

Congratulations! We are happy and thankful that you have decided to adopt a new dog from our shelter. We want to help make this transition as easy as possible so that you and your new dog can spend the rest of your lives together. You can always contact Humane Fort Wayne for questions, or consult this book which has many tips and suggestions to help you get started.

The First Day Home / Supplies You'll Need:

Leash and Collar, Food, Water, Bed, Toys

Now that you have committed to a new furry family member, you need to remember that this can be a stressful and exciting time for everyone involved, including your dog. Your dog has probably been through a lot and will need some time to adjust. The first day home should be spent allowing your dog to get used to their new space. It could take days or even months for them to get used to you and your home. Let them go at their own pace. Establishing a routine will ensure no surprises and will help your dog adjust quickly.

Decompress For Success

Adopting a new dog is all about changes for both of you. Make the first few weeks fun, stress-free, and build a foundation for a lasting relationship by following these steps.

- 1 Routine: Dogs crave predictability. Stick to the same things when feeding, walking, training, and leaving the house.
- 2 Privacy: Dogs, like people, need time to themselves. Create a spot with a crate or mat. Call your dog to leave their space, rather than invading their space.
- 3 Positive Socialization: Limit interactions with new people, places, and things. Let your dog explore gradually in short sessions. Build positive associations.
- 4 Train At Home First: Start positive reinforcement training at home for a distraction-free setting. This is the fastest, clearest way to establish communication.
- 5 Train With Food: Shift calories out of the food bowl and use in short (5 minute) training sessions. Spread training sessions throughout the day, including reinforcing loose leash walking.
- 6 Avoid Leash Greetings: Meeting other dogs can be stressful. Dogs don't always like each other. Limit or avoid greetings until you learn more about how your dog shows unease.
- 7 Observe Your Dog: When your dog is relaxed, what do their ears, mouth, tail position, and entire body look like? Learn your dog's body language to know when your dog is concerned and to identify triggers.
- 8 Let Your Dog Initiate Contact: Let your dog initiate contact with people. Never force an interaction. If your dog solicits attention, pet on the chest, not on top of the head.
- 9 Have Fun With Your Dog: Playing, feeding, walking, and interacting with your new dog builds a lasting bond. Take it easy the first month and get to know each other before widening the circle. After all, you have a lifetime together!

Rule of Three

When adopting a dog

3 Days	3 Weeks	3 Months
		
Your new dog is trying to figure out their new home and family.	They have figured out they will live with you and start a routine.	Your dog has become a part of the family. Welcome home!

Give the dog time to adjust! Don't throw in the towel. Enjoy your new best friend!