

Introducing a New Dog to a Dog Household

Dogs with Wings Assistance Dog Society | March 2014

Whether you're consolidating your household with another person or simply getting a new pet, introducing new dogs to each other can be a deceptively complicated process. Done incorrectly, you could be setting yourself up for scuffles, scent marking and even dangerous levels of aggression. Many of the signs of fear, frustration or anxiety displayed by dogs can be very subtle, and you may not pick up on them until it's too late.

Don't Introduce Them at Home

A nearby park is an excellent place for two dogs to get to know each other. Many dogs, especially particular breeds, become very guarded around their home. This isn't because they are selfish, it's because they're trying to protect you and your belongings. This instinct has been bred into many dogs over years and it sometimes needs a little time to counteract. If your dog gets to know its new friend on neutral territory, however, it will know that it is a friend and a part of the family. This will make it less uneasy about inviting its new friend into its home.

Set Aside Enough Time

It's best for you to set aside at least a few hours for your old dog and your new dog to interact. You should not feel worried if the dogs seem to be ignoring each other. Ignoring one another is actually a good sign because it means that both dogs feel comfortable and safe. If you push your dogs to interact with each other, they may begin feeling pressured or stressed as they won't understand exactly what you want.

Learn Your Dog's Signals

Dogs have a special type of language that they use to communicate with each other. Learning this language is an excellent way to judge how your dogs are doing and bond with your dog on another level. Many people falsely assume that a dog is always happy when wagging its tail. However, wagging may also denote nervousness or fear. If your dog's tail is wagging slowly and is held close to the ground, it will indicate that your dog is uncomfortable. If your dog is holding its tail high and wagging it quickly, it's more likely that your dog is happy or having fun.

Getting a new dog can be a difficult but worthwhile pursuit. When done correctly, this process will enrich your life as well as the lives of your pets. It's very likely that your dogs will soon be inseparable. You may also find that you encounter absolutely no difficulty at all. Like people, dogs are all different. Some simply are not bothered by other dogs or just seem to get along with everyone. However, it's usually better not to take the risk and to do things the right way, even if you feel that you know your dog well.

About Dogs with Wings:

Dogs with Wings is a leader in the international community of assistance dog training schools. The organization exists to serve people with disabilities. They work collaboratively, and in partnership with other organizations that provide assistance dogs to people with disabilities.

Dogs with Wings Assistance Dog Society | 780.944.8011 | Edmonton, Alberta

Dogs with Wings Assistance Dog Society | 587.284.3647 | Calgary, Alberta

© Copyright Dogs with Wings Assistance Dog Society | All rights reserved.