



After the Adoption

So you've taken your time and selected a dog that you feel is right for you and your family. Now all you have to do is figure out how to make the adjustment period as positive and problem free as possible. The following tips are designed to help make this happen. As you read through the tips, please keep in mind that your results will vary depending on your situation and the history behind your new furry friend. If at any time you feel that your situation requires the assistance of a canine professional, please contact the Dog Wizard ([URL link](#)) for an online consultation or you can contact an ACT Canine Coach in your area. ([URL Link](#))

Tip 1 - Do Your Research

Research the breed of dog that you have just adopted to identify its needs and ask the prior caregiver to give you any information available to help you identify what your dog will require both physically and mentally.

Tip 2 - Be Prepared

Make sure that you have the supplies necessary to properly care for your new dog. These basic supplies include: dog food ([URL link](#)), bowls, leash ([URL link](#)), collar ([URL link](#)), toys, ([URL link](#)) bedding and crate ([URL Link](#)).

Tip 3 - Home Introduction

Be sure to supervise your new dog at all times as soon as he enters your home. There will be many new scents and curiosity may cause unwanted behavior. If you cannot supervise your dog, put him in a crate until you can. In the beginning, be careful not to leave him in the crate for longer than 30 minutes at one time. The crate should be set up in the same room as he eats in. Make sure that your entire family knows the rules and boundaries for your new dog and is prepared to reinforce them at all times. Be the Alpha! For tips on housebreaking, if needed, please refer to the instructional manual, "Housebreaking Your Dog in One Week." ([URL Link](#)) Keep your home as stress free as possible. Your new dog is already feeling stress with his new surroundings and caretakers, so you certainly don't want to add to it!

Tip 4 - Behavior

Don't automatically assume that your new dog's perfect behavior or his horrid behavior will stick with him for the rest of his life. Typically, your new dog will have an adjustment period of 3 - 4 weeks. During this time, he will display all kinds of behavior that will be new to you and possibly to him. Understanding why your dog is behaving badly is crucial to identifying the problem, correcting it, and preventing it from happening again. Don't let your guard down if your dog is behaving perfectly - it may not last!

Tip 5 - Identifying Stress

The following are signs of stress that can lead to behavioral issues if left untreated for several weeks: excessive barking, biting, attachment to one family member; shyness and insecurity towards others, jumping, pawing, pacing from one end of the room to the other, lunging at or intolerance to other animals or strangers, inability to be left alone for short periods of time. If you identify these behaviors in your new dog and they have been present for more than three weeks, or you feel you need assistance with them, please contact the Dog Wizard or an ACT Canine Coach in your area for assistance ([URL link](#)).

Tip 6 - Training

Training your new dog is essential to ensure that good behavior continues, or that undesirable behavior is stopped. The Dog Wizard has two sensational DVD's that are packed full of training advice and step by step instructions for training your dog both on leash and off leash. You can also set up an online consultation with the Dog Wizard ([URL link](#)) or contact an ACT Canine Coach ([URL link](#)) in your area for assistance. Training your dog will help ease his anxiety because he will know the rules and know that he can depend on you for his continuing care.

Tip 7 - Socialization

Socialization is critical for any dog at any age. Initially, be careful not to over stimulate your new dog by taking him for a walk down busy city streets or by taking him to dog parks. Dog parks are great for your dog once he has proved stable around other dogs, but they can be treacherous for an overexcited dog or an overly shy / insecure dog. This type of dog can trigger a fight at a dog park in a matter of seconds. So be careful where you take him and who you expose him to until his temperament has stabilized. Exposing your new dog to the neighbor's crazy Labrador may not be the wisest choice. Instead, find someone with a stable, low energy dog for his initial experience. Remember, even if the prior caregiver has told you that your new dog is great with other dogs and strangers, don't assume that they will be this way in their new environment. Assuming anything about your new dog will lead you both down a path of destruction. Make all determinations about his social behavior based on your own observations!

In conclusion, adopting a dog should not be a spontaneous decision. Remember, you are taking on a responsibility for a living, breathing life. This responsibility is a commitment that will last for the rest of the dog's life. The option of turning over ownership should not be a factor in your decision to adopt. Only adopt if you are certain that this dog is right for your lifestyle and the lifestyle of your family. If for some reason you have done your best and the dog is untrainable or unfixable, the option of turning over ownership may be reasonable. But don't use this as an excuse for picking a dog without researching and spending time with it first. Research the dog and be sure that you will be able to care for its needs, both physically and mentally!