

Holistic Hounds

Award-Winning Dog Training & Therapy



YOUR RESCUE DOG

Helping your new rescue
dog settle into their new
home





CONGRATULATIONS!

Congratulations on adopting your new rescue dog! Your journey with your new dog begins the moment you pick them up and it's important to start things as you mean to go on to give your dog the best chance of settling into their new home.

This guide is here to help set you up for success, give you the tools and resources you may need and answer any questions, concerns or issues you may be facing as you learn about your new dog!

We'll go through some basic training, tips to help nervous dogs and some troubleshooting so you feel equipped to deal with whatever life throws at you.

PREPARING YOUR HOME

It's always a good idea to get things prepared before your dog comes home, in order to make sure that you have everything you need to get them settled in. So, get their bed area ready, make sure their water bowl is easily accessible and have an idea of a basic routine that you're going to follow.



What you may need:

- A dog bed
- A crate
- Food bowl
- Water bowl
- Lead
- Collar
- Longline
- ID tag
- Toys
- Treats
- Brushes
- Nail clippers
- Towels
- Shampoo
- Poo bags

Details to put on your ID tag:

Your surname
Number
House name or
number
Postcode

FEEDING

If you've got a rescue dog, it's likely that the rescue will give you a few days worth of food or at least tell you what they've been feeding them. However, this doesn't mean you have to keep feeding them the same food, and it is important to check the quality of the food so you can make sure you're feeding your dog good quality food.



Finding a good food:

If you aren't sure if your food is good quality, you can use a website called 'All About Dog Food' to find out its nutritional rating. We recommend a minimum rating of 75% and would be looking to change your dogs food if it is anything below this. You can generally change an adult dog's food over without issues within about a week, but if you've only got a few days worth of old food and you don't want to buy a whole bag you can do a faster switch and most dogs don't have any issues. The best thing to do if you're worried is speak to a canine nutritionist or your vet who can advise you on the best options for your dog.

FOOD OPTIONS

There are three main food options, all with varying qualities within each option depending on brands. You just need to pick which option works best for you and find a good quality brand from that category and you're set! The three options are; dry food, wet food or raw food. Let's look at each individually.

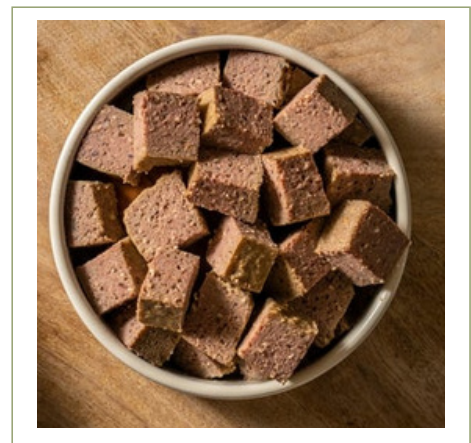
Dry food

Dry food is the most popular option but often the least nutritious as being so though roughly cooked, it loses a lot of it's nutrients in the process. However, there are still lots of high quality brands if dry food is the best option for you.



Wet food

Wet food is the next option, and like dry food it is cooked so some nutrients are lost but not as many as dry food because it is often only lightly cooked. Some dogs prefer the softer texture of wet food too so it's worth seeing what your dog likes.



Raw food

Raw food is the most natural and unprocessed food available and you can either do it DIY or get complete meals making it simpler. Raw is undeniably the best option but it can be daunting for some people and it's okay if it's not for you.

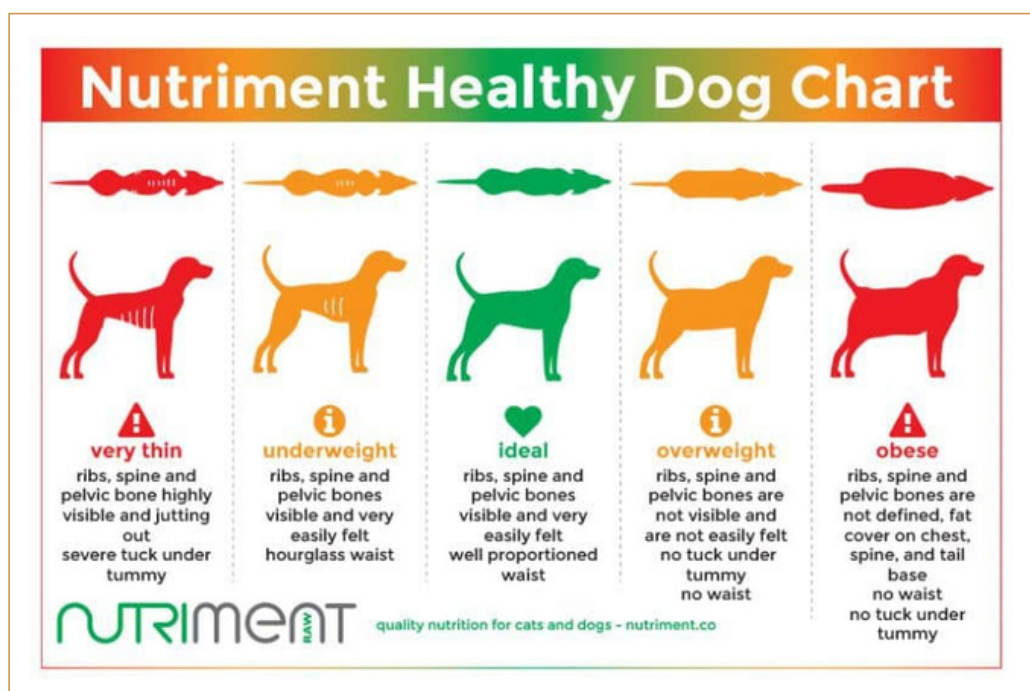


FOOD ROUTINE

Once you've picked your food, have a think about a feeding routine. We often recommend feeding after you've exercised your dog, especially for larger breeds as exercising too soon after feeding can cause bloat. It doesn't however matter what time you feed your dog each day, if it's different, they won't mind!

How much to feed?

How much you feed your dog depends on so many different factors including age, breed, size, exercise levels and food quality. Better food means you'll be feeding less as the nutrients are better digested but it also depends on a lot of other factors. If you have a high energy breed or you're doing sport or long walks often, you'll need to feed more to make sure your dog gets all the nutrients they need. Most food companies will have a baseline feeding guide on their packaging so if you don't know where to start, start there and adjust depending on your dogs weight. If they're a bit chunky, take away a little or and if they're a bit too skinny add a little more in.



FIRST AID

Another important thing to think about is dog first aid, and although you don't need to be jumping into getting first aid trained, it's always good to have an idea on what to do in an emergency. Having a dog first aid kit at home means that if your dog does injure themselves, you can start first aid before getting them to the vets. We also have a travel kit in our car in case of an emergency when we are out on walks.

YOUR FIRST AID KIT

Here is a list of essentials that we recommend keeping in a first aid kit for your dog:

- cohesive bandages
- medium dressing bandages
- large dressing bandage
- gauze
- pods of saline
- vet wrap
- microporous tape
- tick twister
- swabs
- gloves
- plastic pouches
- alcohol free cleansing wipes
- scissors
- tweezers

It's always a good idea to have your vets number on your phone and/or on some paper so that you can get veterinary advice in an emergency.

There are lots of canine first aid courses available if you want to learn more.



YOUR FIRST DAY

Your dogs first day at home can often be a little stressful for them as they are in a completely new environment with new people. We recommend either taking the day off work or working from home so that your dog has a familiar face to get to know in their new environment. Your first day together is also a great time to bond and start building your relationship together!

ROUTINE

Dogs thrive off of structure and it can be confusing for a dog if routines change in a short space of time. Try to stick to as normal a routine early on as possible to help your dog know what is coming next. A good routine to follow is: exercise, crate/bed, feed, crate/bed, free time. Do this morning and evening to help them get used to their new environment.

WALKING

As part of your routine, make sure to take your dog out for walks to use up some energy and let them get to know their new area. It's always a good idea to make sure that your dog has a safe lead that they can't escape out of if they get nervous. We prefer to use slip leads for this reason but also use back up clips to their collars too. Make sure their ID tag is on!



Always make sure to take things slowly, allow the dog time to explore and get comfortable and don't ask for too much too soon so they don't get overwhelmed. However, try to keep things as 'normal' as possible to help them settle and get used to their new routine.

SAFETY FIRST

When you first bring your new dog home, it is important to take appropriate precautions to ensure everyone is happy and safe as they get to know each other. We highly recommend keeping a lead or longline on your new dog for at least the first week when they are loose in the house so that you can give them direction in a way that is less intrusive or confrontational than using spatial pressure or by grabbing their collar.



Take things slowly:

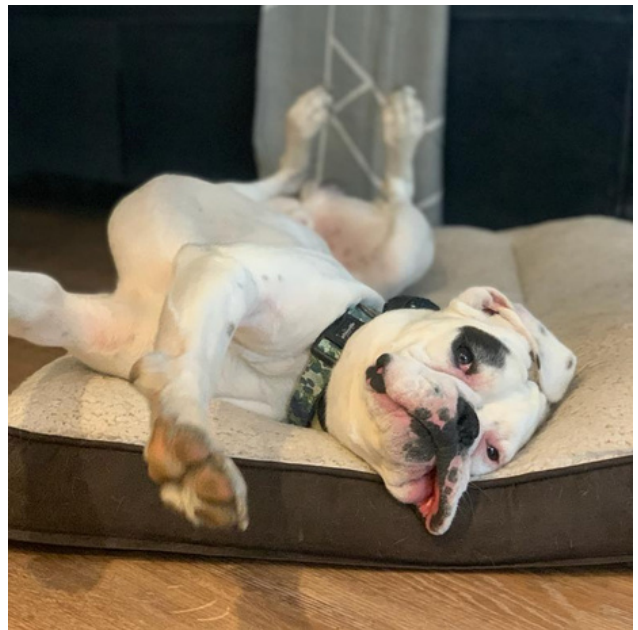
If you have a nervous dog it's important to take things slowly and give them time to prepare for daily activities as it can be confusing and scary in a new place. We also highly recommend that you don't let your new dog off the lead for at least a month from when you get them. It is important to make sure your dog is comfortable in their surroundings and responsive to you before letting them off to explore their new world, and you want to be sure that they will not run away if spooked. Instead, you can pop them on a longline so they can still have space to explore safely and you can also work on their recall with you whilst out and about!

STARTING TRAINING

There are lots of things we recommend teaching your new dog from day one, even from the comfort of your own home - things like learning to settle at home, to loose lead walking, recall and some fun tricks! Doing some training with your dog is a great way to bond and build a relationship whilst doing something productive and fun together!

PLACE TRAINING

An important skill you can teach straight away is place training. This is basically teaching your dog to go to their bed or crate and chill out there until you release them. It's one essential skill we teach every dog we work with as it is so versatile! You can use it at home, at the pub or anywhere else you might want to take your dog.



HEEL WORK

Being able to walk your dog on the lead is an essential skill, especially as you don't know your dog well yet and won't be letting them off lead too soon. It's important to teach your dog how to walk nicely on the lead so that walks can be enjoyable for both of you - after all you're going to be doing a LOT of walking throughout your dogs life!



MORE TRAINING!

RECALL

It's important to start teaching your dog a recall command as soon as you can, as the more you practice the better they'll be! Start by holding a longline, and if your dog is doing well you can progress to dropping the longline so that you still have an emergency handle if you need it. Practice makes perfect so do it regularly out on your walks and make sure to reward well for a good recall!



CRATE TRAINING

Although some people aren't a fan, we firmly believe that every dog should be crate trained, even if it's not used long term. A lot of nervous dogs find having a crate space helps them to relax and reduce stress levels, and it's also a good option if you have an excitable dog who would benefit from having a space to calm down. It also ensures your dogs safety if



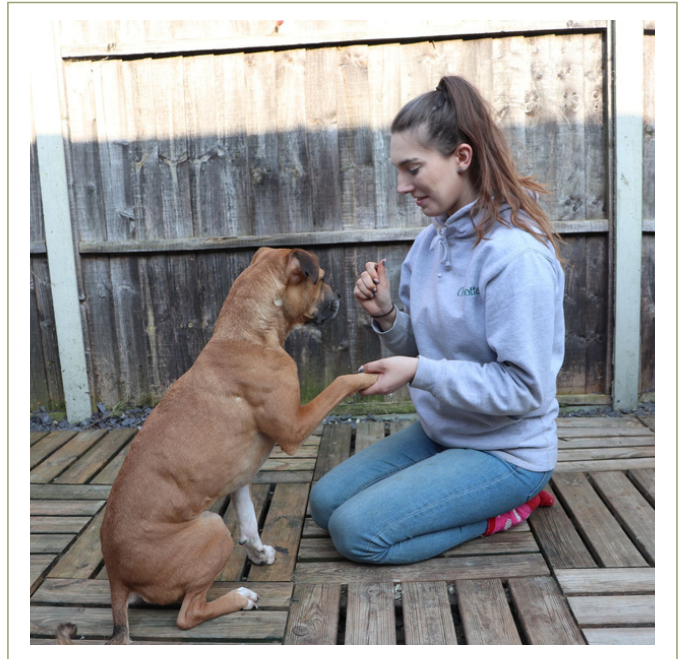
you need to go out without them and do not know how they will react. However, the most important reason to crate train your dog is in case of injury or illness. We simply can't watch our dogs 24/7 and if they are injured or ill and need to be kept safe and quiet, a crate is the best way to do it. If your dog ever needs a vet stay, surgery or recovery from an injury, your vet will often recommend crate rest so it's important to train them to be comfortable just in case they need it.

TRICKS TRAINING

You can also do some fun tricks training with your dog to bond with them have some fun together in your spare time. There are TONS of tricks that you can teach but here are a few to get you thinking!

SIT AND PAW

These two are probably the simplest and easiest tricks you can teach, and "sit" is an important one that you can use in lots of different situations. Most dogs pick up on these super quickly and you don't have to be an expert dog trainer to teach them so don't panic if you're not sure!



DOWN

Another pretty easy trick that you'll likely use a LOT during your life with your dog. If your dog isn't keen on lying down out and about at first, don't panic! The more confident and comfortable they get with life the more willing they will be to lie down outside. You can even progress to doing emergency downs when they are off lead which is a great emergency trick and a fun one to show off with out on walks!



MORE TRICKS

HI FIVE AND WAVE

Again, this one is fairly easy to teach as it is similar to "paw" so most dogs pick it up pretty quickly. Get them to sit up a bit higher and if they're doing well, you can even try to progress to a "wave" if they have good core strength and can hold themselves upright comfortably like the photo. Don't be disheartened if they can't straight away, just pop your hand out to help them until they're strong enough.



LEAVE IT

Now this one is another important one for your dog's safety, as you can stop them from picking up unwanted items. Begin practicing at home in your spare time and start easy before progressing to more complicated things like dropping treats on the floor or popping a treat on their paw or head to really get them using their impulse control!



If you need any help with training whether it be tricks training or any of the other training we've talked about in this guide, you can check out some of our YouTube videos or contact our team.

NEED ANY HELP?

If you need any help with any of the topics covered in this guide we have other online resources you can utilise including our YouTube channel.

Alternatively, you can get in touch with a member of our team who can advise and support you on your journey!



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