

Preparing Your Home for a New Dog

A guide to help adopters prepare before adopting a new dog into the family.

Thank you for choosing to adopt! We understand that adopting a new dog can be both exciting and intimidating but don't worry, we're here to help!

Before bringing your new dog home, prepare carefully to ensure that the transition goes as smoothly as possible for everyone. There's much to consider, including what rules to set for your new dog, what equipment you'll need, how to prepare your home, and more!

Things to Consider Before Adopting

The first few days or weeks at home can be scary and overwhelming for a new pet. There are a few steps you can do to help prepare your home and yourself for your new furry family member to help make the transition as smooth as possible for you both!

- **Where is the crate and bed going to be for your new dog? Where is he going to eat and drink?** Consider setting up these areas in advance so that they are ready for his arrival. Consistency is a key component in a smooth transition, so think about your spaces carefully so that they don't have to be changed during his adjustment period.
- **Where will your pet be seen for veterinary care, behavioral issues, or emergencies?** BARC offers a low-cost Wellness Clinic and we encourage adopters to take advantage of these services for basic wellness care, however it is still important to establish a relationship with a full-service veterinarian or clinic for your pet's general health needs, illnesses, injuries, etc. BARC encourages all adopters to take their new pet to a full-service clinic within 72 hours of adoption to help establish this relationship as well as to have your pet receive a thorough first exam! Many veterinary clinics will offer free and discounted first exams, so we recommend researching beforehand to help find the clinic that works best for you!
- **How will you introduce children (including any child visitors to your home) to your new dog and establish safety rules?** Children and dogs can be wonderful, lifelong friends; however, it is important to always remember that it is up to us as their guardians to keep their interactions safe. Please read through our informational sheet *Children & Dogs: How to Keep Interactions Safe!*
- **What will your dog's new schedule be?** Again, consistency is important during transitions. It's helpful to plan your dog's new schedule for feedings, walks, playtime, potty breaks, and training so that you aren't overwhelmed when you bring him home! Remember that while your pet is learning and adjusting to your new home, it is helpful to offer frequent potty breaks to avoid accidents. These potty breaks can be gradually spread out over time as he learns the ropes! You can learn more about house-training your new dog in our informational sheet.
- **How will you introduce your new dog to your resident pets and visitors?** We recommend giving your new pet time to adjust to you, his new home, and his new routine before introducing him to your resident pets, visitors, or your friends & family member's dogs. Check out our informational sheets on *Introducing Your New Dog to Your Existing Dogs* and *Introducing Your Dog to New People* for more helpful tips when the time comes to begin introductions!
- **Is your home and yard ready?** Remember that while your home is a safe haven to you, to your new dog, it is a scary new environment full of unknowns. They may look for a way out or exhibit destructive behaviors in an attempt to escape or out of stress, anxiety, or fear when left alone. Make sure all escape routes are blocked, that the fence is secure with no holes, and that the home is "dog-proofed" with no loose wires, shoes, books, etc. in reach in advance!