog growls or snaps, realize this is normal. The owners need to assert leadership to convey to the dog that they won't tolerate this behavior. If you back down, or become frightened, your dog gains power over you.
 - * Seek out an obedience program that focuses on teaching you how to provide leadership, relationship building and problem-solving.
- Melissa Berryman, trainer/counselor

Introducing Your New Dog to People

A new dog feels bewildered and stressed by all of the changes, so surrounding her with too many people might cause her to cower or nip. So delay introductions to friends and neighbors until the dog has had a chance to settle in. (However, you can start obedience classes with a humane trainer right away.)

Make introductions one at a time, on leash for control. Exercise and calm the dog before meetings, and have treats handy to shape and reward good behavior. You may want to have the dog on leash so that you can correct immediately as needed. Make sure the visitor is relaxed, and that you convey confidence.

The dog may want to sniff the visitor first, before any petting. Beware: if the guest is tense, the dog may sense this as a direct challenge. So set the tone with your actions and attitude - wait until you're happy and relaxed. Read cues from your dog: how comfortable does she appear? Many dogs love new people, while others feel overwhelmed. (Consult the books listed at the end of this guide to learn how to understand and educate your dog effectively.)

Expect your new dog to engage in behaviors you'll need to correct, such as growling or jumping on people. Allowing a dog to jump on people is a common mistake, but to avoid exasperation down the line, teach your dog "off" from the start. In addition, don't let anyone engage your dog in aggressive play such as wrestling, tug of war, or play biting.

Dogs & Children

Never leave children alone with your dog.

Teach your own and visiting children:

- The proper way to approach a dog.
- Not to rush up to, scream at, or pester a dog.

- Never harass or mistreat a dog. Don't jump on or rough-house with dogs.
- A dog can't whine or cry, so he tells you he's afraid by growling and nipping.

The most common reason so many dogs are returned to shelters is because "something happened" while the adopter/adult was not in the room with the dogs and the children. I cannot stress enough: please use caution. **Dogs are not baby-sitters.**

- Jim Earll, trainer, shelter employee and adoptive father of *Playdough, Snort & Hobo*

Split up tasks such as feeding, playing and walking with other people in your household so that your dog does not associate positive experiences with only one person.

Mealtime

Food:

A bargain brand dog food may not be the healthiest choice, so it can cost you more down the line. Look for a food that uses higher quality ingredients and contains fewer byproducts and preservatives that can trigger food allergies. Ask about your adopted dog's previous feeding schedule and food. When you change dog foods, change over gradually, as dogs thrive on a consistent diet.

Feeding dry food helps keep teeth cleaner. For extra nutrients, supplement the daily diet with some fresh **vegetables** such as green beans and baby carrots and low-fat plain yogurt - dogs love them! But don't feed a dog table scraps, which typically leads to begging, weight problems and indigestion. If a vet prescribes a special diet, follow that advice.

Feeding plain rice can help a dog get through a digestive problem. If your dog is on antibiotics, add plain yogurt to his food to help replace the good bacteria in his system.

There's no free lunch. Don't let a dog grab food. Before feeding, giving treats or petting, give a command (such as "sit") for your dog to practice.

Feeding schedule & tips:

Make sure your dog has free access to clean, fresh water.

Filtered water can offer health benefits to dogs as well as people. Sometimes dogs can be sensitive to something in your local tap water. In many cases, allergic symptoms will abate when a switch is made to filtered or bottled water.

Free feeding can lead to housetraining accidents and spoiled food, so it may be best to feed at scheduled times. Young puppies are usually fed three times a day; older puppies and adult dogs twice a day. If the dog's a picky eater, remove the food bowl after 15 minutes and don't try again until the next feeding time. Feed other animals away from the new dog to prevent fights.

Your new dog may not be interested in eating the first day, but just try again at the next feeding time.



For health reasons, use stainless steel or porcelain bowls without painted surfaces. Plastic bowls are a breeding ground for germs. Wash food and water bowls between feedings.

Frozen green beans are a great **healthy treat** - low calorie, too! Being frozen adds to the chewing satisfaction.

- Donna Leader, adoptive mother of Jazzy, a lab

Positive reinforcement: It is much better to teach your pet that he is a "good boy" or "good girl" for going potty outside, rather than teach him he is "bad" for going inside.

- Kathy Graninger, canine behavior specialist

Housetraining

Wouldn't it be nice if dogs were born housetrained? Or if babies were born potty-trained? Until such dreams come true, here are some real-life tips:

- **Watch** for signs of discomfort, restlessness or circling, then whisk him outside to an established, close-by potty place. Realize that when a dog relieves himself in the wrong place, it's not out of spite. It's because he had to go. A problem with not catching the dog in time to whisk him outdoors: the acting of relieving himself in that spot is immediately self-reinforcing due to the rush of relief he feels.
- **Praise when she goes potty.** Give her a treat or kibble to reinforce the behavior. If 15 or so minutes pass without pottying, trainer Melissa Berryman suggests you pick up a small dog, or bring a larger dog inside for about five minutes and then bring her back out.
- **Confine when you can't watch...**in a crate or a part of the kitchen. Don't leave food out. Do leave water, unless she'll be confined less than 2 hours. Make this her domain until house-trained.
- **Realize that puppies and dogs can't "hold it" for long periods.** Even adult dogs may need a mid- day dog walker if you work long hours. And puppies need to urinate and defecate frequently, so they'll need to go out at least every 4 hours to get housetrained.
- **Crate-train.** The quickest way to housetrain most dogs, crate training is based on the premise they don't like to mess in their sleeping area. Use a crate large enough for your dog to lie down and turn around. For oversized crates, use a divider to confine the dog to one part of the crate until housebroken.
- **Feed on a schedule.** Feed your dog the same times each day, then take him out a certain amount of time after feeding (this depends on age; often, young puppies must be taken within 15 minutes). Young puppies are usually fed three times a day; older puppies and adult dogs twice a day. Don't switch from food to food; keep the diet consistent.
- **Keep a potty routine.** Take your dog outside first thing in the morning, when you get home from work, within an hour after the dog eats, just before bedtime, and following vigorous play. Young puppies may need to be taken outside every two hours. They will get housebroken much faster and reliably if someone can take them out midday during the workday.
- **Don't end the walk outside when your dog potties.** Or she'll get the idea that outdoor fun ends when she relieves herself. This is why some dogs hold it until they are brought back inside. After your dog "goes," praise, give a treat and keep walking a bit longer.
- **Eliminate opportunities for accidents.** During the first two weeks, keep your dog close to you so that if she starts to potty indoors, you can correct immediately. Otherwise, she may relieve herself in other rooms - and if you don't catch her in the act, there's no use in scolding because the dog won't remember or make the connection. Close off unused rooms, and use a leash to keep her beside you, either holding the leash or attaching it to a furniture leg (for safety's

sake, remove the leash when you can't watch her). Until housebroken, crate her when you're not home to watch.

- **Interrupt vs. scold.** And use your voice, not physical force. Typically, a dog goes because she just has to. If you catch her in the act, try to interrupt the action with a loud, startling AH-AH-AH!! or NO! and an immediate trip to the potty spot. Use a loud, deep, firm vowel sound; muttering or repeating commands won't convey the message. You want to alert, not punish, your dog. When she resumes relieving herself outside, praise lavishly.
- **Punishment teaches only fear.** Never shove a dog's nose in his mess or smack a dog, which teaches him only to fear hands. Remember: dogs forget what they do after they do it. A dog is unable to associate past behavior with a punishment he is now receiving. He can associate the pain and anger with the person administering the punishment.
- **Clean up.** Try not to let her see you clean up a mess, or she may think it's an interactive game. Use an enzyme-based pet odor neutralizer like Nature's Miracle or Simple Solution to kill the urine scent. Using ammonia is counter-productive, since urine contains ammonia. Cleaning up extends to the outside, too. Many dogs dislike going in a poop-riddled yard. Note: paper training postpones learning the desired behavior.
- **Neuter and spay.** Intact dogs have a much greater tendency to mark. Alter by age 6 months.

If problems persist, ask yourself:

- Are you missing signals that your dog has to go out?
- Do you keep your dog on a schedule she can count on?
- Do you use an odor neutralizer on the spots, so your dog won't be tempted to mark there again?
- Could your dog have a medical condition? See your vet right away. A urinalysis and fecal exam will help determine if the dog has an infection, parasites, or a pH imbalance requiring a special food.
- Does your dog urinate when excited or frightened? This is submissive urination. Punishing the dog will only aggravate the problem. When arriving home, greet her quietly and take her right out to potty.

Arrange greetings for dogs with **submissive urination** to be outdoors.
- *Melissa Berryman, trainer/counselor*

- Is the dog eliminating in her crate? Pet store pups and other dogs who have spent much of their youth in a pen or cage become used to sitting in their mess. Take the dog outside 20 minutes after eating or drinking. Give her a chance to potty before crating.
- If you keep the buckle collar on when crating, make sure it's snug so to reduce the risk of it getting caught on crate wires, and be sure to use a crate pan or pad. Or remove the collar when crating, but be sure to put it back on properly as soon as you release the dog from the crate. Never leave chain, slip or pinch collars on a dog when not training or walking the dog as they can easily get caught on things, leading to injury. Don't attach tags to training collars either; attach tags only to the flat buckle collar.

New baby? Visiting baby? Include the dog in family activities to avoid behavioral problems. While one person's holding baby, the other should give the dog some attention. Place the dog in a sit/stay, and dispense small treats to reward good behavior towards the child. This way, the dog associates being near the child with good things.
- *Eric Lundquist, trainer/behaviorist*

Bedtime

Your dog should sleep in a room with the **pack** - you and your family. The dog should have her own bed to sleep on. For some dogs, sleeping on the human's bed can aggravate dominant behaviors, so exercise caution. If your dog begins to growl or show other signs of aggression to any one in the household, work on obedience training immediately to reestablish who is in charge.

The first few nights, you may want to confine your new dog in a crate in the bedroom, but start teaching your dog house manners so that you can provide increased freedom. It is not unusual for your new dog to bark or whine if confined to a crate. Dogs want to be with their pack members. (This is why dogs kept outside often are nuisance barkers or destructive. They are stressed being kept apart.)

Place the crate or bed where she can see you. If she barks at bedtime, correct her with a firm "**No Bark!**" Praise softly when he quiets down.

Some people find it useful to accompany a verbal correction with a spray from a bottle filled with water. Your goal, however, is **voice control**. Using an external object devalues the verbal command because the dog associates stopping a behavior with the object.

- Melissa Berryman, trainer/counselor

Safe chew toys (especially if teething) will give your dog something to do until she falls asleep.

Eventually you'll want to wean your dog from her crate. Pick a night after you've tired her out and keep the crate door open. You can transition to just a dog bed from there.

A night-time housetraining hint: put plastic bags in front of the bedroom side of the door. If she gets up, the crackling sound will alert you to your dog's need to go out

Allergy sufferers typically should keep pets off their beds and furniture. If a doctor advises against pets in the bedroom, place the dog's bed in the bedroom hallway or family room. However, most allergy sufferers can happily live with their dogs with the aid of medications, vacuuming and simple preparation such as AllerpetD (rubbed on the dog). Also: wash hands after handling pets.

Keeping a Routine

Dogs are creatures of habit. A **consistent** routine for feeding, exercising, and potty time will help your dog adjust.

Take your dog outside as soon as you wake up. If you feed him in the morning, leave him time to relieve himself after breakfast before you go to work.

After you return from work, take him out immediately to potty and exercise. If he has exercised heavily, wait an hour before his evening feeding. He'll need another bathroom break anywhere from 30 minutes to several hours later depending on his age and habits. Go out once more right before you go to bed.

Withhold evening snacks.

Leaving Your Dog Alone & Avoiding Separation Anxiety

Initially, your new dog may experience **separation anxiety** when you leave. Using a **crate can reduce** accidents and other problems rooted in insecurity by providing a safe and welcome haven. Most dogs like cozy places, which is why you often see dogs resting under tables. Teach your dog from the start that "all good things happen in the crate." Place nice bedding in the crate, along with dog toys that you can rotate for variety. Feed your dog in the crate. Give him praise and treats for venturing into the crate, and for resting there calmly.

You can also confine your dog in the kitchen or hallway using **baby gates**. Jumping dogs may require you to piggyback two gates atop each other.

Anxiety outlet: Try a Kong™ (a rubber chew toy that lasts a long time, even with dedicated chewers). Smear the inside with peanut butter and your dog will spend hours trying to lick it out. Add dry kibble for more fun.

- *Stacey Patmore, rescue volunteer and adoptive mother of Emma, an English setter*

When you get ready to leave, quietly say "good dog!" and provide a small treat. Don't say good-bye; just leave. When you return, quietly praise the dog for being good and take her out immediately.

Make your schedule as consistent as possible. Remember: it is not fair to get upset if a dog has an accident after being left alone a long time. One popular solution: hire a mid-day dog walker.

When you first bring your dog home, should you spend the whole day with her? No - this is one of the biggest mistakes dog adopters make. Instead: have her bed, safe chew toys and water ready in the confined area in which she'll stay when you're gone - whether it's a crate or in a gated-off kitchen area. Take her to that area, tell her to lie "down," give her a chew toy and a treat and praise, using her name.

Next, step away. If she remains quiet, good; don't talk to her, because that will distract her from this desired behavior. Before she begins to grow restless, take her back outside again to play or walk.

Return her to the crate, then go into another room for longer periods. Next, leave the house and come back in right away. Gradually make those trips longer and longer; vary the duration you're out. Your dog will be less anxious as she learns that when you leave, you eventually come back.

Give her a treat while she's in the crate, and talk to her while she is in the crate, so she'll come to accept the crate. By being reliable, you'll gain her trust - and teach her that you decide what to do.

A tired dog is a happy dog. Before you leave your dog for extended periods, exercise her vigorously. Then, for 20 minutes before leaving the house, go about your business calmly - then just leave. Don't make a fuss saying good-bye.

This doesn't guarantee she'll stay quiet for very long periods. In fact, it's counter-productive to crate more than 5 to 6 hours after the transition period. But used properly, the crate is an excellent tool for you and comfort zone for your dog.

Obedience Training & Owner Education

How important is obedience training and owner education? Essential! In fact, training is the biggest factor in whether an adoption succeeds or fails.

When we talk about training, we don't mean just having a trainer teach sit-stay-heel. We mean: YOU as the owner learning about dog behavior and training, and then YOU teaching and guiding your dog with patience and consistency so that he learns how to behave in a world of humans.

Dogs are pack animals who need leadership and rules to survive. Training will make your dog a trustworthy, **socialized** family member and forge a bond with your dog. Group classes teach you how to communicate with your dog despite distractions, and your dog will benefit from this socialization opportunity. The more socialized your dog, the more places you can go together. All family members should participate in training and agree on the rules, so they can teach the dog with consistency.

Think positive: Get recommendations for a class taught by a professional and based on **positive reinforcement**. Talk with the trainer and observe a class first to ensure the trainer uses humane techniques. The facility should be clean inside and outside.

Reward and repeat: If a dog does something that results in reward, he will do it most likely do it again. If you work with your dog each day and reward desired behavior, he will learn what is expected of him. If a dog doesn't learn, it means the owner didn't take enough time to teach and guide him. That is why so many dogs given up as "impossible" turn out to be model canine citizens when lucky enough to be adopted by someone else.

Be patient, firm and consistent: Reward good behavior. Small edible treats work well; always accompany them with verbal praise and positive body language. This is reward-based training.

Put down that newspaper! Punishment teaches a dog to avoid the lesson and distrust the teacher. For example, if you hit a dog who just urinated indoors, he'll learn not to potty when you're looking. Instead, reward good behavior, set up opportunities for the dog to learn and display good behavior - and disrupt or ignore bad behavior.

Timing is essential: Correct immediately when an unacceptable behavior occurs, not afterwards, then **praise** enthusiastically when your canine modifies her behavior.

By correct, we mean a quick yank of the leash, immediately letting it go slack. Some people find spraying water, shaking a can of pennies or tossing a small sack of rattling items (such as beans) effective in disrupting a behavior. However, these aversive techniques should be used to interrupt the dog's action, not as punishment - and they work best when you successfully conceal the fact you are causing the noise. It's better if the dog thinks his own action caused the surprise noise, spray or the landing of the rattle-sack. Never toss the sack at your dog, just in the vicinity of his misbehavior. And it's meaningless to throw it after the misbehavior occurs. Again, timing is key.

Ignoring can be the best medicine: Many modern-method trainers advise to ignore misbehavior such as jumping or grabbing at a sleeve. Instead, turn away - then praise and reward as soon as your dog calms down. Take that opportunity to instruct the dog to engage in a positive action such as "sit." Dogs thrive on attention; often dropping behaviors that don't pay off - while looking for ways to gain attention.

This is a big reason why young dogs run off with shoes. (The other reasons being that they like things that carry their people's smells.) He knows that you'll come looking for the shoe, and give him attention. Most dogs, similar to children, prefer negative attention to no attention at all. So try to remove the opportunity by putting away shoes and your other personal items.

Anticipate and avoid opportunities for misbehavior. For example, don't let the dog dash out the door.

Take the time to teach him to sit-stay away from the door when people are coming and going. Before you have taught him to be trustworthy, keep him in another room or crate.

Give a verbal command only once - if the dog doesn't respond immediately, firmly put her in the position of the command (i.e. "sit"). Repeating commands ("sit, sit, come on, sit, sit, SIT...") means the dog has not learned "sit" means sit.

And don't issue a command unless you are in a position to **enforce** it. For example, don't say "come" unless you have a long-line attached to guide him to you if your dog is not yet reliably complying. If you don't enforce a command, you are teaching the dog that listening is optional.

Another common pitfall is **combining commands**. "Sit," "down" and "come" are distinct and important commands. "Sit-down" and "come on sit" aren't. Be clear.

Once you have your dog reliably responding to a command, start practicing the command in situations with distractions, recommends trainer Eric Lundquist. When you and your dog have accomplished that level of difficulty, it's time to generalize the response to other locations and people. For example, your dog may be great at sit-stays in your home. Now take him outside with several neighbors present.

Always praise a dog for coming to you. Never correct, scold or punish a dog when he comes to you, even if the response is delayed or it was preceded by something naughty.

Learn everything you can - it's worth every penny and every minute because your whole family will benefit. Each dog is different, so it may take more than one approach to solve a problem.

Remember: obedience class is more for you than the dog. It teaches *you* to train your dog. It teaches you how to be alpha, how to gain your dog's respect and obedience, and how to help your dog to live in the human world.

All family members who are old enough to interact with the dog should participate in training. Obedience commands need to be practiced and incorporated into your daily life. Certain commands, like "down-stay," can be invaluable in the house and a life-saver when out in public.

Practicing obedience also gives dogs a terrific outlet for their physical and mental energy. A well-trained dog can go more places with you. And a dog who's secure in his place in the family pack is happy to let his human be the leader.

You can teach a young dog new tricks. Start teaching your puppy simple commands like sit and stay. Keep your training periods short and fun, using lots of praise and treats. Work on one command at a time and end the session when the pup has successfully completed a command. Puppy kindergarten classes for dogs under six months of age are highly recommended for early socialization with strangers and other dogs.

The first six months are critical in shaping the relationship between puppy and family. It will take time, knowledge and persistence to repair a relationship-gone-wrong. While it's easy to blame the puppy or the breed, the truth is that almost any dog can be adjust to almost any family if the owners spend make the daily effort during the first six months.

Who's Leading Who? Becoming the Leader

Your dog nips when you try to take a toy from him...ignores your request to exit the couch...or yanks ahead on walks. If you feel like your dog is challenging authority, then he probably thinks he is the "alpha" of the home. He needs to be taught a new, well-defined pecking order - and a new, lower place in the family hierarchy - for everyone's welfare. He needs YOU to become his leader. Otherwise, he'll rebel, growl and possibly bite when faced with a challenge.

Dogs aren't looking for a democracy - they're looking for leaders. Dogs want to know their place in the family pack and what their people expected of them, otherwise they're stressed. Most often, an "aggression" problem is really a "stress and confusion" problem. If your dog tries to dominate you or someone else in your household, it's probably because he sees role confusion and responds by taking charge.

"Alpha" is an attitude. It is not achieved by force or punishment. Rather, it is earned through confident, authoritative, consistent behavior on the part of the owner, who we prefer to call the leader. Dogs can sense who's in charge immediately; they are continuously reading your body language and are aware each time their people don't enforce commands. Notice how most dogs watch a good obedience instructor - and how they seem to wait to be given direction. They express respect and interest, not fear.

Then notice how a good obedience instructor behaves. He or she will walk with confidence...stand up straight...use a firm tone of voice. And that voice expresses commands as a directive, not a question. ("Come...? Come on, come...?") The dog realizes this person makes the decisions.

Are you rewarding bad behavior? Anticipate and remove opportunities for undesirable behavior. Don't let your dog dash out the door, for the accompanying feelings of joy and freedom are self-rewarding. Don't leave food on the counter, because if the dog grabs a tasty sandwich, counter-surfing has just been reinforced.

For dogs, it's natural to try to control their world with their jaws. Natural, but unacceptable. We need to regain control by using our minds.

How to reverse roles and become leader of the pack:

Step one: no more freebies. From now on, your dog must behave in order to earn the good things in life - petting, treats, meals, walks around the block. These are rewards you can use as you reinforce the new rules of behavior.

Use petting, feeding and playing as rewards. Before setting down the food bowl, instruct your dog to "sit." Say it only once. He receives his food - and enthusiastic praise ("Good boy!") only when he sits calmly. Pogo-ing from a seated position does not count. No "sit," no reward. Put the bowl out of his reach and walk away. Try again later. In addition, if your mealtimes coincide with your dog's, prepare his food first, but place it out of reach. Then eat your meal first before setting down his bowl. The leader in a dog pack eats first.

Subordinate dogs lick and bow to dominant dogs as a gesture of respect. So when you're working to modify the behavior of a dominant, unruly dog, reserve petting to use as positive reinforcement. To receive attention, he must obey a command such as "sit." Praise and pet as soon as he complies. If he prods you for more attention, ignore him. The idea is to convey to him that you decide when to begin and stop petting. The same should apply to playing, feeding and going for walks.

Lead the way, literally and figuratively. Starting today, don't let the dog bolt ahead of you out the door or drag you on walks. Keep your dog on leash, instruct him to sit, cross the threshold first and don't let him out until he complies. If he tends to push through the dog as you open it, slam it shut each time his

nose approaches the opening. After 5 or 6 repetitions, he'll start getting the idea, but you cannot lapse and let him barrel out in front of you or he will resume the bolting behavior. On walks, strive to keep him at a heel.

Stay on a higher level than your dominant dog. During the retraining period, don't sit down to pet or play on the floor with your dog. Pet and praise from a level above the dog's head. In addition, at least until the dog learns his place in the pack, keep him off your bed and other furniture. He should stay at floor-level. On a related note, when you and your dog eye each other, as a leader you should hold the stare longer until he averts his eyes.

Stop the jumping. For dogs are challenging their people, it is important to discourage jumping up, as it is a dominating behavior. Ignore the dog, or command "Off" or "No." When greeting, give attention and petting to the dog only when he sits. If you later want to teach your dog to jump up (or get on the couch with you), you can, but the behavior should be on your terms.

No more playing favorites. If the dog ignores or intimidates another member of the household, let that person be the one to feed and dispense treats to the dog for now. It's essential that everyone in your family practices the same techniques while retraining the dog. Like a child, if a dog finds someone he can dominate, he'll do it.

Control the games. Tell family and friends not to taunt, wrestle or play tug-of-war - these games encourage dogs to dominate physically and to use their teeth. The outcome of games determines who's dominant in a pack. Instead, play hide and seek with a prized toy or fetch. As leader, you must be the one who decides when to start and end the game. Stop playing before the dog loses interest.

Use a crate. The crate serves several important functions. It gives the dog a secure den to call his own - a place to retreat when he wants to relax. Keep the crate door open when you're home so that he can enter if he'd like. The crate also helps you establish a new routine during retraining. Work on training him to go into the crate willingly, on command. Don't take "no" for an answer. To make the crate a welcoming place, start by giving him treats for going in the crate and feeding him in this area. Before training sessions, keep him in the crate an hour so that when you let him out, it will be easier to focus all of his attention on you. This practice also conveys that you, the leader, decides when he goes in and exits the crate. If your dog barks in the crate, ignore him. Do not release him until he's quiet and somewhat relaxed.

Diligently work at retraining so you can reach a point when your dog looks to you as the leader who decides what to do and when. And when you reach that point, don't slack off. You and the other human members of your household should always exude leadership and confidence. In most cases, if a dog knows he can depend on you, he will respect you and his new position on the family totem pole.

<p>Peeing and pooping indoors? Aggressive behavior? Hyperactivity? These can be symptoms of common health problems. For example, a dog with from worms may potty indoors. And a dog suffering from impacted anal glands or a leg injury might be in pain - and bite when someone tries to touch him. See a veterinarian to rule out a medical basis for behavioral problems.</p>

Common Behavior & Behavioral Problems

"Undesirable behavior" is in the eye of the beholder. Many "bad habits" (chewing, mouthing, digging, jumping, chasing, barking) are **natural, normal** behaviors for a dog. But you can control and replace them with desirable behavior by taking the time to work with your dog. Give your dog opportunities to do something you can reward.

It may take a few weeks before you can train and trust your dog with free run of the house. Until then, when you cannot supervise him, confine him in a safe place such as a **crate or baby-gated kitchen**. Leave him toys to play with. Remove trash cans or secure trash can lids from the area.

Activity needs. Most often, there is nothing wrong with reportedly hyperactive dogs. Dogs need **attention and exercise** - and when people don't give them enough, the dog has to do something with that excess energy. By the way, dogs don't do things out of spite, which is a human concept. They do things that, right or wrong, seem like ways to cope.

It helps to determine the source of unwanted behavior. It often stems from the frustration of being alone, since dogs are social animals. If you leave your dog for long hours on workdays, consider doggie daycare or a mid-day dog walker. In some cases, misbehavior results from stress between the human members of the home, or another environmental change such as the arrival of a new household member. Lastly, a change in diet may be needed.

A puppy or dog has **no memory** of recent activities. So unless you catch him in the act of chewing or doing something unacceptable, scolding won't help.

Chewing. Chewing is how young dogs explore their environments and mature dogs relieve stress. Move chewable objects out of reach. Take up throw rugs. Shield or hide power cords. Spray Bitter Apple on furniture legs and wood trim. Make sure your dog always has access to his own chew toys. But limit the number of toys you give your dog, or he'll think nearly everything is fair game. Make a conscious effort to reward your dog for playing with the right toys. In addition, exercise your dog, and teach him obedience commands to redirect his energy.

When you catch him chewing something off-limits, direct him to "leave it," "drop it" or "out." This requires that you first teach your dog this command using positive reinforcement. When the dog drops the item, praise lavishly and give him an acceptable substitute to chew.

Teaching your dog to release items from his mouth. Put on a training collar and leash before a play session. Give him a favorite toy. Then, with the leash in your left hand (keep the training collar slack), command "drop it" - and immediately take the item from his mouth. Praise him with "good dog!" or "good drop!"

If your dog locks eyes or bares teeth, quickly yank the training collar once, then release. If he drops the item, praise him enthusiastically. If he displays aggression, get some of the good training books recommended later in this guide and enlist the help of a professional. Do not smack your dog; he will interpret this as a threat and his instinct will be to bite.

Barking. First, realize that some breeds were bred to bark. Next, figure out the key triggers of your dog's barking. Perhaps it's the mail carrier, children getting off the school bus, the neighbor coming out to mow his lawn, or daily joggers. As with many dog training issues, aim to reduce the opportunities as well as the incentives to misbehave.

If trigger events occur outside, bring him indoors before the triggers appear. He'll be less likely to bark when shielded from the opportunity. When he barks and the targets bypass or leave your property, this reinforces the barking behavior - and your dog figures he did his job well.

If you can't avoid the trigger events, be prepared to re-focus his attention on you. You can do this by using small treats and praise. Or before he focuses on the target for his barking, give a sharp, immediate leash correction. Re-direct his attention to you. Try to catch and stop him before he emits his first bark.

Give the correction and command "no!" or "quiet!" When he attends to you, immediately praise him verbally and use tidbits to reinforce the praise. Keep this up and he will learn it is more pleasant not to bark.

The key is to **break the barking cycle**. To the dog, this cycle is: "Detect trigger person/event ... barkbarkbark...feel good and useful...the trigger leaves...my barking works great...I'll do that again!"

I use "no" as the **disengage word** for every behavior that is undesirable so the dog develops a clear association.

- *Melissa Berryman, trainer/counselor*

Jumping. Jumping and mounting are often behaviors dogs choose to seek a higher rank in the pack; sometimes they just jump out of excitement. Keep people from exciting your dog to the point of jumping up, barking or nipping. Often, jumping can be discouraged by simply ignoring the dog until he settles down. Just turn and walk away. You also can carry tidbits, and provide a treat and attention only when the dog sits calmly on command.

You can correct your dog's bad behaviors by providing **leadership**, clarifying his subordinate role in the pack - and by training using humane methods. And remember: breaking your dog of bad habits is much harder than training him the right way the first time.

Out in the yard. Never leave a dog outside unattended, or overnight. Not only does this practice endanger your dog and subject you to legal liability, it too often leads to a nervous, troubled dog. Many dogs given up for "behavioral problems" had been kept outdoors or in basements. Also, dogs left outside dig holes or find a way under, over or through the fence. Even if your dog is not an escape artist, it helps to be there to correct him when he starts the self-rewarding act of digging.

Dogs want to be with their pack, and get lonely, bored and in trouble when alone. When you're not home, leave the dog in an area where the family spends a lot of time. You can start by confining him in a crate or with babygates until you've taught him good house manners.

Most dogs are time- vs. space-intensive. They'd rather have an owner to play with than a yard to play in. Running around a yard provides physical stimulation, but dogs also need the mental stimulation of active companionship with their people.

Furniture-hogging. Decide on the furniture and other house rules, then all family members must abide by the decisions. Consistency is key to training. To teach your dog to stay off the furniture, snap a long leash to his collar when you are home (and leave it on only when you are in the same room). Use a quick leash correction as soon as he tries to hop up. He'll get the message quickly. Many trainers advise that dogs not be allowed on furniture because the elevated position can give a dog the sense that he is the alpha and can lead to aggressive displays. Instead, give dogs their own comfy beds and crates.

To keep dogs off furniture when you're not home, place or tape balloons on the furniture - dogs don't like popping sounds. You can also use large-size bubble wrap.

New dogs can't get into trouble if they are on leash in the house. It is more humane and easier to stop bad habits before they start, then to change them after they learn something naughty. Maggie was on leash indoors when with me during [the period of] her obedience training. At the computer, I put the handle of the leash around one ankle. In the kitchen, the leash handle went on a cupboard knob.

It sounds cumbersome but you get used to it. Now she follows me from room to room in the house on her own volition. Just make sure that when you leave your dog alone, even for a minute, you remove the leash for safety reasons.

- *Anna Marchy, trainer-in-training and adoptive mother of Maggie the pit bull*

Bonding and insecurities. At first, your dog may be shy or needy. If he continues to cling to just one family member after the transition period, help him work through this problem. Using treats and vocal praise, gradually acclimate him to being near other family members. Have the other people do the feeding, walking and petting, so he associates them with positive, safe experiences.

Give plenty of vocal support and vocal encouragement! Don't be silent around a "shy" dog. Associate a lot of positives to things that may be new to him.

- *Melissa Berryman, trainer/counselor*

Set up situations so that your dog can win if she acts appropriately. Since dogs only use what works for them, you need to show her that to get what she wants [such as scaring off an approaching dog], what normally worked for her in the past [growling, lunging] just won't work anymore. This is why I let dogs freak out in class. It's all part of learning. The dog will freak out for about 15 minutes, then realize that nothing is happening - that everyone is ignoring her! Then she switches to a different behavior to see if the new one will work.

A dog may go through an entire bag of tricks in hopes of a reward. I just wait for the appropriate behavior (this is "shaping behavior.") If the dog accidentally looks at you, there's your opportunity to give a treat. I want the dog to know she's on the right track - and to learn the pattern so well that when she sees another dog, she immediately looks at me for a treat.

- *Cinimon Clark, positive-method trainer/behavior counselor*

Nipping and biting. When young dogs gnaw and nip, people often excuse this as "puppy behavior." But it's **unacceptable** behavior that will continue, and grow worse, if not corrected. Like a child, a dog will test the limits and to see who's boss. The root of a dog's biting may be in lack of early socialization, fear, dominance, confusion over his role in the pack, a health problem requiring a trip to the vet or a dietary imbalance. By reading books and consulting a professional, you can alter this behavior.

As the leader, you must set limits. Don't tell a dog not to do something, then send mixed signals that his bad behavior is cute. Consistently reward him when he obeys; correct him when he doesn't.

- *Melissa Berryman, trainer/counselor*

If your dog tries to nip during play, command "no" and immediately stop playing. If the leash is on, you can give a correction if he doesn't comply. Turn his eyes to meet yours to emphasize the point. You must feel and convey a leadership role. As soon as he calms down, say "good dog." Use your dog's name when giving praise; don't use it when in the act of correcting. Giving your puppy or dog something to chew on instead of your hand can also work.

We had a major problem with **mouthing** after bringing Crop home from the shelter. I ended up with bruises on my arms and legs. Physical intervention (shaking a can of pennies, spraying bitter apple on my arms and legs) didn't work; he just became more excited like it was a game. A trainer solved the problem in one night.

When Crop came over and mouthed me, the trainer had me jump up in alarm, yell "ow" and run into

another room and slam the door. Crop sat by the door. After 5 minutes Crop left the door, and the trainer had me rejoin her and my husband in the living room. We continued a conversation, ignoring Crop. He then came over and more softly mouthed me, as if to test the situation. I repeated the performance. He waited at the door, then went into his crate. I returned to the living room. Crop then came over and just put his mouth on me. I repeated the performance - and he never mouthed me indoors again.

When he tried it the next day in the back yard, I yelled "ow" and ran inside, set the timer for 3 minutes and then went back out. He never mouthed me again. I wanted to relay this story because it fundamentally changed my relationship with Crop.

- Cheryl Bailey, adoptive mother of Crop, a pit bull mix

Four keys to raising a happy dog:

1. Train the dog well so that he understands what a command word means, what behaviors are rewarded, and what behaviors result in being corrected.
2. Gain the dog's respect by being consistent in your behavior and commands. A dog looks to us for leadership because he respects us, not because he fears us, or only because we give him treats.
3. Accustom the dog to a consistent way of living. Avoid indulging in an excessive amount of spoiling behaviors. Too many privileges will give the dog the impression that he is in charge.
4. Use caution when using crates for time-outs. A crate should not be used in a way that the dog may perceive as punishment. Don't create a negative association. So don't put the dog in a crate while scolding him; calm down first. Make being in the crate a positive experience.

- Eric Lundquist, trainer/behaviorist

Health Care

When to go to the veterinarian:

Begin a relationship with a vet now, before you need one in a panic. Bring your medical records. While your rescue dog should be current on shots, altered, and heartworm-tested, you still need to buy heartworm preventative, and you may want your vet to thoroughly examine your new dog. See your vet when a problem arises or if your dog continues to have housetraining accidents.

Medical checklist:

- Keep up on all shots.
- Give heartworm preventative year-round in this area. Heartworm disease is deadly.
- Regularly check between toes for debris.
- Check and clean ears once a week.
- Red eyes can mean conjunctivitis or allergies.
- If a dog pays excessive attention to his anal area, he may have parasites. See your vet.
- Ask your vet for flea prevention recommendations. Some brands contain tick control too.
- Get a dog tooth brush and toothpaste and brush at least 4 times a week.

Heartworm disease & prevention:

Heartworms are deadly parasites transmitted by mosquitoes. The larvae lodge, grow and reproduce in the heart, eventually causing lung, liver and kidney failure and death. By the time symptoms such as lethargy and shortness of breath emerge, the dog has probably suffered organ damage. This disease has become much more common in recent years and can be contracted year-round. Treatment is very hard on the dog.

Heartworm disease is easily prevented with monthly pills available from your vet. Keep dogs on preventative year-round. The dog must have a blood test to make sure he is not already infected.

Cleaning your dog's ears:

If dirt, wax and excess moisture are not routinely removed, ear problems can result. Here's how to clean your dog's ears at least once a week to keep them healthy:

- Make a solution of 1/2 white vinegar and 1/2 lukewarm water.
- Pour the solution into the ear.
- Gently massage the base of the ear to distribute the solution.
- Put a cotton ball over your fingertip and wipe the outer ear clean.
- Let your dog shake out the excess solution.
- Clean the ear again with a clean, dry cotton ball. Repeat as needed.

When to visit the vet: Objects stuck in the ear...redness or swelling...excessive tenderness, scratching, head-shaking... debris, discharge or foul odor.

Home Cure: After a bout of diarrhea, make some rice, adding extra water. Stop cooking before all of the water gets absorbed into the rice. Skim the starchy water off the top, and feed that liquid to your dog.

Flea/tick control products:

Products include topical liquids applied every 30-90 days and monthly oral tablets. Some kills adult fleas and ticks, some keep flea eggs from hatching, some combine heartworm preventative. As your vet for recommendations.

Pet Safety & Dog-Proofing Essentials

- Secure an ID tag to a buckle collar, and keep that collar on the dog at all times. Keep it "2-fingers" snug and check the fit regularly; don't risk your dog's life to a loose collar.
- Always walk your dog on a leash for his own safety and everyone else's. Voice control is useless when your dog decides to chase a squirrel, knock down a child, or fight with another dog.

Microchips and tattoos: All pets should wear a collar with I.D. tag at all times, but in case they come off, microchips and tattoos offer added security. Microchipping involves a safe, permanent miniature implant injected beneath the skin over the shoulder using a hypodermic needle; the chips can be read by scanners found increasingly at animal shelters. Tattoos are easy to spot. For details, contact:

* Home Again Companion Animal Retrieval Microchip System 1-800-252-7894

* AVID Microchip 1-800-336-2843

* National Dog Registry/Tattoos 1-800-NDR-DOGS

* Tadoo-A-Pet 1-800-TATTOOS

If your pet gets lost, contact the Missing Pet Network at www.missingpet.net

- Don't leave your dog unattended in a car - especially in hot weather. Even with the windows open, a car can heat up like an oven in minutes. Hundreds of animals die in cars each year.
- Make sure your dog always has free access to water - inside the house and out.
- Before you let your dog in a yard, make sure the fence is secure. And keep watch! Unattended dogs can eventually dig under or climb/jump over fences, get injured or disturb neighbors.
- Keep your pets off the grass if you've just applied weed killer. They may lick their paws and get ill.

- Avoid heatstroke: don't leave your dog outside for long periods on a hot day. When outside, a dog must always have a shady shelter and access to water.
- Don't chain up dogs. Chains and ropes cause injuries, and a chained dog cannot protect himself from stray animals. Chaining creates frustration that leads to aggression and other behavioral problems.
- Antifreeze kills - and unfortunately its taste appeals to pets. Tightly close and store all containers away from pets, and watch for puddles when you're walking your dog.
- Do not transport your dog in the back of a pickup truck. Hundreds of dogs die each year from falling out of trucks. Also, dogs get head and eye injuries from sticking heads out car windows.
- Shield electrical wires and plug outlets in your home. Don't leave coins, clips, etc. on the floor.
- Store cleaning products high or behind latched doors. Equip cabinet doors with child-proof latches.
- Don't let pets drink from a toilet that has freshener in the tank or bowl. The chemicals are toxic.
- Bones, especially those that splinter easily, can lodge in the dog's throat or stomach and cause fatal punctures. Give your dog rubber bones instead.
- Even a small amount of chocolate can poison and kill your dog. Keep it away from your dog. Unless prescribed by your vet, don't give human medications like aspirin to your dog.
- Identify and move toxic plants out of reach. According to the National Animal Poison Control Center and other sources, some toxic plants include:

Aloe Vera	Cycads	Kalanchoe (Panda Bear Plant)
Amaryllis	Cyclamen	Lily of the Valley & other lily plants
Apple seeds	Daffodil	Marijuana
Apricot pit	Dieffenbachia & Dumb cane	Mistletoe
Asparagus fern	Dracaena	Morning Glory
Avocado - fruit and pit	Dragon tree Easter Lily	Narcissus
Azalea	Elephant Ears	Peach (pits and wilting leaves)
Baby's breath	English Ivy	Philodendron (entire plant)
Bird of Paradise	Fiddle-leaf fig	Plumosa Fern
Bittersweet	Foxglove (Digitalis)	Poinsetta (low toxicity)
Boxwood	Geranium	Poison Ivy
Buckeye	Ivy - Branching, Devil's, English, German, Glacier, Needlepoint	Poison Oak
Caladium	Hibiscus	Primrose (Primula)
Calla Lily	Holly	Rhododendron
Carnation	Hurricane Plant	Sago Palm
Chinaberry Tree	Hyacinth bulbs	Schefflera
Chinese evergreen	Hydrangea	Taro Vine
Clematis	Nightshade	Tomato Plant (all parts except ripe fruit)
Cordatum	Oleander	Wisteria seeds
Corn plant	Onion	Yew
Cornstalk Plant	Indian Rubber Plant	
Croton	Jerusalem Cherry	

Dog-Proofing:

- **Fences.** Check carefully for gaps, loose boards or bent bottom edges. Fix problems immediately. Move any woodpiles away from the fence. Can your dog jump, climb, or dig under

the fence? Or break through the pickets? If there's a way to escape, a dog will find it - either to chase other animals, go after passers-by or to look for company. So don't leave your dog in the yard unattended.

- **Electric/invisible fences.** Convenient - but risky. The shocks can be unhealthy. When the power fails, your dog may run off - subjecting the dog to injury...and subjecting you to a liability claim. Also, many dogs would rather be shocked than miss the chance to chase a squirrel (and they soon learn the shock stops after passing the barrier). Electric fences do not keep animal or human intruders out.
- **Gate latches.** Can someone enter your yard or release your dog? Can your dog open the latch?
- **Screen doors.** A dog can easily kick open or tear through screen doors.
- **Doggie doors.** Block the door when you are not at home or cannot supervise your dog.
- **Block open stairs/railings** using baby or puppy gates.

Cold weather tips: Dogs can get frostbite, so don't stay outside long on cold days. Rock salt can damage paw pads and ice melt can be toxic; when pets lick their paws, they can get ill. After walks, remove ice balls between the toes and wipe feet with a damp towel.

Travel Tips

- Make sure your dog's flat collar is secure and that her ID tag is, too.
- Bring your dog's leash, food, bowls, toys, brush, flea comb, towels - and lots of paper towels.
- Pack a copy of medical records, including rabies certificate (make an extra copy for your glove box). This will help in case you board your dog during your trip.
- Make sure your dog receives a bordatella vaccine in advance.
- Pack heartworm pills and any other medication, plus a first aid kit including tweezers to remove ticks.
- Pack lots of ice - a treat for the dog, plus it melts down into water.
- Cut back on food starting the evening before a long drive, and avoid feeding 2 to 3 hours before leaving town, to reduce the chances of your dog becoming car-sick.
- For the car ride, use a doggie seat belt or confine in a crate.
- Don't leave your dog alone in a car.

Bring a crate when you travel. Folding crates are very convenient - and will safely confine your dog in unfamiliar places.

- Be careful about leaving your dog in a hotel room alone, since she may bark or howl. Sometimes it's best to use a local kennel or doggie daycare facility.
- Don't bring your dog to places unless you know dogs are allowed.
- If you're traveling across borders, obtain a health certificate in advance.

Books, Websites, Obedience Trainers, Veterinarians, Kennels & other services - see the Resource List at the end of this Guide.

Books, Web Sites & Other Resources

Leader of the Pack - by Nancy Baer and Steve Duno

Second Hand Dog...Surviving Your Dog's Adolescence...Mother Knows Best...The Chosen Puppy - all by Carol Lea Benjamin

Childproofing Your Dog: A Complete Guide to Preparing Your Dog for the Children in Your

Life ... MetroDog: The Essential Guide to Raising Your Dog in the City ... Mutts, America's Dogs: A Guide to Choosing, Loving, and Living with Our Most Popular Canine - all by Brian Kilcommons and Sarah Wilson
The Culture Clash ... Dogs Are From Neptune - both by Jean Donaldson
Creating a Peaceable Kingdom - by Cynthia D. Miller
The Power of Positive Dog Training - by Pat Miller
Adoptable Dog: Teaching Your Adopted Pet to Obey, Trust and Love You - by John Ross
Dogsmart: The Ultimate Guide for Finding the Dog You Want and Keeping the Dog You Find - by Dr. Myrna M. Milani
How to Teach a New Dog Old Tricks - by Dr. Ian Dunbar
Bad Dog: A Quick-Fix A-Z Problem Solver for Your Dog's Bad Behavior - by Steve Duno
Purely Positive Training - by Sheila Booth
Happy Dog: How Busy People Care For Their Dogs - by Arden Moore & Lowell Ackerman
The Dog Whisperer - by Paul Owens
Think Dog! - by John Fisher
The New Better Behavior in Dogs...Behavior Problems in Dogs - both by William Campbell
How to Teach a New Dog Old Tricks - by Dr. Ian Dunbar
So Your Dog's Not Lassie - by Betty Fisher and Suzanne Delzio
Don't Shoot the Dog...Clicker Training for Dogs - both by Karen Pryor
Aggression in Dogs - by Brenda Aloff
The Dog Who Loved Too Much... Dogs Behaving Badly - both by Dr. Nicholas Dodman
Dogs for Dummies - by Gina Spadafori
The Dog Who Would Be King - by John C. Wright
People, Pooches, and Problems - by Job Michael Evans
Are You The Pet For Me? - Mary Jane Checchi
The Complete Idiot's Guide to Getting and Owning a Dog - by Sheila Webster Boneham
Choosing and Caring for a Shelter Dog: A Complete Guide - by Bob Christiansen
The Pet Surplus: What Every Dog and Cat Owner Can Do to Help Reduce It - by Susan M. Seidman
Your Dog (Tufts University) 800-829-5116

For young people:

A Kid's Best Friend - by Maya Ajmera and Alex Fisher
Dog Training for Kids - by Carol Lea Benjamin (Ages 9-12)
SuperPuppy: How to Raise the Best Dog You'll Ever Have! - by Peter J. Vollmer (Ages 9-12)

Web Sites

<http://www.paw-rescue.org/before.html> - Planning to adopt a pet
http://www.paw-rescue.org/PAW/dog_tips.html - Dog tips on nearly every topic
<http://www.wonderpuppy.net/canwehelp/> - Solving dog and cat problems
<http://www.kidsanddogs.bravepages.com> - A Kid's Guide to Dog Care
<http://www.avma.org/careforanimals/kidscorner/default.asp> - Great info and activities for kids
<http://www.ddfl.org/behavior/children.htm>
<http://www.thedogsbestfriend.com/kidsand.htm>
<http://www.greatpets.com>
<http://vetmedicine.about.com/cs/doggeneral/>
<http://www.asPCA.org> - Information about pets, teaching children about animals and more
<http://www.avma.org/careforanimals/CFAsiteindex.asp>
<http://www.healthypet.com/Library/index.html> - American Animal Hospital Association page
<http://www.VeterinaryPartner.com/Content.plx>
<http://www.cvm.uiuc.edu/petcolumns/showsect.cfm?section=Dogs>
<http://www.uwsp.edu/psych/dog/lib-prob.htm#agg>

<http://www.canines.com> - Great, creative resource for pet owners with questions or problems
<http://www.inch.com/~dogs/> - American Dog Trainers Network - many resources
<http://www.apdt.com> - Association of Pet Dog Trainers - find a trainer
<http://www.k9web.com/dog-faqs/behavior.html> - Training and behavior guidance
<http://www.dogtrainingbasics.com/> - Professional dog trainer secrets and advice
<http://www.doggiedoor.com/index2.shtml> - Behavior resource
http://www.petsmart.com/pet_library/care_guide/intro.shtml - How to care for and train animals
http://www.petsmart.com/pet_library/home_remedies/introduction.shtml
<http://www.petpsych.com/articles/index.cfm> - Cat and dog behavioral help
<http://www.dog-play.com> - Agility, therapy and other fun activities for you and your dog
<http://members.aol.com/henryhbk/acpr.html> - Pet CPR
<http://www.rescuecritters.com/cpr.html> - Pet CRP
www.paw-rescue.org/petbulls.html - About Pit Bulls
www.dogfriendly.com - Travel tips and places to go with your dog

Phone Hotlines

ASPCA Ani-Med 1-888-721-9100

ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center 1-888-4-ANI-HELP or 1-888-426-4435

National Animal Poison Control Center 1-800-548-2423

Pet Lover's Helpline 1-900-776-0007

Tufts University School of Veterinary Medicine 508-839-5395