

Adding a second dog to your family!

Congratulations on adding your second dog to the pack! Whether you wanted a second dog to keep your first dog company or because the first dog bonded to one family member and you want one to bond to you, there are some things you can do to help with the transition from a one dog to a two dog household.

- 1) Picking the puppy: dogs are like people: sometimes they meet and hit it off immediately. Sometimes they hate each other, sometimes they are standoffish at first and then learn to accept each other. Sometimes an older dog takes longer to adjust to the second puppy. The most important consideration when adding a second dog is NOT gender or size...it's personality. Imagine being a quiet, shy person...a bit of a clean freak who likes calm, and values personal space and suddenly having a gregarious, high energy slob of a roommate move in. Your roommate takes your toys, eats your food, lays on your favorite bed – WHAT????? Someone is NOT going to be happy. When adding a second dog to your home, you want to find a personality that is complimentary and respectful to the existing dog in the household. Your breeder will work with you to find out more about the dog you have and to determine what personality is best for the second dog.
- 2) Before the new puppy comes home: Start preparing for your new addition before you bring him/her home. Put the second food dish out, buy a couple new toys for the new dog/puppy and (buy one for your existing dog too). If you want one bigger dog bed or a second dog bed, get that before the new dog comes so your existing dog can check it out and get used to it being around. If your current dog has food left out all day, start transitioning to scheduled feedings so that your current dog gets used to eating at set times which is what your new puppy will need.
- 3) On pick up day: If it's possible to bring your current dog with you to pick up your new puppy, take advantage of that. Meeting for the first time on neutral ground is very helpful. Not all breeders are set up for this so if that is not possible, set up the first meeting at home, outside, NOT in the house. Dogs can be territorial so setting up the first introduction on neutral territory can be very beneficial. Outside the house, in the back yard, across the street from your house, in a nearby local park....all are good options
- 4) The introduction: As humans, when we meet someone new, we usually offer our hand and say hello. In the dog world, it's all about sniffing the butt. You may recall seeing two dogs endlessly circling each other, each trying to get a good sniff of their new friend's back end. WHY? Because, that is how dogs 'handshake' and say hello. More importantly, the one that sniffs first is 'alpha'. The act of trying to get a sniff in can cause a lot of anxiety so eliminate it all by doing the following:
 - A) hold your new puppy off the ground with its butt pointed away from you.
 - B) Call your current dog over to get a good sniff of the pup.
 - C) Once your dog has checked out the new puppy and walks away, put the puppy on the ground and back away a couple feet
 - D) allow the two dogs to sniff more and to interact. BE AWARE: Some pups may be overwhelmed meeting a new dog for the first time. The pup may cower and hide or run away.

It may also shriek and yell while trying to hide. That is okay. That is all perfectly normal. Don't pick up the puppy or try to console it, just observe and encourage. Monitor your current dog's behavior so that he/she doesn't overwhelm and frighten the puppy. Allow them time to get comfortable with each other. That may take a few hours, a few days or a few weeks.

- 5) Respect the pack: Puppies are adorable and everyone enjoys meeting them and cuddling them but make sure you and anyone who visits you, follows a few simple suggestions to avoid the green eyed monster (jealousy) showing up in your existing dog
 - a. anyone visiting has to say hi and give some love to your existing dog FIRST. Once that is done, the puppy can get attention. You can also try keeping some high value treats at the door. When you have visitors, they can give your older dog a treat and a hello and then just say hello to the puppy (no treat).
 - b. When it's time to feed the dogs, feed your original dog first. Feed the puppy second. It's as simple as asking both dogs to sit, wait, put one dish down, let your older dog start eating and then put the second dish down and allow the puppy to eat. Make sure you supervise feeding so that they don't steal each other's food or, that the older dog doesn't eat all its food and then polish off all the puppy food as well. Once meal time is done, put the food away until the next feeding time.
 - c. Don't permit the puppy on the furniture if your original dog IS permitted on the furniture. The top dog always gets the BEST sleeping spots so pups should remain on the floor if your existing dog is on your lap. As the dogs get older, the puppy can spend some time on the couch. Usually with your permission. In our household, the puppy only tried to get on the couch a few times and each time the older dog scolded him. Puppy soon stopped trying. By the time the puppy was 8-9 months old, he was allowed on the couch when called up and the older dog accepted it.
 - d. Alpha's control entrances and exits so if you are taking the dogs for a walk, make them sit, wait while you open the door and walk out and then call the adult dog out first...puppy should follow. If the puppy tries to dart out the door first, tell it "NO", put it back inside, call the older dog out first and then call the puppy again. Keep working on it until going outside, coming inside, getting in the car, getting out of the car result in the puppy naturally following the 'leader' outside and inside.
- 6) Playtime rules: Puppies have much more energy than adult dogs and sometimes adult dogs are not too excited about all that energy. When it's time to play, watch that the puppy does not endlessly terrorize an older dog that really just wants to sleep. If an older dog jumps onto the couch to get away from the puppy or goes into a crate, that's okay. Supervise all play interactions. Don't allow the adult dog to get too rough with the puppy. Wrestling and tugging toys and chasing are all good forms of play. Pinning a puppy down and gnawing on the neck, chewing on ears/tails etc ...that is NOT okay. Give them a little time away from each other. Watch for the play bow from one or the other. The play bow is the invitation to play. Sometimes the play bow is combined with a toy in the mouth...another sure sign that one dog is trying to entice the other dog into a play session. If play ensues...fabulous! If no play happens, step in and engage with your dog or the puppy to give a few minutes of one-on-one play.
- 7) Sleeping arrangements: Sometimes dogs hit it off and start playing and sleeping together right away. More often, the acclimation to each other is a gradual process. If your older dog is crated at night, crate your puppy beside the adult dog so the pup can see/hear/smell the other dog.

That will give the puppy a sense of security and it will know it is not alone but each dog will have their own space. If the older dog sleeps on the bed, crate the puppy beside the bed so he/she has company at night at least for the first 5-7 nights. The puppy does not need to sleep on the bed (remember Alpha gets the best sleeping spot?) You may gradually notice the two dogs sleeping closer and closer to each other during daytime naps. Eventually, they may sleep together on the same bed or be cuddled right up to each other. Whatever the case may be, let your dogs set the pace. Don't force them to be crated in the same space. Let them decide their comfort level and gradually accept each other. Often how quickly the puppy accepts the older dog's leadership is what determines the timeline for them getting used to each other and becoming best buddies.

- 8) PUPPY TRAINING: If your older dog knows some tricks (shake a paw, roll over, say please, dance etc) you can train your puppy along side your older dog. Your puppy may even learn a little quicker by watching and mimicking what the older dog is doing however, Puppies also NEED one-on-one time for training. Plan to spend at least 5-10 minutes a day with just your new puppy and no distractions to work on basic training (sit, down, come etc). Pups have very short attention spans so no need to spend hours at a time working on basic skills. Your pup will naturally want to follow your older dog around and copy what it sees. Take advantage of that desire but also make sure it gets some time to learn on it's own too.

Adding a second dog to your family can be very rewarding. The dogs provide endless hours of entertainment, excitement, fill your lap (and favorite chair) with cuddles and keep you thinking one step ahead of them. They can also be double trouble if your older dog hasn't mastered good manners or has behavioral issues. If you follow the few simple rules noted in this article, you will be well on your way to creating a wonderful, relational pack and a harmonious household.

Enjoy!