

Bringing your new hound home

A very exciting time and so tempting to want to shower your hound with affection and reassure them that nothing bad will ever happen to them again....

However, please think of your hound in all this. They will find it rather daunting to be in a new home, with new smells, new people, new dynamics and routines.

Give them time on their own to adjust to their new surroundings.

The first thing to do when you get them home is take them into the garden and let them have a really good sniff and relieve themselves. Wait until they do their business before going back inside and of course lots of praise and a treat if they will take one.

Once back inside, leave them be. Maybe let them explore one room at a time as it can be very overwhelming for them.

Don't overload them by taking them to new places, training classes and meeting people and other dogs. Just let them get used to their new home. There is all the time in the world to have new adventures with them, a new home is an adventure in itself.

Give them a day or so at home and carry on your business as normal, pop out to the shops. Some people want to be at home all the time with the new dog, but the dog will come to expect this and rely on this, so it is important to start as you mean to go on and encourage their independence. With nervous dogs, they may need longer - it really does depend on the individual as to how long it will take them to settle.

Your dog may well show signs of stress, this may manifest as their pacing, panting, restlessness, toileting issues (they may have loose stools or become constipated, etc). Monitor them. Give them time. Maybe give them a nice chew or filled kong, snuffle mat or licky mat. Let them sleep as sleep is excellent for dogs to regain some balance.

Walk them in quiet places to begin with to get to know your dog without distractions and again keep it nice and calm. Giving them a routine will help as will having places that become familiar to your dog.

The three threes!

There is a general rule of 3 with new dogs joining a home.

Three days - Three weeks – Three months

3 DAYS: The first three days your hound is home, they're usually just trying to cope with being in a new place (again). Who are these people? What am I doing here? What's going to happen next?

3 WEEKS: By the end of three weeks, your hound has usually figured out they're going to be living with you. They probably understand who else lives there, when and where they eat, sleep and go to the toilet. Routine has been established and they are **STARTING** to settle in.

3 MONTHS: After three months, they have usually blended into your routine and lifestyle. They have become part of the family. Their personality may well be blossoming which is a marvellous thing to see!

Please be advised this is a general outlook of the phases your new hound will go through. Some take longer with some phases.

Please appreciate their unsettled pasts and do not expect them to

just fit in. If you cannot handle them having toilet accidents in the house, then please do not even consider owning a dog. It could take a few days, it could take a few months, don't place unfair expectations on your dog. If you cannot handle them barking at strange noises that startle them or intrigue them, then again, do not consider owning a dog. If you cannot handle the possibility that a dog may chew your favourite shoes or table, then again, perhaps you are barking up the wrong tree and maybe a hamster is more your thing.

In a multi-dog household

If adopting from Lurcher SOS, you would have been invited to meet your new hound, bringing any current hounds with you to see how they get on. If all goes well and you go off skipping into the sunset with your new hound then remember to:

1. Please put all toys away before bringing your new hound home. Introduce them once they are a bit more settled with each other and supervise.
2. Feed separately to begin with and determine if there are any signs of food guarding. It is quite natural for hounds to protect their food.
3. Expect a few spats here and there and don't expect instant bonding. It takes time to establish a relationship and they need to learn about this stranger they are now living with.
4. Lurchers are renowned for their unique play, bitey face, bitey ankle and so on. Their play can be quite intense and vocal, lots of "chase me chase me" and zoomies. If you have any concerns that there is anything other than good old fashioned lurcher play going on, then do get in touch. It can be a highly arousing activity for lurchers so if you feel it is

getting a little out of hand, then distract them and give them a little break.