

THE DOGGY DIGEST

TRAINING TIPS BROUGHT TO YOU BY MUTTS WITH MANNERS

Getting Fido Through Post-Shelter Decompression, and the 3/3/3 Rule of Thumb

Newly adopted dogs (and cats) need a calming period of time to adjust to their new environments, people, children, and other animals they are expected to live with. This period of time is referred to as the post shelter decompression process, and can last about two to three weeks.

Animals are individuals and can adapt differently, so some may need more time and patience as they acclimate to their new forever home.

The 3/3/3 Rule for Decompression: What to Expect

Applying the 3/3/3 rule can help give guidance and a time frame of what to expect as your newly adopted besty begins to settle into your home.

3 days for the initial decompression.

The first few days you bring Fido home should be low pressure. This is a great time to give him space to explore his new environment, do some crate training, and establish some safe places for Fido to go if he feels overwhelmed. His life has just been turned upside down. Let Fido come to you for love right now. This will give him some control in his new environment, and help him realize you are willing to listen to him, as much as you expect him to listen to you. Communication is a two-way street, after all.

Crate training should be short and sweet, with lots of positive reinforcement. The crate should never be used for punishment. When trained well, the crate can be a great place for Fido to escape to if he is feeling overwhelmed the first few days, or to manage him when he can't be supervised.

3 Weeks to learn the routines of your household.

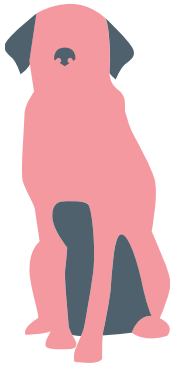
In the first few weeks, you will notice that Fido is starting to get used to your routines and lifestyle. Hopefully you have implemented a feeding routine, and are taking Fido out for regular potty breaks if you are potty training. Teaching Fido when and where to go to the bathroom is important for all dogs, even the potty-trained pups. Give Fido a treat after he eliminates outside in the yard, and throw him a party.

This is the best time to begin some simple, low-pressure training.

Simple ways to begin some training with Fido at home include:

Calling his name throughout the day. As he looks at you, tell him he is a 'good boy' and then encourage him to come to you. Praise him along the way and give him a yummy food reward once he is standing in front of you.

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Begin taking him on short walks that are ALL ABOUT HIM. Let him sniff until he can't sniff anymore, and reward him when he disengages and looks up at you or is walking with a relaxed leash. These walks may be just a few minutes at a time in the beginning, and be open to the idea that you don't even have to leave your front yard for it to be productive.

Remember, what you aren't changing, you are choosing. Don't hesitate to hire a positive reinforcement dog trainer for a private lesson if you and Fido are not ready for a group class.

3 months to start to feel relaxed and finally, at home.

You likely have Fido's personality traits identified, and he now trusts you. You have established some good habits, and may already have signed up for a group class or had a few private lessons. Training is bonding. And when we form emotional attachments, we are less likely to abandon those relationships and stick it out in the long run. Remember, Fido has been given up on already, sadly, maybe even a few times. He needs your commitment to help him learn what it means to live with a human successfully.

Fido is a social animal who is nurtured by his environment. He craves your companionship as much as you crave his. He is always learning from you. So, make time for him in your schedule and you will be rewarded with a relationship like none other, along with fierce loyalty and friendship.

Keep it pawsitive!
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Until next time, keep it pawsitive!