



The Benefits of Adopting Adult Dogs



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Adopting an adult dog can be very rewarding. The benefits can outweigh the negatives. You will not only have a friend for life, but a friend who can truly appreciate the second chance at life you have offered.

Bypassing the puppy phase

When you adopt a dog over a year old you bypass much of the time consuming puppy phase; as fun as it may seem to adopt a young puppy, they require a lot of additional time and training that many older dogs do not. Also, there won't be any surprises about size or coat length.

With a puppy you never know exactly what you're getting. Though many people think puppies are a blank slate that is not the case. In addition, with most families' schedules and busy lives a puppy's time and training requirements may be too much.

The first few days with your new dog

The first few days and weeks are critical in setting up the parameters for your new pet to become a welcome member of the household.

The first day home, your dog may be a bit groggy from the spay or neuter surgery or confused by the sudden change in his life. Once your dog feels better and settles in, you'll see his true personality.

Determine what the house rules will be before your new pet comes home and stick with them as much as possible. It is always easier to loosen

the rules then to try and impose them after a dog has gotten used to unfettered freedom. Feeling sorry for your dog and over-indulging him in the beginning is only setting him up for trouble. Keep your rules simple and expectations realistic and your life with your new pet will be a good one.

Time to adjust

Dogs need time to adjust. Often there is a "honeymoon" period in which the dog seems "perfect" and new adopters let their guard down. This time is critical for setting up your new pet for long-term success.

Time for bonding

You'll need to set time aside to be with your new pet and help guide him through the challenges of learning the rules of the new house and the rules of living in a human society. Navigating through these things in addition to adjusting to a new home can be challenging for some dogs.

This is also a good time to begin a solid relationship built on mutual respect and



understanding. Remember that if you are taking time off initially to acclimate your dog to his new home, it is important to help him get used to the idea of being alone, especially if you will be returning to a full work day. As you are getting closer to the day you will be going back to work, have your pet spend some time alone in a secure area. A crate or gated area can work well for this.

Kids and new pets

Until you fully understand your new dog—how he reacts to things and actions in his environment—be cautious with him around children. No matter what, dogs and children should **never** be left together unsupervised at any time.

Children should learn how to greet and pet dogs politely. Teach your children never to take food or toys away from a dog, or disturb a dog resting or sleeping. Not only are these lessons useful for everyone, they're also considerate of the dog's needs and desires.

A well-trained companion

One of the most important gifts a dog owner can give their pet is a training class. Though we often think we should be able to train our own dogs, it can be very helpful to the pet to learn good manners from a trained professional, but also in an environment with other dogs and people present.

Be consistent with the rules you set and be sure everyone in the home agrees to the rules. Sit down before bringing your pet home and develop guidelines and priorities that everyone can agree upon. This will help the family work together as a team to be consistent with the new pet.

Consistency and creating expectations will play a big part in helping the new pet adjust. 🐾