**Bringing Home a Rescue Dog**

First Day:

* We know moving is stressful — and your new dog feels the same way! **Give him time to acclimate to your home and family before introducing him to strangers.** Some dogs experience stomach upset and diarrhea. House-trained dogs may regress and have accidents. Some will shy away from you for a while until you earn their trust. **Be patient with your baby. It may take a while for him to adore you as much as you adore him. How long it takes is different for every dog. It could take anywhere from three days to three months for your new dog to settle in. Just be patient with him and show him in all of your actions that he is safe with you.** Make sure children know how to approach the dog without overwhelming him.
* Once home, take him to his toileting area immediately and spend a good amount of time with him so he will get used to the area and relieve himself. **Even if your dog does relieve himself during this time, be prepared for accidents. Coming into a new home with new people, new smells and new sounds can throw even the most housebroken dog off-track, so be ready just in case.**
* If you plan on crate training your dog, leave the crate open so that he can go in whenever he feels like it, in case he gets overwhelmed.
* Leave the leash on for the first few hours so you can redirect your dog if he gets into any trouble. Grabbing your dog’s collar can often startle them, and a gentle tug on the leash is an easier option for everyone.
* Dog-proof the area where your pooch will spend most of his time during the first few months. This may mean taping loose electrical cords to baseboards; removing plants, rugs, and breakables; and installing baby gates.
* From here, start your schedule of feeding, toileting and play/exercise.
* **For the first few days, remain calm and quiet around your dog, limiting too much excitement**. Avoid places such as dog parks, pet stores, and large gatherings. Not only will this allow your dog to settle in easier, it will give you more one-on-one time to get to know him and his likes/dislikes.
* If he came from another home, objects like leashes, hands, rolled up newspapers and magazines, feet, chairs and sticks are just some of the pieces of “training equipment” that may have been used on this dog. Words like “come here” and “lie down” may bring forth a reaction other than the one you expect. **This dog may be the product of a never-ending series of scrambled communications and unreal expectations that will require patience on your part.**

Following Weeks:

* **People often say they don’t see their dog’s true personality until several weeks after adoption. Your dog may be a bit uneasy at first as he gets to know you. Be patient and understanding** while also keeping to the schedule you intend to maintain for feeding, walks, etc. This schedule will show your dog what is expected of him as well as what he can expect from you.
* **Be on the lookout for emails from our check-in software, Maddie’s Pet Assistant.** You will be asked to fill out questionnaires to let us know how your dog is settling in over time. Please answer honestly, as your answers will help us determine the best way for us to help you and your dog.
* If you encounter behavior issues you are unfamiliar with, ask us and/or your veterinarian for a trainer recommendation.

Signed:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_