

## HOW TO INTRODUCE A NEW DOG - *ADVICE BY AMY*

Use this checklist to discuss your thoughts with Amy and to help introduce a new dog into your home. All introductions should occur in a structured, safe environment and at a pace that is comfortable for everyone. Introductions should be thought of as a process, not a one-time, high-stakes encounter. Remember – your current dog(s) (or cat) may not share in your eagerness and excitement as you welcome the new member of your family into your home. Plan ahead, go slow, be safe and think "long term".

### PLAN AHEAD

- Assess and discuss the age, temperament, size, energy level, exercise needs, exercise reactions, space needs (including **FENCED YARD**) plus history of your current dog(s).
- Discuss why you want another dog – your motivation.
- Determine what new dog temperament would be most compatible with your current dog(s) and lifestyle.
- Determine how you would "protect" your current dog(s) from a new dog, if needed (either temporarily or longer term). Ex: protecting a sedate or impaired senior from a rambunctious younger dog or puppy.
- Create an environment of plenty – water bowls, places to lie down, treats.
- Remove toys, bones and empty food bowls during the initial introductory period.
- Keep your current dog(s) sleeping arrangements the same. Decide where the new dog will sleep and prepare the location which may include a crate.
- Determine how you will keep your current dog(s) and new dog separated when they are alone until you're reasonably sure they are comfortable with each other. Some dogs might always need to be separated when you're not supervising them.
- Select a time when you will have at least a weekend to be home to introduce, observe and supervise your new dog with your current dog(s). **NEVER** leave two newly introduced dogs alone.
- Choose an adult "helper" who will assist you with the activities described below.
- Become familiar with "dog body language" (refer to Page 4 chart) so you can observe and effectively respond to dog reactions.



### INTRODUCTION DAY: WALKING ON-LEASH OUTDOORS

- Stay calm and keep a reasonable grip (not too tight, not too loose) on the leashes throughout this process.
- Take your new dog and current dog out for a long walk or romp in the yard, separate from each other, so you can wear them out a bit BEFORE the introduction.
- Introduce the dogs in a neutral area rather than in your own home or yard – if at all possible. A neutral area could include your neighborhood, a friend's home (without pets) or an uncongested park. If these options are not available, use a large garage or basement. Both dogs must be on fixed leashes (not retractable leashes) for control, but try to allow them a little room to maneuver. Use one adult for each dog.
- Have the person walking the new dog approach from the side and "catch up" to you and your current dog as you walk. Pick an area where you can parallel walk together with a little distance between the dogs. As they walk they can look at and sniff each other. Try to do this in an area without a lot of other people and dogs so that neither dog is over-stimulated. After both dogs walk in the same direction, turn back and trade places with the other dog-human team so that each dog has a chance to scent where the other dog walked. Allow the dogs to investigate potty spots since urine-sniffing is one of the ways dogs pick up information about other dogs. If both dogs are offering relaxed, social behaviors towards one another, gradually decrease the distance between them while continuing to parallel walk. Don't allow direct face-to-face approach as the dogs get closer since head-on is a stressful and unnatural way for dogs to meet. The walk should end at your home.
- Enter your home but don't let the dogs jostle each other in an entryway. Try to get both into your home quickly so that one doesn't react to the other's entrance later.

- Give the dogs a break. Keep them separate for a period so they can have their own free time in a portion of your home. It helps if one of the dogs is crate- or confinement-trained, but you can also take them on separate walks or let them play in your **FENCED YARD** one at a time. Then, after break, repeat the previous steps.

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## INTRODUCTION DAY: USING LONG LEASH & OFF-LEASH OUTDOORS

- weather permitting, it may help to bring the dogs into your **FENCED YARD** before going into your home a second time. At first, allow them on a long leash until you notice relaxed body postures and interest from both dogs. Once they appear relaxed and interested in a friendly manner (no hiding behind you, hard stares, tense postures, freezing in place or lowered/tucked tails), you can allow the leashes to drop so they may interact. "Relaxed" and "friendly" may or may not occur the first day, week or even month. It depends on the two dogs. Go slow. As the dogs interact, watch for signs of respect: a mutual give-and-take with pauses in the action.

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## INTRODUCTION DAY & BEYOND: MOVING INDOORS

- After you introduce your new dog to your current dog, you can introduce your new dog to your home. Have your adult helper take your current dog for a stroll as you give your new dog a chance to check out his/her new living space alone. Keep an eye on your new dog as he/she investigates. When he/she has checked everything out, bring him/her to an open area of your home, away from the entry door. Cramped spaces can lead to jockeying for position and accidental scuffles. As previously mentioned in the "Plan Ahead" section, pick up any dog toys, treats, beds, food and prized possessions that could create tension between the dogs. Have your helper bring your current dog inside.
- Try to keep your household calm as the dogs acclimate to one another. Don't throw a "welcome to the family party" on the first day home. If you have children, do not let them or their friends interact with the two dogs without adult supervision. Separately, train children how to respect and interact with dogs and **NEVER** allow children to place their faces close to a dog's face.
- Maintain your current dog's typical daily schedule and try to set aside one-on-one time with each dog, including going for solo walks.
- Always be aware of the signs of brewing tension between your dogs, like low growling, hard stares and body blocking. If you notice any of these signs, intervene immediately. Separate the dogs and direct their attention to something else. Give them a break from one another for at least 20-30 minutes before allowing them to engage again.
- Monitor mealtimes and follow a set routine. Always separate your new dog and current dog during food preparation and mealtimes. You can either place their bowls in different rooms or use a dog gate to separate them or feed them in each of their own crates. If one dog finishes first, don't allow him/her to hover as the other dog eats. To prevent tension, keep them apart until both dogs have licked their bowls clean. Always pick up the bowls after feeding time. A very food-motivated dog will eat well from the start, but some dogs may need a person with them for the first day or two.
- Give each dog their own bed, as previously mentioned in the "Plan Ahead" section.
- Introduce toys slowly. Bring out a few toys at a time. Always supervise your dogs when they are trying out a new toy. Look for playful interactions without signs of guarding, like standing over the toy or snapping at the other dog if he/she gets too close to it. If your current dog never receives treats because he/she gets aggressive over them, that should be the rule for the new dog too.
- Separate the dogs when you're away. Alone time is an important aspect of the getting-to-know-you process. Whether you're leaving the house for the day or just taking a shower, always separate your dogs when you can't watch them. This obviously keeps them safe while also providing them with downtime apart from one another.
- Create playtime breaks . Many dogs don't understand when to say "when", particularly if they're having a good time together. Rough play and nonstop play can tip over into inappropriate behavior when dogs are overtired. Giving your dogs a break from one another, by physically separating them in different spaces, allows them time to relax and regroup until they learn how to modulate their play.
- Establish an elimination routine. Treat the new dog as though you were beginning to housetrain him/her until he/she understands your routine. Try not to let him/her have accidents in your home; sometimes one dog will mark over the elimination of the other leading to house soiling problems.
- Avoid restraint type activities such as grooming or bathing one dog in front of the other. A dog may attack the restrained dog if he/she becomes anxious.
- Have patience. Do not overwhelm your new dog which includes hugging, kissing and rough play. Go slow. It may take months before your new dog mellows and before both dogs find true comfort with one another. If, for example, your

new dog or current dog tries to keep the other dog away from certain locations or people, do not scold or punish the dog. Distract the dog so the behavior stops. Give each dog time to get used to siblinghood.

- Watch for excessive bullying behavior from one dog towards another. If you notice that one dog is repeatedly avoiding eye contact and interactions, rolling over onto his/her back, or attempting to escape from the other dog, this can be an indication that one dog is uncomfortable and fearful that the other dog is not appropriately responding to his/her avoidance cues.
- Always acknowledge positive interactions between your dogs and enjoy watching the lifelong friendship bloom.
- Engage a vetted trainer or knowledgeable and experienced dog rescuer if you need assistance in assimilating your new dog into your family. Many people are very willing to help out so just reach out and let them know!

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References include:

*Introducing Your New Dog to Your Other Dogs*, The Human Society of the United States.

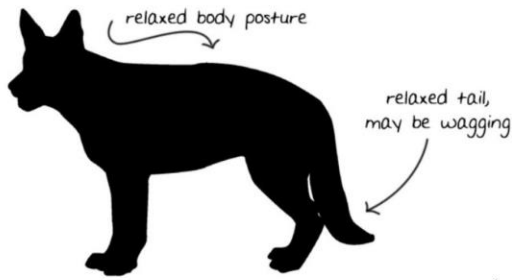
*Introducing Your New Dog to Your Current Dog*, The Ohio State University, College of Veterinary Medicine.

*How to Introduce Dogs the Right Way*, Pet MD.

*How to Introduce Your New Dog to Your Other Pets*, Preventative Vet.



# DOG TO ENGLISH TRANSLATION CHART



## CALM & NEUTRAL

This is the dog you'll want to pet. He's calm, neutral, and relaxed. There is no tension in his body and he's probably panting happily and waiting for you to come over and just say "hi".



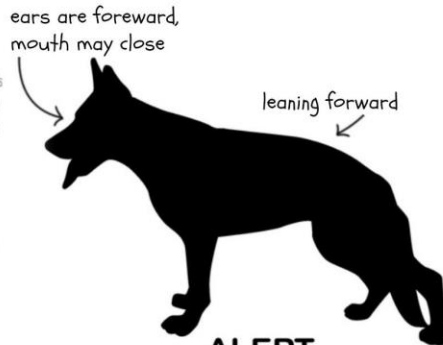
## SUBMISSIVE

"I give up, don't hurt me" pose  
You'll mostly see this behavior when two dogs interact, but a dog that was abused or is really scared may do it as well.



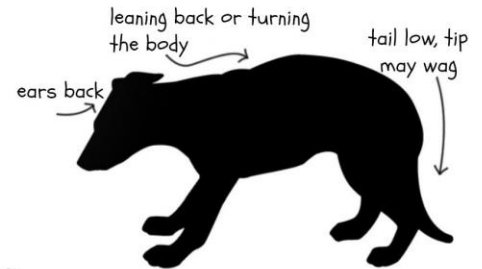
## RELAXED

It's usually safe to pet a relaxed dog, but make sure he hasn't fallen asleep!



## ALERT

He may just be really interested in what's going on.



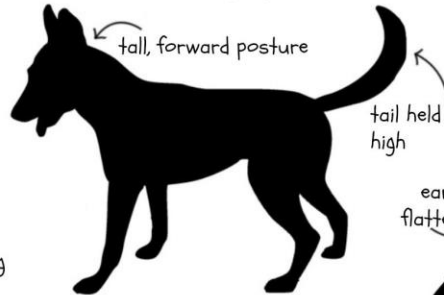
## ANXIOUS & NERVOUS

This dog is uncomfortable or doesn't know what's going on. It's best not to pet him.



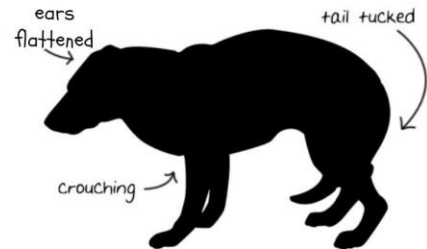
## PLAYFUL

The Play Bow



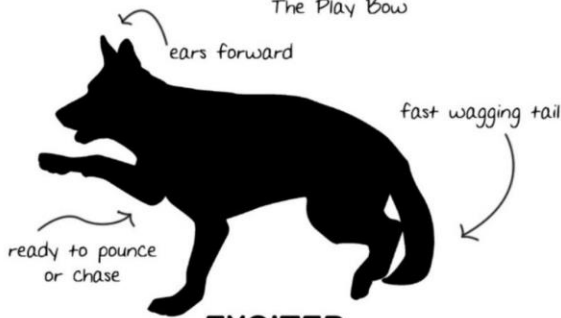
## DOMINANT

Toward another dog: "I'm in charge!"



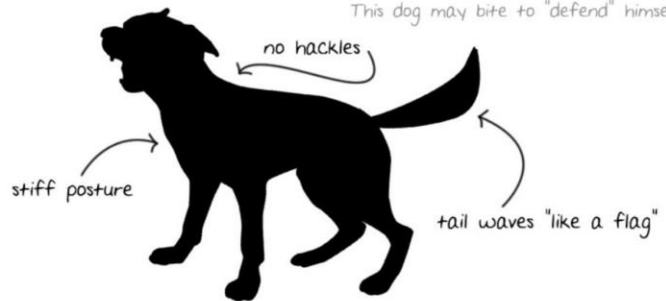
## FRIGHTENED

This dog may bite to "defend" himself.



## EXCITED

An overly excited dog may jump up, knock you over, scratch you with his paws, or even nip you with his teeth.



## AGGRESSIVE

Don't run away from an aggressive dog. Stand still "be a tree" and look away.