

A CALM FIRST WEEK

Rescue Dog First 7 Days Checklist

A new rescue dog doesn't need to be brave on day one. They need quiet, food, water, a safe place, and someone patient enough to let trust grow slowly. These first-week steps help you give them a softer landing. Tick what you've set up, and go at their pace.

● A quiet space

- ☐ A calm corner away from the busy areas
- ☐ A bed or open crate, left open so they can leave
- ☐ Water within easy reach
- ☐ Let them come out on their own

● Food & water

- ☐ Feed in the same quiet spot each day
- ☐ Offer gentle hand-feeding if they're ready
- ☐ A smaller appetite can occur after a move; track it and call promptly if it is marked or concerning
- ☐ Keep fresh water always available

● Walks & potty

- ☐ Keep walks short and quiet at first
- ☐ Use a snug harness they can't back out of
- ☐ Let them sniff, don't rush them along
- ☐ Plenty of potty chances, no pressure

● Visitors & family

- ☐ Keep the first week calm and quiet
- ☐ No crowding or reaching over the head
- ☐ Let the dog choose to approach
- ☐ Ask kids to give them space

● Alone time

- ☐ Start with short, calm separations
- ☐ Keep hellos and goodbyes low-key
- ☐ Build alone time up slowly
- ☐ Leave a chew in their safe spot

● Body language & trust

- ☐ Watch for hiding, freezing, or lip-licking
- ☐ Let them set the pace
- ☐ Never force touch or corner them
- ☐ Quietly reward calm moments

AS YOUR DOG SETTLES

First week notes

Progress with a new dog is slow and easy to miss day to day. A few quick notes help you see how far they're coming. Jot down what you can.

⚠ CALL YOUR VET OR AN EMERGENCY CLINIC RIGHT AWAY IF

- Trouble breathing, collapse, or a seizure
- A marked drop in eating or drinking, or inability to keep water down
- Vomiting, diarrhea, or signs of illness
- Extreme panic, or hurting themselves
- A sudden change in how they act
- A serious bite, uncontrolled bleeding, or immediate danger

For growling, snapping, or guarding, create distance; do not punish, confront, or forcibly remove an item. Contact your veterinarian to check for pain or illness and seek qualified, reward-based behavior help. Immediate danger or a serious bite needs urgent local help.

What went well today? What worried you?

EATING (LAST 24H)

SLEEPING & RESTING

FAVORITE HIDING SPOT

POTTY / ACCIDENTS

WHAT WORRIED THEM

WHAT HELPED TODAY

Questions for your vet, shelter, or a trainer☐

Reached out for help

☐

Booked a vet check

☐

Keeping things calm today