

Quick Guide: DECOMPRESSION

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Shelters are stressful environments, and adjusting to a new home takes time. Decompression allows your dog to settle, rebuild trust, and show their true personality. Expect this process to take **4-6 weeks**, though every dog is different.

1

Forget Expectations:

Your dog's behavior will evolve as they adjust. Be patient and avoid comparisons to past pets or other adopters' experiences.

2

Give Them Time:

Your dog won't show their full personality right away. Let them decompress at their own pace.

3

Create a Calm Space:

Limit noise, visitors, and overstimulation. If you have children, teach them to give the dog space.

4

Minimal Affection: (at first)

Let your dog come to you. Avoid overwhelming them with petting, toys, or face-to-face contact.

5

Leash & Martingale Collar:

Use a leash, even indoors and in fenced areas, to ensure safety and build trust. A martingale collar prevents escape.

6

Slow Introductions:

Keep your dog at home for 2-3 weeks before introducing them to new people or pets. If you have other animals, meet on neutral ground first.

7

Stick to a Routine:

A predictable schedule helps your dog feel secure. Keep feeding, potty breaks, and walks consistent.

8

Daily Exercise:

Short, quiet walks help your dog decompress and build confidence. Increase exercise gradually after the initial adjustment period.

9

Create Positive Associations:

Reward calm behavior with treats and praise, especially around new sounds and experiences.

