

**Bringing Home a FBRGB dog home**

First things first - CONGRATULATIONS!!! We at FBRGB are thrilled that you have got through the adoption process and have been matched to give one of our dogs a forever home.

Rescue dogs have often found themselves looking for new homes through no fault of their own. Family break-ups, death of previous owner, or lack of training in their former home are common causes. The last thing they need is to go into another home that has no understanding of them, yet wants them to understand our human world.

**Before you pick up your new rescue dog.**

We have already told you everything we know about the dog , including veterinary information which should have been or will be emailed over and current eating, sleeping and activity routines so that their transition into your home can be made as easy as possible. We recommend that you find out all you can about the dogs routine when you collect from the fosterer, and keep to it as much as you can. Work out your house rules and decide what is required with all the members of the family. Who will walk the dog first thing in the morning? Who will feed them at night? Will your rescued dog be allowed on the couch or bed? Where will they sleep at night?

 We suggest that you arrange the arrival of your new dog to coincide with a time when you can be home for a few days, but still keep to a routine that you wish to follow. Start early on to leave your dog for short periods, returning within a few minutes at first and then lengthening the time gradually so as not to cause him distress at eventually being left alone for an hour or so, as he will soon realise that you will be coming back very soon.

 If you feel the dog would benefit from dog training classes that teach dog manners, canine to canine body language and discipline then speak to your vet who will be able to make recommendations in the local area. Please allow a week or so of ‘settling in’ to allow your new dog some time to adjust to you and your home before putting him into the stimulating environment of a training class.

**When you arrive home...**

**Things to expect**

You should expect your new dog to act differently to maybe how he has been in foster as this will be the third house they have been in within normally a five week period. They will be excited, nervous and maybe tired after the trip to your house. They don’t know the smells, the sounds, and importantly, the routines and rules of your house. This is very confusing and stressful time for your rescue dog.

Dogs display anxiety and nervousness by either panting, pacing, lack of eye contact, "not listening," toilet accidents, excessive chewing, gastric upset (vomiting, diarrhoea, and loose stools), crying, whining, jumpiness and barking.

How can we overcome these? Reduce the "noise & confusion in their head" and get them to relax, to be calm and show how to be good. Despite your joy at adopting one of our rescue dogs, you should be calm and gentle and firm. Talk to them in a calm, low voice as you travel home - avoid playing the car radio and having too many people with you when you pick him up. Let them approach you for contact and preferably sit on the floor so you are at their height and not bearing down on them.

All rescue dogs go through a "honeymoon period." After the first day or so, the dog may be very quiet "good." The "real" dog appears four to six weeks later - after they have mostly figured out the house rules, the schedule of the days, and the characters of their new family. At this time, they will start testing out there position in the pack, and may "regress" to puppyhood behaviours and "bad" behaviour. Be patient with them praise for appropriate behaviour - especially when they are lying quietly and behaving themselves. Do not praise without a reason constantly, this will only confuse your dog and in time they will not respond.

**Things to Do**:

Introduce them to any existing dog outside of the home FIRST! Arrange to meet up at a local park or neutral area so they can get to know each other before entering the home.

**PUT YOUR DOG ON A LEAD TO INTRODUCE HIM TO YOUR HOME!**

When you first bring your new dog home, make sure you have them on a lead! Spend the first 15-30 minutes walking outside around your house and garden. Walk slowly and let them sniff and pause if they want to. This is them getting used to all the smells, your dog may relieve itself; this is their way of making themselves at home by adding their mark to the smells of your home, and now their new home. Obviously you would want this to happen outside! The excitement of the move and new family will cause them to relieve themselves more often than normal. You must be prepared to give them plenty of opportunities to do this in the beginning by taking them to your garden.

Let your new dog explore the house, making sure they are supervised AT ALL TIMES.

**PROVIDE QUIET TIME**!

Quiet time will be important for your new dog in the first week, because of his nervousness and anxiety. **Even though you are excited about having a dog, please do not invite friends and relatives over to visit them**. Give them time to get used to your immediate family and resident pets only. Again, do not bath your dog within in days of having him; this is a very stressful thing for your new dog.

**FEED YOUR NEW DOG**!

Please ensure you follow the feeding pattern that has been explained to you by the foster home; try to keep as near to the time as possible. This can be changed, but slowly day by day, until the time is convenient to you. By changing both the time and type of food too quickly could cause upset stomachs and lead to diarrhoea. French Bulldogs have very sensitive stomachs and suffer with allergies so unless recommended by a vet please do not change the food they are on.

If you have other dogs, feed your new dog away from them but at the same time. You can feed in the same room, but use opposite corners. You may want to arrange having another adult in the room for the first week of feedings to monitor the "pack behaviour." Watch that each dog sticks to their own bowl.

**SAFE AREA FOR YOUR DOG!**

Every dog needs a place to escape to, a place to call their own, away from children or other pets. Try to ensure you provide them with a safe haven somewhere in the room. . We suggest using baby gates in the kitchen or hallway. Remember, you may really want to keep your dog on easy cleanup flooring at first, for example the kitchen area. Where ever you decide, make sure your dog will not be isolated away from your family or other pets. The more they can hear and see the family and other pets the better.

**BE PATIENT DURING THE HONEYMOON PERIOD!**

There is a good chance that your dog will be insecure and will follow you everywhere! This will include when you are in the bathroom, watching TV, even wanting to sleep with you when it is bed time. It is not unusual for them to whine or cry or bark if confined away from you at night, lights out at a new strange place is a stressful thing for them. Perhaps leave a light on, or the radio low, wrap a warm hot water bottle in a familiar smelling blanket, and even a ticking clock wrapped and placed in the bed may help, especially young dogs as it sounds like mums heartbeat.

**ESTABLISH A ROUTINE!**

Try and have a daily routine for feeding, exercising, and time to go for their toilets. Dogs are creatures of habit and routine gives them security. If you do the same things in the same way and in the same order, they will settle in more quickly and learn what is expected of them and when.

**SOCIALISE YOUR DOG**

Our rescue dogs come from many different backgrounds, but all dogs can do with more socialisation. After your dog has time to settle in your home and is starting to look to you with confidence (2-3 weeks), start providing new socialisation opportunities.

NOW you can start inviting your friends and relatives over. Be sure to tell your visitors that your dog is new from a Rescue so they need to be more sensitive and careful. Start taking your dog new places, parks, shops if we have advised that is the environments that the dog can cope with.

**LOVE AND ENJOY YOUR NEW DOG!!**

Most of all, be prepared to give and receive more love, affection and loyalty than you ever thought possible! Enjoy your rescue dog for many years to come and thanks again for adopting a dog through FBRGB.