



Your guide to a successful adoption.

before:

- * Talk with your family, spouse, housemate or partner and be sure you all have the same goals and expectations regarding adoption. If you already have one dog, be sure you factor that into the equation.
- * Be sure you're ready from a budgetary stand-point - are you able to pay for unplanned medical expenses? (note: many vets take CareCredit - a low-interest credit card specifically for medical issues. www.carecredit.com)
- * Determine which gender, age, size, temperament is the best match for you and your family.
- * If your goal is to adopt a pure-bred dog, be sure to educate yourself on the breed's temperament and potential health issues. Look for breed-specific rescue organizations in your area.
- * Be sure you know you will be able to spend the right amount of time with your new buddy. Will your new buddy be going to doggie day care? If so, research and select in advance.
- * Decide: couch or no couch, bed or no bed.
- * Research your area's shelters - visit them frequently, be sure they are certified and ask for references.
- * Read up on training methods, research your area's trainers and sign up for a class (they can have a waiting list). Good training and socialization are key to a happy life together.
- * Read up on health care for dogs. In the last decade, there has been an explosion of alternative diets and health care options introduced to pet owners. Choose what's right for you, then research your area's veterinarians/ health care providers and local pet shops to see what they offer for products, services and expertise.
- * Determine where you're going to exercise your dog: the park, the beach, your own back yard? Remember that dogs need to socialize with other dogs and they really enjoy diversity - new smells are always exciting to sniff.

during:

- * Most, if not all, shelter dogs will not be released to a new family until they are spayed or neutered. **BE SURE THIS IS THE CASE WITH YOUR SELECTED SHELTER.** If it is not the case, **GET YOUR BUDDY FIXED!**
- * Prepare your house. Hide your shoes, remote and iPhone until you're confident they won't be chewed.
- * Be ready to manage your new buddy's transitional stress. Don't freak out if you see odd or unpleasant behavior during the first several weeks. They need to settle in their new surroundings and routine.
- * Prepare your car. All dogs should be secured and ride in the back of the vehicle...but **NEVER** in the back of a truck.
- * Visit your selected veterinarian, get rabies vaccination and a clean bill of health.
- * Register your buddy with your town (you will need the rabies vaccination in order to do so).
- * Choose a groomer, if necessary.
- * Buy your supplies:

bed	food treats	crate
food and water bowls	toys (both chew and soft)	leash and collar with ID tag
flea and tick prevention	pet deodorizers	grooming supplies (shampoo, conditioner,
doggie towel	vehicle supplies (gate, mat)	brush, nail clippers)

after:

- * Have an adoption party!
- * Raise your new buddy with lots of snuggles, romps, treats, kisses and love.