

A guide for DOG-TO-CHILDREN INTRODUCTIONS



Taking the time to introduce your dog properly will help set your children and dog up to have a great relationship!

Adopting a dog into a home with children can be a wonderful experience, but it's important to ensure the dog and kids get along well. Here's a quick guide to help make the introduction and ongoing relationship a success:

- Advise children to be **calm and quiet** during the introduction because high-pitched noises may excite the dog.
- Encourage the children to **sit or stand quietly** and let the dog approach them. Don't have children reach their hand over the dog's head or offer for the dog to sniff.
- **Discourage children from running away** from your dog, even if it's playtime, because the dog's instinct will be to chase and this can be counterproductive to a good introduction.
- Your new **dog should have his or her own space** (e.g. a crate or bed) where they can retreat from the family and relax. Be sure to instruct children to not approach the dog when it is in that space.
- Have the **dog on a loose leash** for the initial meet. Dogs can easily knock over a small child if they are excited.
- **Never leave young children unsupervised with a dog**, especially during the first few months. Even the friendliest dog can get startled or annoyed by sudden movements or loud noises, when there is food or treats around, or when children play too rough or get over-excited around the animal. *(If you have young children, it's important the dog is well-socialized and accustomed to different sounds and actions that children make (e.g., loud noises, quick movements, etc.)*
- **Reward good behavior** for the child and the dog, so everyone learns how to adjust to each other comfortably.
- Both the dog and your children will need time to adjust to each other. **Stay patient** and allow them to build trust and understanding gradually.