



ADOPTING A DOG

QUESTIONS TO ASK BEFORE ADOPTING

Do I have enough time to spend with a new dog?

Is there someone who can help out if I need to leave the dog more than a few hours?

Is everyone who lives with me happy to get a dog?

Is anyone allergic to dogs?

Am I allowed to have a pet in my apartment?

Am I considering moving home in the future and will I be allowed a dog in the new place?

Will my neighbours complain if the dog barks when I am away from home?

Is the dog going to sleep inside the house?

Is there outside provision (shade and cover) if the dog will be sleeping outside?

Do I have enough money to pay vet bills for regular things like vaccinations?

Do I have enough money to pay for possible emergency treatment of the dog?

Should I consider taking out insurance for the dog?

Can I afford dog food and other essentials?

Is my current dog/cat going to be affected by the addition of a new dog?

Does the new dog get on well with my current dog and cat?

What provision will I make for my dog when I go away – to work or holiday?





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GETTING TO KNOW THE DOG

Our dogs will be in foster care or in a commercial animal hotel, currently El Rey de la Casa.

If the dog is in foster care you have understand that the dog does not know that this home is temporary. There will certainly be an attachment between the dog and the foster parents. Do not be put off by this (foster mum tears are a regular thing during pre-adoption meetings), foster parents understand that they are not going to keep the dog forever but that doesn't stop them falling in love with the animal so expect to see emotion. Foster parents also know that even though they love the dog in their care, the best thing for the dog is a good, permanent home, which also frees them up to foster another dog in need.

THE FIRST MEETING

If the dog is in the animal hotel, then it will be used to a set routine – of feeding time, quiet time, of exercise etc.

If the dog has been in the hotel for a long time, it will have become happy with the environment – of having lots going on around him; lots of other dogs to play with and with the hotel staff around much of the time. This is the dog's home and they may not be too happy to leave this environment where they feel safe and loved. It is almost certainly the best home they've ever had.

Many of our dogs have been very badly treated in the past, chained up, beaten, starved and much worse, so when they are rescued and given a safe environment with love and care they quickly get attached to that environment and really do not want to leave. So, you may ask "why not leave them there if they are happy and content?" Well for several reasons. Firstly, we do not have an endless pot of money and can only afford to pay hotel bills for a few dogs at a time, so we need to rehome to make space for newly rescued dogs. Secondly, as the dogs get older, a comfortable home is better. Another issue is that some of our dogs have health problems and these are better controlled in a home. One of our dogs, Aguas, had been in the dog hotel for 5 years before we adopted her. She has Leishmania and was on high doses of medication. The Leishmania affected her in different ways, but mainly with skin problems. She would bite herself or rub off her skin on the floor and walls of her sleeping space when the itching was bad. Since she has been in our home, the Leishmania is very much under control. She no longer needs injections, just bi-monthly medication in tablet form. Her skin is good, she has no lesions and she is a very healthy-looking girl.

So, it may be better to meet the dog outside of its current home. In a neutral place. But if this is not possible, just be aware of the attachment it has with its environment. Just because it wants to be with its foster parents, or with the staff from the hotel, does not mean that it will not be happy in your home.

PATIENCE

With any rescue dog, you will need patience. It may be that the dog has never been inside a home before. They may not know how to bark to tell you when they want to go out – to toilet etc. They stand staring at the door but don't give any other sign, so if you are not there to see them, maybe in a different room, you will not know they need to go out.

They may have weird behaviour – one of ours would not walk through a doorway for many months and even now is cautious. The main problem is if someone has a hand on the door handle or stands





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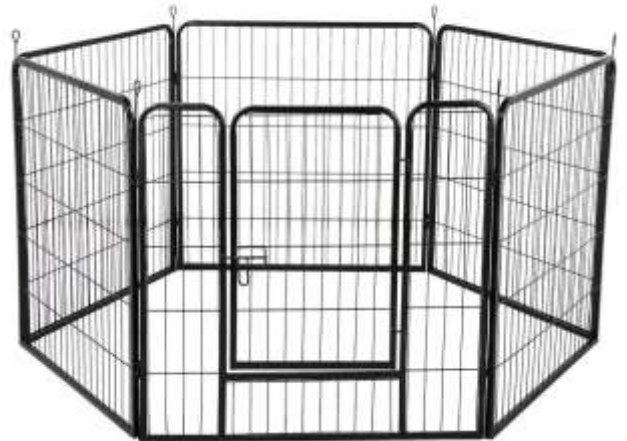
too close to the door, so we found that if we open the door and move well a way, that often he will come through – sometimes he won't.

IN THE KITCHEN

If the dog has never been inside a home before, he will not be trained not to steal food from the worktop etc. It can be a long job training him not to touch food, not to beg while you are eating etc, but with a good routine and firm, consistent training he will learn.

CHEWING

We all know that puppies chew things so getting used to having puppy in your home means making sure you put away things like shoes, slippers, handbags. Not all things can be moved out of his way, and puppies love to chew chair legs and even doorframes. So, consider what you can do to minimize things like this happening. With a small puppy a cage, big enough for bedding and water can be used for times when you are not around. For older/bigger puppies, you can buy dog playpens. There are different sizes and materials. Some are easily collapsible for storage; others fold up for storage. Some have doors, some are covered at the top and some are open at the top. There are different heights too, so consider growth – it may be worth paying a little bit more so that it lasts a few months longer. Amazon have a good selection, or you can ask at your vet or pet shop.



The above playpen is available from Amazon.co.uk or Amazon.es just search for **Parque Perros**.

