

# DOG FOSTER HANDBOOK



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## Section 1: Introduction

Thank you so much for your interest in fostering dogs for Adoptable Friends, NFP. By opening your home to foster dogs, you're not only helping to save lives, you're providing the individual attention and love these dogs desperately need.

To become an approved foster home you must fill out a foster application on our website and attend a foster orientation webinar. In the orientation, we'll go over this manual and answer any questions you have about the program.

Our dog foster program allows us to save animals and find their forever homes while the kennel and cat house structures on our property are being renovated for future use.

Foster homes are asked to provide care for the dogs, transportation to and from veterinary appointments as needed, as well as transportation to meet and greet appointments with prospective adopters. Care for foster dogs includes feeding according to size and needs, exercise, enrichment, positive reinforcement training, and of course, play time.

Although fostering is a lot of work, it is a very rewarding experience. By participating in this program, you are saving lives and helping many different types of dogs find the families they've been longing for. Through fostering, we can work together to save more lives!

### 1.1 Are you ready to foster?

#### **Do you have the time to spend with your foster puppies/dog(s)?**

We recommend that you spend at least two hours per day with your foster dog giving individualized training, socialization, and play time. This doesn't include time spent feeding and cleaning—but watching your foster acclimate to the comforts of home will make time fly by!

#### **Can you commit to bringing your foster pet in for various veterinary re-checks?**

Depending on the animal, we may need you to schedule occasional appointments with our veterinary partners. These appointments may be weekly or once every two to three weeks.

#### **Are you able to keep your pets separate from your foster dog?**

For the first few days, we encourage you to keep your foster dog in a separate room (with crate or exercise pen) away from your resident pets for decompression, everyone's safety, and to avoid illness transmission. The Foster Coordinator will provide a recommendation about how slowly to introduce your foster dog to your resident animals when you take your foster home.

### **Are you prepared for the mess?**

Fostering comes with a great deal of clean-up and potential for damage to your home. Adoptable Friends is not responsible for any damage incurred while fostering one of our animals.

### **Will you be able to bring your foster pet back at the end of the foster period?**

Letting go can be hard! We understand, but because of foster parents like you, we can save more lives.

## **1.2 Frequently asked questions**

### **What kinds of dogs need fostering?**

We have a variety of dogs in need of foster homes and we will work with you to find the animal that fits best with your home environment and lifestyle! Adoptable Friends often has pregnant moms, nursing moms and puppies, puppies in need of socialization, adolescent dogs in need of training, and healthy adult dogs who need a loving home until they find their forever home!

### **Where do the foster dogs come from?**

Adoptable Friends takes in animals from local shelters as well as rural shelters in other parts of the country. We want to save as many lives as possible, and the foster program allows us to maximize our resources.

### **What does Adoptable Friends provide?**

We provide you with a crate, leash, harness and collar with ID tag, food, and any medications needed as well as instructions on how to administer those medications. We will also provide training and behavioral support throughout the foster period.

### **What do foster families need to provide?**

Foster families need to provide:

- A healthy and safe environment for their foster dogs
- Transportation to and from meet and greet appointments and all vet appointments as needed
- Socialization (positive introductions to new objects sights, sounds, and textures) and positive reinforcement training to help teach dogs positive family and pet relationships
- Bowls
- Toys
- Willingness and ability to communicate frequently with the Foster Team.

### **If I foster puppies, how many puppies will I have?**

Puppies under 8 weeks of age will need to stay with littermates in order to learn proper social skills, and litter sizes vary! Older puppies may be fostered individually. We will let you know the situation before asking you to take puppies.

### **Can I foster dogs even if I have a full-time job?**

Yes. Our foster application is designed as a survey to help the Foster Coordinator match you with the best animal for your needs and your current schedule. If you have a full-time job, the Foster Coordinator will match you with a dog who may be OK alone during the workday. You would then just need to provide ample exercise before or after you go to work, as well as a crate or confinement area in which to keep your foster dog while you are gone. We cannot place puppies or dogs under the age of 6 months in your home if you are out of the house for three hours or more at a time.

### **Can I foster a dog if I don't have a fenced yard?**

Yes, you can foster a dog for us if you do not have a fenced yard, however the dog must be on a leash at all times when outside of your home. We **do not** allow the use of electronic fences, invisible leashes, or electronic collars on our dogs.

### **How long will the dog need to be in foster care?**

Ideally, foster dogs stay in their assigned foster homes until they get adopted. We do ask that you make a minimum of a two week commitment so that your foster dog has time to decompress in a home after being in a stressful shelter and on transport. Veterinary research has shown that it takes this amount of time for a dog's body to recover from these stresses and we dive deeper into the topic of decompression later in the manual.

### **Will I need to give medicine to my foster dog?**

Almost all of the dogs that we have in our foster program are rescued from shelters and have been exposed to shelter illnesses. While we do our best to ensure that we are aware of all the conditions that a foster dog may have prior to going home, many illnesses have incubation periods, meaning symptoms can arise after you take a dog home. So while some dogs do not require any medicine, others may. If your foster dog needs medications, we can show you how to administer them before you take the animal home.

### **Can I foster if I have pets in my home?**

Yes. However, in many cases, especially with sick or injured animals, you must have the ability to isolate the foster animal in a separate room or section of your home to avoid exposure of an illness to your pet or disrupt the healing time of your foster.

### **Can I let my foster dog play with my personal pets?**

There are a few guidelines that we ask foster families to adhere to regarding their personal pets. While foster dogs playing with other pets is often fine, we advise that you consult with your veterinarian before fostering to ensure that all of your personal pets are healthy and up-to-date on all vaccines. Your foster dog should always be supervised at all times when playing with your own pets.

Dogs in shelters are very susceptible to illness and can carry or catch different diseases. If, for any reason, your personal pet becomes ill while you are fostering an Adoptable Friends dog, we cannot cover medical care costs for your personal pet.

In order to help your foster dog transition into their permanent home, you will need to spend individual time with your foster dog, as well as provide your foster dog time alone without the companionship of your resident dog.

### **Can my foster dog go to a dog park or doggy daycare?**

No, your foster dog is not allowed to go to dog parks or daycare. While we encourage you to work on socializing your foster dog, a dog park or daycare can be overwhelming and not an appropriate place to do so.

### **What if I want to adopt my foster dog?**

If you want to adopt your foster dog, you will need to complete an adoption application and follow the full adoption process. We give our foster homes the right of first refusal to adopt their foster dog up until the point at which adoption applications are received and being processed. If you do decide to adopt your foster dog, please contact the Foster Coordinator right away.

### **What if a family member or friend wants to adopt my foster dog?**

If you know someone who wants to adopt your foster dog, please ask them to fill out an application at [adoptablefriends.org/adopt](https://adoptablefriends.org/adopt) and let the Foster Coordinator know. The application will be reviewed and references checked as we always make placement decisions in the best interest of the dog.

### **Who will take care of my foster dog if I need to go out of town?**

If you have travel plans while you are fostering a dog for Adoptable Friends, you will need to contact the Foster Coordinator to find an alternative arrangement for your dog while you are away. Please provide at least two week's notice to ensure that we can find a temporary foster for your dog. If your trip is over a holiday, please provide a minimum of one month's notice.

You cannot leave your foster dog with an unauthorized person or pet sitter. We have specific training for foster parents, and pet sitters have not undergone that training or signed the release waivers for the foster program.

### **What if my foster dog bites me or becomes aggressive?**

If any of your foster pets bite you or any person and breaks skin, causing bleeding, you need to report the bite to the Foster Coordinator immediately. The law requires that we report all bites. The teeth of the animal, not the nails, must have broken the skin. If you are unsure, then please report the bite anyway.

If your foster dog shows any aggressive behavior, which may include growling, lunging, or air snapping, please report it to the Foster Coordinator immediately. The Foster Coordinator will share the report with the Training Director, who will contact you directly for further information.

### **What if my foster dog is not working out?**

You are not required to continue to foster a dog if you feel it's not working out. However, we may not have an immediate alternate foster home for the dog. We will work on moving your foster dog out as soon as possible, but ask for your understanding and patience. Please call the Foster Coordinator during business hours if this situation arises.

### **Can I foster a dog to fulfill a community service obligation?**

Unfortunately, Adoptable Friends cannot sign off on court-ordered community service hours for fostering. Community service is supervised work, and fostering is unsupervised, since it takes place in your home. If you need community service hours, on-site volunteering is an option. You can sign up online at [adoptablefriends.org/volunteer](https://adoptablefriends.org/volunteer).

## **Section 2: Preparing for your foster dog**

When you take your foster dog home, he may be frightened or unsure about what's happening, so it's important not to overwhelm him. Prepare a special area for the foster dog to help ease his adjustment into a new home environment. Sometimes it is better to confine the foster dog to a small room or area at first, to let him adjust before giving him free rein in your home. This area should be large enough for an appropriately sized crate and/or exercise pen and should allow the dog access to his food and water dishes and toys.

We request that all foster dogs be housed indoors only. An unfinished basement, garage, backyard or outdoor run is not a suitable accommodation for a foster dog.

During the first couple of weeks, minimize the people and pet introductions to your foster dog, so that she is only meeting immediate family and your personal pets. If you have other pets at home, it is especially important to give your foster dog a space of her own where she can stay while getting used to all the new sounds and smells. Do not leave your foster dog unattended in your home with your personal pets.

### **2.1 Supplies you'll need**

We provide you with a crate, leash, harness and collar with ID tag, a supply of food, and any medications needed as well as instructions on how to administer those medications. We will also provide training and behavioral support throughout the foster period.

We greatly appreciate any help that you can provide in supplying items for your foster dog. Here's what you'll need to help your foster dog make a smooth transition to living in your home:

- At least one bowl for dry food and one for water: Stainless steel works best.
- Dog toys: Make sure the toys are durable and appropriate for the size of your foster dog. Please do not leave your foster dog unattended with any plush toys or toys with parts that can be swallowed. To reduce disease transmission, also make sure the toys are easy to sanitize.
- A comfortable place to sleep.
- Pee pads: Helps save your carpets and makes clean up from puppy messes easier.
- A baby gate and/or exercise pen: This comes in handy to keep certain areas of your home off-limits.
- Dog treats: Giving treats is a good way to help train and build a positive relationship with your foster dog. We prefer dog treats and chews that are made in the USA. Do not give your foster dog rawhides.
- Grooming supplies: A well-groomed dog has a better chance of getting adopted.

## 2.2 Dog-proofing your home

Foster dogs come from a shelter environment, and even if they have previously lived in a home, we don't always know how they will react in a new home. So, before bringing home a new foster dog, you'll want to survey the area where you are going to keep your foster dog. Remove anything that would be unsafe or undesirable for the dog to chew on, and securely latch any cupboards and doors that the foster dog could get into. People food, chemicals, and plants can be very harmful if consumed by dogs, so please store them in a place that the foster dog cannot access. Choose a room in your house that can be temperature controlled. This room should also be able to withstand messy puppies and playful dogs who may knock over food, spill water, and tear up their pee pads.

Never underestimate your foster dog's abilities. Here are some additional tips for dog-proofing your home:

- Make sure that all trash cans are covered or latched and keep them inside a closet. (Don't forget the bathroom trash bins.)
- Keep the toilet lids closed.
- Keep both people and pet food out of reach and off all counter tops.
- Move houseplants or secure them. Some dogs like to play with them and may knock them over.
- Make sure aquariums or cages that house small animals, like hamsters or fish, are securely out of reach of your foster dog.
- Remove medications, lotions, or cosmetics from any accessible surfaces.
- Move and secure all electrical and phone wires out of reach. Dogs may chew on or get tangled in them.
- Block access to any hiding places in your foster dog's new space.



- Pick up any clothing items that have buttons or strings, which can be harmful to your foster dog if consumed.
- Relocate knick knacks or valuables that your foster dog could knock down.
- If you have a resident cat, make sure their litter box is out of reach of the foster dog while still being accessible to the cat.
- Pick up children's toys so your foster dog does not confuse them for their own toys.

## Section 3: Bringing home your foster dog

Taking care of a foster dog requires a commitment from you and the members of your family to make sure the dog is happy and healthy. Thank you so much for opening your heart and your home to these dogs who desperately need your help.

### 3.1 Choosing a foster dog

The Foster Coordinator will work with you to select a foster dog who meets your specific requirements. We will always do our best to match you with a dog who fits with your lifestyle and schedule.

The Foster Coordinator will meet you and introduce you to the dog. Together, you and the Foster Coordinator will decide if the dog is the right fit for you. *Be honest: If you aren't comfortable with anything about the animal you may be fostering, please tell the Foster Coordinator before you take the animal home.*

When you and the Foster Coordinator have decided on a foster dog, an appointment will be scheduled so you can pick up the dog and any supplies that you will need. The appointment will typically be at Adoptable Friends in Mundelein, IL.

### 3.2 Dog introductions

If you have personal pets who are dogs, you'll want to introduce them to your foster dog one at a time and supervise their interactions. Keep interactions short for the first week, or longer if necessary. It's a good idea to introduce them outside in a large yard or on a walk, keeping all the dogs on leash and allowing them enough space to get adjusted to one another. Allowing your foster dog to explore your fenced yard first, then securing him elsewhere while allowing your resident dogs to explore the new scent of your foster dog can be a great, low-stress, introduction.

If you can, it works best to schedule a time for your personal dogs to meet the foster dog before you take the foster dog home.

In addition, make sure that all dog items (food, chew toys, plush toys, Kongs, or anything else that your dogs hold in high regard) are put away whenever the dogs are interacting. You don't want to allow the possibility of a fight. Any item may be valuable to your foster dog so please remember to provide a separate space for them to enjoy their toys, food, and chews. Those high-value items are best placed in the dogs' personal areas—their crates.

Finally, never feed your dogs in the same room as the foster dog; always separate them at feeding time.

### **3.3 Cat introductions**

We can't ensure that a foster dog has been "cat-tested," so if you have personal pets who are cats, you'll need to make the introduction to the foster dog carefully and safely. Start by keeping them separated at first. You can either keep your cats in a separate room (equipped with food, water, litter boxes and beds) or confine your foster dog to a room or crate within a room. Over a one- to two-week period, let the dog and cats smell each other through the door, but don't allow them contact with one another. Exchanging blankets or towels between the dog's area and the cats' area will help them get used to each other's smells.

After a week or two, do the face-to-face introduction. Keeping your foster dog on leash, allow your cat out in the same area. (If you have more than one cat, introduce one cat at a time.) Providing your foster dog with treats while the cat is in the same area creates a positive association for foster dogs who may not be used to cats. Do not allow the foster dog to charge or run directly up to the cat. Try to distract the dog as best you can so that the cat has the chance to approach without fear. Watch the body language of each animal closely and don't continue the interaction if either pet becomes over-stimulated or aggressive. The idea is to keep the interactions positive, safe, and controlled. If you see any signs of high prey drive in the foster dog, please notify the Foster Coordinator immediately. You can then discuss whether you feel you can manage this situation or will need to return the foster dog. Your resident pets' safety is of utmost importance to us.

Finally, never leave your foster dog unsupervised with any cats in your home.

### **3.3 Children and dogs**

Since we don't always know a foster dog's history or tolerance level for different types of people and activities, please teach your children how to act responsibly and respectfully around your foster dog. We will do our best to place you with an appropriate animal for your home situation, but you should still supervise **all** interactions between children and your foster dog.

Key things to remember:

- Always leave the foster dog alone when he/she is eating, chewing, or sleeping. Some dogs may nip or bite if bothered while eating or startled while sleeping.
- Do not allow your children to hug, lay on, or attempt to kiss your foster dog.
- Do not allow your children to take anything away from the foster dog.
- Do not allow your children to tease the foster dog. Do not allow children to pull on ears, tails, or fur.
- Don't allow your children to chase the foster dog around the house or run quickly around the foster dog; it may scare or excite him.
- Remind your children to pick up all their toys. Some dogs may not be able to tell the difference between what is theirs and what belongs to the kids.
- Do not allow children under 12 years of age to walk the foster dog because they may not be strong enough or experienced enough to handle encounters with people, other dogs, or other animals who cross their path. If your child is over 12, they may walk the foster dog but only with active adult supervision.

For more resources regarding dogs and children, check out [stopthe77.com](http://stopthe77.com) and [familypaws.com](http://familypaws.com).

### **3.4 The Decompression Period**

The decompression period is the first two or three weeks your foster dog comes home. During this time, your dog really has no idea who you are, or what to expect. This needs to be a quiet time in your home, so the dog can get used to your family, the new home and routines, and start bonding. During this time, we recommend the following:

- Crating/confining the dog for 20-30 minutes at a time throughout the day in a quiet space, preferably the room it will continue to be crated in.
- Tethering the dog to you by leash at all times it is out of the crate. This prevents improper behavior, and creates a bond, as it learns everything comes from you.
- No field trips. This means the only place you should take your dog is to the vet during this time.
- No walks. Walks are full of stimulus that may, at this time, be overwhelming for your dog.
- No visitors. Your dog needs to spend time bonding with you, and more strangers can be difficult for your dog.
- No furniture privileges. These may be added later as the dog earns it.
- No free access to possessions. Omit any high value options, and limit low value options.
- Do not allow the dog to invade your personal space, nor should you invade theirs.

After the first two to three weeks (though some dogs may become comfortable sooner than others), it's important to begin training. The kind of training you do depends on your dog. Shy or timid dogs may need a class to help you teach them to be more confident, build their self-esteem, and learn to trust. Comfortable and confident dogs may do well in an obedience class. Some dogs may do best with

private training. All training through an outside source must be approved by the Training Director or Foster Coordinator.

## Section 4: Daily care

### 4.1 Feeding

All foster dogs should be fed a diet of dry dog food twice daily, unless otherwise specified by the Foster Coordinator. We ask that you use the food we provide so as to not upset your foster dog's digestive system. Feed your foster dog twice daily; the amount will be based on the age and weight of your foster dog. We recommend keeping a daily log of your foster dog's food intake so if something seems wrong with their eating schedule, you can go back and check. Make sure the dog always has access to fresh, clean water.

Dogs naturally are scavengers—and we love food delivery toys that meet this instinctual need and provide enrichment. Our favorites are the Kong Wobbler, Bob-o-lot, and Kibble Nibble. Chewy.com has a great selection of these and other puzzle toys.

Please feed your foster dog separate from your resident dog(s) or other foster dog(s) to eliminate the risk for dog fights. If your fosters, or your foster and your own dog are fighting over food or toys, contact the Foster Coordinator immediately for advice. DO NOT attempt to take away food or a toy from a dog who is growling. Instead, wait until it is abandoned and then pick it up and put it away. If you need to remove an item from your foster dog, please present a high-value food reward to them as a “trade” by throwing it to the ground away from the item you need to take.

You can give your foster dog treats of any kind (unless he/she has known allergies, of course); giving treats for desired behaviors provides the positive reinforcement the dog needs to bond with you and create good behaviors for living in a household. Most dogs like to chew on things, so try Nylabones, Benebones, or beef cheek chews (an alternative to rawhides, which we do not allow for our dogs). Keep in mind, though, that not all dogs like to share, so only give these treats when your foster dog is confined to his/her own area or crate.

### 4.2 Daily routine

When you first take your foster dog home, take care not to overwhelm her with too many new experiences all at once. Sometimes, too much stimulation can cause a dog to behave unexpectedly toward a person or animal, which is why it's a good idea to keep introductions to a minimum during at least the first two weeks after you bring your foster dog home. It's also important to establish a daily routine of regularly scheduled feedings, potty breaks and walk times. Dogs take comfort in having a routine they can count on.

Also, on a daily basis, be aware of your foster dog's appetite and energy level. If she's not eating well or seems listless, something may be wrong medically. You might want to record your observations to make it easier to notice any health issues.

### **4.3 House-training**

It's unlikely that your foster dog will be perfectly house-trained when you take him or her home. Most of the dogs in the foster program have lived in a shelter for a while, often with minimal walks or chances to relieve themselves outside. At the very least, be prepared for an adjustment period until your foster dog gets used to your schedule.

Because a dog has a better chance of being adopted if she is house-trained, please help your foster dog to perfect this skill. Take your foster dog outside to go potty multiple times per day (3-6 times daily, depending on age). Initially, you may need to take her out more frequently to remind her where the door to the outside is and to reassure her that you will take her out for potty breaks. Remember—the need to eliminate usually comes after the dog has been asleep, playing, or sniffing. Most dogs will give cues — such as standing near the door or sniffing the ground and walking in small circles — to indicate that they need to go out. Keep your foster dog in a crate when you are not available to supervise him indoors.

If your foster dog has an accident inside the house, don't discipline or punish him. It will only teach her to fear and mistrust you. Clean up all accidents with an enzymatic cleaner. Nature's Miracle and Simple Solution are two products containing natural enzymes that tackle tough stains and odors and remove them permanently.

### **4.4 Crate training**

Crate training, done in a positive way, can be an effective component of house-training. A crate can be a safe place for your foster dog to have "down time" and can also limit his access to the entire house until he knows the rules. A crate should never be used as a form of punishment and a dog should never be left in a crate for an extended period of time.

You can prevent problems with crate training by setting your foster dog up for success. He should only associate good things with the crate, so start by putting treats and/or toys in the crate and encouraging him to go in. Some dogs warm up to the crate slowly. If he is afraid to go in, place a treat in the crate as far as he is willing to go. After he takes the treat, place another treat a little farther back in the crate. Keep going until he is eating treats at the very back, then feed him his next meal in the crate with the door open, so that he can walk in and out at will.

Crate training a fearful dog can take days or longer, so be patient and encouraging. If a crate is properly introduced and used, your foster dog will happily enter and settle down.

## **4.5 Grooming**

A clean and well-groomed dog has a better chance of getting adopted, so bathe your foster dog as needed and brush him regularly if he has longer hair or requires more frequent grooming. Contact the Foster Coordinator if you feel that your foster dog needs to see a professional groomer. If you are comfortable with it, you can trim his nails. But please be careful because you can cause pain and bleeding if you trim the nails too short. We do not recommend trying to clip the nails of a dog with black claws unless you have a great deal of experience with that.

## **4.6 Mental stimulation and exercise**

Depending on your foster dog's age and energy level, he or she should get at least two 30-minute play sessions or walks (after the decompression period) with you per day. *Remember, a walk is not for all dogs.* Enrichment activities, such as food puzzles, Kongs, and positive reinforcement training (see below) can also tire out your foster dog.

Try a variety of toys (balls, squeaky toys, rope toys, etc.) to see which ones your foster dog prefers. Remember to discourage the dog from playing with your hands, since mouthing won't be a desirable behavior to adopters. Remember to redirect the dog to an appropriate toy if the dog is mouthing your hands. If you try this three times without success, it's time for your foster dog to have crate time away from you to lower their arousal.

## **4.7 Enrichment and training**

Dogs are social beings that need both physical and mental exercise . While they need time to decompress and begin building trust, it is important to provide exercise that is appropriate for their breed and age. Foster dogs should be given the opportunity to explore the world around them at their own pace. Traditional neighborhood walks are NOT appropriate exercise for foster dogs.

### **Enrichment**

Foster dogs need the opportunity to express normal dog behaviors in a safe, comfortable way. Normal dog behaviors include sniffing, scavenging, chasing, playing, and chewing. Your foster dog may have learned to survive through these behaviors. Daily enrichment allows your foster dog to be mentally, emotionally, and physically satisfied. Here are some easy ways to provide opportunity for your foster dog to have appropriate outlets for these behaviors:

### 1. **Work to Eat**

Your foster dog should eat at least one meal from a food puzzle or toy. Some of our favorites are a snuffle mat, a muffin tin (which can be covered with tennis balls), a cardboard box or paper towel roll (with the ends twisted to close), a kong wobbler, or Bob-A-Lot.

### 2. **Nose Work Games**

Your foster dog will enjoy using his nose to find treats you have hidden or scattered. Treats can be randomly placed within his safe space so he can hunt for them when comfortable, or you can create treat trails or treat scatters in the yard for him to hunt.

### 3. **Sniff and Stroll**

Once your foster dog is comfortable with you and his new environment (after the decompression period) you can begin sniff and stroll walks. These allow your foster dog to explore at his pace, following his nose, without the pressure of having to walk through the neighborhood. Sniff and Stroll walks can be taken around your home, in nearby parks, or any other area that allows your foster dog to move about freely, without interference from other people and dogs. A sniff and stroll walk is more enriching if your foster dog is on a 6-10 foot leash and harness and there is room to move about.

### 4. **Chewing Toys**

Your foster dog will need appropriate chew items to satisfy the normal dog behavior of chewing, especially if he is between 6 months and 2 years of age. Chew toys must be of the appropriate size and material for your individual foster dog. Stuffed animal type toys and rope toys are NOT appropriate for chewing as they have the potential to create an intestinal blockage. Here are some chew items you might consider:

- **Food Stuffed Rubber Toys** – Kong, West Paw, and Starmark all make great durable rubber toys that can be stuffed with food and frozen.
- **Starmark Everlasting Treat Series** – These toys have inserts that your foster dog can chew.
- **Himalyan Churros and Chews**
- **Cow Hooves, Knee Caps, Knuckle Bones and Beef Cheeks**
- **Greenies, Dental Bones, and other natural chews**

## **Training**

Your foster dog will need to learn manners that can be easily transferred to his new permanent home. While basic obedience skills are necessary for every dog, it is critical that your foster dog learn foundation skills first. Your foster dog is always learning whether or not you are actively training! Here are the foundation skills we would like you to practice every day. Meal time is a great time to train!

### 1. **Name Game**

Use treats to teach your foster dog his name. Say his name once and when they begin to turn to look at you, mark with "yes", hand them a treat and REPEAT.

## 2. Hand Targeting

Teach your foster dog that hands give! Place a small food reward in your fist. Present your fist toward your foster dog's nose with your fingers facing towards your foster dog. When he shows any interest in it, mark that behavior with YES, open your hand and "pez out" the treat. Repeat, rewarding for each subsequent movement forward until your foster dog is touching the fist with his nose. Once he understands the game, only mark and reward for actual nose touches to your hand.

## 3. Find It

Teach your foster dog to pay attention to you! Begin indoors with a small handful of treats. Toss a treat on the floor where your foster dog can see it and give the cue "FIND IT". Your foster dog will pick up the treat. Wait until he turns around to look at you and mark the look back with "YES" then toss another treat. You are rewarding the focus back to you NOT eye contact. Repeat the exercise several times each day for a fun focus skill. Make it a game!!! Once you have success indoors you can begin to work outside with your foster dog on leash.

## 4. Sit Politely

This is how we teach dogs to say "Please." We recommend you use the following method.

- a. **Say it.** Tell your dog, "Sit" in a cheerful tone of voice.
- b. **Show it.** Pause a second (one-one thousand), then lure your foster dog into a sit by putting the treat up to your foster dog's nose and slowly moving the treat backwards and up. Keep the treat lure close to your foster dog's nose—if you move your hand up too quickly or too far away from your foster dog's mouth, they may give up and lose interest or jump up to snatch the treat.
- c. **Pay it.** As soon as your foster dog's hindquarters hit the ground praise and treat. Repeat as many times as you can, so long as you and your foster dog are still enjoying yourselves. Praise and treat every sit.
- d. **Repeat it.** Repeat the exercise several times over a few days. When your foster dog sits reliably, it is time to take the treat out of your hand and use the verbal cue alone. If your foster dog makes a mistake, first try luring without the treat. Only put the treat back in your hand if all else fails.

## 4.8 Safety requirements

Foster dogs must live indoors, not outside. Please do not leave your foster dog outside unsupervised, even in your fenced yard. We ask that you supervise your foster dog when he is outside at all times to ensure that he doesn't escape or have any negative interactions with other people or animals. Your foster dog is only allowed to be off-leash in an enclosed backyard that is completely fenced in after the decompression period ends. During the decompression period (2-3 weeks), your foster dog needs to drag their leash as an extra safety precaution to prevent escapes.



When walking with your foster dog, please keep her on leash at all times. This means that your foster dog is not allowed to go to off-leash dog parks or other off-leash dog areas. We do not know how your foster dog will act in these situations, or how other dogs will react, and we need to ensure that all animals are safe at all times. In addition, we don't know if the other dogs they encounter are vaccinated appropriately or carry diseases, so do not let your foster dog meet any unknown dogs. Having recently come from a shelter setting, foster dogs can be vulnerable health-wise.

Your foster dog cannot ride in the bed of an open pickup truck. When you're transporting foster dogs, please keep them crated inside the vehicle or restrained in an appropriate manner if a crate is not possible.

## Section 5: Helping your foster dog get adopted

### Frequently asked questions

#### **Will I need to take my foster dog to adoption events?**

The Foster Coordinator will contact you when adoption events are scheduled. We encourage you to attend with your foster dog to allow members of the public to meet the dog.

#### **How can I help my foster dog find a great home?**

As you get to know your foster dog, we ask that you stay in frequent contact with the Foster Coordinator so that he/she can update the foster animal's biography online to reflect accurate information about the dog's preferences and quirks. Some people write their own biography for their foster dogs, which we encourage, though they may be edited. We also welcome any quality photos that you take of your foster dog in your home; we can use the photos to create a kennel card to accompany the online biography. Please send the info about your foster dog and photos to [info@adoptablefriends.org](mailto:info@adoptablefriends.org), and include "Attn: Social Media Coordinator" in the subject line.

Please keep in mind that anyone who shows interest in adopting your foster dog will need to go through the adoption process and speak with a staff member before taking the animal home.

#### **What if I know someone who's interested in adopting my foster dog?**

If you know someone who wants to adopt your foster dog, please ask them to fill out an application at [adoptablefriends.org/adopt](http://adoptablefriends.org/adopt) and let the Foster Coordinator know. The application will be reviewed and references checked as we always make placement decisions in the best interest of the dog.

#### **Will it be hard to say goodbye to my foster dog?**

Saying goodbye can be the most difficult part of fostering, but keep in mind that many more dogs in shelters need wonderful foster homes like yours.

## Section 6: Medical and emergency protocols

Adoptable Friends uses Maddie's Pet Assistant for vaccine and treatment reminders for your foster pet. You will receive reminders via email and you are responsible for scheduling appointments for your dog's vaccines with our Foster Coordinator or around the due dates indicated in the email.

If you are fostering a dog who is on medications, please make sure that he/she gets all prescribed doses. Do not end medication early for any reason. If your foster animal has not responded to prescribed medications after five days (or in the time instructed by a veterinarian), please contact the Foster Coordinator.

### 6.1 Veterinary care

Adoptable Friends provides all medical care for our foster animals at our approved veterinary partners. Because we are ultimately responsible for your foster dog's well-being, our staff must authorize any and all treatment for foster dogs at our approved veterinary partners.

If your foster dog needs to go to the veterinarian, please notify the Foster coordinator by email or phone. The Foster Coordinator will schedule the appointment with our veterinary partner.

For non-emergency situations, please understand that our veterinary partners book quickly and may not be available for same-day appointments. We ask that you request basic non-emergency appointments with our Foster Coordinator (drop-off, pick-up, vaccines and supply pick-ups) at least 48 hours in advance.

Remember, foster parents will be responsible for payment of any medical care if they take their foster animal to a veterinarian without authorization from the Foster Coordinator. If you wish to take your foster pet to a veterinarian who is not a partner, you risk having to cover the costs out of pocket.

### 6.2 Signs of illness and what to do next

Dogs generally do a good job of masking when they don't feel well, so determining if your foster dog is under the weather will require diligent observation of the dog's daily activity and appetite levels. It's a good idea to keep track of these levels in a journal. You'll also want to record any of the following symptoms, which could be signs of illness.

#### Loss of appetite

Your foster dog may be stressed after arriving in your home, and stress can cause lack of appetite. But if the dog hasn't eaten after 24 hours, please notify the Foster Coordinator. Also, if the dog has been eating well, but then stops eating for 12 to 24 hours, call the Foster Coordinator to set up a vet

appointment. Please do not change the dog's diet without contacting the Foster Coordinator. An abrupt change in diet can cause diarrhea, which can lead to dehydration.

### **Lethargy**

The activity level of your foster dog will vary depending on age and personality. Keeping an activity log and journal will help you notice whether your foster dog is less active than he normally is. If the dog cannot be roused or seems weak and unable to stand, it's an emergency, so contact the Foster Coordinator immediately.

### **Diarrhea**

It is important to monitor your foster dog's pooping habits daily. Soft stool is normal for the first two or three days after taking a dog home, most likely caused by stress and a change in food. If your foster dog has liquid stool, however, please contact the Foster Coordinator so that an appointment can be scheduled to ensure that the dog doesn't need medications. Keep in mind that diarrhea will dehydrate the dog, so be proactive about encouraging the dog to drink and contacting the Foster Coordinator. If your foster dog has bloody diarrhea or you see mucus present, please contact the Foster Coordinator immediately. Please refer to the **Bristol Stool Chart** in the Appendix for how to describe your foster dog's stool.

### **Vomiting**

Sometimes dogs will eat too quickly and will immediately throw up their food. Occasional vomiting isn't cause for alarm, but if your foster dog has thrown up two or more times in one day, please notify the Foster Coordinator. It could be indicative of an underlying medical issue.

### **Dehydration**

Diarrhea and vomiting can cause dehydration. To test for dehydration, gently pinch the dog's skin around the scruff area. If the skin stays taut, the dog is dehydrated. Please call the Foster Coordinator the next business day to schedule a vet appointment.

### **Pain or strain while urinating**

When a dog first goes into a foster home, he or she may not urinate due to stress. If the dog hasn't urinated in more than 24 hours, however, please contact the Foster Coordinator. Also, if you notice the dog straining to urinate with little or no results, or crying out when urinating, please contact the Foster Coordinator immediately because it may be indicative of an infection or an obstruction.

### **Frequent ear scratching**

Your foster dog may have a bacterial or yeast infection (or, in rare cases, ear mites) if she scratches her ears often and/or shakes her head frequently. These conditions can be treated by a veterinarian, so please call the Foster Coordinator to schedule a medical appointment.

### **Swollen, irritated ears**

If your foster dog has irritated, swollen or red or pink ears that smell like yeast, he may have an ear infection called otitis. This type of infection is more common in dogs who have very floppy ears, like basset hounds or Labradors. These dogs may need to have their ears cleaned more often to ensure that the infection does not re-occur. Please contact the Foster Coordinator for instructions on treatment and maintenance.

### **Hair loss**

Please contact the Foster Coordinator if you notice any hair loss on your foster dog. It is normal for dogs to have thin fur around the lips, eyelids and in front of the ears, but clumpy patches of hair loss or thinning hair can indicate ringworm, dermatitis or the early stages of mange. It is important to check your foster dog's coat every day.

## **DISCHARGE:**

### **Eye discharge**

It is normal for dogs to have some discharge from their eyes when they wake up and some may have more than others, depending on the breed. But if your foster dog has yellow or green discharge, or swelling around the eyes (making it hard for him to open his eyes), or the third eyelid is showing, you need to contact the Foster Coordinator to schedule a vet appointment. In the meantime, you may gently clean the area with a warm, moist washcloth if the dog tolerates it.

### **Nasal Discharge/Coughing**

Coughing and nasal discharge. Coughing can be common if your foster dog is pulling on leash. If the coughing becomes more frequent, however, watch for discharge coming from the nose. If the discharge is clear, the infection is probably viral and medication may not be needed. Please observe for any loss of appetite, excessive water drinking, lethargy or irritability, and call the Foster Coordinator to find out if a vet appointment is necessary.

If the discharge becomes colored, notify the Foster Coordinator who will make an appointment because the dog may have a bacterial infection. Be sure to monitor the dog's breathing. If the dog seems to struggle to breathe or starts wheezing, call the foster coordinator immediately. Also, once you notice nasal discharge, monitor the dog's eating habits more closely to ensure that he or she is still eating.

### **Vaginal Discharge**

There are many reasons for vaginal discharge some of which are not serious and others which are. If your foster female experiences bloody discharge, discharge that looks like pus or mucous, monitor her for bloody or cloudy urine, difficulty holding urine, frequent urination, behavior changes and appetite. Call the Foster Coordinator to find out whether a vet visit will be needed.

## **Penile Discharge**

Normal penile discharge is clear fluid. If you notice pus or bloody discharge, please monitor the dog for lethargy, lack of appetite, incontinence, excessive licking and redness/swelling of the area and contact the Foster Coordinator to determine whether a vet visit is needed.

## **Wound Drainage**

If your foster dog has a wound when you take him home, the Foster Coordinator will provide you with instructions about caring for the wound. If the wound drainage changes in amount, odor, or color, please contact the Foster Coordinator for guidance. If your foster develops a wound, please note the absence/presence of drainage, including the amount, odor and color and contact the Foster Coordinator for instructions.

## **6.3 Common ailments in animals from shelters**

Shelter dogs may suffer from kennel cough, giardia or intestinal parasites. Symptoms of kennel cough include a dry hacking cough, often with phlegm discharge, discharge from the nose and/or eyes, decrease in appetite, dehydration and slight lethargy. Symptoms of giardia or intestinal parasites include vomiting, diarrhea (often with a pungent odor) and/or dehydration.

If your foster dog is displaying one or more of these signs, please contact the Foster Coordinator. These ailments will worsen if left untreated.

## **6.4 If your foster dog gets loose or goes missing**

If your foster dog gets loose or goes missing, immediately call the Foster Coordinator. Then notify your local police departments and local animal control, if available. You will have the dogs' microchip number in case he/she is picked up.

Place any bedding your foster dog has used near the door of your home. The scent may help your foster find his way back. Make sure that someone is home watching while any others are out looking for the dog. We appreciate any help you can give us in recovering our lost foster dog.

If the dog returns to your home, please check him/her over carefully to determine whether there are any injuries, cuts or scrapes. Call the Foster Coordinator with this information. The Coordinator may ask you to bring the dog in for a check up. If the dog is picked up by Animal Control, he/she will be returned to Adoptable Friends for a medical assessment and determination of the next steps.

It's important to remember that being away from your home is a very stressful event. Be aware that the dog may withdraw initially and require less activity. Depending on the length of the absence, you may want to restart the decompression protocol again, although the dog will usually respond more quickly than initially.

Once the dog is returned, please be observant of any changes in stool, as it is easy for a dog to pick up parasites.

## 6.5 Criteria for emergencies

What constitutes a medical emergency in a dog? A good rule of thumb is any situation in which you would call 911 for a person. Here are some specific symptoms that could indicate an emergency:

- Not breathing or labored breathing
- Symptoms of parvovirus: bloody diarrhea, vomiting, weakness, suspected fever
- Signs of extreme dehydration: dry mucous membranes, weakness, vomiting, tenting of the skin (when the skin is pulled up, it stays there)
- Abnormal lethargy or unable to stand
- Unconsciousness or unable to wake up
- Cold to the touch
- Broken bones
- Any trauma: hit by a car, dropped, stepped on
- A large wound or profuse bleeding that doesn't stop when pressure is applied
- Loss of appetite for more than 24 hours

If your foster dog displays any of these symptoms, contact the Foster Coordinator immediately by phone (847-260-8556). If the animal is vomiting or has diarrhea, but is still active, eating and drinking, you can probably wait until the next day to get help.

## 6.6 Emergency Contact Procedure

**Call (847) 260-8556 in case of an emergency to authorize medical care for your foster animal.**

Adoptable Friends partners with **Preiser Animal Hospital** in **Northbrook, IL** as our primary veterinary provider during normal business hours. If your foster animal needs after-hour or emergency vet care, after calling the number above, you will be asked to take the animal to **Veterinary Specialty Center** in **Buffalo Grove**. Exceptions may be made at Adoptable Friends' discretion.

### **Preiser Animal Hospital, Northbrook, IL**

2975 N Milwaukee Ave, Northbrook, IL 60062

[\(847\) 827-5200](tel:(847)827-5200)

### **Veterinary Specialty Center, Buffalo Grove, IL**

1515 Busch Pkwy, Buffalo Grove, IL 60089

847-459-7535

## Section 7: Behavior support

One of your goals as a foster parent is to help prepare your foster dog for living successfully in a home. So, we ask that you help your foster dog to develop good habits and skills through the use of positive reinforcement training, which builds trust between you and your foster pet. The basic idea is to reward desirable behaviors and to adequately manage the environment to prevent unwanted behaviors from occurring.

You must not physically punish a dog for a behavior that you find undesirable because physical punishment is ineffective at eliminating the behavior. If the dog is doing something undesirable, distract him or her before the behavior occurs, or manage the situation so the dog cannot rehearse the behavior in the future. It is also important for every human in the foster home to stick to the rules established for your foster dogs, which will help them to learn faster.

When interacting with your foster dog, refrain from wrestling or engaging in play that encourages the dog to be mouthy and “play bite” on your body. Also, try to refrain from inviting dogs up on the couch or bed. Not all adopters find this habit acceptable.

If you feel unable to manage any behavior that your foster dog is exhibiting, please contact the Foster Coordinator during business hours to discuss the issue. We will put you in touch with our Director of Training who will guide you on how to work on the behavior issue. It will be helpful to have videos of the issue to share with the Director of Training, so please do your best to safely record any incidents that occur.

## Section 8: Preparing for your next foster

Dogs and puppies may leave behind germs that can put your next foster pet at risk for disease transmission. To prevent this, we ask that you follow this specific cleaning protocol before bringing home another foster pet:

- Remove and wash anything your foster slept on or played with
- Scrub everything that your foster could have touched with a diluted bleach solution or an alternative (see below).
- Food and water dishes can be washed in the dishwasher or soaked in dilute bleach for 10 minutes.
- Clean all toys with dilute bleach
- Wash all bedding in hot water and dry on a hot setting
- Throw away anything that cannot be bleached

**Diluted bleach solution:** of ¼ Cups Chlorine Bleach, 2 ¾ Cups Warm Water

**Alternative to bleach solution:** Odoban (purchase at Home Depot, ACE Hardware), Clorox Clean Up

Thank you so much for opening up your heart and your home to foster pets.

## Appendix

### Foster Agreement & Waiver

Our official Foster Agreement & Waiver is part of the application to foster that you initially filled out online. The terms are listed below as reminders.








1. I agree to foster dogs with Adoptable Friends and understand and will abide by the expectations described in the following statements as indicated by an “Agree” response on my initial application.
2. I commit to fostering each foster dog for a minimum of 2 weeks unless I have an explicit agreement with the Foster Coordinator for a shorter time frame.
3. I agree that I will work through behavior needs such as housetraining, crate training, leash walking and other minor behavior issues common in foster dogs.
4. I understand that I must use force-free/positive reinforcement training with my foster dog as a first line training method. I will not use a prong, choke, or electronic (shock/vibration) collar or any aversive training method on my foster dog, including physical punishment.
5. I understand that if I need to return a foster dog or request temporary foster, I will email the Foster Coordinator at least 3 days in advance unless it’s an emergency.
6. I will not let a foster dog off leash outside of my home. Dogs must be walked on a well-fitted harness with a martingale collar displaying an Adoptable Friends ID tag at all times.
7. I will not leave a foster dog unattended in a yard, even one that is fenced.
8. I will crate or otherwise confine my foster dog while I am out or unable to supervise or make sure my foster cannot damage my property.
9. I will not travel out of the area with a foster dog without previous approval from the Foster Coordinator.
10. I will not hand off a foster dog to a sitter or any other person without the prior approval of the Foster Coordinator.
11. I will provide marketing information (pictures, bios, videos) throughout the foster period. I will provide these to the Social Media Coordinator for distribution to outlets other than my personal social media.
12. I confirm that I willingly offer to foster and that I do not expect any goods or services in return, including an application fee reduction or waiver should I decide to adopt my foster dog.
13. I understand that Adoptable Friends has the final say on who adopts each foster dog. I also understand that Adoptable Friends does not adopt out biologically-related dogs to the same home (littermates or mom and puppies).



14. I will immediately report any bite or behavioral issue to the Foster Coordinator.
15. I will immediately notify the Foster Coordinator if my foster dog gets loose or is lost.
16. I will not allow children, minors, or any person outside my household to care for or walk my foster dog.
17. Medical Care Acknowledgement: Adoptable Friends is committed to ensuring their dogs get the care needed to transition into their forever homes. These dogs come from a variety of shelters, which makes it impossible to know if they have been in contact with a contagious disease. I understand this potential risk and acknowledge the following statements as indicated by an "Agree" response on my initial application.
18. I will not take a foster dog unless all my resident animal(s) are fully vaccinated.
19. I understand that although any dog that I foster has been/will be medically examined and appropriately vaccinated, it is possible they may still be carrying a disease from a previous shelter or may have an underlying medical issue not initially identified on intake.
20. I will respect and defer to Adoptable Friends' decisions regarding the care of a foster dog.
21. I will notify the Foster Coordinator immediately if a foster dog is showing any signs of illness or injury.
22. I understand that Adoptable Friends provides all medical care for our foster dogs, and will NOT reimburse me for the cost of ANY unapproved medical care.
23. I understand that if my resident animal becomes ill due to a contagious disease from my foster dog that I will not be reimbursed for medical expenses.
24. I acknowledge that any loss, such as illness, injury or property damage to myself, my resident animals, or any other person, animal or object occurs as a result of my not following any of the Adoptable Friends rules or guidelines, I am solely responsible for that loss.

## Bristol Stool Chart

### Bristol stool chart

Type 1		Separate hard lumps, like nuts (hard to pass)
Type 2		Sausage-shaped but lumpy
Type 3		Like a sausage but with cracks on its surface
Type 4		Like a sausage or snake, smooth and soft
Type 5		Soft blobs with clear-cut edges (passed easily)
Type 6		Fluffy pieces with ragged edges, a mushy stool
Type 7		Watery, no solid pieces, <b>Entirely liquid</b>

# DOGGIE LANGUAGE

starring Boogie the Boston Terrier



ALERT



SUSPICIOUS



ANXIOUS



THREATENED



ANGRY



"PEACE!"  
look away/head turn



STRESSED  
yawn



STRESSED  
nose lick



"PEACE!"  
sniff ground



"RESPECT!"  
turn & walk away



"NEED SPACE"  
whale eye



STALKING



STRESSED  
scratching



STRESS RELEASE  
shake off



RELAXED  
soft ears, blinky eyes



"RESPECT!"  
offer his back



FRIENDLY & POLITE  
curved body



FRIENDLY



"PRETTY PLEASE"  
round puppy face



"I'M YOUR LOVEBUG"  
belly-rub pose



"HELLO I LOVE YOU!"  
greeting stretch



"I'M FRIENDLY!"  
play bow



"READY!"  
prey bow



"YOU WILL FEED ME"



CURIOUS  
head tilt



HAPPY  
(or hot)



OVERJOYED  
wiggly



"MMMM...."



"I LOVE YOU,  
DON'T STOP"

# Body Language of Fear in Dogs



**Slight Cowering**



**Major Cowering**

## More Subtle Signs of Fear & Anxiety



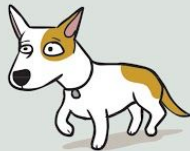
**Licking Lips**  
when no food nearby



**Panting**  
when not hot or thirsty



**Brows Furrowed, Ears to Side**



**Moving in Slow Motion**  
walking slow on floor



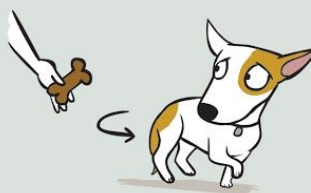
**Acting Sleepy or Yawning**  
when they shouldn't be tired



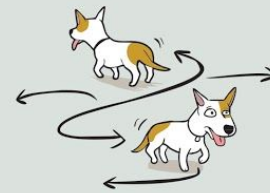
**Hypervigilant**  
looking in many directions



**Suddenly Won't Eat**  
but was hungry earlier



**Moving Away**



**Pacing**

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*The Art and Science of Animal Behavior*

For additional free dog bite prevention resources and more dog behavior books and products, visit [www.drSophiaYin.com](http://www.drSophiaYin.com).



# How Kids SHOULD Interact with Dogs

Use common sense.

Be polite and kind to pets



Learn to recognize when your dog is scared or anxious



Play appropriate games with pets, such as:

Fetch



ROLL OVER



Training tricks (like roll over, shake, beg, etc.)

Walking and running with a dog



SNIFF  
SNIFF



Playing hide-n-seek

Always remember:

**Supervise all interactions. Accidents can happen in a split second.**



Train your dog to associate the kids with positive experiences so he'll be more likely to tolerate your child in case she accidentally interacts inappropriately.



TREAT!

For additional Low Stress Handling information, posters, flyers, books, and DVDs, please visit our website at <http://DrSophiaYin.com>



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Questions@cattledogpublishing.com

(530) 757-2383 — P.O. Box 4516, Davis, CA 95617

Support@lowstresshandling.com

# How Kids SHOULD NOT Interact with Dogs

It's common sense. Just imagine how people should interact with each other.

Avoid taking people's food



Avoid bothering dogs when they are eating

Avoid stealing other people's toys



Avoid taking a dog's bones or toys

Avoid putting your face right up to someone else's face



Avoid putting your face right up to a dog's face

Avoid bothering when asleep



Avoid bothering animals when they are resting. Let sleeping dogs lie.

Avoid pestering



Avoid grabbing tail/ears

Avoid climbing on or trampling



Avoid climbing on or trampling

Avoid pinching



Avoid hugging. Most dogs dislike it.

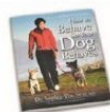
Avoid screaming around



Avoid hollering and shouting. Use your "inside" voice instead.

**Dr. Sophia Yin, DVM, MS**  
The Art and Science of Animal Behavior












For additional free dog bite prevention resources and more dog behavior books and products, visit [www.drsophiayin.com](http://www.drsophiayin.com).



## How to Greet a Dog

# How to Greet a Dog (and What to Avoid)

Appropriate greetings are common sense. Imagine if someone greeted you the way many people greet dogs!

Human to Human INCORRECT	Human to Dog INCORRECT	Human to Dog CORRECT
 <p>HEY!!</p> <p>Avoid reaching into their safety zone.</p>	 <p>Avoid reaching in or towards the dog's car.</p>	 <p>Stand a safe distance away so that you are not a threat.</p>
 <p>CRIP!!</p> <p>Avoid rushing up.</p>	 <p>YIKES!</p> <p>Avoid rushing up.</p>	 <p>Approach slowly (at a relaxed walk).</p>
 <p>STRANGER DANGER!</p> <p>Avoid interactions without asking.</p>	 <p>STRANGER DANGER!</p> <p>Avoid interacting with unfamiliar dogs, especially if they're tied up.</p>	 <p>MAY I PET YOUR DOG?</p> <p>Ask if you can interact first.</p>
 <p>Avoid staring at people. This is scary.</p>	 <p>Avoid staring at or approaching head-on.</p>	 <p>Approach sideways and look using your peripheral vision.</p>
 <p>Avoid looming over.</p>	 <p>Avoid leaning over or towards dogs even when you change position to squat or get up.</p>	 <p>Stay outside the dog's bubble and present your side to the dog.</p>
 <p>Avoid reaching into personal space.</p>	 <p>Avoid reaching your hand out for the dog to sniff.</p>	 <p>Let the dog approach at his own rate.</p>
 <p>Avoid close interaction if the person is afraid of you.</p>	 <p>Avoid petting if the dog looks nervous or tense. Just admire him instead.</p>	 <p>It's OK to pet the dog if he looks relaxed, comes up to you, and solicits your attention by rubbing against you.</p>
 <p>SQUEEZE</p> <p>AAARGH! DON'T LIKE!</p> <p>Avoid touching inappropriately.</p>	 <p>Avoid hugging, kissing, and patting roughly. This is too familiar and disliked by many dogs.</p>	 <p>Pet gently.</p>

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(530) 757-2383

P.O. Box 4516, Davis, CA 95617

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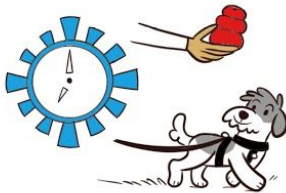
## Decompress for Success

Adopting a new dog is all about changes for both of you. Use this guide to make the first few weeks fun and stress-free. You will build a foundation for a lasting relationship if you follow these steps to ...



### ROUTINE

Dogs crave predictability. Stick to the same times when feeding, walking, training, and departing from your home.



### PRIVACY

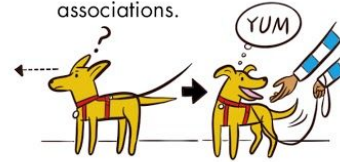
Dogs, like people, need time to themselves. Create a spot with a crate or mat. Call your dog to leave their space, rather than invading their space.



### POSITIVE

### SOCIALIZATION

Limit interactions with new people, places, and things. Let your dog explore gradually in short sessions. Build positive associations.



### TRAIN AT HOME FIRST

Start positive reinforcement training at home for a distraction-free setting. This is the fastest, clearest way to establish communication.



### 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.



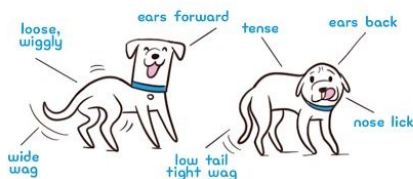
### AVOID LEASH GREETINGS

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.



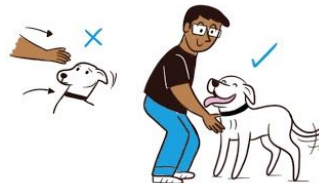
### OBSERVE YOUR DOG

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.



### 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.



### 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!





## **Important Contacts**

### **Foster Coordinator**

Pam Kitts, Executive Director

[pam@adoptablefriends.org](mailto:pam@adoptablefriends.org)

847-260-8556

### **Training Director**

Brenda Belmonte, CPDT-KA

[behavior@adoptablefriends.org](mailto:behavior@adoptablefriends.org)

847-341-1024

### **Preiser Animal Hospital, Northbrook, IL**

2975 N Milwaukee Ave, Northbrook, IL 60062

[847-827-5200](tel:847-827-5200)

### **Veterinary Specialty Center, Buffalo Grove, IL**

1515 Busch Pkwy, Buffalo Grove, IL 60089

847-459-7535