

Settling in Your New Rescue Dog Advice- Give them Space

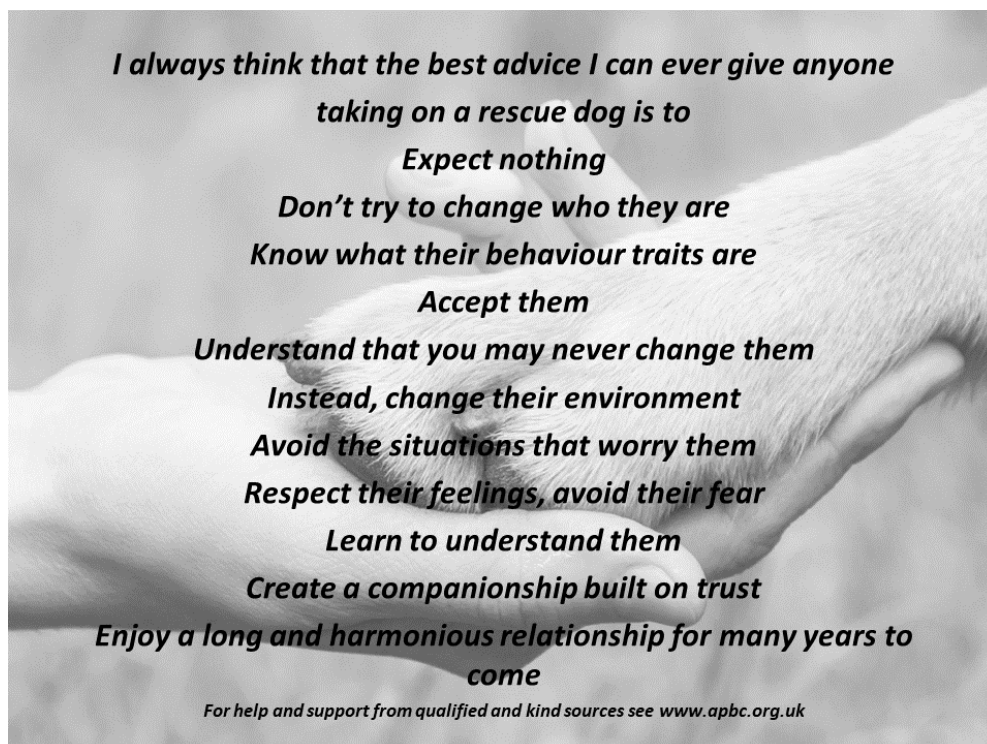
Imagine how you would feel if you were suddenly taken from everything and everyone you knew into a strange environment with strange people. You would feel scared and unsure. This document is designed to help your new dog as they are settling into their new environment and you are getting to know each other.

1. Give them their own “safe place” Set up a crate or den area in a quiet area of the house. Cover it with a duvet. Put a comfortable bed in there. Feed them in there. Leave the door open so they do not feel trapped. Make this the place where they can go and where they know no one will disturb them. They may prefer to sleep in here too. If your dog has come from kennels remember that they probably slept from 5pm until 9am whilst kennels were closed. Or they may have found it hard to sleep in kennels and be very tired. They may find too much contact overwhelming. They need a quiet place they can go to relax and take everything in.
2. Hands Off- Avoid too much interaction with your dog unless they seek it. Don't stroke too much or talk too much. Just let them be. If they come to you for attention then respond but be mindful of their body language. Stroke them for just a few seconds but if they move away when you stop, or don't move towards you to continue, they are telling you they have had enough. Yawning can be a sign of stress. Allow the dog to approach you – do not keep walking up to them or calling them. They need time to get to know you and have the choice to interact or to move away.
3. Mental Stimulation- It's calming for dogs to use their brains. Do free work with them. Hide treats around the garden for them to find. Give them a box of tricks to find treats in [used toilet roll holders etc] Hide treats under plant pots for them to search out. Take a look at the following; <https://caninecompilation.com/free-work-enrichment-for-dogs/>
4. Walking- If your dog is relaxed on their walks then take them for a walk but be careful not to do too much. Avoid busy areas with lots of people or other dogs initially. They need time to get to know and trust you before they feel comfortable with busy environments. Don't do ball throwing or other games that will over excite them. Everything needs to be calm and quiet for now. In a few weeks or months depending on how relaxed they are, you can then start to introduce games and busier areas. Keep walks short and positive. Don't take them for a huge long walk to get to know the area – gradually increase the length of the walk each day to avoid overwhelming them.
5. Supplements- Whilst they are settling in, they will inevitably feel stressed and unsure. An ADAPTIL collar, plug in or spray PET REMEDY for their bed or YUCALM supplements are great for supporting them as they get used to their new home.
6. Always use treats and toys to encourage the behaviours you want and to help your dog succeed. Eg, If you don't want them on the sofa then encourage them down with a treat and then reward. If you don't want them upstairs, get a stair gate. Take a look at the following; www.apbc.org.uk
7. Safety- It is always better to use a harness as pulling on a collar can damage a dog's neck and is obviously unpleasant for them. Initially a double ended clip lead that clips onto both the collar and the harness is a good idea. Then if your dog gets frightened or you are in a difficult situation you know you safely have control and won't lose them should a collar or harness slip off.

8. Don't take them to meet people or invite people to meet them. They need to feel safe and trust you before they start making new friends. In a month or so you can reassess this.
9. Don't bath them [even if they smell] Would you like to be bathed by a stranger?
10. Don't take them to the vets or groomer [unless it is for welfare reasons] the pet shop, pub or cafe. This is stressful for any dog, but especially one that has just arrived in a strange environment. In a month or so, you can reassess this.

To summarise, keep things really simple initially;

Essentially DO NOTHING with them, except from look after their welfare. Just LET THEM BE. Share the same home quietly but with limited interaction for now. Once your new dog has relaxed and trusts you to take care of them [it will probably take months], then you can start to have more interaction.



Huge Congratulations on your new Family Member

Enjoy the journey as you get to know each other

Take it slowly and expect nothing, and it will be so rewarding

Other Useful Information:

General behaviour advice: www.apbc.org.uk

Two brilliant webinars on settling in a rescue dog:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lqHmhddpAqc&list=PLfVvL6ly1doJx9NfuMY-r9nbLs5yHsRI7&index=4&t=289s>

<https://m.facebook.com/groups/1336863253341818/permalink/1361074830920660/>