

# DOG ADOPTION GUIDE



Oxfordshire  
Animal  
Sanctuary

Here is a general guide to help your newly adopted dog settle into their new environment.

However, it's important to remember that every dog is unique, so it's always best to consult with the sanctuary or rescue shelter for specific information about your dog and adapt the activities accordingly.

Good luck with your new furry friend!

## WEEK 1

- 🐾 Short on-lead walking only
- 🐾 Introduce the dog to the concept of a crate if applicable
- 🐾 Allow the dog to meet and interact with people living in the home
- 🐾 Learn to read the dog's body language and understand calming signals
- 🐾 Gradually increase the time the dog spends alone, starting with short periods
- 🐾 Ensure the dog wears a collar with an ID tag
- 🐾 Introduce other animal family members gradually and under controlled circumstances
- 🐾 Avoid overwhelming the dog with too many experiences, both positive and negative
- 🐾 Delay formal training classes and unnecessary vet visits until the dog has settled in

## WEEK 2-3

- 🐾 Continue on-lead walking, gradually increasing the duration and exploring different environments
- 🐾 Test the dog's recall in a controlled setting within the house and garden
- 🐾 Introduce the dog to important family members, one at a time, in a calm and controlled manner
- 🐾 Teach the dog to interact calmly with visitors, avoiding overwhelming situations
- 🐾 Slowly increase the duration of time the dog spends alone, monitoring their comfort level
- 🐾 Focus on establishing house rules, manners, and basic obedience tasks at a suitable pace
- 🐾 Utilise scent work and engage in quiet activities like playing with toys and improving recall
- 🐾 Refrain from engaging in rough play with the dog to prevent potential episodes of heightened excitement or fear responses

## WEEK 4-5

- 🐾 Start using a long line or extendable lead to work on recall in safe and open spaces
- 🐾 Controlled introduction of the dog to the next circle of friends or extended family members
- 🐾 Introduce the dog to other known dogs outside the house, ensuring positive interactions
- 🐾 Work on the dog's behaviour around food bowls, reinforcing positive associations
- 🐾 Seek professional help if the dog exhibits resource guarding tendencies

## WEEK 6

- 🐾 Attempt walking the dog in a more urban environment, focusing on calm behaviour and training
- 🐾 Reward calm behaviour when passing people, other dogs, and potential triggers
- 🐾 Introduce known dogs into the house, ensuring proper introduction and prior walking together
- 🐾 Continue using a long lead for recall until the dog's reliability improves
- 🐾 Gradually introduce the dog to other unfamiliar dogs, always monitoring their comfort level

## WEEK 7-8

- 🐾 Address any specific challenges or issues observed in the dog's behaviour
- 🐾 Consider joining a training class or introducing the dog to a fun dog sport with guidance
- 🐾 Seek professional help for ongoing behavioural problems
- 🐾 Adjust the pace of activities according to the individual needs and progress of the dog