



**Humane  
World for  
Animals™**

Formerly called the  
Humane Society of the United States  
and Humane Society International



# Welcoming your **new** dog

# Table of contents

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>How to find an ethical, responsible dog breeder</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>How to bring your new dog home and make them feel welcome</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>How to find a veterinarian for your pet</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Which type of dog collar is best for your dog?</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>How to pick the best and safest dog toys</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>How to potty train your puppy or dog</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>How to stop your dog's destructive chewing</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>How to stop your dog from jumping</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>How to find obedience classes or dog trainers</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Introducing your new dog to your other dogs</b>	<b>22</b>

## **Copyright © 2025 by Humane World for Animals**

This publication is in copyright. You may reproduce and share this publication for noncommercial purposes only, provided the publication remains intact and unchanged and Humane World for Animals is credited. All other rights are reserved.

The Humane World for Animals name, logo and related trade dress are trademarks of Humane World for Animals, and may not be used without permission, unless allowed by law.

This publication provides people with information about caring for their pets. While efforts have been made to ensure the information's accuracy, it should not be regarded as professional advice. If you are uncertain about the information, you should contact a professional. Humane World for Animals does not and cannot assume any responsibility for property damage or any other injury caused to you, your pet or others as a result of the information contained herein.

Any links or references to commercial products or services or external websites are provided for informational purposes only. They do not imply an endorsement or approval by Humane World for Animals, and Humane World for Animals bears no responsibility for the accuracy, legality or content of external websites.



# Introduction

Welcoming a new dog into your life is a joyful, life-changing experience—and it comes with plenty of questions. That's why we created this helpful e-book from Humane World for Animals, filled with practical, compassionate advice to support you and your new companion every step of the way. Inside these pages, you'll find guidance on topics such as choosing a responsible breeder, preparing your home, understanding your dog's needs, finding the right vet, and building positive habits through training and play. Whether you're a first-time dog guardian or looking to brush up on the basics, these resources will help you create a safe, happy and loving home for your new best friend.

We hope you enjoy this selection of articles we've carefully chosen for you, written by the animal care and veterinary experts at Humane World. These articles represent just a small fraction devoted to the topic of pet care and companion animal issues. Please visit [humaneworld.org](https://humaneworld.org) to find more resources like these.

The animals we've chosen to share our homes and lives with require attention and care to live their best lives. As a pet owner, you take responsibility for providing them with access to nutritious food and clean water. You attend to their grooming needs and seek veterinary care when they fall ill. You enjoy enriching their lives with training and playtime activities.

Most responsible pet owners don't think twice about providing these things—but there are countless animals who never experience even the most basic of these necessities.

Dogs languishing in puppy mill breeding operations endure confinement in filthy cages, often without access to fresh water or adequate food. Mother dogs are bred repeatedly, and many are never let outdoors to breathe fresh air or feel grass beneath their paws. Unfortunately, such forms of extreme cruelty are not limited to puppy mills or animal hoarding situations.

Cows, chickens and pigs in factory farms endure short, painful lives in extreme confinement for the sake of maximizing profits to the agricultural industry.

Wild animals—though allowed to live free—aren't always free from human exploitation. Lions, elephants and bears are hunted to wind up as wall trophies. Other wild animals are killed for their horns, fins or internal organs to be consumed as a delicacy or used in medicines of dubious effectiveness.

Together with our supporters, we continually strive to end these abuses and more. We are encouraged by the amazing progress our dedicated efforts have made over the years toward bringing relief to suffering animals. This is a direct result of rescue operations and advocacy campaigns to create awareness and enact laws to end such practices once and for all.

As an animal lover, we know you're outraged by the conditions facing voiceless animals around the globe. The good news is we are working tirelessly with the dedicated support of our generous donors to confront the worst cases of cruelty and neglect and give animals the respect they deserve.

## **We sincerely hope you'll consider joining us.**

Together, we tackle the root causes of animal cruelty and suffering to create permanent change.

---

**Stay up to date with [email](#) and [text message](#) alerts.**



# How to find an ethical, responsible dog breeder

**If you've checked shelters and rescue groups and still haven't found the best pet for you, here's how to find a responsible dog breeder.**

So, you've decided to get a dog. Congratulations! You're in for the time of your life.

Take time to evaluate your lifestyle to figure out exactly what sort of dog you're looking for (e.g., a high energy dog to go running with, or a more sedate dog to lounge on the couch with). Remember that breed is no guarantee of temperament or likes and dislikes, so it's best to get to know the individual animal.

## **Start at a shelter or rescue group**

Not only are you likely to find a great dog, you'll also feel great about helping a homeless dog find a loving home. Most dogs lose their homes due to owner-related problems like cost, lack of time, lifestyle changes (new baby, divorce, moving or marriage) or allergies, not because of something the dog has done.

You don't want to buy a puppy from a pet store or a website. Most of those puppies come from mass breeding facilities—better known as puppy mills. If you've decided to buy a dog from a breeder, you'll want to support one who has their dogs' best interests at heart.

## **Consider a senior dog!**

**Don't have the time, energy or resources to dedicate to a new puppy? There are many benefits to adopting an older pet, including:**

- Most are already house-trained.
- They're great companions.
- They have laid-back, gentle spirits.
- They usually don't need as much exercise as younger animals.
- You'll get good vibes from helping an animal in need.

## How to find responsible dog breeders

Responsible dog breeders don't sell their puppies to the first person who shows up with cash in hand. Too often, unsuspecting people buy puppies from puppy mills. Too often, this results in purchasing puppies in poor health or with temperament problems that may not be discovered right away.

A dog who has health problems due to poor breeding practices or living conditions, or who develops significant behavior problems due to a lack of early socialization can cost thousands of dollars to treat—and result in grief and heartache as well.

## Avoid the pitfalls

Download our [“How to Identify Responsible Dog Breeders”](#) [PDF] checklist and take it with you as you visit different breeders. If the breeder you're working with doesn't meet all of the minimum criteria listed, Humane World for Animals advises you to walk away. Remember, your dog will likely live 10 to 20 years, so it's well worth investing some time now to be sure you're working with a responsible breeder who breeds healthy, happy dogs and keeps them in clean and humane conditions.

You can also check the PupQuest website, which is run by

licensed veterinarians and warns against the health problems with puppy mill dogs.

## Get a referral

You can find responsible dog breeders by asking for referrals from your veterinarian or trusted friends, by contacting local breed clubs, or by visiting professional dog shows. Remember, a responsible breeder will never sell their dogs through a pet store or in any other way that does not allow them to meet with and thoroughly interview you first to ensure that the puppy is a good match for your family and that you will provide a responsible, lifelong home.

## Always visit where they were born and raised

Always personally visit a dog breeder's facility before buying a puppy. Find out where your puppy was born and raised. Take the time now to find the right dog breeder and you'll thank yourself for the rest of your dog's life.

---

Read this [article](#) online



# How to bring your new dog home and make them feel welcome

**Preparation and patience are key while your dog adjusts to a new home and you learn to live together.**

Bringing a new dog into your life is an exciting event, but it's also one that can be stressful for both you and your pup until you've settled into a routine. It can take days, months or longer for you and your pet to adjust to each other and for your dog to acclimate to your home, especially if your new pet has lived in multiple homes or shelters in the past.

Be patient, and use the following tips to help your pet adjust to the "new normal" and build a trusting bond with you.

## Preparing your home

### Gather supplies

Prepare the items your dog will need in advance. You'll need a flat-buckle or martingale collar and identification tag, a harness and a 6-foot nylon leash, food and water bowls, a bed—and toys! We recommend toys that are unlikely to be swallowed, such as Nylabones (not to be confused with rawhide, which we don't recommend), until you have a sense of whether your dog will shred or ingest toys.

You might also consider an appropriately sized crate or enclosed pet playpen that's large enough for your dog to stand up and turn around in for use as a safe, quiet "den."

If you know what kind of food your dog has been eating, buy a small bag to keep their diet consistent. You can always change food down the road, but you'll want to gradually mix the current food with the new food to avoid upsetting their stomach.

### Establish a routine

Determine your dog care regimen in advance with the human members of your household. Who will walk your dog and when? How often will you feed your dog? Will your dog be allowed on

the furniture or will they initially need to adjust to a crate? Where will they rest at night? Are there any rooms in the house that are off-limits?

### Plan the arrival

Arrange for your dog to arrive during a weekend or when you can be home for a few days. Get to know each other and spend some quality time together. For the first few weeks, you'll want to make sure you establish a routine with your dog so they know what to expect and grow to trust you, but don't rush your new dog into unfamiliar situations. It can be tempting to take them to a busy park or dog park or to bring them to the pet supply store to pick out toys, but most dogs will be overwhelmed simply by the transition to your home. So, keep things as quiet and consistent as possible for the first week or more. Feed and walk your dog, and come and go from work around the same times each day.

When you do leave home, consider leaving your dog with an enrichment item, such as a stuffed treat toy or puzzle food bowl. This provides mental and physical distraction and can prevent issues such as separation anxiety.

### Prepare for house-training

Assume your new dog is not house-trained and work from there. Be consistent and maintain a routine. Bear in mind that many house-trained dogs might initially eliminate in your home while they get used to a new environment and routine; you can prevent this by taking them out every few hours.

### Ensure all pets are healthy

If you already have dogs or cats at home, make sure they are up to date on their shots and in good general health before introducing your new dog.

New family members can be stressful for pets, so you want all pets in your home to be mentally and physically healthy before adding any additional stress.

Take your new dog to the veterinarian within a week for a general health check, vaccinations and preventative flea/tick medicine. It's likely that your shelter, rescue or reputable breeder already vaccinated, microchipped and spayed or neutered your dog, but if not, you'll need to request a microchip and make a spay/neuter appointment as well.

You'll need to make appointments for booster vaccinations throughout your dog's life. Most veterinarians will email you helpful reminders.

## The first weeks

### Consider a crate

A crate may look to you like the canine equivalent of a jail cell, but to your dog, who instinctively likes to den, it can be a room of their own and can make house-training easier in some cases. The crate should be roomy enough to allow your dog to stand up, turn around and sit comfortably in normal posture.

### Join a training class

Dogs want to make you happy! Use calm, firm, clear cues (a single, strong "no," for example) immediately after they do something you'd like to correct, or better yet, reward them with praise, pets or treats immediately after they do something you like! It's much easier to encourage your dog to do things you like than to stop them from doing things you don't. Positive reinforcement training will also help you and your pet form a positive relationship. Consider signing up for an in-person or virtual dog obedience class or learning about reward-based

dog training through online videos or books from your local library.

## Long-term

### Let the games begin

Dogs need plenty of playtime and exercise for their mental and physical health. That means you should plan games and exercise for your pet, from long runs, walks or hikes with larger dogs to a game of fetch with even the smallest dogs. Consider working with your dog to learn tricks—no dog is too old for new tricks!—and turning mealtimes into games by spreading wet food on a licking mat or spreading kibble on a snuffle mat. Remember that a tired dog is a good dog: Dogs who are mentally and physically tired are much less likely to engage in boredom behaviors such as chewing or barking.

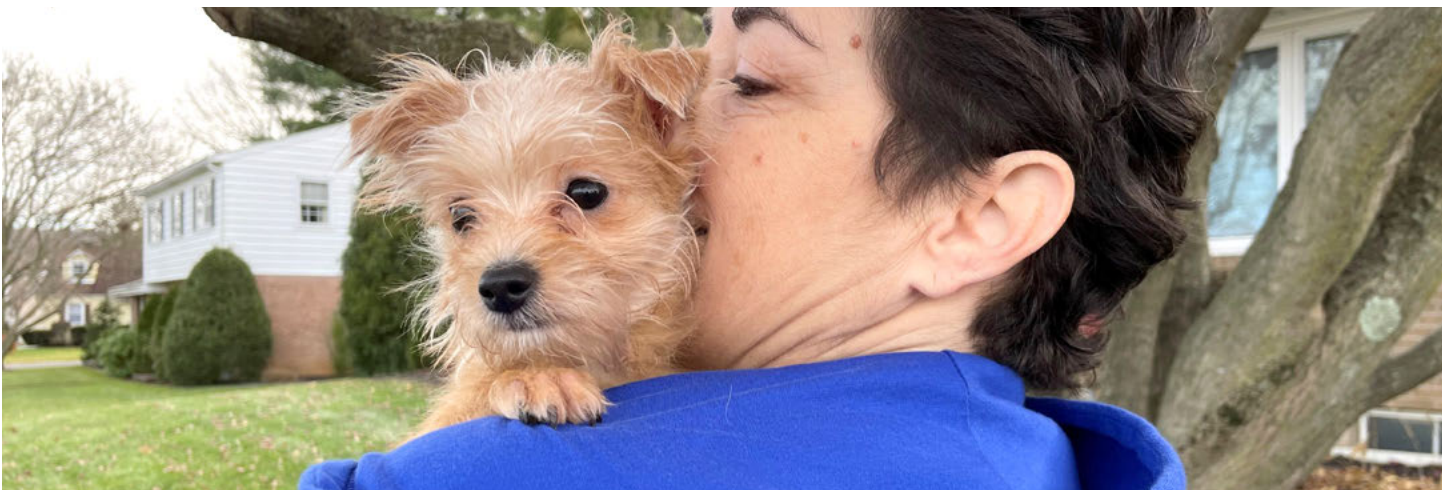
### Patience is key

Finally, remember to temper your expectations. Life with you is a different experience for your new companion, so give them time to adjust. You'll soon find out that you've made a friend for life. Don't forget to reach out for help if you're struggling with a behavior. The shelter or rescue where you adopted or the responsible breeder you purchased from can offer tips on basic behavioral challenges or refer you to a certified trainer if necessary.

No one will ever greet you with as much enthusiasm or provide you with as much unqualified love and loyalty as your dog will. Be patient, and you will be amply rewarded.

---

Read this [article](#) online





# How to find a veterinarian for your pet

**Whether you just adopted your pet or are moving to a new location with your companion animals, it's important to carefully pick a vet for the best care.**

The process of finding a vet should be similar to selecting your own doctor. You'll ideally want to seek recommendations from trusted sources and also research the veterinarian (and the clinic) to ensure that they best meet your family's needs and your pet's individual health care requirements.

## Where to look for a veterinarian

### **Ask friends, family and colleagues for recommendations**

Similar to your search for human health care providers, the best recommendations often come from family, friends and colleagues who are already utilizing these services and can vouch for their quality. Ask your contacts why they chose their veterinarian and how long they've been using the provider. Has their pet received any specialized care? It's also appropriate to ask about the cost of care for comparison purposes.

### **Ask rescue groups and shelters for recommendations**

Rescue groups and animal shelters are great resources for finding a veterinarian or clinic. You may have recently adopted your pet from a shelter or rescue in the area, or you may volunteer with a local group. Find out who they are using for their medical care and what their experiences have been, including quality and cost of care. If they give a positive recommendation, that's helpful information, and you can also feel good about potentially working with a veterinarian who supports local shelters and rescue groups. Additionally, some shelters operate veterinary clinics that are open to the public; these are a great resource for pet health care needs, particularly wellness exams, vaccinations and spay/neuter surgeries.

### **Research vet options online**

If you have a trusted source for online pet information, such as a rescue network, a pet-sitting company or a breed rescue group,

they can be good sources of recommendations. But in general, exercise caution when looking at online reviews for veterinary health care providers because individual comments may not accurately reflect the actual quality of care given by a provider.

## Important things to consider

It's important to start looking for a veterinarian as soon as possible so that your pet doesn't end up having a medical emergency without already having an established relationship with a provider. Additionally, if you are moving from another location, once you've selected a veterinarian, you'll want to have your pet's medical records, including vaccination history, transferred from your previous veterinarian so that the medical history is readily available to your new provider.

After you've identified a potential new provider, schedule a visit to meet the veterinarian and discuss your pet and their health care needs. This visit will be a good opportunity to see if you and your pet are comfortable with the veterinarian and the clinic and to get answers to your questions about their services.

### Criteria

Every family has different needs, and the reasons for selecting a particular veterinarian for a particular pet may differ widely. The following are some suggested criteria to consider when evaluating a new veterinarian and their clinic.

#### What are the vet's clinic hours?

Find out the regular clinic hours and the average length of time to get an appointment. If it's important for your own schedule, find out if the clinic offers evening or weekend appointments and any after-hours or emergency care. If the clinic houses patients overnight, it's important to find out if staff are on-site overnight so that your pet would not be left unattended.

#### What services do they offer?

Find out what range of medical services the practice offers and if it meets the needs of your pet. For example, if you have an exotic or nontraditional pet (these include rabbits and birds), will the veterinarian be able to provide care for that species? Some clinics offer in-house specialty services—such as behavior counseling, orthopedic surgery or emergency care—but many do not. In case your pet has a future need, it's good to find out if specialty services are available or if the clinic has a specialist referral network.

#### What are their fees and payment options?

The cost of veterinary care can quickly add up, even for routine care, and fees can range significantly between veterinary

providers, depending on their location and the type of services offered. Therefore, it is helpful to shop around for estimates from clinics in your community and the surrounding area. When comparing providers, it may be helpful to learn their fees for standard services, such as physical exams and vaccinations, as well as for routine medical procedures such as spay/neuter surgeries or dentals. If emergency services are offered, those fees are usually higher.

It's also helpful to find out if the veterinary clinic accepts pet insurance (if you have pet insurance or are considering it) and whether the clinic offers payment plans or other financial assistance options such as CareCredit. Some clinics have emergency assistance funds available for families in need or offer help in obtaining financial assistance from local nonprofits and other groups.

Some veterinary clinics are co-located in pet stores, like Banfield and Vetco, and offer lower cost options or low-cost vaccination days. Please call to confirm that they are the best option for you and your pet.

Finally, there are some veterinary clinics operated by animal shelters or by nonprofit organizations that typically offer more affordable veterinary care than private clinics. In some cases, these clinics offer sliding-scale payments for families who are facing financial challenges. Check with your local animal shelter or rescue group to see if this type of clinic operates in your community and, if so, investigate its rates as well as the services offered (which may be limited in some cases to spay/neuter and basic wellness care).

#### Do they support animal welfare?

You may want to make certain that the veterinarian treating your pet is animal welfare friendly. This can encompass a wide range of factors and what's most important will vary by family. Some veterinarians are certified as "Fear Free" practices and focus on creating stress-free environments for their patients. Some refuse to do unnecessary and harmful procedures, such as cat declaws or ear crops; tail docks and devocalization of dogs. Many veterinary clinics partner with local rescue groups and shelters to offer discounted or free services for their animals. And some veterinarians volunteer for local vaccine clinics or for trap-neuter-return and community cat spay/neuter events. Others devote time outside their practices to animal advocacy—volunteering to speak to the media or at legislative hearings in support of animal welfare legislation, for example. If these types of activities are important to you, you may want to ask your veterinarian about them and, of course, to thank them if they are taking these extra steps to promote animal welfare.

---

Read this [article](#) online



# Which type of dog collar is best for your dog?

Learn which type of collar is best suited to your beloved pooch.

Every dog needs a collar, chiefly because they need something on which to attach their leash and their license, ID and rabies vaccination tags.

There are so many styles of collars out there that it's easy to get one that reflects your dog's (or your) personality—but collars serve purposes beyond identification and decoration, and not all kinds of collars are appropriate for all, or even any, dogs.

## Regular collars

### Flat collar

This is the standard collar for dogs. It has a buckle or plastic snap ("quick-release") closure and a ring for attaching identification tags and leash and is available in many colors and designs. A flat collar should fit comfortably on your dog's neck; it should not be so tight as to choke your dog nor so loose that they can slip out of it. The rule of thumb says you should be able to slide two fingers comfortably underneath the collar.

### Martingale collar

The martingale collar is also known as a limited-slip collar. This collar is designed for dogs with narrow heads such as greyhounds, salukis, whippets and other sight hounds. It's also useful for a dog of any breed who is adept at slipping out of their collar or for fearful dogs who may try to retreat while on a walk. A martingale collar is a must-have for anxious and fearful dogs.

The martingale consists of a length of material with a metal ring at each end. A separate loop of material passes through the two rings. The leash attaches to a ring on this loop. When your dog tries to back out of the martingale, the collar tightens around their neck. If the collar is properly adjusted, it will tighten just to the size of your dog's neck, without choking them. This is the most humane collar option for dogs who may slip out of their collars.

### Head collar

The head collar is similar in principle to a horse's halter. One strap of the collar fits around your dog's neck and sits high on the head,

just behind the ears. The other strap forms a loop around your dog's muzzle. The leash attaches to the ring at the bottom of the muzzle loop.

The head collar is good for strong, energetic dogs who may jump or pull. Because the halter is around your dog's muzzle, instead of their neck, your dog loses a great deal of leverage and is unable to pull on the leash with the full weight of their body.

To be effective, the head collar must be properly fitted. As with any training equipment, the head halter isn't intended to be used in a jerking or yanking fashion but rather to gently steer your dog in the direction you need them to go. Some manufacturers include instructions with the collar. Otherwise, ask your dog trainer or a knowledgeable salesclerk for assistance with fitting. Proper fit and use should minimize the risk of injury to your dog.

It may take some time, patience and lots of treats to get your dog accustomed to wearing a head collar. Put it on for short periods while giving your dog lots of high value treats until they are comfortable in the collar. Then they should only wear it when you're taking them out on a leash. Don't leave the head collar on your dog all the time—eventually they will manage to pull off the muzzle loop and use it as their chew toy!

## Aversive collars

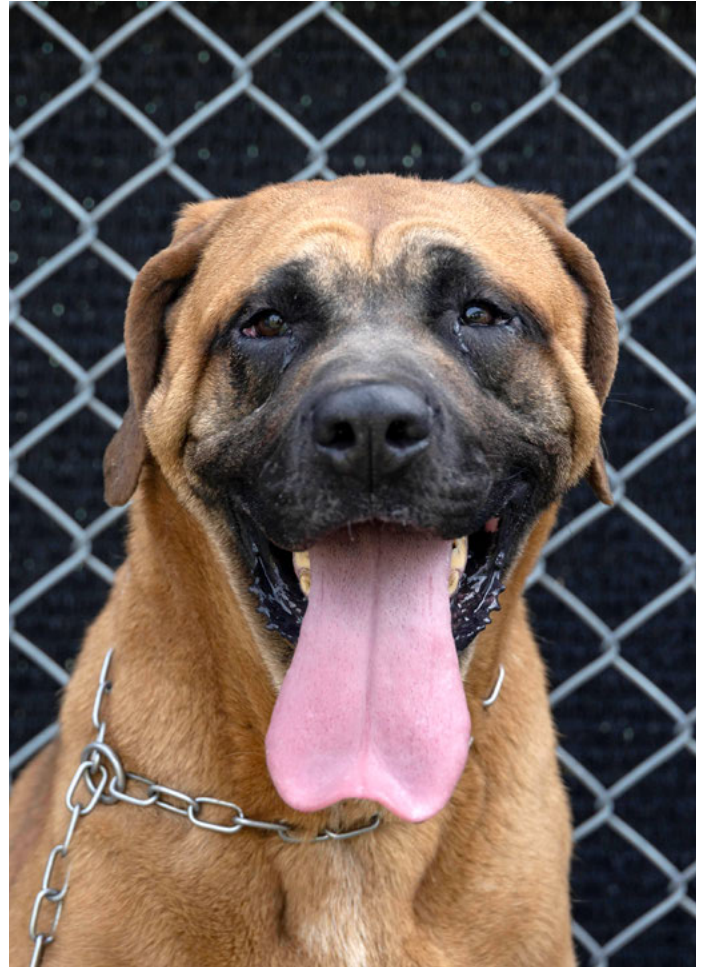
Aversive collars, or collars that rely on physical discomfort or even pain to teach a dog what not to do, aren't a humane option. While they may suppress the unwanted behavior, they don't teach the dog what the proper behavior is, and they can create anxiety and fear, which can lead to aggression. Positive reinforcement training methods—ones that use rewards—are more effective and strengthen the relationship between you and your dog.

### Choke chain collars

As the name implies, this collar is made of metal links and is designed to control your dog by tightening around your dog's neck, an often painful and inhumane training tool. Unlike the martingale collar, there's no way to control how much the choke chain tightens, so it's possible to choke or strangle your dog. It can also cause other problems, such as injuries to the trachea and esophagus, injuries to blood vessels in the eyes, neck sprains, nerve damage, fainting, transient paralysis and even death. It's very easy to misuse choke chains, and with all the humane, effective collars on the market, choke chains are unnecessary and shouldn't be used.

### Prong or pinch collars

The prong or pinch collar is similar in design to the martingale. However, the control loop that the leash is attached to is made of chain. The loop that fits around your dog's neck is made of a series of fang-shaped metal links, or prongs, with blunted points.



Aversive collars, like the choke chain collar in this photo, can often be misused and lead to injuries. Consider a more humane option for your pup.

When the control loop is pulled, the prongs pinch the loose skin of your dog's neck. Similar to choke chains, these collars can be easily misused and shouldn't be used.

### Shock collars

Shock collars use electric current passing through metal contact points on the collar to give your dog an electric signal. This electric signal can range from a mild tickling sensation to a painful shock. Shock collars may be sold as training devices, although more and more companies are pulling them from the shelves. They're also used with pet containment (electronic fencing) systems. Shock collars are often misused and can create fear, anxiety and aggression in your dog toward you or other animals. While they may suppress unwanted behavior, they don't teach a dog what you would like them to do instead and therefore shouldn't be used.

Electronic fencing uses shock collars to deliver a shock when the dog approaches the boundaries of the "fenced" area. Typically, the shock is preceded by a tone to warn the dog they're about to get shocked. While the dog will be shocked if they run

out through the electronic fence, they will also be shocked when they reenter, leading to dogs who are unlikely to return home.

## Special use collars

### Bark control collars

Though several types of collars are available to control excessive or unwanted barking, none of them address the root cause of the barking. Dogs bark for several reasons, such as fear or territorial behavior. Though some bark collars may reduce barking, they won't reduce the stress causing the dog to bark.

- **Spray:** Barking causes these collars to emit a burst of citronella or air, which interrupts and deters your dog from barking. Spray collars will sometimes not react to high-pitched barks, making them ineffective. Tip: Don't use a spray collar when your dog is with other dogs. Another dog's bark may trigger your dog's collar.
- **Ultrasonic:** When your dog barks, the ultrasonic collar interrupts them by emitting a sound only your dog can hear.

### Flea/tick collars

These collars are impregnated with chemicals and help protect your dog against fleas and ticks. They're worn in addition to a regular collar. Be sure to check how long the flea/tick collar is effective and to replace it as recommended.

### Vibrating collars

This type of collar uses vibration, not electric shock, to get your dog's attention. Vibrating collars can be useful to train a deaf dog who can't hear your voice or a clicker.

### Elizabethan collars

The Elizabethan collar, or E-collar, is a wide, cone-shaped plastic collar used to prevent your dog from licking or scratching wounds after a veterinary procedure while they heal. Typically, tabs or loops on the Elizabethan collar can be attached to your dog's regular collar. Some models have hook and loop closures to secure them. These collars come in a variety of sizes to ensure proper fit for your dog. Your dog should be able to eat and drink with the collar in place but not be able to reach the healing site. If your dog won't tolerate an Elizabethan collar, there are other options available, including soft, round collars that don't impact your dog's ability to move around or see clearly.

### GPS collars

This collar uses global positioning satellite technology to help locate your pet if they get lost. While these can help recover a lost pet, they often rely on the availability of satellites and battery life, making them less effective in remote areas.

---

Read this [article](#) online



# How to pick the best and safest dog toys

**For dogs and other pets, toys are not a luxury, but a necessity.**

Toys are important to your dog's well-being. Toys help fight boredom when you have to leave your dog at home and provide comfort when they're feeling nervous. Toys can even help prevent your dog from developing certain problem behaviors.

Although cats can be pretty picky about toys, dogs are often more than willing to play with any object they can get their paws on. That means you'll need to be particularly careful when monitoring your dog's playtime to prevent any "unscheduled" activities.

## Ensure safety

Many factors contribute to the safety or danger of a toy, and a number of them depend upon your dog's size, activity level and preferences. Another thing to consider is the environment where your dog spends their time. Although we can't guarantee the safety of any specific toy, we can offer the following guidelines. The things that are usually most attractive to dogs are often the very things that are the most dangerous. Dog-proof your home by removing string, ribbon, rubber bands, children's toys, pantyhose and other inedible items that could be swallowed.

Be sure to buy toys of appropriate size for your dog. Toys that are too small can easily be swallowed or become lodged in your dog's throat.

Supervise your dog's play with squeaky toys: your dog may feel that they must find and destroy the source of the squeaking, which means they could ingest it if left unwatched.

Avoid or alter any toys that aren't "dog-proof" by removing ribbons, strings, eyes or other parts that could be chewed off and ingested. Discard toys when they start to break into pieces or are torn. Check labels on stuffed toys to see that they are labeled as safe for children under 3 years of age and that they don't contain any dangerous fillings. Problem fillings include

nutshells and polystyrene beads, but even "safe" stuffings aren't truly digestible. Remember that soft toys are not indestructible, but some are sturdier than others. Soft toys should be machine washable.

## A note about rawhide

If you're thinking about giving your dog rawhide chew toys, be sure to check with your veterinarian about which ones are safe and appropriate for your dog. These toys may pose choking hazards, so give them to your dog only when you can supervise them.

Many rawhides are by-products of the cruel international fur trade. For a humane alternative, consider toys made of very hard rubber, which are safer and last longer.

## Recommended toys

### Active toys

Hard rubber toys such as Nylabone and Kong-type products come in many shapes and sizes, and are fun for chewing and carrying around. For dogs that like tug-of-war and chewing on interesting textures, rope and woven toys are usually available in a "bone" shape with knotted ends.

Tennis balls make great dog toys for fetching but don't stand up to chewing very well. Discard any tennis balls that have been chewed through, as they can pose a choking hazard to your pet.

### Distraction toys

Kong-type toys, especially when filled with broken-up treats, can keep a puppy or dog busy for hours. (If your veterinarian says your dog can eat peanut butter, make sure it is not sweetened with xylitol—which is toxic to dogs—and add some to the crushed-up treats for a tastier, and busier, snack!)

“Busy-box” or “feeder” toys are large rubber shapes that can be filled with treats. By moving the cube around with their nose, mouth and paws, your dog can get to the goodies. Many dogs who tend to eat their food too quickly benefit from being fed through a feeder-style toy.

### Comfort toys

Soft stuffed toys are good for several purposes, but they aren't appropriate for all dogs. Here are a few tips for choosing the right stuffed toy:

- Some dogs like to carry around soft toys. If your dog sees their toy as a companion, pick one that's small enough to carry.
- Some dogs want to shake or “kill” their toys, so choose one that's large enough to prevent accidental swallowing and sturdy enough to withstand the dog's attacks.

Dirty laundry, such as an old T-shirt, pillowcase, towel or blanket, can be very comforting to a dog, especially if the item smells like you! Be forewarned that the item could be destroyed by industrious fluffing, carrying and nosing.

### Toys for teething puppies

From 12 weeks to 6 months, as they lose their baby teeth and their adult teeth erupt through their gums, puppies get the urge to chew on everything. Supplying teething toys will make them more comfortable and save your hands, shoes and furniture. Durable nylon bones and rubber toys can take weeks of chewing without breaking into pieces that might be swallowed. You can buy specialized puppy teething toys designed to be frozen and imprinted with soothing textures.

### Toys for blind dogs

Blind dogs still have their senses of smell, taste, hearing and touch. A 2022 study found that vision and smell are linked in dogs and together help them navigate through the world. Even without added scent, blind dogs will likely be able to smell and find individual toys, but stores offer toys with food odors and toys that make noises. Smearing food on nylon bones or filling rubber toys with food or hiding it within “puzzle” boxes will entice blind dogs to play. They may also like tug-of-war and can generally follow a toy dragged along the floor. Some blind dogs adapt so well with their other senses that they play much like sighted dogs.



### Making toys last

Rotate your dog's toys weekly by making only a few toys available at a time. Keep a variety of types easily accessible. If your dog has a favorite, like a soft comfort toy, you may want to leave it out all the time.

Provide toys that serve a variety of purposes—give your dog at least one toy to carry, one to shake, one to roll and one for comfort.

“Found” toys are often much more attractive than toys that are obviously introduced. A game of finding toys or treats is a good rainy-day activity for your dog, using up energy without the need for a lot of space.

Many of your dog's toys should be interactive. Interactive play is very important for your dog because they need active “people time,” which enhances the bond between you and your pet. Try balls, flying disks and other toys that help foster the bond between person and pet.

By focusing on a specific task—such as repeatedly returning a ball, Kong, or Frisbee, or playing “hide-and-seek” with treats or toys—your dog can expend pent-up mental and physical energy from boredom in a limited amount of time and space. For young, high-energy and untrained dogs, interactive play also offers an opportunity for socialization and helps them learn about appropriate and inappropriate behavior, such as jumping up or being mouthy.

Read this [article](#) online



# How to potty train your puppy or dog

**House-train a new dog or puppy by establishing a routine for when they eat, drink, go outside and get rewarded for desired behavior.**

House-training (also known as potty training or housebreaking) your dog or puppy requires patience, commitment and lots of consistency. Accidents are part of the process, but if you follow these basic house-training guidelines, you can get the newest member of your family on the right track.

## How to potty train your puppy

### Establish a routine

Puppies do best on a regular schedule. The schedule teaches them that there are times to eat, times to play and times to do their business. Typically, a puppy can control their bladder one hour for every month of age. So if your puppy is 2 months old, they can hold it for about two hours. Don't go longer than this between bathroom breaks or they're likely to have an accident.

**Take your puppy outside frequently—at least every two hours**—and immediately after they wake up, during and after playing, and after eating or drinking.

**Pick a bathroom spot outside**, and always take your puppy (on a leash) to that spot. While your puppy is relieving themselves, use a specific word or phrase that you can eventually use before they go to remind them what to do. Take them out for a longer walk or some playtime only after they have eliminated.

### Reward your puppy every time they eliminate outdoors.

Praise or give treats—but remember to do so immediately after they've finished, not after they come back inside. This step is vital, because rewarding your dog for going outdoors is the only way to teach what's expected of them. Before rewarding, be sure they're finished. Puppies are easily distracted, and if you praise too soon, they may forget to finish until they're back in the house.

**Put your puppy on a regular feeding schedule.** What goes into a puppy on a schedule comes out of a puppy on a schedule. Depending on their age, puppies may need to be fed two or three times a day. Feeding your puppy at the same times each day will make it more likely that they'll eliminate at consistent times as well, making house-training easier for both of you.

**Pick up your puppy's water dish** about two and a half hours before bedtime to reduce the likelihood that they'll need to relieve themselves during the night. Most puppies can sleep for approximately seven hours without needing a bathroom break. If your puppy does wake you up in the night, don't make a big deal of it; otherwise, they will think it is time to play and won't want to go back to sleep. Turn on as few lights as possible, don't talk to or play with your puppy, take them out to the spot where they relieve themselves, and then return them to bed.

### Supervise your puppy

Don't give your puppy an opportunity to soil in the house; keep an eye on them whenever they're indoors.

**Tether your puppy** to you or a nearby piece of furniture with a 6-foot leash if you are not actively potty training or playing. Watch for signs that your puppy needs to go out. Some signs are obvious, such as barking or scratching at the door, squatting, restlessness, sniffing around or circling. When you see these signs, immediately grab the leash and take them outside to their bathroom spot. If they eliminate, praise them and reward with a treat.

**Keep your puppy on leash in the yard.** During the housebreaking process, your yard should be treated like any other room in your house. Give your puppy some freedom in the house and yard only after they become reliably house-trained.

**When you can't supervise, confine.** When you're unable to watch your puppy, restrict them to an area small enough that they won't want to eliminate there.

- The space should be big enough to comfortably stand, lie down and turn around. You can use a portion of a bathroom or laundry room blocked off with baby gates.
- Or you may want to crate train your puppy. (Be sure to learn how to use a crate humanely as a method of confinement.) If your puppy has spent several hours in confinement, you'll need to take them directly to their bathroom spot as soon as you return.

**Mistakes happen.** Expect your puppy to have a few accidents in the house—it's a normal part of potty training. Here's what to do when that happens:

- Without a lot of drama, immediately take them to their outside bathroom spot. Praise your pup and give a treat if they finish there.
- Don't punish your puppy for eliminating in the house. If you find a soiled area, just clean it up. Rubbing your puppy's nose in it, taking them to the spot and scolding them, or any other punishment will only make them afraid of you or afraid to eliminate in your presence. Punishment will do more harm than good.
- Clean the soiled area thoroughly. Puppies are highly motivated to continue soiling in areas that smell like urine or feces.

It's extremely important that you use these supervision and confinement procedures to minimize the number of accidents. If you allow your puppy to eliminate frequently in the house, they'll get confused about where they're supposed to go, which will prolong the house-training process.

**Make plans for when you're away.** If you have to be away from home more than four or five hours a day, this may not be the best time for you to get a puppy. Instead, you may want to consider an older, already potty-trained dog who can wait for your return. If you already have a puppy and must be away for long periods of time, you may need to:

- Arrange for someone, such as a responsible neighbor or a professional pet sitter, to take them for bathroom breaks.
- Alternatively, train them to eliminate in a specific place indoors. Be aware, however, that doing this can prolong the process of housebreaking. Teaching your puppy to eliminate on newspaper may create a lifelong surface preference, meaning that even as an adult they may eliminate on any newspaper lying around the living room.
- If you plan to paper-train, confine them to an area with enough room for a sleeping space, a playing space and a separate place to eliminate. In the designated elimination area, use either pet pee pads, newspapers (cover the area with several layers of newspaper) or a sod box. To make a sod box, place sod in a container such as a child's small, plastic swimming pool. You can also find dog litter products at a pet supply store.
- If you have to clean up an accident outside the designated elimination area, put the soiled rags or paper towels inside that area afterward to help your puppy recognize the scented area as the place where they are supposed to eliminate.

---

Read this [article](#) online

# How to stop your dog's destructive chewing

**Chewing can be directed to appropriate items so your dog isn't risking their safety or destroying things you value.**

Sooner or later, many dog lovers return home to find some unexpected damage inflicted on their furniture, shoes or other items by their dog or, more specifically, their dog's teeth. Although dogs make great use of their vision and sense of smell to explore the world, one of their favorite ways to take in new information is to put their mouths to work.

Fortunately, chewing can be directed to appropriate items so your dog isn't jeopardizing their own safety or destroying things you value.

Until they've learned what they can and can't chew, however, the best medicine is prevention. By setting your dog up for success, you can avoid having to replace your favorite chair or paying for an expensive visit to the veterinarian when your dog has ingested something dangerous.

## Understand your dog

Puppies, like infants and toddlers, explore their world by putting objects in their mouths. And, like babies, they teethe for about six months, which usually creates some discomfort. Chewing not only facilitates teething but also makes sore gums feel better.

Adult dogs may engage in destructive chewing for any number of reasons, including as a coping strategy for stress and boredom. To stop the behavior, you must first determine why your dog is chewing—and remember, they're not doing it to spite you. Possible reasons for destructive chewing include:

- As a puppy, they weren't taught what is and isn't acceptable to chew.
- They don't have access to safe and appropriate chew toys.
- They're bored.
- They suffer from separation anxiety.

- Their behavior is fear-related, and chewing is a coping skill.
- Biting and chewing simply feel really good.

If you believe your dog's chewing is related to serious anxiety, you may need to consult a behavior professional for help with both separation anxiety and fear-related behaviors.

## Teach what to chew

**Take responsibility for your own belongings.** If you don't want it in your dog's mouth, don't make it available. Keep clothing, shoes, books, trash, eyeglasses and remote controls out of your dog's reach. Putting trash in a cupboard or blocking off areas with enticing items is the easiest way to prevent mistakes.

**Give your dog toys that are clearly distinguishable from household goods.** Don't confuse them by offering shoes and socks as toys and then expecting them to distinguish between their shoe and yours.

**Supervise your dog until they're consistently chewing on appropriate items.** Keep them with you on their leash in the house so they can't make a mistake out of your sight, or only give them access to certain rooms of your home. Choose a "safe place" that's dog-proof and provide fresh water and "safe" toys. If your dog is crate trained, you may also place them in their crate for short periods of time. Remember: crates should never be used for punishment and should be a space where your dog feels safe. Exercise pens and baby gates are also helpful tools.

**Give your dog plenty of physical and mental exercise.** If your dog is bored, they'll find something to do to amuse themselves.

On the other hand, a tired dog is a good dog, so make sure they get lots of physical and mental activity. The amount of exercise should be based on their age, health and breed characteristics. While daily walks and other outdoor time are crucial to their well-being, letting your dog sniff will be more enriching than trying to power walk two miles without stopping. For dogs who enjoy the company of other dogs, a well-run doggy day care can be an excellent choice for high-energy pups.

**Build toys into your daily routine.** Instead of bowls, put their food in a puzzle toy or fill a Kong-type toy with their kibble. For more advanced chewers, cover the openings of the puzzle toy with canned cheese or peanut butter and freeze overnight before giving it to them. And be sure to keep a rotation of toys—novel items are more fun for your dog than chewing on the same toy from last year. Keep some toys hidden and bring them out when you need to keep your dog occupied.

**If you catch your dog chewing on something they shouldn't, trade them for a toy that's appropriate.** If the item they picked is so much fun they won't give it up, keep tasty treats on hand to trade it out. As your dog catches on to this idea, you can add the command "give" as their cue to release the object in exchange for the treat. Removing items from your dog's mouth can cause your dog to develop guarding behaviors or run from you when you need to get an item back.

**If your puppy is teething, try freezing a rubber toy;** the cold rubber will soothe their gums. As always, supervise your puppy so they don't chew and swallow any pieces.

**Make items unpleasant to your dog.** Furniture and other items can be coated with a taste deterrent (such as Bitter Apple) to make them unappealing. Caution: Supervise your dog when

you first try one of these deterrents. Some dogs will chew an object even if it's coated with a taste deterrent. Also, be aware that you must reapply some of these deterrents to maintain their effectiveness.

**Don't chase your dog if they grab an object and run.**

If you chase them, you're only giving your dog what they want. Being chased by their human is fun! Instead, call them to you and offer a treat.

**Have realistic expectations.** At some point your dog will inevitably chew up something you value; this is often part of the transition to a new home. Your dog needs time to learn where and what the appropriate chew toys are. Take precautions and keep things out of their reach to set them up for success.

**Punishment doesn't work.** There may be times when you're panicked over what your dog is chewing—such as a bottle of medication—which is why training them to trade you for treats will ensure they give up even the most fun items. Scolding or pulling things out of your dog's mouth can cause behavior issues to develop. Why risk your dog's trust when positive reinforcement methods are more effective?

And that "guilty look" is actually a canine submissive posture that dogs show when they feel threatened or unsafe. When you're angry and upset, your dog feels threatened by your tone of voice, body language or facial expressions, so they may hide or show submissive postures. Building and maintaining a positive, trusting relationship with your dog is the foundation of a happy life together!

---

Read this [article](#) online



# How to stop your dog from jumping

The same rules apply whether you want to stop dogs from jumping on you, friends, family or others.

Dogs jump for all kinds of reasons: attention, excitement or not knowing what else to do when they see a person.

Does your dog jump on you as if they've got springs on their feet? Like it or not, we humans are to blame. We not only permit this behavior, we encourage it. We know we shouldn't encourage jumping, but a fuzzy puppy is just too cute to resist. We forget that cute behavior in a puppy can become a real nuisance when they grow up.

Allowing your dog to jump on people can be dangerous too. You can end up scratched and bruised. A child or frail adult can be knocked down and seriously injured.

Solving a behavior problem like jumping requires both managing the situation and training your dog.

## Management

Management means you must control the situation so your dog doesn't have the opportunity to jump up. Use management techniques until your dog is adequately trained not to jump.

As an example, let's take the dog who jumps on visitors. To manage your dog's behavior, you could do one of the following before your guest arrives:

- Put your dog in their crate.
- Confine them in another room.
- Restrain your dog on a leash and ask them to sit while the guest enters. Be sure to reward good behavior.

This will prevent jumping while they are learning proper behavior.

## Training

Teach your dog that they receive no attention for jumping on you or anyone else. You can turn your back and only pet your dog when all four paws are on the floor.

Teach your dog to do something that is incompatible with jumping up, such as sitting. They can't sit and jump up at the same time. If they are not sitting, they get no attention.

**It is important to be consistent.** Everyone in your family must follow the training program all the time. You can't let your dog jump on people in some circumstances, but not others.

## Training techniques

When your dog ...

### Jumps on other people:

- Ask a family member or friend to assist with training. Your assistant must be someone your dog likes and wants to greet. Your dog should never be forced to greet someone who scares them.
- Give your dog the "sit" command. (This exercise assumes your dog already knows how to "sit.")
- The greeter approaches you and your dog. If your dog stands up, the greeter immediately turns and walks away.
- Ask your dog to "sit" and have the greeter approach again.
- Keep repeating until your dog remains seated as the greeter approaches.
- If your dog does remain seated, the greeter can give your dog a treat as a reward.

When you encounter someone while out walking your dog, you must manage the situation and train your dog at the same time:

- Stop the person from approaching by telling them you don't want your dog to jump.
- Hand the person a treat or get a treat ready in your hand to reward your pup for good behavior.
- Ask your dog to "sit."
- Tell the person they can pet your dog and give them the treat as long as your dog remains seated.

Some people will tell you they don't mind if your dog jumps on them, especially if your dog is small and fluffy or a puppy. But you should mind. Remember you need to be consistent in training. If you don't want your dog to jump on people, stick to your training. If someone is encouraging jumping, you can simply say "no thank you" when they want to greet your dog.

#### **Jumps on you when you come in the door:**

- Keep greetings quiet and low-key.
- If your dog jumps on you, ignore them. Turn and go out the door.
- Try again. You may have to come in and go out dozens of times before your dog learns they only gets your attention when they keep all four paws on the floor.

#### **Jumps on you when you're sitting:**

If you are sitting and your dog jumps up on you, stand up. Don't talk to your dog or push them away. Just ignore them until all four feet are on the ground.

---

Read this [article](#) online



# How to find obedience classes or dog trainers

**If your dog has started showing signs of behavioral challenges, then we can help you get started in finding a dog trainer or an obedience class.**

Whether you're potty training a new pup or struggling with positive reinforcement, you might want to consult a qualified dog trainer and/or enroll your pooch in a class.

"A lot of people say 'I know how to teach a dog to sit. Why would I go to a class?' And it's so much more than that," says Lindsay Hamrick, director of shelter outreach and engagement at Humane World for Animals and a certified professional dog trainer herself. She advises dog owners to "reach out for help anytime they don't know what to do."

Animal behavior websites can vary greatly in quality, Hamrick adds, but dog trainers can too—so here are some tips to get you started!

## Starting the search

Start your search for a dog trainer at the Certification Council for Professional Dog Trainers, which makes locating a qualified dog trainer near you as simple as plugging in your zip code. You might also try searching "canine behaviorist" and "dog behavior consultant."

## Making a match

Contact potential dog trainers to see if they'd be a good fit. Trainers' websites typically describe their expertise, allow you to submit a form explaining the concerns you have about your dog's behaviors, and give you an idea of the cost. It's also important to determine if they have the bandwidth to work with you.

Good dog trainers "know what they can and can't handle," Hamrick says. Some don't work with aggression cases, for example, and focus solely on obedience training or non-aggression behavioral challenges.

## Setting realistic expectations

Remember that dog trainers aren't miracle workers and behavior change takes time. "If you are talking to a trainer and they think they can fix your issue in a 30-minute television show... you should find somebody else," Hamrick says.

However, while a single session may not solve the challenges completely, we know that access to behavioral support can be pricey unless you have a low-cost option in your community. One consultation can still be helpful in identifying the root causes of your dog's behavior and some initial ways to help them choose new behaviors.

And just like when you were in school, homework matters.

"If you only practice during those training sessions, it's not going to stick," says Jessica Simpson, a senior companion animals public policy specialist for Humane World. A consistent approach is necessary to help dogs generalize the new behavior from the classroom to the home.

## Virtual training

Online dog training options have exploded in the wake of COVID. It's possible for dog trainers to size up a dog's issues through virtual chats with the owner and videos of the dog's behavior. After an initial video consultation, trainers can give the owners homework and then watch videos tracking the dog's progress. GoodPup is a great online program for those looking for this approach.

## Red flags

Ideally, you'll find an affordable, certified dog trainer who's knowledgeable about your dog's issues, practices humane techniques, and is available either in person or online. But if the training sparks concern, you can simply leave.

"If you don't feel good, then remove your dog," Hamrick says. "If you go to a local obedience class, and the trainer is yanking on leashes or making your dog scared, if your dog is not excited to go to class, then you absolutely have the right to cancel and remove them. You will do more damage by trying to be nice and stay."

---

Read this [article](#) online

# Introducing your new dog to your other dogs

**From “the leader of the pack” to “the top dog,” plenty of simplistic metaphors come from canines. But relationships that dogs have with each other can be complex from the first meeting.**

## Introduce on neutral territory

It's best to let dogs become familiar with each other on neutral territory: outdoors. Each dog should be walked separately on a leash, and each walker should have a bag of high value treats or food broken into small pieces. At first, walk the dogs at a distance where they can see each other but are not too provoked by each other's presence. If the dogs are not showing any negative behaviors, reward them with treats just for seeing each other. For example, when the dog you're walking looks at the other dog, you can say “Good boy!” in a happy, friendly voice and give him a treat. Repeat often.

## Pay attention to each dog's body language

Watch carefully for body postures that indicate a defensive or wary response, including hair standing up on the dog's back, teeth baring, growling, a stiff-legged gait or a prolonged stare. If you see such postures, either when the dogs are at a distance or near each other, immediately and calmly interrupt the interaction by interesting the dog in something else. If the dogs seem relaxed and comfortable, you can shorten the distance between them. Again, offer treats to the dogs any time they look at each other in a relaxed manner.

## Let the dogs determine the pace of the introduction

It's possible that the dogs will just want to play with each other by the middle of the walk. It's also possible that it will take more time

before the dogs are comfortable enough to walk side by side. The most important thing is to take this introduction slowly. The more patient you are, the better your chance of success. Do not force the dogs to interact.

Once the dogs are able to view each other at a close proximity, allow one dog to walk behind the other, and then switch. If the dogs remain comfortable, allow them to walk side by side. Finally, let the dogs interact under close supervision. If one or both dogs show any signs of stress or agitation, proceed more slowly with the introduction.

## Monitor closely in the home

When first introducing the dogs in the home, use a sturdy, tall baby gate to separate them. Observe how they interact through the gate. Reinforce positive behavior by providing high value treats to the dogs for positive interactions.

Make sure that there are no toys, food or treats left around the home that the dogs could potentially fight over. Also, be aware of situations that could lead to conflict—for example, when the dogs get overly excited. Closely monitor the dogs when they are together, rewarding them with treats, until you are 100% confident they are comfortable and safe with each other.

For help with introductions that don't seem to be going well, contact a professional dog trainer or animal behaviorist.

---

Read this [article](#) online



# Our mission

**Together, we tackle the root causes  
of animal cruelty and suffering to  
create permanent change.**



**Humane  
World for  
Animals™**

**[humaneworld.org](https://humaneworld.org)**

©2025 HUMANE WORLD FOR ANIMALS, ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

PHOTO CREDITS: COVER: SHELBY LAVIGNA/FOR HUMANE WORLD FOR ANIMALS 2023; PAGE 3: ERIN BRETHAUER/AP IMAGES FOR HUMANE WORLD FOR ANIMALS 2025; PAGE 4: DAN KOECK/AP IMAGES FOR HUMANE WORLD FOR ANIMALS 2021; PAGE 5: SAMANTHA NELSON/HUMANE WORLD FOR ANIMALS; PAGE 7: HUMANE WORLD FOR ANIMALS 2021; PAGE 8: MAGDALENA HERNANDEZ/HUMANE WORLD FOR ANIMALS 2024; PAGE 10: SALLY RYAN/FOR HUMANE WORLD FOR ANIMALS 2011; PAGE 11: JEAN CHUNG/FOR HUMANE WORLD FOR ANIMALS 2025; PAGE 12: PETRA RICHLI/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO; PAGE 14: MEREDITH LEE/HUMANE WORLD FOR ANIMALS 2022; PAGE 15: DAVID PAUL MORRIS/FOR HUMANE WORLD FOR ANIMALS 2012; PAGE 18: JACOB MEYER/GREAT PLAINS SPCA 2016; PAGE 20: JASON GEIL/FOR HUMANE WORLD FOR ANIMALS 2013