

"Puppies & Dogs"

If you already have a dog and are planning on bringing a puppy home, this article is for you!

While some dogs may be eager to receive the new member...

Others may not...



There's a great deal we can do to help everyone adjust!

Let's consider your dog's social skills!

- If you have dog that lacks social skills with other dogs, you really need to consider whether a puppy will be at risk of injury before bringing a puppy into your home.
- If your dog has been in fights in the past (whether he started it or reacted to a threat), you'd probably be best to work with a great behaviourist to try and overcome any issues before bringing a puppy into your home. Ask your veterinarian for a referral as many have a list of good behaviourists!
- Remember, dogs learn from each other so whatever behavioural issue you are seeing in your older dog can easily be mimicked by your puppy.
- Invest time and resources into your dog before bringing a new puppy into the mix! It'll be worth the investment as we all work on promoting safety in homes and communities!

Let's consider your dog's age and "life stage" before deciding!

- As dogs age, many tend to lack patience for puppies. Their energy levels have dropped, they may be achy and sore or simply prefer peace and quiet during their golden years. Consider whether your older dog can be happy with a puppy or even with another dog in the home before making your decision. The great news is, some families report that puppies have actually engaged older dogs to live a more active and enjoyable lifestyle! You know your pet, make the decision that's best for all of you!
- If you believe your dog will enjoy the company of a puppy then by all means, let's get started!

Let's consider your dog's energy level and temperament!

- If your dog is active, loves to run and play as well as investigate with a naturally higher environmental focus, then a high energy, playful, confident puppy would be great for your dog!
- If your dog is quiet, calm and easy going, then a lower energy, socially focused and calmer dog would be a great companion for your dog.
- If your dog is serious or perhaps lacks patience and tolerance, select an easy going puppy!
- Some people encourage investing in a puppy of a different sex from your adult dog. If you are buying from a reputable breeder, ask his/her opinion on the matter. In my experience, focusing on temperament is more important than focusing on the sex of the puppy.

Preparing for the exciting day!

- **Err on the side of caution** even if your dog LOVES all dogs. Recovering from a bad experience is harder than preparing for a good one!
- **Plan ahead** for the big day! Remove access to any resource your dog may want to protect both indoors and outdoors (ie: toys, furniture, food and water bowls; etc...). If you think your dog will become possessive of the couch, we must have lots of positive interaction between puppy and dog before they are both near the couch at the same time. If we are talking about a dog becoming possessive over you, then we'll need to bring other people into the mix when introducing the puppy to your dog the first time! You'll get to stand on the sidelines and give direction.
- **INVEST IN AN X-PEN** for your puppy as well as a crate! The x-pen will save your sanity and improve relations between your puppy and your dog immensely!
- **Separate** your puppy and your dog when you want to give them toys. Puppy can go in his x-pen or in his crate! You'll want to do this for a month or so as it may take that long for your dog to truly accept your puppy. Also, keep in mind that puppy toys are hazardous to dogs since they are so small!
- Dogs develop deep relationships with others when we have lots of positive experiences to build on. Let's set your dog and puppy up for success by **being proactive and minimizing mistakes!**
- If possible, when visiting with your puppy before bringing him home, rub a towel on his fur and tuck it in a plastic bag for later. When you arrive home, and when your dog is feeling quiet and calm, let him sniff the towel and say "good boy" then give him a tasty reward (don't let him take the towel and tear it up). We only reward him if he is calm, curious and content. If he growls upon sniffing the towel, you may have a problem and should discuss this with your breeder. Put the towel away once your dog is done sniffing it and you can do this exercise daily until your puppy arrives.
- Plan to **tether** your dog and your puppy (to doorknobs or something sturdy enough that can't be pulled) in the same room but far enough away from each other when they are being fed. This way, they can eat at the same time, in the same room, without actually interrupting each other. Make sure to place the bowls in the sink before releasing your dog and puppy.
- We will work on **avoiding jealousy!** Give your dog loads of calm affection once your puppy arrives and daily thereafter. Since you'll be training your puppy with exercises (as those found in *The Happy Puppy Training Kit*), do exercises with your dog as well before or after your session with your puppy. Ensure to use lots of verbal praise, patting and treats for your dog too even though he already knows the exercises!
- It's important to **train your puppy separately** initially. You want him to be responsive to you and not distracted by your dog.
- If your dog is lovely and responsive to you, he'll be a **GREAT teacher** to your puppy. Take advantage of that as soon as your dog has truly accepted your puppy.
- Since puppy will be eating 3 times a day initially, and since your dog may currently be eating once or twice a day, consider measuring a day's ration of food and divide it into 3 meals so that your dog can eat when your puppy eats. Food is an incredibly high valued resource for dogs and we don't want your dog thinking that puppy is getting more than his share! Not to worry, they'll both be weaned back to 2 **meals** a day before too long. If you'd prefer not to do this, you can tether both pets and simply reward your dog with treats while puppy is eating his meals.
- Aside from changing meal time so that it coincides with your puppy's meals, try and **keep your dog's routine closest to normal as possible** (daily walks at the same time only with him initially until your puppy is fully vaccinated). You'll be able to walk both together before long.
- Once you have a feeling of comfort with the interactions between your puppy and your dog, you'll be able to have them together in the same room off leash under **supervision**. It's important to watch your dog and identify signs that he is getting annoyed with the puppy. Step in and control your puppy's behaviour when he is being rude, letting your dog know that you have his back! Your dog may correct puppy from time to time and that's ok, as long as the correction is reasonable. What's reasonable? A quick correction with a quick end to the correction (preferably with no use of teeth although some dogs with good bite inhibition may even give a little nip). Help your puppy in understanding the body language signals so a lip curl, a hard stare, a closed mouth and so on is your cue to re-direct your puppy away from your dog (with a good "leave it") before your dog feels the need to correct puppy on his own. Not sure about the signals? Simply refer to *The Introduction to Canine Body Language Booklet* found in *The Happy Puppy Training Kit!*
- Ensure your puppy is comfortable with a collar and leash before the introduction. If you have questions, refer to the Leash Training exercise in *The Happy Puppy Training Kit*.
- **Your energy matters so have fun and relax!** Just take it one step at a time and let your dog (not your puppy) set the pace. When he's content and relaxed, you're ready to move to the next stage!

The Initial Greeting:

- Have someone walk your dog before puppy arrives so that he is relaxed and a little tired!
- Exercise your puppy a little bit in the meeting place BEFORE your dog arrives.
- Introduce your puppy and your dog in a neutral territory, one that your dog won't consider his. Keep in mind your puppy is not yet fully vaccinated so a friend's yard may be a great place to start.
- You'll want puppy in the yard, on leash, before bringing your dog into the yard, on leash.
- Breathe deeply, relax and enjoy this experience!
- Only have your dog and your puppy present for this initial visit, along with at least 2 adults (one for each pet). Remember, if your dog is jealous of other dogs interacting with you, step aside and have a 2nd handler present for this introduction.
- Don't bring other dogs into the mix! We must focus on these two becoming friends over the next few weeks before bringing another dog into the mix!
- Have your puppy and your dog on leashes. Remember to keep those leashes loose so as not to create tension in your pets.
- Don't force the pets together. Let them make their way towards each other.
- **Forward movement is a GREAT way to get dogs to get along.** So, start by walking in one direction at the same time but away from each other and after several minutes, if all is going well, you can allow a sniff greeting between your puppy and your dog. Then, keep on walking forward with your pets. ***** If your dog loves to greet other dogs on leash during walks, you can certainly let your dog and puppy greet each other then start walking around the yard with them.*****
- If your dog stops to sniff something, hold your puppy back until your dog is done and moves away - then your puppy can sniff that space too.
- **Don't have treats during this first visit.** Gentle verbal praise and patting is best for now!
- When things are going well, leave the yard and walk back to your home. Spend a little time walking your pets around your front yard, then a little time doing the same in the back yard before entering your home. Step into your home and place puppy in the x-pen so that he can get comfortable in his new space. Give your dog LOTS OF PRAISE for being so wonderful!!! When you are ready, have someone bring your dog outdoors (a play session or maybe a nice walk) so that your puppy can explore his new living space off leash. **NOTE: This time outdoors must be a fun positive one for your dog – don't just release him in the yard on his own while you spend time indoors with puppy right now.**
- Once your dog comes back indoors, have your puppy and your dog on-leash to limit access and control excitement during this early stage.
- Done right, your dog will have lots of positive experiences with your puppy. Remember, puppies sleep a lot during this stage providing wonderful opportunities to reassure your dog that you love him to bits too!



Becoming good friends is the goal!