



The first few days with your adult rehome dog

The first few days after you bring your rehomed dog home can be the hardest. New people, new environment, new expectations and experiences. So, here are some tips to help them settle in and make it as stress-free as possible.

Tip one: Let them settle in at their own pace. While most puppies are relaxed and inquisitive, adult dogs may be worried when they arrive a new home. You may find they hide at first and don't seem to want to interact with you. Don't worry – this is perfectly normal. To help them relax you should let them go at their own pace. If they do hide, leave them alone – never force out or put your hand into their den.

Allow them to spend time on their own without disruptions and come to you when they are ready. They may come over and look at you, sit nearby or drop a toy at your feet.

Avoid any visitors to the home during this time and make sure it is calm and quiet, so they get familiar with their new surroundings in peace. I often just follow them around and praise them for being interested in new things.

Tip two: Avoid fussing them and don't force interaction. You don't want to fuss your dog too much, especially when they first arrive and particularly if they appear uncomfortable. Wait for them to approach you and keep your hands at your side.

If they lean in, stroke them on their chest or shoulders for three to four seconds. Then wait to see if they initiate further interactions. This is to make sure they are enjoying it and feeling relaxed.

If they don't seem interested and haven't approached you for fuss, then don't force it. Give them some space and allow them time to relax and feel more confident around you.

Tip three: Allow them to spend time in their den area undisturbed. That den you created before dog arrived will be particularly important during these first few days.

They will learn that it is a quiet, safe space where they can go to spend time on their own. They can relax here and simply observe while they get used to the new household. They won't feel exposed, and this will help to build their confidence.

You could add enrichment, treats and toys to this area to encourage them to use it and help them to learn that it's a positive place. But, they should never be disturbed when they are here.

Tip four: Start using food enrichment. Food enrichment can be a positive way to encourage your dog to explore their new environment. Your dog may be unsure around you at first. This is something you can do without constant interaction which will feel less intense and help to build their confidence.

Tip five: Keep walks short. You'll no doubt be keen to start giving your rehome dog lots of new and exciting walks. However, over the first few days you want to keep walks short and in the same location. This will give pup time to get used to their new area and get their bearings. I like to wait three days before walking them the first time.

Tip six: Carefully introduce them to other pets. It's important to ensure that your dog is introduced slowly and carefully to any other dogs or cats that live in your home.

Tip seven: Create a routine and stick to it. Start to create a routine and stick as closely to it as possible. This will help your dog get used to their new home and start to know what to expect and when. Remember, this may, at least in part, be based around what they are already used to which will help them to settle.

Tip eight: Be understanding and patient. Your expectations and routines may be different from their previous home. They may, for example, have been allowed to sleep on their owner's bed or on the sofa. If this isn't something you want, then use treats and toys to make the den area much more appealing to them. Despite being an adult, they may need showing where to toilet and so could need help with this.

Being patient and understanding is so important to help them settle in. This also means looking out for signs that they are feeling anxious or frightened, so you can respond appropriately.

Tip nine: Keep a diary. You could keep a settling-in diary for the first three months. This is a place where you can note down everything from your dog's likes and dislikes to behaviours and eating habits. This will help you get to know your dog and what is normal for them. You may notice changes over the first few days, weeks and months and this will help you to keep a track of them.

Tip 10: Seek behavioural support. You can't always know exactly what an adult dog will be like in your home. This means they may display some unexpected behaviours when you arrive home. Keep in touch with Tegan for support before anything becomes an issue.

Need to know:

Don't forget, in those first few days while you are helping them to settle into their new home you also need to update their microchip details, organise pet insurance and register with your local vet.

Introducing your new Beagle to other household pets.

Create individual areas

Set up a core area for each pet where they will feel secure eating, drinking, resting and going to the toilet. Make sure that both can access all of their resources without coming into contact with each other. Make sure that your existing dog is comfortable spending time in their core area before bringing home your new arrival.

Use physical barriers

Make a plan, if you need to, to keep your pets separated with physical barriers, such as baby gates or by keeping doors shut, at least in the short term. Chasing is very rewarding for dogs, so it's vital that they don't get to practise this behaviour.

Safe introductions

Now you can start gradual introductions, but there are two important things you need to keep in mind when introducing your dogs.

Keep your pets separate

Your dogs should be kept separate unless you are there to watch them and reward good behaviour.

Even then, it's a good idea to have a physical barrier between your pets. You could also keep your dog on a lead (or preferably a house-training line) until you are confident that they are calm and relaxed around one another.

Be fair

Keep "play" fair, and force rest periods. If play becomes one sided use a lead or body block to remove the over stimulated dog for a few moments, with a clear voice command of "no". Repeat this body blocking, don't use your hands, it is effective – if the dog is not responding or listening then pop into their den to settle.

THE RULE OF THREE



Lilleagle
Beagles

3D

IN THE FIRST 3
DAYS

- FEELING OVERWHELMED
- MAY BE SCARED AND UNSURE
- NOT COMFORTABLE ENOUGH TO BE SELF
- MAY NOT WANT TO EAT OR DRINK
- SHUT DOWN IN CRATE OR HIDE
- TEST BOUNDARIES

3W

IN THE FIRST 3
WEEKS

- STARTING TO SETTLE, FEELING MORE COMFORTABLE
- FIGURED OUT ENVIRONMENT
- GETTING INTO A ROUTINE
- LETTING GUARD DOWN AND SHOWING TRUE PERSONALITY
- TEST BOUNDARIES
- REALISING THIS IS HOME

3M

IN THE FIRST 3
MONTHS

- FINALLY COMPLETELY COMFORTABLE IN THE HOME
- BUILDING TRUST AND A TRUE BOND
- GAINED A COMPLETE SENSE OF SECURITY WITH NEW FAMILY
- SET IN A ROUTINE