



FRANKLIN ANIMAL SHELTER

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What to Expect from a Shelter Dog

Your new dog may have been abandoned, found as a stray, surrendered by a previous family, or abused or neglected. The dog had to adjust to life at our shelter and is now going home to a new, unfamiliar place with strangers. Kind of scary if you think about it!

Being gentle, considerate, kind and patient will help ease your new dog into his/her new life with you. Some shelter dogs may be very friendly at first while others may be reserved until they get to know you. Let the dog come to you. Don't force him/her to do anything until you better understand his/her personality and behaviors.

No dog is going to be "perfect" and due to their past history, shelter dogs require special consideration.

Shelter dogs have a higher chance of being very reserved or submissive at first due to their past history, but then tend to come out of their shell within 1-2 weeks. We say 'higher chance' but often this is not the case.

Don't feed pets in the same room together until they are showing no aggression or jealousy at mealtime. A dog that has been starved, or forced to give up food to other dogs in the past, may be very protective of the food you give it.

WHERE AM I?

Your dog might be afraid and unsure of his new surroundings. If he appears to be scared, keep him in a small, quiet area to start, and take it slow. Don't allow children to bother the dog if he is afraid; fear can result in nipping. Instead, give your dog plenty of time to adjust to his new surroundings, taking it one step at a time. Don't give up! Don't leave your other pets or small children unsupervised with the new dog until they are used to each other.

OOPS! I'M SORRY

Even a toilet trained dog can make mistakes in a new home! Expect this to happen. He doesn't know which door to go to or how to ask his new family what he wants. Keep a very watchful eye on your new friend and confine him when you can't watch him.

The worst thing you can do is to physically reprimand a dog. This teaches the dog that he must go someplace you can't see him to eliminate. A firm "no" when you catch him in the act and placing him outside or on papers will teach him where it is appropriate to go.

The main thing is to reward good behavior and use firm verbal cues for bad behavior.

**It is not advised that you let the new member of your household free reign of the house when you are away for long periods of time. **

NEW RULES

Your new dog had a whole different set of rules in his previous home. If he has been given up, he may have been allowed to sleep in bed or beg at the table. He/she may have had a life confined to a cage with no human contact.

Franklin Animal Shelter staff spends a lot of time with dogs in our care and tries to make an adequate behavioral assessment before allowing a dog to be re-homed. It's up to you to teach him your rules. Teaching proper behavior takes time and patience.

ADJUSTMENT PERIOD

Allow several weeks to adapt to his new surroundings and up to four months to fully adjust (older dogs may take longer than young ones). Adopting a pet is a lifetime commitment. We assume that you will make a patient and concerted effort to achieve a successful placement.

Sometimes shelter dogs may exhibit behavioral problems that could include house soiling, destructive behavior, mild aggression toward other pets or humans, submissive urination, clinging behavior, licking behavior, and hiding or cowering in bed. All shelter dogs will exhibit some behavior when entering a new home. Most of the time, bad behavior is of very short duration as the animal becomes used to its new surroundings. Franklin Animal Shelter will advise you regarding any behaviors that have been observed while the animal was in our care.

These are some of the situations you may possibly run in to with your shelter dog. For the majority of adopters, however, after an initial few days of adjustment they find that they have adopted a truly wonderful little dog that wants nothing more than the touch of your hand, the sound of your voice, and the love of your heart. You may find it hard to believe that someone in the past treated your new friend with cruelty and malice or abandoned or surrendered him/her. It is difficult for us also but, because of your loving care, that will never happen again.

SHELTER DOGS MAKE SOME OF THE GREATEST COMPANIONS

There are many misconceptions about the quality of animals found in shelters and re-homing centers. The persistent stigma which shelter dogs have been labeled is that they are "damaged goods". Despite countless educational campaigns to educate the public, there still remain some individuals who believe shelter dogs do not make wonderful companions, or else their original owners wouldn't have gotten rid of them.

Animals are brought to the Franklin Animal Shelter for a large variety of reasons - which include:

- .
A family relationship has broken down and the dog/s need a new home
- .
Their owners have passed away and no other family member could care for the pet.
- .
An irresponsible owner didn't get their pets spayed or neutered and ended up with unwanted litters.
- .
The animal's owners were abusive to the animal, so the authorities have removed the pet from the harmful environment..
- .
An animal was purchased or adopted by someone who did not take into consideration all of the responsibilities associated with caring for a dog.
- .

There are many other reasons – many heartbreaking, but most often than not – it's not the dog's fault.

I DON'T KNOW WHAT I AM GETTING WITH A RESCUE DOG

Although it's true that the medical history and temperament of an animal adopted from a shelter are not always known or able to be tracked down.

HEALTH OF DOGS COMING FROM SHELTERS

It certainly is possible that a dog adopted from a shelter may have medical problems. However, the majority of the animals who are adopted are perfectly healthy, and just need a good home.

If anything, you're more likely to get an honest answer about an animal's medical problems from a shelter volunteer - who is clearly there because they care about the animals - as opposed to someone who is only in it for the money.

The Franklin animal Shelter wants the dog and the new owners to succeed in a happy relationship and will always be honest to potential new families. We don't want to set anybody up to fail.

You have chosen to give a new home to one of our dogs that has been abandoned or neglected. You should be proud of yourself. Without people like you, hundreds of abandoned and abused dogs of all breeds could be euthanized every year only because no one wanted them.