



OUR DOG FOUNDATION ADOPTION GUIDE

PLEASE ENSURE THAT YOU READ ALL OF THIS GUIDE
CAREFULLY AND CONTACT US IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS.



ADOPT

If you can't adopt...

FOSTER

If you can't foster...

DONATE

If you can't donate...

VOLUNTEER

If you can't volunteer...

NETWORK

If you can't NETWORK...

EDUCATE



We are a non-profit organisation specialising in the rescue, rehabilitation, fostering and rehoming of dogs from the Romania and the UK.

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WHAT YOUR ADOPTION FEE INCLUDES



IF OUR DOG FOUNDATION IS A NON-PROFIT ORGANISATION, WHY ARE OUR ADOPTION FEES £495 PER DOG? HERE'S WHY...



TESTS

TO ENSURE YOUR NEW PET HAS A CLEAN BILL OF HEALTH PRIOR TO TRAVEL.

TOTAL PER DOG = €100 MINIMUM

- Parvo test (puppies under 6m) €20;
- Giardia test (on all dogs) €15;
- Leishmaniasis test (on all dogs) €18;
- 4DX test: heartworm, anaplasmosis, ehrlichiosis, Lyme disease (usually only performed on dogs 6m+) €22;
- Brucellosis test (usually only performed on dogs 12m+) €25.

VACCINATIONS

TO PROTECT YOUR NEW PET AGAINST COMMON DISEASES.

TOTAL PER DOG = €65 MINIMUM

- DHPPi (combination vaccine shot that protects your dog from four different diseases: distemper with leptospirosis, hepatitis, parainfluenza, and parvovirus) & Rabies €50;
- Kennel cough €15.



SHELTER & CARE

TO KEEP YOUR NEW PET SAFE IN PREPARATION FOR TRAVEL TO THE UK.

TOTAL PER DOG = €240 MINIMUM

- Release fee & transport cost from kill shelter (if required) €50;
- Food & foster care for three months €120 (dependant on time in OUR care - our long-stay residents cost us much more);
- Worm & flea treatment €20;
- Vitamins & special food for puppy health €10;
- Neuter/spay (if old enough) €40.

PREPARATION FOR TRAVEL & TRANSPORT

TO ENSURE THAT YOUR NEW PET ARRIVES WITH YOU HEALTHY & HAPPY.

TOTAL PER DOG = €280 MINIMUM

- Microchip registered in your name €10;
- Passport €10;
- Transport from Romania to your door in the UK €260.



GRAND TOTAL = €685 / £585

OUR POT IS EMPTY, WHICH IS WHY WE RELY SO MUCH ON SPONSORSHIP FEES, DONATIONS & FUNDRAISING.

THE ADOPTION FEE FROM ONE DOG IS ALWAYS USED TO SAVE THE NEXT; ANY FUNDS LEFT OVER WILL ALWAYS GO TOWARDS A DOG NEEDING EXTRA MEDICAL CARE OR REHABILITATION.

Introduction

First things first...this is a guide to rescuing from Romania, and the O.U.R Dog Foundation Team are all so happy that you have chosen to save the life of one of our dogs. All of OUR Dog Foundation's rescues are very **special** and you must think ahead at all times and consider that most of these dogs will never have been in this kind of situation. Almost all of these dogs are not used to living in a house and therefore, don't understand the house rules!

Some are quieter than others and some come in like they've always lived there! It all depends on the dog and his history. Some are house trained, and some are not. Some are good with children and cats and others are not. We often don't know until the dog is here, but most seem to get on fine with their families.

Some dogs we get lots of background info, some we know very little particularly when saved from kill lists.



Changing Your Dog's Name

Many of you ask about changing the dog's name. Mostly the dogs are given their names at the rescue, this is because they come into us with just a number. Therefore, it will not be familiar to the dog and they will soon adapt to your chosen name if you decide to change it. Your dog's microchip will be changed to your details by the rescue, you will be contacted with these details in an email by Pet Trac (which may go into your junk folder) a few days after their arrival. You can still change your dog's name at this point if you so wish.



Before Their Arrival (Things to Consider)

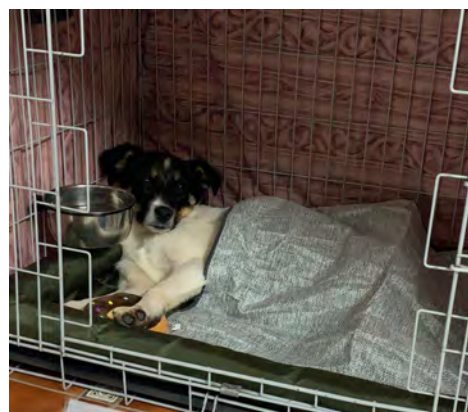
It's important to make sure you have everything prepared before the arrival of your new dog and a plan to ensure that their first few days go as smoothly as possible. Your dog will have had a long and stressful journey to get to you so providing them with a safe space to call their own will be important.

This safe space should be tucked away preferably in a quiet area where they can settle in and decompress. A crate is a good option for dogs who may feel overwhelmed and want to hide away as it provides a den-like area where they can feel safe. It is important never to force a dog into a crate, shut them in one for long periods of time or use a crate as a form of punishment. It should be a place they can go when they do not want to be bothered or want to feel secure. You do not have to use a crate, but they can help with many different training issues.

Crate or not, it is worth considering blocking off access to the whole of the house at first. Baby gates are a great tool for sectioning off certain areas to the dog. Your new dog will likely not have had the luxury of living in a home before as so will find all the sights, smells and hustle and bustle of daily life overwhelming. You can help to reduce this overwhelm by slowly introducing portions of the house you would like them to be in over time rather than allowing full freedom at the beginning. Although it is tempting to provide them with all the things you feel they may have missed out on, it's best to introduce new things slowly. This also applies to things like toys.

To begin with, it's best to simply provide them with a bed and their food and water bowls. Introducing toys too early could cause issues with resource guarding.

When your dog arrives you will need to attach a collar with an ID tag to them. They will not be used to this so tread carefully and go slowly at their pace. It is a legal requirement that dogs wear tags so make sure that you have this. You will also need a slip lead, although in the long term we don't recommend this as a method of walking your dog as Romanian Rescues often strongly dislike any pressure around their neck. It is, however, the most secure and easy way to get them from the transport to your home.



One of the biggest factors in issues with dogs initially in the home is rooted in the expectations of new owners/fosters. We must stress that you remember the journey your new dog has likely been on to get to this point. From kill shelter, to kennels, to fostering in Romania and then a long trip all the way to England on a van being handled by new people. They will most likely be extremely stressed and when stressed dogs have a tendency to behave differently to their actual temperament. Alongside this is the fact that many of these dogs will never have lived in a home or know how to communicate in any way with humans. They will need time and patience to learn what is expected of them.

If you have children it will also be important to explain beforehand how to behave around the new dog who may be frightened. Including being calm and gentle, to leave them alone for the first few days as they settle. It may be worth explaining the long journey the dog has taken and that they may not want to play at first.

Shopping List

- Bed or bedding;
- Crate * (not required if you don't intend to crate train);
- Enrichment toys such as kongs or puzzles;
- Slip lead;
- Collar with ID and Lead;
- Harness * (Do not attempt to put this on your dog until they are fully settled);
- Bowls for food and water;
- Long-lasting chews such yak chews, antlers, etc;
- Dry doggy shampoo and pet wipes.

Many of these items can be purchased from [OUR Doggy Essentials Shop](#). For 10% off as a new adopter, use the code OURFRIENDS10 at the checkout.



Collecting Your Dog

If your dog is coming directly to you from one of our overseas shelters, usually the dog is delivered straight to your door. However, sometimes you may want to meet the transporters to cut down on your dog's travel time. This is usually at a service station or another drop near to you. We hope you will be able to help us in this way if necessary.

If you are collecting your dog at a meeting point, please make sure that you arrive early and have everything ready so that you can get the slip lead on the dog as soon as possible. It may be advisable to secure them with two leads as in their fear they will be likely to bolt. Most dogs will not be used to the feel of a collar and lead so you will likely have to carry them into the home or car. Don't try to walk your dog: just get them into the car harness/travel crate (secured as this is a legal requirement) comfortably and go straight home.



Again, be very careful when getting them out of the car and into the house: they are quick and will run given the chance.

When Your New Dog Arrives Home

When you first bring your new dog home, make sure you have them on a lead!

Spend the first 15-30 minutes walking them outside around your house and garden. Walk slowly and let them sniff and pause if they want to. They are getting used to all the smells. Your dog may relieve themselves; this is their way of making themselves at home by adding their mark to the smells of their new home. Ideally, you would want this to happen outside but the excitement of the move and new family will cause them to relieve themselves more often than normal, which could equal indoor accidents. In the beginning, try to give them plenty of opportunities to do their toileting by taking them into your garden often.

Do not be concerned if their stools are runny (and sometimes bloody) at this point. This is completely normal and likely down to stress and a potential change of diet. You can purchase some inexpensive probiotics to add to their food if this becomes a concern. Make sure your dog has access to water and a small bland meal (wet food or chicken and rice) and leave them to decompress. It will be important at this point not to fuss over your dog or allow family members to fuss over the dog. If there are children/other animals in the house it may be a good idea to separate them to enable the dog to get over the initial trauma of their journey in peace.

Once the dog is growing in confidence, leave the lead trailing, just in case you need to move your dog out of or into anywhere; this will eliminate the need for you to grab, which could be very scary for them. We recommend you leave the lead on until your dog is relaxed and more trusting of you, your family and any other resident pets.

Let your new dog explore their new home at their own pace, making sure they are supervised **at all times**. Never force them into new rooms or areas.

Dogs display anxiety and nervousness by either panting, pacing, lack of eye contact, 'not listening', toilet accidents, excessive chewing, gastric upset (vomiting, diarrhoea, loose stools), crying, whining, jumpiness and barking. Reduce the noise and confusion in your dog's head and get them to relax, to be calm and try to show them how to behave. Despite your joy at adopting one of our rescue dogs, you should be calm, gentle and firm. Talk to them in a calm, low voice.

***IMPORTANT**

The dog must stay on your premises for 48 hours before going out or leaving. This is called 'Traces' and is a legal requirement by DEFRA. Sometimes DEFRA do spot checks just to ensure everything is in order but always phone first if they want to visit. This is nothing to worry about and just part of the process to check the dog's condition and their paperwork.

Keep Them Safe!

We live in fear of our dogs escaping so please ensure that the dog is shut away before answering the front door as these dogs are very good at escaping.

Be **very aware** that these dogs have had to survive any way they can... they can jump higher than you think, wriggle through holes smaller than you think and be gone in seconds if scared. In the unlikely event of your dog escaping and running away, you **must inform a member of our team straightaway**.

Immediately, you should ring the dog warden and all local rescues. If you and friends or family go to search for them, we cannot stress highly enough **do not chase or try and corner them** as they will just become more fearful and run further.



The Rule of 3:3:3

There is a well-known and general rule that can be applied when welcoming any new dog into your family. This is referred to as the 3-3-3 rule. It suggests that it takes 3 days for a dog to decompress and get over the initial trauma of a big move. 3 weeks for them to begin to feel at home and up to 3 months for them to fully settle into your home and begin to learn the rules. For some dogs this time frame may be shorter but for street dogs it more often can be longer.

The 3-3-3 rule generally applies to dogs who are entering a new home who perhaps have not had the level of trauma that a street dog may have. Not to mention the trauma of 2-3 days in transport and a new home with new people and new expectations. Some dogs will cope with this change remarkably well. However, it is better to assume that they won't and behave and handle them accordingly. Acting in this way can help prevent potential issues and allow the dog time to acclimate to the new environment.

IT DOESN'T HAPPEN OVERNIGHT
THE 3/3/3 RULE IS A GENERAL GUIDELINE FOR THE ADJUSTMENT PERIOD OF A DOG AFTER ADOPTION. EVERY DOG IS UNIQUE AND WILL ADJUST DIFFERENTLY.

 3 DAYS	 3 WEEKS	 3 MONTHS
TO DECOMPRESS	TO LEARN YOUR ROUTINE	TO START TO FEEL AT HOME
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● FEELING OVERWHELMED● MAY FEEL SCARED/UNSURE OF WHAT'S GOING ON● NOT COMFORTABLE ENOUGH TO BE "HIMSELF"● MAY NOT WANT TO EAT OR DRINK● SHUTS DOWN AND/OR HIDES UNDER FURNITURE● TESTS THE BOUNDARIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● STARTS SETTling IN● FEELS MORE COMFORTABLE● REALIZES THIS COULD BE HIS FOREVER HOME● FIGURES OUT HIS ENVIRONMENT● GETS INTO A ROUTINE● LETS HIS GUARD DOWN, MAY BEGIN TO SHOW HIS TRUE PERSONALITY● BEHAVIOR ISSUES MAY START TO APPEAR	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● FINALLY FEELS COMPLETELY COMFORTABLE IN HIS HOME● BEGINS TO BUILD TRUST AND A TRUE BOND● GAINS A COMPLETE SENSE OF SECURITY WITH HIS NEW FAMILY● SETS INTO A ROUTINE

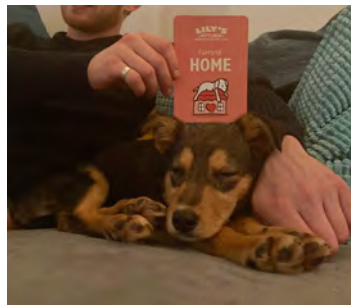
GIVE THEM A CHANCE

Their First Three Days

In the initial days, your dog's stress levels will be extremely high. At this point, you want to do everything you can to minimise this by not overwhelming them with too many stimulating experiences. Think about the various new things your dog is likely experiencing that they have never experienced before (new people, new smells, new environment, new sounds, new animals, etc) if you have the potential to avoid introducing a few of these initially you can help to reduce those stress levels quicker and your dog will likely settle much easier.

During these first few days, you should give your dog plenty of space, and explain to any children or family members to do the same. Your dog may spend a lot of time sleeping or hiding away in their bed or crate during those first initial days. They may test boundaries and not act in a way that is true to their personality. They are frightened and it's your job to make sure they feel as comfortable and safe as possible in these initial stages.

At this point, the dog should come to you, and if they do, offer calm, gentle encouragement. This will help build the association that you are a good thing. It's important that yourself or other family members do not disturb the dog during this stage. Attempting to pet them or fuss over them may lead to an increase in their fear. The dog should choose to come to you and eventually this will make them more trusting.



At around 3-7 days, you can begin to introduce new family members and other pets, consider the progress your dog has made before doing this. If this is done too early, your new dog could become more stressed and this may increase the likelihood of issues later on.

Avoid having lots of visitors to the house during the first week. Let your new arrival settle and get used to their new environment and get used to you before you start introducing more new people. Visitors tend to want to excessively fuss because they will know your new dog is from a rescue and might have never known love or how to be a pet. All this attention from so many strangers can cause many of these dogs to feel anxious.

Recommendations:

- It is best to wait as long as possible before walking your new dog (See: Your Dogs First Walks). Allow them to fully settle and become comfortable before even considering taking them outside. During this time you can work on getting them used to the feel of a collar or harness and a lead as well as other behaviours that may be handy later on.
- Consider leaving a lightweight lead on your dog in the house, this will allow you to move the dog if necessary without having to grab the collar or handle the dog who will likely be fearful.
- Do not allow the dog access to sofas/bed for the first few weeks. This can be introduced later if wanted but giving dogs access to such spaces straight away can cause issues with resource guarding.
- Begin with your new dog in a smaller area or room to begin with. Do not allow them to follow you around the home, this can lead to resource guarding and separation anxiety. Teaching them to be alone and calm without you will be very important (See: Preventing Behavioural Issues). Many of these dogs have not ever lived in homes before and allowing them sudden freedoms will be overwhelming and can make them more anxious.
- Keep your dog on the lead in the garden for the first few weeks; their high levels of stress will likely make them more prone to bolting and therefore all steps should be taken to prevent this even if you think you have an extremely secure garden.



Their First Three Weeks

After the initial period of decompression, your dog will begin to show their true self a little bit more as they start to get into the swing of your routine. At this stage he/she may still not yet know what is expected of them. It may appear that they are acting out or misbehaving but in those frustrating times remember that this is not personal, your new dog is not stubborn or difficult. They simply do not understand what is expected of them. At this stage you can begin to teach them how you wish them to behave.

The best approach with rescue dogs is one that is gentle and compassionate. If you attempt to use punishments or scolding your dog is more likely to become fearful and this could lead to them lashing out in response and create further issues down the line.



In these initial few weeks, you can begin introducing your dog to the new things in their environment, which they will hopefully be more willing to explore. Giving them more access to the house over time and taking them on walks or longer walks depending on how well your dog is settling. Do not be tempted to rush anything, the slower you take things the easier it will be for your dog to adjust.

In the first 3 weeks, you may start noticing some training issues coming out, as your dog becomes more confident and sure of themselves you may notice more issues with training or that they could potentially revert to old behaviours. It's important to be patient with them during this time. If you are persistent with training them and do not give up they will learn.

Their First Three Months

At around 3 months, your dog will be feeling much more comfortable in your home. They will have started to build a bond with you and other family members and you will have more of an idea of their true personality. As long as you have continued with training and a routine your dog should be well on their way to becoming the dog you expect them to be. It is important to note that this timeframe can be smaller or longer and is completely dependent on the time and effort you put in and the dog in general.

All rescue dogs go through a 'honeymoon period'; the dog may be very quiet and 'good' for a time, but the 'real' dog may appear four to six weeks later. This is usually after they have figured out the house rules, the schedule of the days, and the characters of their new family. At this time, they'll start testing out their position in the pack, and may 'regress' to puppyhood behaviours and 'bad' behaviour.



Be patient with them and praise them for appropriate behaviour - especially when they are lying quietly and behaving themselves. Do not praise them without a reason constantly, this will only confuse your dog and in time they will not respond.

Create House Rules

Don't allow your new dog to follow you everywhere and have access to all areas of the house for the first few days/weeks. Often, these dogs will not be used to all the home comforts we offer them and if you allow them free reign over everything, you could find them developing resource guarding behaviours over all the new and wonderful 'stuff' they have acquired!

Plus, it can help prevent the development of separation anxiety by providing them with their own room that you leave now and again just to go to other areas of the house. An already anxious dog can feel even more anxious if they have too much space.

Other problems that you might experience:

- Not liking their lead being put on;
- Pulling on the lead or not wanting to move at all when the lead is on;
- Bin raiding and stealing;
- Demanding attention;
- Separation anxiety;
- Fear of people and other animals;
- Chewing or other stress behaviours;
- Toileting accidents.

Do not panic if your new dog starts displaying behavioural problems. They will have never been told what to do, when they are getting food, when they can go outside, what is acceptable and what isn't. Start as you wish to go on, be consistent and very rewarding with your training and stick to a strict routine. Dogs love routine and adapt to it very quickly! If any problems continue and you have any concerns, please contact us and we can offer all the advice we can. Though if your dog has ongoing issues, it is your responsibility to look for behaviourist support in your area.

These rescue dogs have had a tough life and offering a loving home is one of the best things you can do for them! Just remember to temper your expectations; life with you is a different experience for your new companion, so give them time to adjust. You'll soon find out that you've made a friend for life. No one will ever greet you with as much enthusiasm or provide you with as much unqualified love and loyalty as your dog will. Be patient, and you will be amply rewarded.

Introducing Your Dog to Children

When introducing children to dogs, it is very important to explain to your children how to approach and handle the dog before-hand. As your new dog will likely be overwhelmed and stressed the first few days it is worth keeping contact with children during this time to a minimum. Which is why it's important to give the dog a separate area so that they can hide away if they need to.

Children will need to know that if the dog is sleeping, eating or hanging out in their safe space they are to be left alone and not be bothered and that they should instead wait for the dog to come to them.

All introductions between children and dogs should be done slowly and with close supervision. A child should never be left unsupervised with a dog, especially during the first few months. Watching the dog's body postures, a high wagging tail and relaxed body are good signs that the dog is comfortable and happy. However, a low wagging tail, ears back and a tense posture are all signs a dog is not ready to be approached. Don't be disheartened - your dog is likely just unsure and a slow gentle approach will bring them round. It will be worth explaining to the child how to pet the dog gently, on their side and not the top of the head which can be intimidating.

When initially approaching the dog, have the child come to the side of the dog leaving enough room for the dog to choose whether they want to bridge the gap. This will allow the dog to approach the child on their own terms. Teaching your children to wait for the dog to ask to be fussed will help the dog bond better to the child and overall make this experience better on both sides.



Allow the dog to sniff the child and get them to stand still and avoid offering a hand to be smelt as it could be mistaken for an offering of a treat. Let the dog approach and do not make a move to approach them. In the first few meetings it is worth keeping them fairly brief and positive.

It is important to explain to the children/child to be quiet and calm around the dogs. Many kids initially want to hug or squeeze dogs, but they need to remain calm and gentle. It is important to stress this to any child when a new dog enters the home. As sudden movements can scare even the most friendly of dogs and may lead to the dog resorting to nipping to protect themselves.

Avoid the temptation to use treats or toys in these first meetings. This may increase your dog's excitement and if they are not yet used to taking things gently could jump up or snatch food from tiny fingers. Toys are great for interacting with your dog but can cause territorial issues or rough housing that may be intimidating for the child at first.



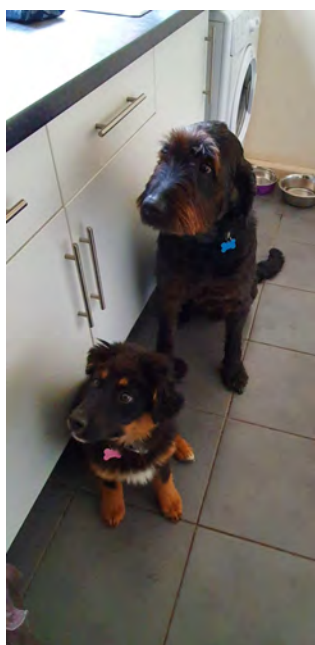
To summarise:

- Allow the dog to approach the child on their own terms.
- Explain to the child how to appropriately pet the dog and not to approach them whilst sleeping or eating.
- Give the dog a safe space to hide if they feel the child is too much. - Set up baby gates or pens to help with separating your child and new dog whilst they cannot be supervised.

Introductions to Other Dogs

Upon arrival, your new dog may not be ready to meet resident dogs, as they will already be coming down from their journey to you. It is worth leaving your new dog for the first few days in their own space and doing introductions after they have had some time to settle. Otherwise, you increase the likelihood of introductions not going well.

All introductions between your new dog and other dogs must be done with full supervision. This supervision will need to extend to not leaving the dogs together unsupervised for the first weeks even if they appear to get along. Many Romania rescue dogs are not used to a collar and lead, therefore the usual ways of introducing two unfamiliar dogs will not apply. However, there are ways to introduce them that will help ease the strain and make the experience positive for both your current dog and a new dog.



It is best to start off in the garden where it is secure but it is worth having controls or barriers in place in case things do not go as planned. If you do not have a garden it may be worth waiting until you can walk your new dog and introduce them in a neutral area. Allow the dogs to sniff each other and observe their behaviours. If one appears to be bouncy or playful and the other is attempting to escape/move away, separate them and bring them back together when calm. This may need repeating several times initially before the dogs will begin to work each other out and act appropriately.

After this initial meeting, separate the dogs again, this is where a baby gate will come in handy as it will allow the dogs to sniff each other and approach on their own terms. Be aware of potential barrier frustration where the dog may feel upset at being unable to access you or the other dogs easily. This can cause them to cry and bark. A baby gate will allow you to go about your day spending equal time with both your resident and new dog so that neither feels shut out.

Allow the dogs carefully supervised time together in the garden often and once you feel comfortable introduce them to each other within a space in the home. It will be worth monitoring this first in-home introduction very carefully and if there are any signs of overwhelm from either dog, separate them and begin the introduction again at another time slowly. Although, again, many dogs will cope with this incredibly well and Romanian rescues in particular are usually very good at reading other dogs' body language, your own dog may not pick up on subtle signs or simply the stress of the situation may cause them both to react in unexpected ways. If a fight does occur in these first few days, (bearing in mind that the elevated stressed state of your new arrival may cause them to be overall less tolerant) can potentially damage any relationship between your resident dog and new dog and make it difficult for them to become friendly and live amicably together.

You may find that at first your Romanian rescue may want to guard things from your resident dog. As these dogs likely may have had to fight for their food and resources, they can display resource guarding, however, this behaviour is not something that is overly concerning among dogs as long as it is properly managed. It is worth feeding the dogs separately and monitoring them carefully. If your resident dog(s) or the new dog attempts to approach each other's bowls and a warning growl is given as long as the other dog backs away this is perfectly normal when establishing boundaries. If you find one does not back off and continues attempting to steal food then they will need to be separated during feeding times. Over time you may find these behaviours begin to dissipate naturally as your new dog learns the routine and when to expect things.

Introductions to Cats

Romanian rescues will often have a high prey drive. As a result, they may not be suited to life with small furrries. However, some are used to living comfortably with cats. It is important to introduce your cat slowly to any new dog so they can both learn to live together without issue. Even if your Romanian rescue has lived with cats before, the experience of having a dog in the home may make your cat react in a way that is unexpected to them.

It is very important to be able to separate the two if needed. On first introduction, keep your new dog on a lead so that they can easily move away, if they become too interested or fixated on the cat you may need to separate them using a pen or baby gate. I would suggest having this already set up to avoid issues. If the dog is overly interested in the cat, you can use food as a reward to divert their attention from the cat onto you. Avoid using toys in this case as it may cause the dog to become overstimulated.

Keep all initial interactions short and try to end on a positive note. Praise and treat your dog for any good behaviour or calm behaviour. If possible, in the beginning, it may be an idea to regularly swap bedding to enable them to get used to each other's scent. This way they will get to know a little about each other before they've even met. Make sure the cat always has the opportunity to get away, preferably somewhere up high.



Do not force interactions between the cat and the dog and ensure that all initial interactions are carefully supervised. Do not leave the dog and cat together until you are more than happy with their behaviours.

Bathing your New Dog

When the dog first arrives with you, he/she will likely be very smelly after a life in kennels. Please resist bathing the dog for as long as possible (at least a week if not longer). Bathing is likely something the dog has never experienced, along with any grooming or fussing over. So they may be very afraid of this process. Whilst it is tempting to give them a quick wash, it may damage the growing trust you will be developing with them and could cause them to lash out if they feel cornered or restrained. Therefore, it is best to build this trust first and then you will get a better idea of how your dog will behave when handled. For the first few days, try to wipe them over with [pet wipes](#) and spray them with [dry doggy shampoo](#).



The first bath is likely to be stressful, so you may need two pairs of hands, one to hold and reassure the dog and the other to bathe them. It's generally not a good idea to get the kids involved in this first bath as the more people are involved the more stressful this may be. You can buy [Lickimats](#) that are designed to stick to the side of the bath. You can smear these with peanut butter or wet food and sometimes this will make the process more positive for your dog, however, some dogs will not take treats or food whilst being bathed. Towel dry them and let them dry naturally and do not attempt to use the hair dryer on them at this time.

First Walk

It's better to begin getting your dog used to the feel of a lead indoors, and to introduce things like the harness slowly and with lots of praise. When you first attempt to walk your dog on the lead it's likely they will either resist any form of pressure, refuse to walk or attempt to get out of the restriction. Although a rare few may take to the lead immediately, it's always worth taking gentle steps to encourage walking on the leash to help prevent any issues.

To begin with you will want to get them used to the presence of lead, to start with let them sniff the lead and give calm and gentle verbal praise for any interaction with it. You can give them treats for this interaction. Once your dog has earned some treats, sniffing and getting to know their leash, clip it on to the harness or collar. A harness is often a better option if the dog is nervous of the leash as it will not be so immediately in their vision and the pressure is distributed in a way that is often more comfortable.

Start with a high value treat for putting the leash on (such as chicken or cheese). Then take a few steps and encourage your dog to follow you. If your dog is immediately too fearful to follow you you may need to go back a step and work on getting them comfortable with the presence of the leash, even clipping it on and off to get them used to the sensation. Your dog may need coaxing to walk forward. In the beginning for each step they take, give them lots of verbal praise and treats to reward them. Some may take longer to get to this stage but be patient, rushing will only make the process take longer.

If your dog is eager to please and happy to be on the leash, then you can try taking a short walk but keep this minimal at the beginning. Even just try walking to the end of your drive and letting your dog sniff and guide you to begin with. You can begin working on loose leash walking later once they are fully settled and happy to walk without issue. Go out with treats (squirry Primula cheese straight from the tube is always good!) and give them frequently in the beginning for any progress. Be sure to do this often, building the length of the walk slowly over time. Do not be tempted to suddenly go on a long walk and rush as this can lead to leash reactivity and increased anxiety.

Socialising

It is a common misconception that socialising a dog looks like introducing your dog to every possible human/dog you possibly can or allowing them to play off-lead with groups of other dogs. In actual fact, this can lead to issues that are often complicated to undo. Socialising your dog is all about teaching them how to be calm and relaxed around people and dogs whilst keeping their attention on you. The issue you have with having dogs greet every available dog or person is that this can either fuel an already anxious dog or create a situation in which the dog feels that other dogs/people equal treats and playtime. Which can cause them to pull, lunge and bark to get to these dogs/people.

The best way to socialise your dog appropriately is to work on leash training and teach them to give their attention to you. To do this, begin by teaching them to respond to their name. Say their name throughout the day and offer them a treat. Once they look round at you each time you say their name you can then use this when out to teach them to give you their focus. Try this at a distance from other dogs. Each time they look at another dog, say their name and give them a high value treat.



Although dogs are social animals, having them socialise with other dogs is not necessary, however, if you feel your dog may benefit in having a friend to play with you can seek out other dog owners who have a dog that is of a similar temperament and size to your own. When they are together watch for 'good play', which looks like wiggly bodies, dogs that come together and break apart and bow to each other. If at any point one dog appears to become uncomfortable and is trying to get away or the other is being too boisterous and not allowing them to get away. Separate the dogs to allow them to calm down.

Basic Training Issues

No dog will ever be perfect, and we shouldn't expect them to be! But there are a few behaviours that are fairly typical in the dog world that people often have an issue with. It's important to note that all these behaviours are perfectly natural on the part of the dog. They do not make them 'bad' or 'stubborn'. Dogs simply do not understand what is 'good' and what is 'bad' behaviour. It's up to us to teach them what we expect from them.



House Training:

Many of the dogs who come over from Romania are not house trained. They likely have never had to live in a house before! So this is a common issue when bringing them into your home. The best approach to house training is to start with a schedule, letting your dog outside frequently, especially around food time. Do not leave food out for your dog all day and pick up water bowls overnight to prevent them excessively drinking and then going to the toilet all over the floor as a result.

In the event of your dog doing an accident inside the house, the best way to handle this is to gently lead the dog outside and clean up the mess - make note of any behaviours you noticed before they started doing their business as this may be helpful in preempting them in future. Yelling at, making loud noises or in any way punishing your dog if caught will only make them less likely to go to the toilet in front of you in future as they don't have the ability to associate the punishment with the specific action of going to the toilet inside. They will instead be more likely to associate the act of them going to the toilet with the act of you becoming angry.

When your dog does go outside, calm and gentle praise and even a treat will help them learn that is what you want them to do in future.

Recall:

The issue of off-lead walking is a difficult one when it comes to Romanian rescues, as they often have a high prey drive and will want to chase things that move or simply to wander. Although it is possible to eventually have them off lead, it's important to begin with teaching them an effective recall. For this, you may want to employ the use of a long line or training lead which you can buy easily online and at many pet stores in various lengths. The longest length will enable your dog to roam in open spaces but still keep them safe from running off.

A long line will help you begin to work on recall and also help you gauge how well your dog listens to you from a distance whilst ensuring their safety.

Training recall will be an ongoing process. It is always best to begin at short distances inside the home or garden where there are likely less distractions. Offer lots of praise and reward to begin with and this can be phased out slowly over time. Make sure that even if it takes your dog a while to come back to you or they seem to refuse to listen as soon as they eventually return you give them lots of praise and rewards. They will be less likely to come back to you in future if they believe you are going to punish them.

Issues Around Food:

Another common training issue with street dogs is surrounding food. As many have had to steal or potentially persuade humans to hand over their meal, this is fairly normal when a dog is living on the streets for any length of time. This coupled with having never been expected not to beg or take things or often these dogs can begin by counter-surfing to steal anything left on the side or attempt to beg and sometimes steal the food you may be eating. It's important to note that this is normal behaviour for them.

Counter surfing in particular is an issue of management. You should not be leaving food unattended on the side with the dog in the same room. Each time they are given the opportunity to steal they are only reinforcing to themselves that this is a rewarding and good thing to do. You will find by doing this that overtime they do not think to search the counter tops for scraps.

For begging, the best way to combat this is to teach them behaviours such as leave it or to go to their bed on command. For example, each time they keep coming over to the table to beg or bother you, simply lead them to their bed. Randomly reward them with treats for staying in their bed. Eventually, with enough persistence, your dog will learn that begging at the table gets them nothing and that their bed is the best place to be. It is very important not to feed your dog scraps from your plate. This will only make begging and stealing behaviours worse.

Many dogs are also noted as having issues with guarding their food. To avoid this becoming an issue, the best bet is simply to not touch your dog's food and leave them alone whilst they are eating. If you persistently fiddle with or interrupt your dog's meal to attempt to add or take things away you will only make the situation stressful and increase their anxiety.

In the beginning, it is worth not giving your dogs anything they could potentially guard such as high value items like bones. When they are fed, leave them alone and give them space. Eventually they will learn that you are not a threat to their meal. If you have multiple dogs in the household and one is guarding food over the others, always feed the dogs separately to avoid issues.



Mental Enrichment:

Many people are greatly concerned about ensuring their dog has enough physical exercise but miss out on the importance of also giving your dog enough mental exercise. A lot of unwanted training issues and some behavioural issues can be resolved or greatly lessened by working on keeping your dog's mind busy and tired. Things like stuffed [kong toys](#), puzzle toys, games and general training can make a huge difference to your dog's quality of life and behaviour.

Activities that encourage licking and sniffing (like [Lickimats and Snuffle Toys](#)) are naturally calming and giving your dog an activity to do by themselves will promote both calmness, confidence and help with any anxieties about being without you for short periods. There are plenty of inexpensive and low effort ways to provide your dog with mental enrichment. It could be as simple as ditching their usual bowl and placing their meals instead into a dispenser or toy or simply scattering it on the floor.

You can find out more about Mental Enrichment and get some ideas from the Canine Enrichment Ideas facebook group that will be linked in resources below.



Behavioural Issues:

Your dog has likely been through a lot before they have come to you so some behavioural issues are to be expected. Whilst many dogs settle and learn to live with you without issue, occasionally you may come across something that you may struggle with. O.U.R Dog Foundation has an online [After Romania facebook group](#) where you can share your issues and get help from other owners or a member of our team who is experienced and qualified in dog behaviour.

It's important to remember that with time and patience your dog can learn to live happily alongside you. If you struggle at any point with specific behavioural issues, the O.U.R Dog Team will endeavour to give advice and support where appropriate and can help to recommend trainers in your area.

Troubleshooting: Children & Dogs

When you have kids, and you bring a new dog into your home it can feel a bit like a juggling act. OUR Dog Foundation has created this section of our guide to help you troubleshoot introductions between your kids and your new dog when things are not quite going to plan.

Why is your Dog Behaving this Way?

It is important to begin with understanding that dogs, especially young dogs like puppies or ones who have not lived so closely alongside humans before, do not have a sense of right or wrong. So, when they lash out or “misbehave” it is more often because they are feeling fearful or uncomfortable about the situation, they find themselves in or that they simply do not understand what is expected of them.

Why Don't We Punish a Growl?

A growl or a bark is a dog's way of communicating when they feel scared, in pain or uncomfortable about something. When you punish a dog for this attempt at communication you run the risk of increasing these negative feelings and potentially escalating the behaviour which can cause them to resort to other means to protect themselves, such as snapping.

When a dog growls what they are trying to say to us is “I'm not okay with this”. So, the better approach is to work out why they feel this way and what they are scared or worried about specifically (such as a person, area of the home, noise, etc) and work to decrease this fear instead. If we simply punish the behaviour, we are not teaching them not to be scared, we are just teaching them not to communicate which leaves us with no warnings when they feel fearful. This is much like taking the batteries out of your fire alarm.

Effective Management is Key to Good Behaviour

We always begin with any behaviour by looking at the way we are managing it. Most people like to be given proactive things to do but very often it is the small little changes in the daily routine or how a situation is handled that make the biggest difference. It will also make living with your dog whilst you are working on these behaviours much easier and safer.

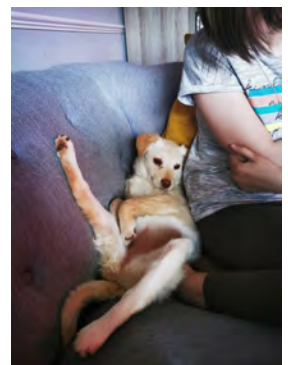
The first thing to do is look at the spaces you have for your dog – where are they positioned? Are they in a high or low traffic area of the home? Are they out in the open or do they have a space to tuck themselves away? It is important that the dog has a space that is quiet and secluded that they can retreat to or be led to if they are tired or simply do not want to interact with people. This space should be ideally in a low traffic area, and they should get lots of rewards for choosing to be here.

Does your dog have access to all areas of the house? Do you have a way to restrict their access to certain areas? Often in the start it's best to limit a dog's access to certain areas, this is best done using baby gates. It can be tempting to want to give them access to everywhere and have them cuddle up on our beds and this can be the goal eventually. However, if we offer it right from the start it too often can cause a dog to become overwhelmed and can cause guarding issues or even separation issues if they are able to follow you everywhere. It's better to begin with one room and slowly increase this as they start to settle and learn what is expected of them.

It is also a good idea not to allow your dog to sleep on your bed at first especially if you find they have a habit of guarding. As they will begin to see your bed on their own and this is when you will often see guarding behaviours with those they do not consider to be allowed in their space.

A house lead is also a highly effective management tool. It is essentially a standard thin light weight lead with the loop cut off the end. You just leave this on your dog in the house whilst they are still learning so that it trails behind them. It can be used to lead them away from a situation if they are reacting and placing them in their bed or own space without having to touch the dog or their collar which can often escalate a behaviour. It can also be used to effectively control or manage any interactions with guests in the home.

It is also important to explain to your kids that they must be quiet and calm around the dog. They are not to approach it whilst it is eating or sleeping and ideally should let the dog choose to come to them. Young children may also need help learning how to appropriately pet a dog. All interactions with children and dogs should never be forced and should always be very carefully managed and fully supervised by an adult.



What Can I Do to Help Their Relationship?

There are lots of effective methods and games you can play to build better communication skills and encourage your dog to learn to live harmoniously with the children in the household. It's all about creating positive associations and redirecting the behaviours we do not want. Below are some methods you can use to teach your dogs that the kids are not so bad. These can be incorporated and used in daily life by adding treat stations around the house, so you always have access to rewards for good behaviour.

If at any point your dog does have a reaction it's important to reset this by leading them away to their safe space and rewarding them for moving away. Please ensure that any training involving children is done under strict and careful supervision. Keep any planned training sessions short and frequent.

Let Good Things Rain from the Sky

As soon as the child enters the room, begin to throw tasty high value treats (such as chicken or cheese) around your dogs' feet. As soon as the person leaves, the good things stop. If you repeat this over a period, your dog will begin to realise that the presence of this person only brings about good things. This works by changing your dog's thought process at an emotional level and with the intention of decreasing their overall fear.

Treat and Retreat!

Treat and retreat is essentially rewarding your dog for any forward movement towards you or whoever they find fearful. The idea is not luring the dog with trails of treats or an outstretched hand but instead to gently throw the treats near to the dog so they take just a few small steps forward but can still choose to move away if they feel uncomfortable. You would begin throwing the treat close to the dog and as the dog begins to become braver throw a few treats a bit closer. All the while remain side on to your dog to show you are not a threat.

Building Value to Safe Spaces

One of the most effective things you can teach your dog which can help to reduce several different unwanted behaviours is to go to their bed on command or when they feel unsafe. You can do this by first building value to the bed itself. You begin by throwing treats onto their bed and giving them more rewards when they have all four paws on the bed. In the beginning it is best to keep the reward rate high so lots of treats at a fast rate. These should all be on the bed and not direct to the dog's mouth, so the association is built with the bed itself. You can pair this with a phrase like 'Bed' or 'Place'. You can then use this as a tool for when your dog is reacting by sending them to their safe space and rewarding them for making that decision.

Capturing Calmness

We are so often focused on correcting and finding solutions we forget to praise our dogs for naturally doing the things we would like to see more of! So, another good method is to frequently reward the behaviours you wish to see. That is if you see your dog lying peacefully, minding their own business and being calm.

Without too much excitement just drop a treat at their paws or calmly tell them they are a good boy/girl. It's important to mark these good behaviours to encourage our dogs to do more of the things we want.

When you Feel It Is Right – Get the Kids Involved!

Empowering your kids to take an active role in your dog's life will not only give them both confidence but it will enable them to build a bond together. Kids are often as uncertain as new dogs are new dogs are of them! So, when we give them safe opportunities to be involved it builds the trust between them. Things like letting your child be involved in dinner time, getting them involved in training sessions, letting them take the lead on a walk or showing them how to play appropriately with the dog. Can all be hugely beneficial. Just be sure that both the child and the dog are always feeling safe and comfortable.

If All Else Fails: Bring in the Behaviourist

It can take a lot of time and patience to get your dog to learn to live peacefully within your home. If things really are not going well, it's always worth considering if it's time to get a professional involved. Hiring a dog trainer or behaviourist can be confusing and a bit of a minefield and it's important to get it right. You can find certified trainers in your area by visiting <https://www.petprofessionalguild.com/Zip-Code-Search> or contact OUR Dog Foundation on Facebook and we can help advise you on what to look out for.

A Message about Rescue Backup

Before OUR dogs are adopted within the UK, they have had a huge amount of time, patience, commitment and financial support from ourselves, our sponsors and our fosterers. If you're entering into this process, we ask that you approach their adoption with the promise that you'll treat your new pet with the same level of dedication and devotion.

After an initial honeymoon period, many of OUR rescues acclimatise into their new homes and settle like they have never been anywhere else, but there are some that do not. We cannot foresee the future so we need to know that you have fully considered every eventuality?

As part of OUR's ongoing commitment to our adoptees, we offer ongoing advice throughout the dog's life from experienced adopters and a trained behaviourist about how to integrate your new family member successfully and help rectify any ongoing issues. More serious, ongoing issues may well require a trainer or behaviourist in your local area at your own cost.

Once every avenue of support has been pursued, rescue backup (RBU) is available, where OUR will organise your dog being surrendered back into our care and taken to a place of safety within 21 days.

We must stress that you thoroughly and honestly ask yourself these questions before signing the contract for your Romanian rescue dog as RBU will only be exercised in exceptional circumstances:

Are you prepared for your new arrival and for your life to be turned upside down or are you expecting a dog to fit in immediately with you, your routine and your family?

Do not underestimate the impact on your social life, your house rules and your daily life. You need to fit your life around your dog; not the other way around.

This is NOT a reason for a dog to enter into rescue backup.

Have you considered what you will do about introducing your new dog to existing dogs? What if they don't immediately get on? How are you going to work around this?

If you have a dog already, it is highly advisable to remove all toys and treats from being freely available, our dogs have never had these things and will guard them. It's quite common for dogs to take time to settle in each other's company not instantly become firm friends but it can be worked through with the correct advice.

This is NOT a reason for a dog to enter into rescue backup.

How house proud are you?

Most of our dogs will not be house-trained so how important are your new carpets or your belongings? Our dogs may have accidents or chew if they are anxious as they just don't know any different.

This is NOT a reason for a dog to enter into rescue backup.

Have you considered taking time off work when your new pet arrives?

We ask that you spend as much time as possible with your new arrival to help them to settle into a home and build up the time that they are left in small doses. Some of our dogs will display separation anxiety, which will mean major adjustments to your normal routines.

This is NOT a reason for a dog to enter into rescue backup.

Do you have children? Are they old enough and sensible enough to follow the rules of having a new pet?

New dogs need planned integration with every new family member. Will your children respect the dog's need for a 'safe space'? If a dog growls, it is a sign that they are intimidated in a new, unfamiliar environment with unfamiliar people.

This is NOT a reason for a dog to enter into rescue backup.

Are you expecting lovely walks in the countryside with a well-behaved dog that trots happily at your heel?

In time, this may happen, but most of our dogs will never have experienced a harness or lead so learning to cope with them will take time and patience. Also, they may initially hide or attack other unfamiliar dogs that they consider more dominant whilst out of your home.

This is NOT a reason for a dog to enter into rescue backup.

Are you prepared for if your dog latches onto a family member and begins to guard them?

This is a very common and hopefully a temporary thing. If it happens, we will expect you to follow our advice and work through it.

This is NOT a reason for a dog to enter into rescue backup.

If you are adopting one of our dogs and have any doubts at all, please contact us now and not two days after your dog has travelled for days to get to you on the promise of a better life.

Imagine life from your new dog's perspective...

- you've just been taken from the only family you've ever known; - been placed in a crate and travelled hundreds of miles for up to three days; - dumped in a place called 'home', which smells funny, has scary noises and is filled with people you don't know or trust;
- you desperately need to sleep as you haven't slept for three days, but you don't know if it's safe to close your eyes?

Adopting a Romanian rescue dog is unlikely to be plain sailing; if problems arise, we expect you to not panic, read up on a solution and take up our offers of support. Their guard will begin to come down and they will start to feel happy under your care, but this whole process can take many days, weeks or months.

By following the advice that you are given and not panicking, rescue backup will almost certainly not be needed and most dogs WILL become the loving, loyal pet you dreamt of.

Helpful Resources

<https://www.youtube.com/user/kikopup>

YouTube channel dedicated to providing helpful content on dog training.

<https://www.youtube.com/user/zakgeorge21>

Videos created by a dog trainer, Zac George, who has also written a number of helpful books specifically good for puppies.

<https://absolute-dogs.com/>

Absolute Dogs - an online learning resource providing training 'games' and dvds as well as online communities for teaching your dog important lessons using games.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/374160792599484>

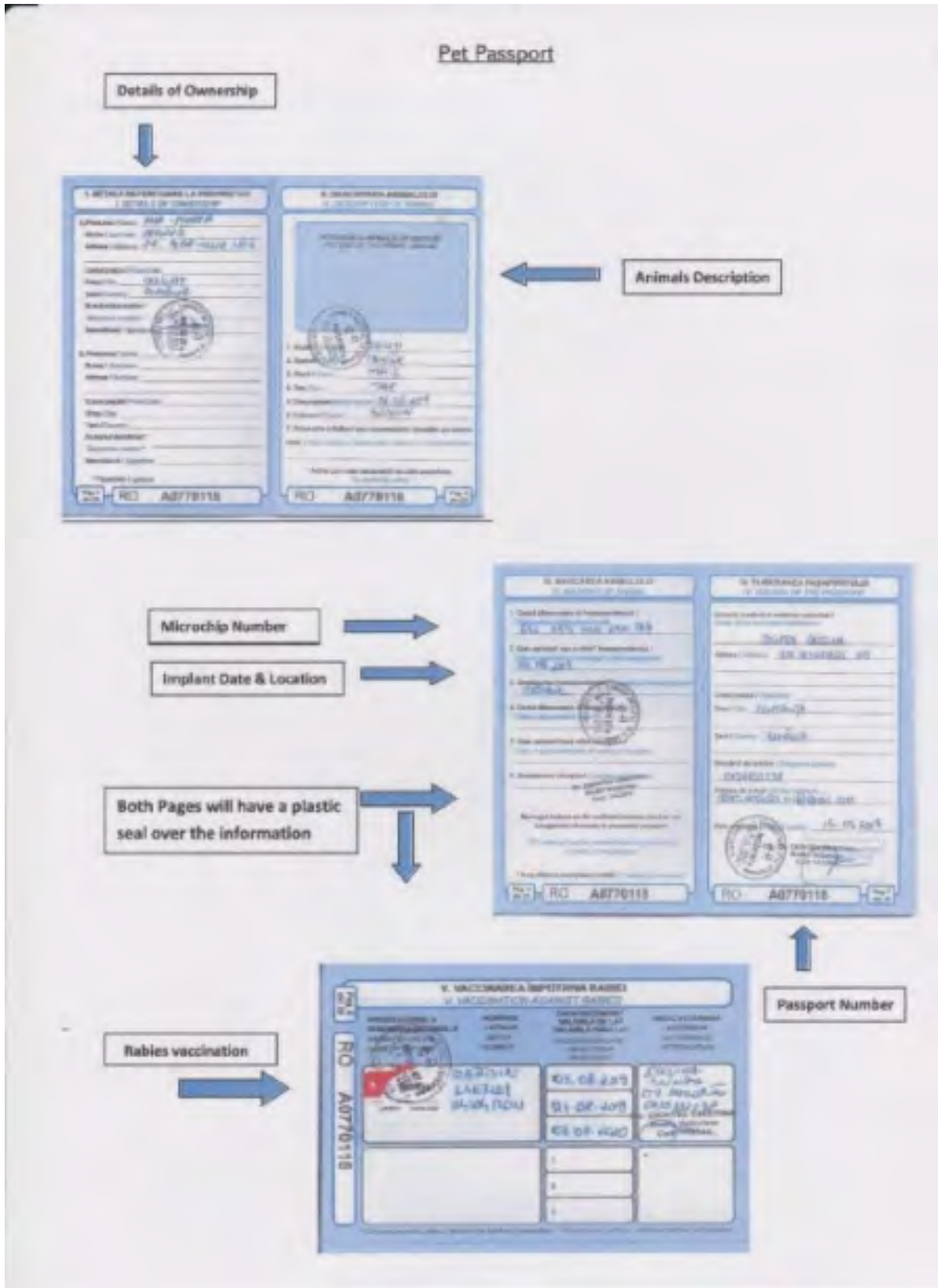
Dog Training Advice and Support - A Facebook group run by qualified trainers and behaviourists offering free advice and help to dog owners.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/2326424080971527>

Canine Enrichment Ideas - A Facebook group with lots of helpful advice and ideas for mental enrichment activities.



Your Guide to Your Pet Passport and DEFRA Documentation



PET PASSPORT

MS. TRATAMENT ANTIECHINOZOCOS
MS. TRAT. ANTI-ECHEINOCITOSIS

INSTITUCION O MEDICINA VETERINARIA

RO A0770118

1	17/08/2019	Tratamiento con Ivermectin
2	28/08/2019	Tratamiento con Ivermectin
3	14/09/2019	Tratamiento con Ivermectin

Treatment for worms

Flea & Tick treatment

Date & time of last treatment

Both Worm & Flea treatment will be due 30 days for this date, you must inform the rescue when these are required

MS. TRATAMIENTO ANTIFLEBOTOMOS
MS. TRAT. ANTI-ECHEINOCITOSIS

INSTITUCION O MEDICINA VETERINARIA

RO A0770118

1	17/08/2019	Tratamiento con Ivermectin
2	28/08/2019	Tratamiento con Ivermectin
3	14/09/2019	Tratamiento con Ivermectin

Date & time of last treatment

SE. ALFET. MOCINAR
SE. ALFET. MOCINAR

INSTITUCION O MEDICINA VETERINARIA

RO A0770118

1	17/08/2019	Tratamiento con Ivermectin
2	28/08/2019	Tratamiento con Ivermectin
3	14/09/2019	Tratamiento con Ivermectin

Distemper
Hepatitis
Parvo
Leptospirosis
Kennel cough

NO. Y. 015/07/18

1	17/08/2019	Tratamiento con Ivermectin
2	28/08/2019	Tratamiento con Ivermectin
3	14/09/2019	Tratamiento con Ivermectin

You could have either of these vaccinations' pages

DEFRA is the UK Government Department that deals with the importation and exportation of animals and plants. Dogs from overseas are subject to TRACES so **MUST** not leave the premises for 48 hours. This is a legal requirement by DEFRA.

WHAT ARE TRACES?

Traces requirement is that when a dog arrives in the UK, they must not be walked for 48 hours, dogs must remain at your property for this duration. **ALL** dogs from overseas are subject to TRACES in England, Wales or Scotland. DEFRA requires the addresses of where the dogs will be in the first 48 hours. You may be contacted by DEFRA or APHA as they do spot checks, they will want to examine the pet passport, microchip and TRACES Certificate. This is routine and nothing to be concerned about.

The form is titled "Intra trade certificate" and contains the following sections and fields:

- Section 1 (Top):** Includes "UNIQUE CERTIFICATE NUMBER" and "INTRA TRADE CERTIFICATE NUMBER".
- Section 2 (Owner):** "YOUR NAME YOUR ADDRESS". Fields include Name, Address, and Postcode.
- Section 3 (Transporter):** "YOUR NAME YOUR ADDRESS YOUR POSTCODE". Fields include Name, Address, and Postcode.
- Section 4 (Transporter Details):** "TRANSPORTER DETAILS". Fields include Name, Address, and Postcode.
- Section 5 (Travel):** "TRAVELING TIME". Field for Traveling Time.
- Section 6 (Dog Details):** "PASSPORT NUMBER", "MICROCHIP NUMBER", and "DOGS AGE IN MONTHS".

A large "ORIGINAL" watermark is printed diagonally across the center of the form.

