



The 10 Commandments of Bringing a New Dog Home

by Joe Ramirez - K-9 Joe

- 1. Walk your dog and allow them to relax before going into your home.**
Rescue dogs are often temporarily traumatized from losing everything familiar to them. Now adopted, they are going to a nicer, but still unfamiliar, confinement. A short walk will distract them and create a calmer dog entering into your home for the first time.
- 2. Do not assume your rescue dog is housebroken.** A new home can be confusing. Take your dog straight to the backyard and allow them to explore. If your dog eliminates, praise him, then, back on the leash for a tour of the house.
- 3. Do not give your new dog free run of the house or nurture unwanted behaviors or shower them with excessive affection** (because you feel sorry for them). Your dog could view this as a sign of weakness and lack of leadership on your part. Give them boundaries and confinement. It is essential that they know that you control the environment they are now a part of. Dogs with too much freedom too soon, can often become over-protective and even aggressive. Ease them into more freedom as a reward for showing responsible behavior.
- 4. Get to know your dog's temperament before you decide the best approach to a healthy relationship.**
- 5. Humans must establish their leadership role using positive reinforcement.** Leaders are firm, not mean. Dogs are pack animals and packs require a leader, they do not respect a subordinate. Be a leader to your dog or your dog will become your leader.
- 6. Pack leaders control the resources.** There are 4 things that you, the pack leader, should control in your dog's life: *Food, Space, Games and Grooming.*
- 7. Provide your dog's daily basic needs.** All dogs have different traits and personalities but all have the same basic needs: *Exercise, Food, Grooming and Fun.*
- 8. Basic obedience training reinforces you as the pack leader.** If you are not an experienced handler, hire a professional to assist you. Even one or two sessions will make a huge difference. It is your best investment as you will be starting off on the right foot with your new dog.
- 9. Do not expect a humanistic relationship with your dog.** Do not get frustrated if your dog does not understand you in the beginning. Even though they are capable of learning many words, they immediately understand and respond to body language and expressions. Be aware that once your dog gets to know you, your moods will have an impact on their state of mind.
- 10. Make an appointment with your Vet.** It is important to visit your vet for a check up and to have your dog become familiar with the staff. Use lots of praise and treats to make it a pleasant experience. This will also give you a professional view of your new dogs overall health.

Above all, give your new dog TIME. The adjustment period could take days, weeks or even months. Stay committed and know that BRLA is there to provide help if you need it.