

Introducing Fosters to your Home and Personal Pets

Setting everyone up for success. Preventing fights, bites, and resource guarding.

STEP 3: OUTDOOR INTRODUCTIONS – Pack Walks & 6-foot Walks

When you're ready for introductions, you have to think like a dog if you want a good interaction. Humans like to stand in one spot, make eye contact, and talk. Dogs like to run around and move, they avoid too much direct eye contact, and they'd rather smell than talk.

STRUCTURED PACK WALKS

Start with a 'structured pack walk'. With one handler/dog out in front and the other handler/dog behind. After a few minutes, take a wide circle around and switch who is leading the pack. This allows each dog to get a chance to sniff the other while having a chance to feel confident in the front of the pack and at the end of the pack.



6-FOOT WALKS (PARALLEL WALKS)



- Keep everyone moving forward, dogs/handlers walking parallel to each other, 6-feet apart
- Remember the 5-second rule about eye contact: Nothing good ever comes from more than 5 seconds of two new dogs locking eyes.
- Watch them, count silently in your head, and around the 3 to 5 second mark, take the lead and redirect the dogs BEFORE any negative body language, growls, or snaps happen.
- Reward them positively for the good, short interaction.
- Then repeat. And repeat. Always short interactions, always ending on a positive note.

INDOOR INTRODUCTIONS – Monitor closely in the home.



When first introducing the dogs in the home, use a sturdy, tall baby gate to separate them. Observe how they interact through the gate. Reinforce positive behavior by providing high-value treats to the dogs for positive interactions.

- No toys, food or treats should be left around the home that the dogs could potentially fight over.
- Be aware of situations that could lead to conflict—for example, when the dogs get overly excited.
- Closely monitor the dogs when they are together, rewarding them with treats, until you are 100% confident they are comfortable and safe with each other.



DO NOT feed your foster and personal dogs together!

To prevent resource guarding fights from breaking out, and to also help with crate training, please only feed your new foster in their crate.



Crate your new foster when you leave the house.

If your personal dogs are left out when you leave the house, please make sure to crate your new foster. This will avoid any fights from breaking out when you're not home and keep everyone safe.