



Important Steps for a Happy and Healthy Relationship with your New Pet!

Crate Training:

A crate can be one of the most effective training tools when trying to help your pet adjust to their new family and environment, and is used when you are unable to watch your pet, when you are eating dinner, when you are away from the home, etc.

Sometimes pets become anxious, excited or curious when no one is home and can get themselves into trouble. Pulling down curtains, scratching at the doors, chewing and eating anything they find, are just a few of the damages left behind by an anxious dog looking for their family member. All of this can be avoided by using a crate. Try to think of it as a playpen where they will be safe but can still move around, play with toys, chew appropriate things and sleep. When introducing an adult dog or puppy to a crate, **DO NOT** force the pet into the crate, shut the door and leave.

Make the crate a desirable place for your pet. Set up the crate in the area where you spend most of your time i.e. living room, kitchen, family room, etc.

Don't let them think they are being punished by being separated from the family. A basement, garage, mud room and even bedroom is not a good idea unless this is where you normally are - they are contained in the crate where they can see the family while they play with and chew their toys and even sleep. They may still bark and whine because they want to follow you, but they need to discover that they are okay when they can't.

Start by placing high-value treats, their favorite toy, a chew bone, etc. in the crate.

Show and encourage them to get the items but don't close the door the first time. Do this 5-6 times before you close the door. If the dog starts barking, whining or scratching, try not to let them out until they are quiet. They will learn that when they are quiet the door will be opened. Start giving them meals in the crate, not opening the door until they are quiet.

Pick one high value, long lasting treat that they will only get when they are in the crate. It can be a sterilized beef bone or Kong smeared with cheese, peanut butter or some other long-lasting treat. Remember, the high-value treat should **ONLY** be given to them when they are back in the crate.

The goal is to graduate the pet from the crate once they are trained and understand the house rules.