



SETTLING YOUR NEW DOG

We have put together some advice and information to refer to when your new dog arrives.

Some dogs enter a home and settle down like they've always been there, others take a little time so we have tried to cover the most common issues that may arise.

Please read through and direct any additional questions to a member of admin.



DOGS CAN ARRIVE ANYTIME OF THE DAY OR NIGHT DURING A 24HR PERIOD. IF YOUR DOG IS DELIVERED DIRECTLY FROM ROMANIA, YOU MUST NOT WALK YOUR DOG OR LEAVE YOUR PREMISES DURING THE FIRST 48HRS BY LAW!

ARRIVAL & INITIAL STEPS

- It is most important to remember that when your dog arrives they will be scared and overwhelmed. They may have been travelling for up to 4 days and they are in a new environment, with new people. In many cases they do not wish to be stroked and fussed right away.

TIP: Show them where a comfy bed and water is and let them settle and come to you when they are ready. Sometimes this takes just a few hours, sometimes a few weeks; the most important thing to remember is, just let them come around in their own time.

- Don't expect too much too soon, and never push them to do something they don't want to do, which includes being stroked.
- Your dog, unless a UK foster, may never have experienced life in a home, so will need support and patience with training and settling. Even walking through a doorway can be very daunting as this is something they are not used to, they will need gentle encouragement. Positive Reinforcement such as treats is a great technique here.
- Crying at night is common, it is up to you where your new dog sleeps if you have adopted, but please do not allow on sofas, in your bed, or other furniture until full trained and boundaries in place.
- Be prepared to sit with and settle your dog for the first few nights. It is all very new and scary for them. Often warmth and silence are very alien to them.
- If your garden is secure allow your dog to explore in their own time. They may not wish to come back inside immediately or when you want them to, just give them gentle persuasion and use treats to encourage them.
- NEVER push or drag your dog.
- For many dogs, crates and pens are recommended as they often see this as a safety place.

PLEASE SEE OUR SEPARATE CRATE TRAINING INFORMATION & ADVICE FOR FURTHER INFORMATION.

TAGS & MICROCHIPS

- Please ensure you have a tag made with your identity and contact details on, prior to the dog's arrival. Wearing a tag is a legal requirement and you can be fined if your dog does not wear one, this includes any foster dog.
- Your dog will be microchipped and this will be checked against the passport when they arrive. If you are adopting your dog, we will register your dog's microchip, as this is included in adoption fee. If you are fostering, the microchip remains registered to us.

TOILET TRAINING

- It is unlikely, unless in foster, that your dog will have any sort of toilet training.
- Please be patient, consistent and give your new dog time to learn.
- Build a good routine - outside within 10-15 minutes of eating and have your own trigger word or phrase, such as 'quick' or 'wee-wees' etc.
- Some people do use puppy pads, but it can sometimes be more confusing for an older dog.
- If you are struggling with toilet training methods please consult a member of our admin team.

BATHING

- NEVER try to bath your dog when they arrive. This will not be an enjoyable experience as the dog will be scared and still unused to the environment.
- Bathing could cause your dog lots of stress and could make them fear you more, affecting your ability to build a bond with them.

- Please always wait at least 1 week and go at the pace of your dog.
- Think carefully, prior to fostering or adopting a dog from overseas if you do not want a smelly dog in your home, because the reality is, they will smell.

TOP TIPS

Please adhere to the following as these are the things that will set your dog up with good manners and the boundaries that he/she will need to ensure a safe and happy life as a part of your family:

1. **START** training as soon as possible - immediately if you can!
2. **DO NOT** treat your dog to a bone/hoof/pig's ears etc. These are things that they will guard.
3. **AVOID** dogs on the sofa until their position in pack hierarchy is established and after that **ONLY** if they are invited. Sofas make for a good place to guard.
4. **YOUR** dog should be made to sit before they are given their food.
5. **SUPERVISE** your dog at all times, especially around children, other pets, and visitors - and even out in the garden, until he/she is settled.
6. Unless stated, our dogs are unlikely to be used to children, we will advise during contact if we think your family is suitable for the dog you fall in love with and always endeavour to make the perfect match. When introducing your new dog to children please do this very carefully and **ALWAYS** under strict supervision. **NEVER** leave a dog with any child unattended.
7. **BE MINDFUL** of your own body language - waving of arms in particular - as this could make your dog fearful.

8. DO NOT touch your dog whilst they are sleeping. Dogs sleep deeply and if they are touched, they can become reactive as they will not be aware of what it is that has touched them!
9. DO NOT allow anyone other than the usual adult members of your household to look after your dog for the first few weeks of arrival. Too many strangers can scare your dog.

PLEASE SEEK FURTHER ADVICE FROM YOUR ADMIN ON TRAINING AND BOUNDARIES IF REQUIRED.

DIETARY REQUIREMENTS

IT IS NORMAL FOR YOUR DOG TO HAVE AN UPSET STOMACH ON ARRIVAL.

- A bland diet, little and often, is advisable for the first few days: chicken and rice, scrambled egg and white fish, are highly recommended whilst your dog adjusts to a normal diet and feeding routine.
- Whilst in Romania your dog would have been fed a locally sourced dry food. Please allow at least 7 days of this plain bland diet before seeking further advice and introducing new foods.
- Tins of wet food such as Chappie and a grain free dried food such as James Welbeloved or Harringtons are great choices.
- Please do not be alarmed if you notice any blood in your dog's stools when they arrive; an upset stomach is perfectly normal and it is not unusual to see traces of blood in their faeces as a result. It is often just caused by stress and the long journey they have had. You can purchase some inexpensive probiotics to add to their food from most pet stores such as Pets at Home

**ANY LARGE AMOUNTS OF FRESH BLOOD OR CLOTS PLEASE SPEAK TO
A MEMBER OF OUR TEAM OR A VET IMMEDIATELY.**

GOING OUT

Fear of a collar and lead is very common in Romanian dogs - a fear installed by bad experiences with dog catchers.

- We strongly recommend a harness rather than a collar and using positive association with the leads and treats. Favourite treats are a great tool to use here (such as cooked chicken or cheese).

ALWAYS DOUBLE LEAD WHEN FIRST TAKING YOUR DOG OUT!

We recommend using TWO slip leads or slip lead and clip on lead (double lead) when first walking your dog in case they wriggle out of one.



- If you find a harness isn't working then try just a slip lead (it is worth being aware that certain breeds such as malamutes and husky types tend to be worse in a harness as the pressure on the chest can make them pull more).
- It is fundamentally important that you keep your dog on a long lead in the garden for the first few days/weeks! They can be notorious escape artists and will scale walls and fences.
- Always ensure all windows and doors are kept shut and secure whilst your dog is settling in as this is also a common escape route for them.
- If fostering a dog, we require the foster dog to ALWAYS be on a lead when leaving the home.
- Many frightened dogs can easily escape both a collar and a standard harness in seconds. Whatever equipment you use to keep your dog safe, please also be aware that determined / fearful dog can chew through a lead or harness strap in seconds.
- Keep your eyes on your dog, take things gently and be patient while getting to know each other.
- Always use double lead until you are fully confident that your dog will not attempt to escape.
- Be prepared to work hard using a long line and treats to ensure perfect recall.
- Your dog may have a 'name' but it may not know it! Most dogs quickly learn their name and basic commands.
- In the unlikely event of your dog escaping you must inform a member of our team IMMEDIATELY - you should ring the dog warden and all local rescues. If you and friends or family go to search for the dog we cannot stress highly enough DO NOT CHASE OR TRY TO CORNER THE DOG they will just become more fearful and run further. We have specialist

tracking teams we can contact who are highly skilled in returning Romanian dogs to their owners.

DEALING WITH AGGRESSION

- Food aggression is a normal issue to encounter and is not impossible to overcome.

IT IS IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER YOUR DOG MAY HAVE LIVED ON THE STREET AND HAD TO FIGHT FOR ITS FOOD

- We always advise you feed your dog on its own, and keep all other animals and children separate at feeding time.
- It does not take long for your dog to learn that in your home, food is readily available.
- Please be aware that growling is not a pre-cursor to aggression.

GROWLING IS JUST A WARNING

- Growling is a dog's way of saying that they are uncomfortable and unsure of a situation. Back away and leave them in peace.
- Growling IS NOT a dog being aggressive.
- Growling IS NOT a dog about to bite.
- Growling IS NOT a dog 'going for you'.
- Growling at other animals is a warning.
- Growling is also a dogs way of finding their place in the new pack.
- Allow them to settle things at their own pace.

- Should a fight occur DO NOT put yourself in danger to separate.
- Make yourself aware of what play fighting can look like, sometimes it looks a bit scary, but while they nip at each other's neck and faces they never break the skin.
- A submissive dog will bow down to invite another dog to play and sometimes when two dogs are bouncing around in this way it can look and sound worse than it is.

PLEASE BE AWARE

There are other quirks that rescue dogs can show, some across all rescue dogs, some more particular to those from Romania.

- Do not be surprised to see your dog eating its own faeces. This can be for a variety of reasons but is often a learned behaviour due to hunger.
- They may show fear of:
 - Traffic/vans /bin/recycling lorries,
 - Males,
 - Noises that are alien to them such as TV, vacuum, phone, doorbell.
- They may dig in your garden and rummage in bins! They will often eat everything and anything they see.
- Your dog may never have been in a home before - DO NOT let them on furniture, your bed or sofas. Provide them with a bed and ensure you set strict boundaries and have training in place ASAP.
- BE VERY AWARE - these dogs have had to survive any way they can, they can jump higher than you think, wriggle through holes smaller than you think, be gone in seconds if scared.

- Settling in can take time, these dogs have been taken from everything they have known and put in a situation that can feel scary and daunting.
- They do not understand initially, that they are safe in your home or that you will love them and they do not know that they are no longer in Romania.
- They do not understand that your expensive ornaments/cushions/rugs/curtains are not appropriate toys! Provide a variety of toys/squeaks/tug toys/soft toys for your dog and let them know they can play with them.
- A firm no is all that is ever needed if your dog does something that you would rather they didn't.

NEVER, EVER STRIKE OR SMACK YOUR DOG.

Please remember that the size your dog is stated as being or maturing to is a guesstimate - as mixed breeds can vary so much - therefore your dog may grow bigger than we initially thought, or in fact remain smaller!

..and FINALLY! Please enjoy your family's new addition, and remember the commitment you have made to them¹.



¹ Anything you are concerned by, or should you encounter any issues or need advice/training tips etc. the Pawprints to Freedom team are always on hand for you to contact us.