



Tips for New Beagle Parents (Foster & Adoption)

Adapted from: <https://www.reboundhounds.org/the-first-two-weeks.html>

We hope you find that these tips are helpful, but please remember, each dog and each household is unique! It is important that you do what is best for you and your pet.

The most important phase that dogs go through arriving at their foster or adoptive home is the “Decompression Phase.” Any change in a dog’s environment or routine will cause some level of stress and it’s our job to be patient and guide them through this time...however long it takes.

“People want the dog to fit in and often make the biggest mistakes during this period. They will give the dog too much love, too much training, too much attention...all of which can be overwhelming to a transitioning dog. After the experience of living at the shelter the best thing a dog can get upon getting out is space. Space that will allow the dog to decompress from the emotional stress that dogs incur at our shelter. During that phase they should NOT be bothered too much, NOT be engaged too much and expectations should be extremely limited. Especially for the first few days...allow the dog to SEE what his new life will be without expecting him to Live this LIFE” ~~~~Robert Cabral- The Decompression Phase- Bound Angels~~~~

All dogs need structure/rules/boundaries to feel safe. They thrive on predictable routines. The greatest form of affection we can show our new dog is to fulfill their needs: to eat, to have clean water, to potty outside, to walk and to have a cozy/soft/warm place to rest, such as a crate.

Pet your new dog, offer treats and a chew toy. It is suggested that you keep these things to a minimum for at least the first few weeks.

- Upon arrival, before entering the home, go for a 20-40 min. walk, depending on the dog’s health condition.
- When returning home, keep your dog leashed and walk calmly through the front door. While leashed, walk around your home. NO FREE ROAM.
- After this brief tour, go to crated area, allow some water and practice a few crate exercises. The crate should be in an area of the house that is neither isolated nor in the middle of everything. You want your new dog to observe you and your family without feeling stressed and overwhelmed.
- While still leashed, walk to the door that you will be using for potty breaks. Return to crate and let your dog rest. It is important to establish the routine and structure of the crate immediately.
- After some time, leash the dog and remove from crate. Consider hand-feeding meals at first (this is a great bonding/engagement exercise) and then go outside for a potty break.
- Engage in “out of the crate time” (still leashed) once back inside the house. NO rough play, NO wrestling, NO couch, NO beds, NO laps, NO kissy face, NO free roam through the house, NO interactions with any other pets, NO visits from your friends and family, NO trips to Petco and No car rides (other than to the vet). The goal for these first few weeks is to help your dog learn the structure/rules/boundaries of your home.
- After free time, its back outside (still leashed) for potty and then back in for some crate rest.
- Once returned to the crate, ignore your dog to allow for good rest.

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- The first few weeks should be quite simple. Walks/hand feeding/access to water/potty breaks/limited free time in the house/crate time...repeat.

Imagine you just started a new job. You walk through the huge entrance to the building and you are standing in the lobby trying to figure out which way to go. You do not know where your office is. You do not know where the break room is. You do not know where the rest room is. And, you do not know any of your coworkers. You feel lost/overwhelmed/nervous/anxious. Now imagine that same new job BUT as you walk into the building, a coworker walks up you and calmly says "Hi, welcome to XYZ Enterprise, follow me and I will show you around." They give you the tour, they give you a welcome packet and they show you to your office. How much more relaxed and comfortable would you be in the second scenario? Your co-worker made you feel comfortable by guiding you and giving you information. NOT by hugging you or showering you with affection. That is exactly the relaxed comfortable feeling you need to create for your foster or newly adopted dog.