

Franklin County Dog Shelter & Adoption Center 🐾

Decompression and Tips for a Successful Adoption



In 2016, **18%** of adopted dogs were returned to the shelter.

Many dogs are returned because they are not properly introduced into the home setting. This can be caused by a variety of circumstances such as small children being present or having multiple pets in the home. Any new dog needs time to adjust to their new environment. Below are some suggestions on how to successfully welcome your new dog into your home.

- 🐾 **Plan** on taking a couple of weeks to get adjusted. Keep in mind, your resident dog or cat will also need time to adjust.
- 🐾 **Treat your new dog like a puppy.** Give lots of treats for good behavior until you establish a routine. Do not punish undesirable behavior. New dogs do not know how to tell you when they need to go outside. Take them out regularly and reward them each time they potty outside.
- 🐾 **Decompressing** from shelter life is something many dogs need to do. They need time to adjust to different noises and routines. Remember, they've come from being confined in a small space. In the beginning, limit interaction with visitors and other animals. This includes avoiding dog parks for a while. Do not leave new dogs unsupervised with other animals. Use baby gates or crates to keep them separated until they are comfortable together.
- 🐾 **Separate** your new dog and resident dog immediately if you see any issues arise. Keep them separated for a period of time- sometimes days. Use baby gates/crates as needed. Slowly begin to reintroduce them again as if they have never met before. Take them on walks, only moving closer when they become more comfortable. Do not leave them unattended together at any time until they have reached an agreeable relationship. Keep all toys, treats and food out of reach at first to prevent fighting between the dogs. Watch for negative body language (raised hair, stiff body, high wagging tail or no wagging tail).
- 🐾 **Remind kids to be respectful.** Refrain from pulling hair, tails, ears etc. **NEVER** remove a toy from a new dog's possession. They need to get to know you. Try trading the toy for a treat or for another toy.
- 🐾 **Time** for integrating a new dog depends on the dog. Consider committing to at least a couple of weeks to help your dog decompress.
- 🐾 **Crates** can be used while you are away to give your dog a safe space when they feel overwhelmed. Give good treats in the crate to create a positive association.

Want to know more?

Visit these websites:

- 🐾 <http://www.columbusdogconnection.com/behavior-tips-for-new-dogs.html>
- 🐾 <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/steffen-baldwin/chill-out-decompression-t b 8331986.html>
- 🐾 <https://www.animalhumanesociety.org/pet-behavior-library>
- 🐾 <http://woofliketomeet.com/2016/03/trigger-stacking-how-we-set-our-dogs-up-to-fail/>

Want to take your dog to training?

- 🐾 Come to the shelter for **FREE** obedience training in a group atmosphere. Classes are held on Mondays at 6:30PM in the Community Room. If you are not sure about handling your dog in a group, ask if a volunteer can help you!
- 🐾 Google local training centers → some are more affordable than you might think.

Need vaccines?

- 🐾 Check out the HOPE Clinic offered through Central Ohio Pit Savers (COPS). They offer monthly clinics providing **\$5** canine vaccines.
- 🐾 https://www.facebook.com/CopsCentralOhioPitSavers/?ref=br_rs

Need enrichment ideas?

- 🐾 Use kongs stuffed with peanut butter or cream cheese, benebones or nylabones → Remember to separate dogs if needed.
- 🐾 Use calming collars, pet relief treats, classical music and appropriate essential oils to help calm an anxious or hyper dog.

Thank you for adopting a dog from FCDS. Please feel free to reach out to us with any questions!

614-525-DOGS (3647)