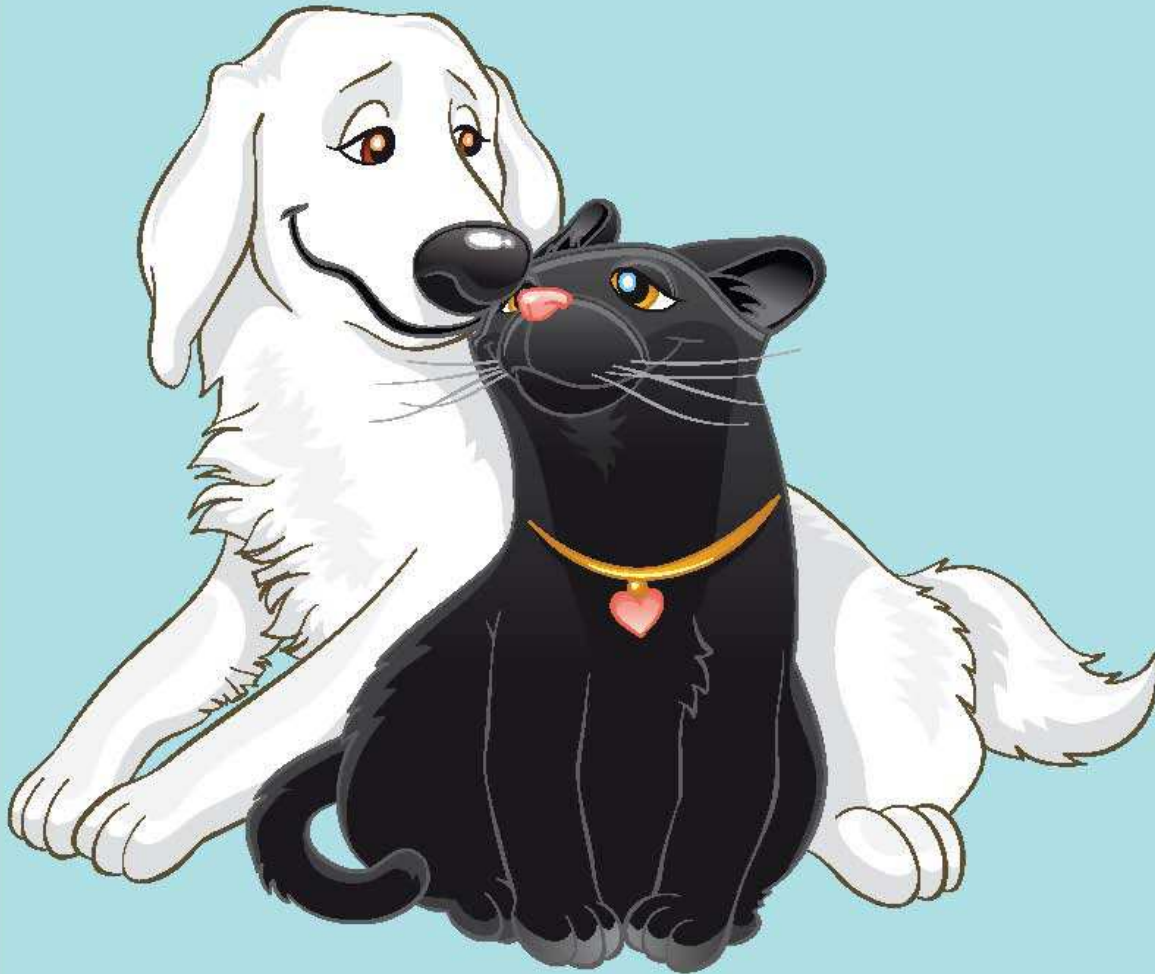


Your New Rescue Dog

Getting Off to a Good Start



by National Great Pyrenees Rescue

Your New Rescue Dog

Thank you giving a home to a rescue dog! By doing so, you have saved a life. It takes many volunteers and tremendous amounts of time and effort to save each dog. Please remember each and every one of them is special to us and we want the best for them. As such, we want you to be happy with your dog. No dog is perfect, and a rescue dog may require time and patience to reach their full potential, but they will reward you a hundred times over. Be patient, be firm, but most of all have fun and enjoy your new family member!

Meeting a transport



Traveling on a commercial or multi-legged volunteer transport is very stressful for dogs. Many will not eat or drink while traveling, so bring water and a bowl to the meeting place. Have a leash and name tag ready with your contact info and put these on the dog ASAP. No one wants to see a dog lost, especially after going through so much to get to you.

Take your new Pyr for a walk around the parking lot. It's tempting to cuddle a new dog, but what they really need is some space. They will let you know when they are ready for attention. Puppies often need to be carried at first, but they do much better once they feel grass under their feet. Young puppies **should not** be placed on the ground at transport meeting locations. Their immune system may not be ready for this.

Be prepared to let the dog relax for 15-20 minutes before loading in your car. In the event that the dog is extremely nervous, Rescue Remedy, Serene (available at many pet stores) or Aconite (a homeopathic remedy) can help calm them. Every dog handles the experience differently - some are excited, others scared or grumpy. Even the gentlest dog can react poorly under stress, so do not crowd, hug, or put your face near the dog.

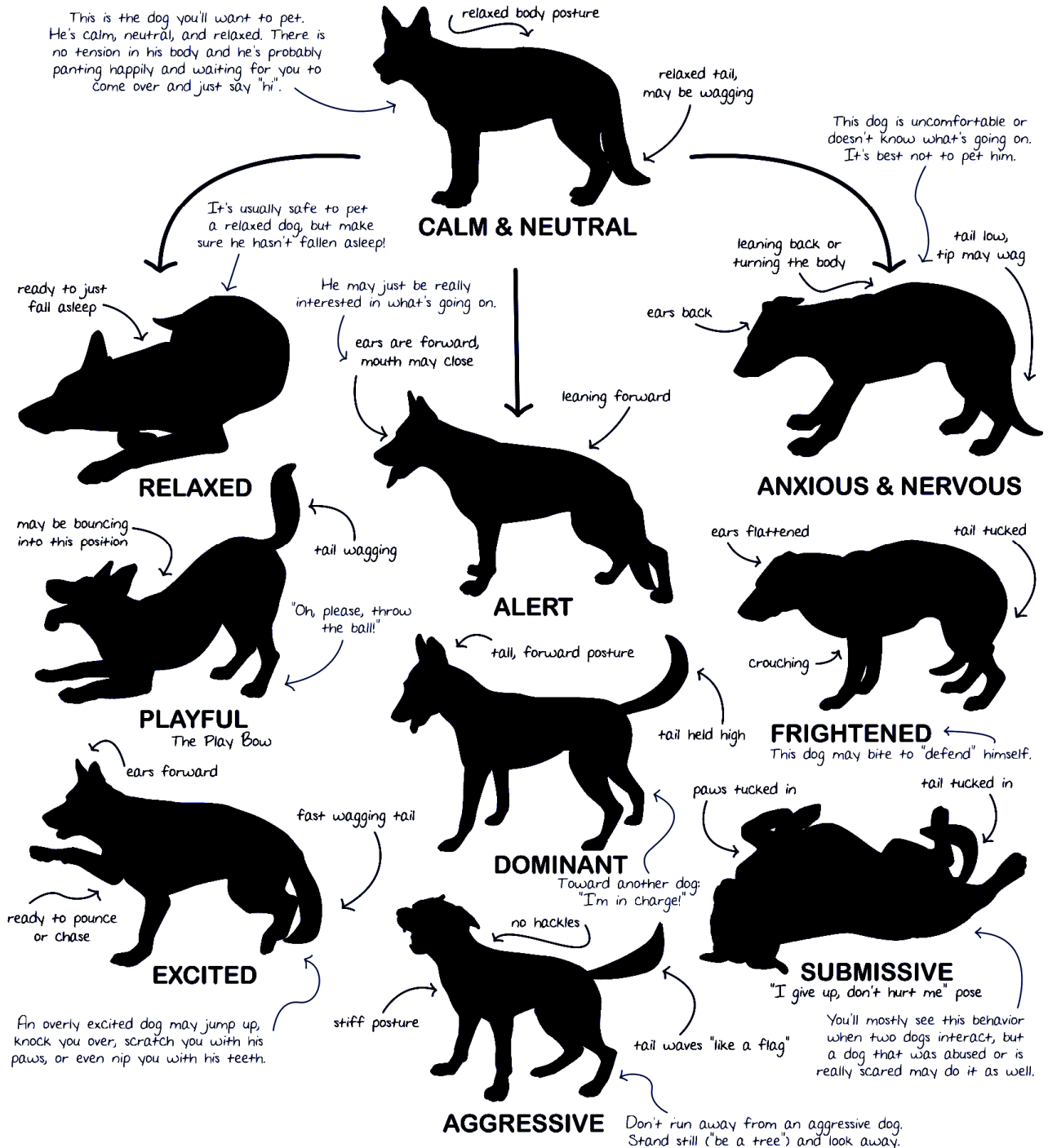
Use common sense when introducing kids to a new Pyr, just as you would with any strange dog. Ideally, introductions should wait a couple of days until the dog begins to settle. Children and dogs must always be supervised when together.

The first 48 hours



This is a period of acute stress for the dog, but it will subside when allowed the time and space to unwind. Signs of anxiety include trembling, lip licking, restlessness and lack of appetite. A wagging tail does not necessarily mean a dog is being friendly, it means a dog is stimulated; he could be happy, anxious or angry. A relaxed dog will have a mouth slightly open. The first day or so **must be QUIET time**, so avoid visitors and any high-energy play.

DOG TO ENGLISH TRANSLATION CHART



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Provide a quiet area for the dog to rest. Some dogs are exhausted and sleep a lot for the first couple of days; others will be restless and up all night. Some Pys won't bark until they feel acclimated, while others will bark at everything until they figure out what they need to bark at (this can take a week or two). Be careful not to overfeed, especially if they've been fasting. Feed several small meals if they act very hungry. Dogs that need extra time to adjust may not eat for several days but don't worry, they will.

Because your new Pyr will be stressed, you should be prepared for one or two slip-ups despite the fact that the dog is housetrained. The best way to prevent this is to pretend the dog is not housetrained for the first few days and therefore, take him or her out a lot! If an accident happens, don't chastise the dog as it will only increase his anxiety. Dogs that are anxious can 'hold it' for a surprisingly long time but their functions will return to normal once they have relaxed.

Leave the leash on the dog and let him trail it while indoors. This allows you to step on the leash to curtail any unwanted behavior.

People often hug to show love and affection. But just what does a hug mean to a dog? The closest thing a dog knows to a hug is mounting or placing a paw on another dog's neck and back. Both of these gestures are commonly used for dominance. When we try to hug a new or unknown dog, he will likely interpret that gesture as threatening and will either run away, submit, or return the challenge. Keeping this in mind, it really makes sense to avoid a hugging new dog. Dogs can be taught that hugging is positive, but this kind of handling takes time.

[Introducing your rescue dog to your resident dogs](#)



When you bring your new dog in to meet your existing dogs, take them both for a long walk individually before meeting. This will allow them to wear off their energy so they won't be as likely to disagree. After the walk, leave a leash on both dogs and let them meet on neutral territory like a park or sidewalk where your dog is less likely to view the newcomer as an intruder.

- Each dog should be handled by a separate person. Allow the dogs to sniff each other briefly and then walk the dogs together (assuming they are both okay on a leash). This allows them to become used to each other without the intensity since they have plenty of distractions to keep them occupied. Allow them stops to sniff each other but don't allow them to investigate each other too long because this could escalate to an aggressive response.
- Be aware of body postures One body posture that indicates things are going well is a "play-bow" which usually elicits friendly behavior from the other dog. Watch carefully for body postures that indicate an aggressive response, including hair standing up on one dog's back, teeth-baring, deep mouth and stiffened jaw may also be a sign of potential trouble brewing.

If you see such postures, interrupt the interaction immediately by calmly getting each dog interested in something else. For example, both handlers can call their dogs to them, have them sit or lie down, and reward each with a treat. The dogs' interest in the treats should prevent the situation from escalating into aggression. Try letting the dogs interact again, but this time for a shorter time period and/or at a greater distance from each other.

- Be careful not to praise undesired behaviors. For example, petting and soothing an agitated or growling animal will reinforce the wrong response. Reward only calm, desirable, or at least neutral behavior.

When the dogs seem to be tolerating each other's presence without fearful or aggressive responses, and the investigative greeting behaviors have tapered off, you can take them home. **The NEW DOG should enter the yard and house first.** This can help reduce resource guarding and territorial behavior.

- Be sure to remove all bones, toys, food or anything else they might fight over in advance. Keep a leash on both dogs, even in the house. If they get in a fight, don't panic because this will cause increased anxiety on their part and cause the fight to continue. Slowly pull the leash back on both dogs. **NEVER** grab the collar or any part of either dog – this will lead to a

high probability of you being bitten. Have a crate or room ready where they can be separated from each other.

- If you have more than one resident dog in your household, it is best to introduce the resident dogs to the new dog one at a time. Two or more resident dogs may have a tendency to "gang up" on the pack's newcomer.
- There's nothing wrong with managing the dogs rather than expecting everyone to fit in perfectly right away. Long-term management of resources, i.e., feeding dogs in separate rooms or picking all toys up and putting them away, may be required and shouldn't be viewed as an issue.

Do's and Don'ts

- **Do have a plan in place BEFORE the new dog arrives** of how to give the dogs a break from one another. This may be as simple as taking one dog on a walk, putting a crate-trained dog in the crate for a while, or using gates to separate them.
- **Do Not put the dogs in a vehicle together for several weeks.** This is an area that many resident dogs will guard. It is also too small an area if the dogs aren't ready to be in such close proximity. They may feel trapped as retreat is not an option.
- **Do regulate** doorways and stairs. These are other close-quartered areas that can create tense situations if both dogs are trying to get through at the same time.
- **Do feed dogs in separate areas and pick up bowls when they are done eating.** Water should be available their separate areas as well.
- **Do Not allow dogs to play too rough.** A dog that becomes uncertain can become fearful resulting in an aggressive response. Also a dog that is overstimulated can tip from playing to fighting. If the dogs enjoy roughhousing, allow them to play for very short periods and then separate them until you are sure that they are both calm. This also goes for chasing.

- **Do Not introduce toys or bones for several weeks.** Most fights break out over valued objects. Dog can take up to a month (sometimes longer) to adjust to each other. Closely monitor the dogs when one or both have a toy or bone.
- **Do have separate sleeping areas for the dogs.** This will allow them to relax at night until they are acclimated to each other.
- **Do Not leave dogs unsupervised together for several weeks.** They may need your leadership until they are completely comfortable together.
- **Do have lots of patience.** A new home is a huge adjustment for a dog. It's an ongoing process and takes months for everyone to fully settle in.

Introducing dogs and cats



As a breed, Pyrs are generally good with cats, and those going to homes with felines have usually been tested in advance. However, no one can predict how a dog will react to a cat when in a new environment, so it is important to introduce them properly for everyone's safety. Cats should not be out and about the first time the dog enters the home. Introductions should wait until the dog is calm and relaxed, which may be a day or so after they've arrived. You cannot control the cat, so focus on controlling the dog.

Swap scents; using an old blanket or towel, give the item to your cat. Let her play on it, sleep on it, eat on it. Rub her with the blanket and then leave it in her room for 24 hours.

Remove the blanket and present it to your dog. Rub him all over with it, let him roll on it, sniff it, sleep on it for 24 hours, then switch and do the same thing again. This blends their scents, making them a bit more at ease with each other.

Return home and put him in one of your largest rooms. Put him in one end of the room, farthest from the door, on a down-and-stay command. Keep your hand on the leash so you have control of him. Have a second person bring the cat into the

room, and set the cat down in the opposite end of the room. Make sure the dog stays calm.

Never force a cat into close proximity by holding her, caging her or otherwise restricting her ability to escape. This is stressful and does not help. Stress is a common reason for cats to break litter box training. Have a room and high places that the cat can access but the dog cannot. Baby gates, cat doors and clearing high surfaces can accomplish this. Pet gates with cat doors for a quick kitty exit allow pets to view each other securely.

It is important that the cat can retreat to relax and enter 'dog territory' at her own pace. The cat should have access to food, water and litter so interactions are not forced. The dog must know that the cat is in charge, and the dog must defer to the cat. Simple things like greeting the cat first when coming home and feeding the cat first establish higher status.



Kids & Dogs

The love between a child and the dog is wonderful to behold. This relationship is precious, and it needs to be nurtured and guided. Families can accomplish this by teaching the dog and the child to respect and cherish each other.

Dog owners should socialize their puppies to small children at an early age. Socialization can be as simple as walking the dog near a playground where children are making noise, running about, playing ball or Frisbee or soccer or walking through the neighborhood while the kids wait for the school bus. The dog can be told to walk at heel through a crowd of children, to sit-stay and watch the play or allow the children to pet his head, to down-stay until the end of the game. Constant exposure of this type will accustom the dog to the presence and antics of children

Most dogs, even those that are well-trained, do not consider children as figures of authority. Furthermore, since children frequently stare intently at animals, a dog may feel threatened by this short person who is trying to catch him. Even the best-natured dog may feel the need protect himself in these circumstances.

Training your dog is only half of your job! In addition to teaching your dog how to behave around kids, kids also have to be taught how to behave around dogs.

Once a child is given permission to approach a dog, she should present her closed fist for the dog to sniff. This protects the fingers in case the dog is frightened and tries to nip. Children should be taught to handle dogs gently. Show them how to pet politely. They should know never hit a dog, to lower their voices when playing with the dog, to leave the dog alone when he's sleeping, eating, or ill. Children don't like to be handled roughly, so they should be taught that it's equally rude to tease a dog by poking, pinching or pulling on their fur, tail or ears. Incidences can occur because the child teases a pet beyond endurance.

In general, dogs dislike being hugged. Both adults and children should only hug their own dog – but only if the dog will tolerate it (see page 4). The same goes for climbing and/or crawling on a dog.

The dog should never be left alone with a child less than six years of age. Even if the child is generally well-behaved and the dog is very tolerant, it's essential for all interactions to be supervised.

If the dog has access to a fenced yard, owners should make sure that neighborhood children cannot accidentally or intentionally tease him. Kids often begin by goading the dog to bark, then to snarl. Or they may throw things at him so the dog will charge the fence. This will teach a dog to dislike children.

If the dog does not like the children, the children need to change their behavior when they are around the dog. Here are a few hints to alleviate the tension between a dog and children:

- Provide a place a dog can call his own - a private room, a den or a crate where the dog can escape the attention of a boisterous or overly excited child. Teach children to leave Ranger alone when he's in the crate, to pat him gently--no squeezing around the neck, please--and to leave him alone while he's eating. Dogs and children should be separated at snack time so the dog doesn't learn to steal food from tiny hands
- Do not play tug-of-war with any dog that has access to children. A dog that learns to tug on any item will soon figure that anything he can grab is his, even if it's a child's toy, clothing, or appendage.

- Running and screaming children can frazzle a human, imagine its effect of a more sound sensitive dog! Teach children to be calm and gentle in a dog's presence.
- Never tie a dog in the yard. Children tend to tease tethered dogs even without realizing it.

With all of these DON'Ts, it must seem like kids can't interact with pets at all. In reality, they just need to be taught to be polite and kind to pets, instead of treating their companion like he's stuffed animal. Adults should ensure that the dog has lots of positive associations with kids.

Once children understand that they should be kind to their pet, they can be taught appropriate games to play. For instance, fetch where the dog willingly gives the toy and remains polite before it's tossed is fun for dogs who like to retrieve. Hide-n-seek is another great way for both dogs and kids to have fun. Kids and pets love to learn tricks that result in rewards such as yummy treats. All dogs need their exercise, and kids can be a part of this too if the dog is well-trained.

The key is to teach both the dog and the children to be polite. Make sure your children interact with your dog the same way you want them to interact with you. Follow these simple dos and don'ts and everyone will be safer and happier.

Behavior & Training



Please remember many of these dogs have lived in a backyard or on a farm without much human interaction until they came into rescue. Some have been deprived of food, love and care throughout their lives. But in saying this, you cannot coddle your rescue dog – because in doing so, you are allowing him/ her to be leader instead of you. Dogs NEED a strong leader to become confident, obedient and loving family members. A child that isn't given boundaries is unmanageable, likewise with a dog – no one wants to deal with a 100-pound Pyr brat. Basic training using positive-based techniques is highly recommended for all dog owners, but especially for Pyrs since they are independent (stubborn) by nature. Not all trainers are equal, so do your research, ask questions, get

references and observe a class. An excellent source of training materials can be found at: www.patriciamccconnell.com/ and www.askdryin.com/dog_movies.php

According to a veterinary study published in The Journal of Applied Animal Behavior, if you're aggressive to your dog, your dog will be aggressive too. Aggressive behavior includes those used in confrontational training methods such as:

- Hitting or kicking the dog
- Growling at the dog
- Forcing the dog to release an item from its mouth
- "Alpha roll" (forcing the dog onto its back and holding it down)
- "Dominance down" (forcing the dog onto its side)
- Grabbing the jowls or scruff
- Staring the dog down (staring at the dog until it looks away)

These can do little to correct improper behavior and can provoke fear and arousal in the dog, leading to defensive action. It can also cause dogs to react without giving any warning at all since, it is the warning signs that are often corrected.

The Trade

Sometimes a rescue dog can get in the trash, grab things off the counter, and find something under the table - even paper can be a high-value item for a rescue dog. First, DO NOT try to grab the item from his/her mouth or yell at the dog or chase him around the house. This could either cause a defensive reaction or may even turn the situation into a game which reinforces the behavior. Instead, exchange another valued object for the one your dog gives up.

Trading avoids unpleasant confrontations with your dog and makes both parties happy. You get the inappropriate item away from your dog and he gets an item of equal or greater value. The most common valued object to use is food: dog biscuits, a piece of cheese, a carrot or whatever kind of food the dog likes equally or more than the object he already has. If you are going to "trade" with your dog, NEVER offer the trade object and then withdraw it at the last moment. Offering the item and then not following through will cause your dog to distrust you.

The Trade is easy:

- When your dog has an inappropriate item, get the trade item (dog biscuit) and show it to your dog while simultaneously saying "Trade" in a calm and friendly voice. Once your dog realizes that you have something better, he will most likely drop the item he has and take the new one. Quiet praise for making the trade will help reinforce your dog's desired behavior.
- Do not force the trade item on your dog or corner your dog when trading. Remember that you are giving your dog the CHOICE, not forcing him. If your dog is under the furniture, allow enough room for him to get out in order to get the trade item. Be patient.
- Once the trade is complete, give your dog an appropriate toy to carry around and praise him lavishly for holding an acceptable item. This second step teaches your dog which items are acceptable. If your dog tends to pick up soft or cloth items, try giving him his own stuffed dog toy, or an old towel of his own.

If your dog is protective of items (growls or snaps) or refuses to trade, call a qualified dog trainer to get immediate advice. In most cases, you can work through the undesirable behavior with some guidance. While waiting for help, avoid the situation and do not challenge your dog.

Collars:

There are many types of collars & harnesses, but the general rule is to use the mildest collar that gives the control you need. You should be able to control and work with your dog without constantly 'reminding' him what to do... (nag nag nag nag, jerk jerk jerk pull). Nagging is not the same as training because the dog is ignoring your corrections. You are effectively training the dog to ignore you.

Not every person/dog team is right for a prong collar or a slip collar. Halti, Gentle Leader, Easy Walk and other trademarked collars/harnesses might do the best job for you and your dog in different situations. Some dogs with damaged tracheas (sometimes due to choke chain injuries) have to stay in a harness. Every collar has a correct fit. Be sure to learn what that 'fit' is and if you have a growing pup, get new collars to maintain that fit.

Retractable leashes:

Retractable leashes give the dog more freedom to explore surroundings. However, these leashes should **ONLY** be used after your dog has been trained to walk on a regular leash and will respond to voice control.

Cons of retractable leashes:

- Owner lacks control over companion pet.
- Can damage dog's trachea when he runs and unknowingly reaches the End of the leash. A strong jerk from a big dog can break the leash and also injure your shoulder!
- Does not reinforce loose leash-walking behavior.
- Encourages pulling when on leash.
- Leash will not retract when under tension.
- Pet can come into dangerous contact if leash lock is not on.
- Leash lock can become unlocked when dog lunges or bolts.
- Leash can become tangled around your legs or the dog's legs.

Feeding your rescue dog



Many rescue dogs have been deprived of food throughout their lives – therefore, they have learned it is a scarce resource that must be fought for to survive. For at least 2 months, do not give high value treats – rawhides, bones, people food, etc. These are items that they may decide would be worthy of challenging the leader for access. For at least 2 months, feed your rescue dog separately; do NOT feed with your other dogs or near cats. If possible, feed your rescue dog by hand – this reinforces that you are the leader and all good things come from the leader. After hand feeding, you can slowly throw kibble into their bowl and let them eat from below you – indicating that you have provided food. Then, you can let them eat out of bowl with them below you. If they know the ‘sit’ command, have them do so before putting the bowl down. Do not toss treats out to dogs. Instead, have each dog obey a command, such as sit, and give the treat right after he/she obeys.

Each rescue dog is different – and each step should take at least a week or as long as 2 weeks. If unable to complete these steps, an alternative is to feed in the crate. The negative to this method is the rescue dog feels like he/ she has control over the food rather than the leader. They will learn with time that leader provides the food but it takes a longer time frame to achieve your leadership role.



Medical

Heart worm preventative:

Heartworm pills are a monthly heartworm preventive that you can purchase from your vet or online with a prescription (usually much cheaper).

Collies, mixed-breed Collies and Australian Shepherds are very sensitive to Ivermectin, so **do not use Heart Guard on these breeds**. See www.vetmed.wsu.edu/depts-VCPL/ for more information. Interceptor is used instead.

Acepromazine

Ace has a variety of uses (ex: anti-nausea, anti-emetic, decrease itching due to allergies), but is also used as a sedative to control anxiety. **Pyrns and related breeds do not tolerate Acepromazine well**. It can remain in the system much longer than anticipated and can also heighten the dog's sensitivity to noise and other stimuli (which produces the opposite effect of what we're looking for!). If you vet wants to prescribe it for outpatient use, please ask for an alternative or an explanation as to why they are specifically recommending Ace.

Worms and parasites

Rescue dogs have been through several wormings. *However*, even a parasite-infected animal may not show positive on a fecal test. Human error and equipment choice are factors, but so is the parasite itself. Sometimes they do not make themselves known in the stool since worms that aren't shedding eggs and

low-grade infections may not reveal much. If your dog has worms, don't panic! Wormers can be purchased your local Petsmart, Petco or other petstores that will take care of the tape, hook, and round worms.

Some use black walnut hulls (sold in capsule form) or diatomaceous earth as alternative remedies to control parasites. Several brands of heartworm preventative also contain dewormer in one monthly pill.

Kennel Cough

Kennel cough is a deep honking, gagging cough that sounds worse than it is. Most cases are mild and will resolve themselves in about 2 weeks, much like the common cold in humans. Exceptions to this are puppies, elderly dogs and/or those with weakened immune systems where the infection can develop into pneumonia or other bronchial problems. An OTC cough suppressant such as Robitussin DM can help relieve symptoms, but check with your veterinarian before administering any drug. Many dogs act, play, eat and sleep normally other than the cough itself. If the dog is lethargic, feverish, will not eat or has green discharge from the nose, contact your vet immediately.

The Bordetella vaccine is not very effective in preventing kennel cough, so even vaccinated dogs can contract it. Vitamin C given at the first sign of kennel cough may help to minimize severity and speed recovery.

Caution on Lyme Vaccine

There are many 'core' vaccines recommended by the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA): parvovirus, distemper, adenovirus, and rabies. Other vaccines are considered 'non-core' and vary in their efficacy. (Some 'non-core' vaccines are required in certain states, or to meet requirements in boarding facilities.)

We have recently seen an increase in the usage of the Lyme vaccine, which is considered 'non-core'. Many of the veterinarians we work with will not administer the vaccine for several reasons. Instead they advise using collars or topical products proven most effective against ticks, including the deer tick which is the

primary vector for Lyme disease. Unlike the diseases against which most vaccines are meant to build immunity (e.g. distemper, parvo), Lyme is a *bacterial* infection, not a *viral* infection. Most canine cases of Lyme are much less severe than in humans and respond well to medications such as doxycycline. The current Lyme vaccines are not guaranteed effective against all variations of Lyme, and do NOT offer any protection at all against other tick-borne diseases such as Ehrlichia, Babesia and Anaplasmosis. In addition to the possibility of anaphylactic reactions, there are instances where dogs develop severe lameness that mimics that of acute Lyme disease. Pharmaceutical companies as a rule only test for reactions within 24 hours of administration of the drugs, so no long-term studies are available.

Correspondingly, we have also seen an unusual link between sudden-onset aggression in Great Pyrenees and Great Pyrenees mixes who had behaved normally prior to receiving the Lyme vaccine, and developed aggression (extreme in some cases) within days or weeks of receiving the vaccine. We can only wonder whether this breed with its slow metabolism is more sensitive to the vaccine, just as some breeds have been proven to be more sensitive to certain medications. Not every dog who has had the vaccine shows these symptoms, but the instances have been severe and are becoming common enough for us to share our concern and caution adopters against using this non-core vaccine for their dogs.

Itching

Diphenhydramine (Benadryl) is an OTC antihistamine that can provide *temporary* relief to itching caused by allergies or other skin ailments. **The only active ingredient should be diphenhydramine.** As many medications that are sold OTC contain other meds, this really is critical. This means that Benadryl Decongestant, Benadryl for Colds, etc. are unacceptable. You can safely administer up to 1mg/lb every 8 hours. Skin infections, allergies and yeast infections need to be treated by a vet.

Nausea

Peptol-Bismol can be administered to dogs (never cats!) with upset stomach or vomiting. Give one teaspoon per 20 pounds of weight every 4-6 hours for 24 hours, or until symptoms begin to resolve.

Diarrhea

Imodium (*loperamide*) can be given to some dogs and cats for diarrhea. **WARNING:** Certain dog breeds related to Collies may have adverse reactions to loperamide. Do not give this medicine to Collies, Shelties, Australian Shepherds or Long-haired Whippits.

OTC pain relievers

Over-the-counter pain relievers like Ibuprofen and Tylenol **can poison a dog or cause serious or deadly complications** such as heart failure, liver failure, kidney disease, dehydration, diarrhea or urinary obstruction. Never give a dog ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil, Nuprin), naproxen (Aleve), or acetaminophen (Tylenol). Even a child's dose can be fatal. Some ibuprofen tablets are coated with sugar and appeal to dogs. It is important that dog owners keep ibuprofen out of a dog's reach.

Aspirin can be given **short term** to dogs (never cats!) to help relieve inflammation and pain. Aspirin has potent blood thinning properties, and continued usage can be harmful. If you are considering giving your dog aspirin regardless of weight, start off with the low dosage of 81mg. Use aspirin made specifically for pets or aspirin with a powdery covering "buffered" rather than the "hard candy" type enteric coating. Enteric coating of aspirin creates unpredictable absorption in dogs. It becomes dangerous when the dog's GI tract accumulates enteric-coated aspirin tablets which do not digest in the stomach, and instead collect in the intestines until a toxic dose is reached, resulting in aspirin toxicity. Always give Aspirin with food. **DO NOT** give aspirin in conjunction with any other prescribed NSAID (Zubrin, Previcox, Deramaxx, Metacam, Rimadyl).

Supplements

Non-prescription supplements have a new and growing place in the medical treatment of dogs. All are available in major pet stores and pharmacies. Some popular supplements and their uses include:

Fish oil: Used for maintaining skin & coat and also helps with kidney function. It possibly also helps pets with heart disease and osteoarthritis, and may be helpful in preventing stroke, cancer and allergies.

Vitamin E: Extra vitamin E is needed when giving fish oil on a regular basis as fish oil supplemented for many months can lower vitamin E levels (most fish oil supplements contain additional vitamin E for this reason.)

Glucosamine/Chondroitin: Glucosamine and chondroitin work together to improve the health of joint cartilage, which helps your dog stay mobile and active. It has been reported to be supportive in arthritis, osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis, disc degeneration, bursitis, ankylosing spondylitis, tendinitis, cartilage / tendons / ligaments repair, skin wound-healing, carpal tunnel syndrome and in reducing inflammatory response. This is a long term treatment and its effects may not be immediately noticeable.

MSM (Methylsulfonylmethane) is a naturally occurring sulfur compound found in the body. It aids in the absorption of vitamins and other nutrients, such as vitamin C, Coenzyme Q10, all B vitamins, Vitamin A, D & E, amino acids, selenium, calcium, magnesium and many others. It is often combined in a pill form with glucosamine.

Vitamin C (sodium ascorbate): some animals given vitamin C seem to exhibit fewer signs of joint pain. Vitamin C has been used to help prevent the formation of some bladder stones in dogs and cats, and also helps to boost the immune system. Ester-C is recommended as it is buffered to reduce stomach upset.

Coenzyme Q10 helps slow periodontal disease and helps to maintain cardiovascular health.

Probiotics are another term for friendly bacteria that live and work in the gastrointestinal tract, which include *Lactobacillus acidophilus*, *Bifido-bacterium bifidum*, and *Lactobacillus bulgaricus*. Probiotics are the body's first line of defense against the all the potentially harmful microorganisms that your pet

inhales or ingests. Stress, poor diet, pollutants, fertilizers, pesticides, and prescription drugs can destroy beneficial bacteria. Plain (unflavored) yogurt is a good source of probiotics, or they can be purchased in powder form.

Canine Bloat (Gastric Dilatation-Volvulus)

Bloat is a life-threatening condition that can affect dogs at any age. It is a leading cause of death in dogs, yet many dog owners know very little about it. The condition is rapidly fatal, causing shock, coma, and death within 6-12 hours. Large breeds are particularly susceptible to bloat.

Bloat is a two-stage condition. In the first stage, the stomach swells with gastric gases produced by ingested water and/or food. In the second stage, called gastric torsion, the stomach flips over cutting off the blood supply and quickly leading to tissue death. **A dog that shows any of the symptoms common to bloat should be taken to a vet IMMEDIATELY. IT IS BETTER TO MAKE MANY FALSE TRIPS TO THE VET THAN TO MISS BLOAT THE ONE TIME IT MATTERS.** Time is critical; minutes can mean the difference between life and death. The longer the dog is in the stages of bloat the less likely he/she will survive. Knowing and recognizing the symptoms of bloat could save your dog's life!

Causes of Bloat: The exact cause of bloat is currently unknown; however, certain risk factors include:

- breed (deep, narrow-chested dogs)
- genetic predisposition
- rapid eating
- eating only one large meal a day
- dry food only diet
- overeating & overdrinking
- heavy exercise before or after a meal
- stress
- fearful temperament

Symptoms of Bloat: In the early stages, a dog that is bloating will be uncomfortable and edgy for no apparent reason. Other symptoms of bloat may include:

- gagging or attempts to vomit, but nothing coming up, except ropy, slimy saliva (this is the most common symptom)
- may vomit foamy mucous or have foamy mucous around the lips
- lack of gurgling sounds in the stomach
- abnormal gum color: white, deep red or blue
- coughing
- whining
- pacing
- licking the air
- seeking a hiding place
- unproductive attempts to defecate
- may attempt to eat small stones and twigs
- apparent weakness; unable to stand or has a spread-legged stance
- excessive drinking
- looking at their side or other evidence of abdominal pain or discomfort
- excessive drooling
- abdominal pain
- walks in a stiff-legged fashion
- extreme agitation
- pacing accompanied by the inability to sit or lay down comfortably
- Swelling between the rib cage and the hips; it could start in the lower rib cage. *(In early stages swelling may not be visible, insist on an x-ray for early diagnosis. Once swelling is visible, time is limited. **This is an emergency!**)*
- Heavy panting, often accompanied with labored and loud breathing
- Head and tail hanging down, with a roached-up (hunched) back
- WATCH FOR UNUSUAL OR UNCHARACTERISTIC BEHAVIOR FOR YOUR DOG *(A normally active dog becoming listless; a normally hungry dog whose refusing food; a laid-back dog who is restless, pacing, looks uncomfortable, with a pain grimace on his/her face)*

Prevention: Knowing and recognizing the symptoms of bloat could save your dog's life! To reduce the chances of bloat:

- Avoid highly stressful situations. If you can't avoid them, try to minimize the stress as much as possible. Be extra watchful.

- Do not let your dog exercise strenuously one hour prior to and after eating. A good rule of thumb: if he is panting from exertion or heat, do not feed until he stops panting. Particularly avoid vigorous exercise and don't permit your dog to roll over, which can cause the stomach to twist.
- Do not permit rapid eating or drinking
- Feed 2 or 3 meals a day, instead of just one.
- When switching dog food, do so gradually over several weeks
- Do not feed dry food exclusively
- Reduce carbohydrates as much as possible (typical in many commercial dog biscuits)
- Feed a high-quality diet
- Do not feed gas-producing foods (beans, cabbage, etc.)
- Prophylactic gastropexy surgery is elective stomach tacking, where the stomach is attached to the body wall.

Be Prepared

- If your regular vet doesn't have 24-hour emergency service, know which nearby vet you would use. Keep the phone number handy and call them ahead of time to let them know you are bringing a dog with bloat symptoms.
- Have directions to emergency vet ready.
- **Always keep a product with simethicone on hand** i.e. Mylanta Gas (not regular Mylanta), Gas-X, etc. If you can reduce or slow the gas, you've probably bought yourself a little more time to get to a vet.

Additional Resources: If you have never seen bloat, it is easy to miss, especially in the earliest stages. Even those who have experienced a bloating dog before often miss the symptoms. **A video of a dog in the early to mid-stages of bloat is available on YouTube:** <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mrrB1ojgK7M> or type the keywords 'Bloating Akita' into the search bar.



Dogs & Nutrition

Changing a dogs diet rapidly results in stomach upset. If possible, find out what brand of food your dog has been eating and pick up a small bag. Transition him slowly to your preferred brand by mixing $\frac{3}{4}$ old food to $\frac{1}{4}$ new food for three days. For next 3 days feed half and half. For the next 3 days feed $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ and finally switch fully to the new food. It's a good idea to rotate brands and protein sources every few months.

Stress and/or new food may result in diarrhea. Canned pumpkin (pureed form, NOT pumpkin pie filling) may help to firm up loose stools or diarrhea within a few hours. One or to two teaspoonfuls is all that is needed. Conversely, pumpkin is also a stool softener, which makes it a good natural remedy for constipation. Probiotics can help to stabilize the stomach. Boiled chicken and rice is very bland and easily digestible and can help with intestinal distress.

The importance of diet cannot be over-emphasized for humans and animals. What you put into your body dictates the rest of your life and the state of your health. The same is 100% true for your pet. Cheap brands use low-quality ingredients – anything that comes from a rendering plant is suspect. A healthy diet can make a huge difference in the well-being and longevity of your pet. The better quality food, the less you will have to spend on his medical care later in life. Some recommended brands are:

Flint River	Solid Gold	Eagle Pack
Wellness	Innova	Pinnacle
Artemis	Fromm	Taste of the Wild
Blue Buffalo	Natural Balance	Castor & Pollux
Merrick	California Natural	Timberwolf
Orijen	Canidae	Chicken Soup for dogs

- Ingredients to avoid in dog food:
Meat by-products , ethoxyquin, BHT/BDA, tallow, animal digest, unspecified meat source (such as 'poultry' instead of 'chicken') brewers rice, brewers yeast, corn, wheat gluten, hulls & middlings , 'mill run' ingredients, cellulose, salt, colors & dyes, sugar/sorbital/corn syrup/sucrose, natural & artificial flavors, soybean oil, vegetable fiber
- Avoid and dog food & treats made in China
- Healthy ingredients include:
Meal (such as chicken or lamb, not 'meat'), fruits and vegetables, whole grains such as barley and brown rice, prebiotics & probiotics, glucosamine and chondroitin, chelated vitamins & minerals, flaxseed oil, fish oil, grapeseed oil or powder.
- Links for information on dog food:

Dogfoodanalysis.com

largedog.meetup.com/boards/thread/2914614

RAW-lite is a yahoo group that is an excellent source for information on raw feeding: <http://pets.groups.yahoo.com/group/RAW-lite/>
- Foods that are dangerous to dogs:

Xylitol ,an artificial sweetener most commonly found in sugar free gum and toothpaste, is extremely toxic to dogs. A dog that has consumed this product needs to be seen by a vet immediately.

Chocolate
Grapes/raisins
Macadamia nuts
Hops
Walnuts
Coffee
Candy
Onions
Avocados

ASPCA poison control number (888)426-4435

Puppies

Excess calcium has been attributed to skeletal abnormalities in large breed puppies. As a giant breed, GP puppies should be fed kibble with a calcium level below 1.5% and not more than 1% phosphorous. Most premium large breed puppy formulas fall within these guidelines, but not all, so be sure to check the label. If the information is not listed, then it can usually be found online or by calling the manufacturer directly. If you prefer to feed an ALS (all life stages) formula, check to see if the levels are appropriate. Never give supplemental calcium of any kind when feeding a commercial diet.

Socialization: It is very important to socialize your puppy. This is the time to have lots of friends over, including men, women, and children. A few weeks after completing the puppy vaccines, you should take him everywhere possible with you to make sure he's a well-socialized dog. We can't stress this enough! If you have children in the family, no tug-o-war or any playing with hands around the puppy's face as that will encourage nipping. Keep a chew toy handy to redirect any play biting and if all else fails, give a short time out.

Shopping List



Bring when picking up the dog:

Collar: leather or non-stretch material. Make sure it is "2-fingers" snug and can't come off. An excellent choice is the Truman collar (thetrumancollar.com); 25% of sales are donated to The Morris Animal Foundation to fund animal disease research.

ID tag: Heavy-duty plastic name tags work well. Dogs' ears are very sensitive, so it is a kindness to them to minimize the clinking of metal tags so close to their ears. Plastic tags or tag silencers can be found at many stores.

Leash: Slip leashes the go directly over the head instead of attaching to the collar. If the dog tugs and pull away from you the leash will become tighter on the dog, thus there is no chance of slipping out of a collar.

Note: use another person or a crate/carrier to transport a puppy to contain any "accidents."

Supplies to have ready at home:

Crate: an invaluable tool, especially at the beginning. Avoid crating a dog for more than 4 hours. Place safe toys inside. Folding crates are also ideal for traveling. If the dog chews on crate bars, get the Vari-kennel or airline crate. Make sure the crate is large enough for dog when full grown; you can block off part for a pup.

Baby/pet gates: a good confinement alternative. Make sure dog can't get head/paws caught in gate, can't chew through or knock down the gate or jump the gate. Cat door optional.

Bedding: easy to clean, thick enough for comfort.

Puppy pen: helpful when you want a pup confined but not crated.

Water and food bowls: use stainless steel or ceramic with no painting in the inside. Plastic can absorb bacteria and smell.

Flea comb: check for fleas, and comb to aid the skin. Good "shedding" control, too.

Brush: brush daily; good for skin and can be better than bathing.

Grooming supplies: get the right tools for your dog if you're going to bathe, clip claws and cut fur yourself.

Pet-specific cleaners: such as Simple Solution or Nature's Miracle, available from pet supply stores. They remove pet stains and odors.

Food: quality premium dog kibble. No table scraps: feeding table scraps encourages begging. It's your job to keep food out of reach - keep in mind that big dogs can easily reach counter tops.

Biscuits: avoid those with food coloring. Use to reward good behavior.

Rescue Remedy (available in health food stores): calms when traveling, nervous or injured. May help relieve mild car sickness and/or mild thunderstorm phobia.

No rawhide bones: they can be rough on digestion, cause choking - plus rawhides, pigs hooves and other too-highly covered treats can incite dogs to fight over them.

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NGPR would like to credit the following for excerpts from this document: Dr. Sophia Yin, Petsource.org, AnimalPlanet, AVMA, Yankee Golden Retriever Rescue, Norma Bennett Woolf, Dogs for Defense K9, The Partnership for Animal Welfare, Akita Rescue MidAtlantic Coast, and Ranger Productions/globalspan.net