

# Companion Animal Alliance Dog Adoption Packet



## Congratulations

Thank you for choosing to adopt from Companion Animal Alliance! We hope you will be very happy with your new furry family member. In this adoption packet you will find a variety of helpful hints and materials. We encourage you to utilize this document as a resource and let us know if there is anything else we can do to help you!

When one of our dogs leaves the shelter to start his or her “new beginning” we feel great happiness for the dog and his or her new family. We again thank you for giving your dog a loving home and hope you will encourage others to consider adopting an animal from CAA or another shelter, so they too can experience the joy of finding a new four-legged friend.

## Contact Information

If you have immediate questions about your new dog, we encourage you to look through your adoption paperwork as many of the most common questions- such as what vaccinations your dog has received- can be found in your dog’s paperwork. If you have any questions that aren’t answered in this packet, please utilize the following contact information. CAA appreciates the opportunity to keep in touch so we can continue to help you with the bond you’ve established with your new companion. As an organization that has matched thousands of families with companion animals, we have extensive experience and information to help new pet parents and their dogs.

We want your new relationship to be successful, so if problems arise, we hope you try the resources we offer as well as other professional resources in the community in order to make your relationship work. Please don’t hesitate to contact us to share your concerns.

Companion Animal Alliance  
2550 Gourrier Ave, Baton Rouge Louisiana  
10:00am-5:00pm daily  
(225)408-5360

Adoption Questions/Client Services  
[adopt@caabr.org](mailto:adopt@caabr.org)

Scheduling Medical Appointments  
[adopt@caabr.org](mailto:adopt@caabr.org) , (225)408-5360 ext:

Returns by Appointment  
(225)408-5360 ext: or [intake@caabr.org](mailto:intake@caabr.org)

# Table of Contents

Adjustments	4
Fear Free Happy Homes	5
Safely Interacting with Dogs	5
Kids and Dogs	6
Microchip Information	6
Shopping Lists	8
Dog Toys	8-9
Training Information	10
Behavior Help	10
Socializing Your Dog	11
Crate Training Your Dog	12-13
House Training Your Dog	14
Introducing Dogs	15
Introducing Dogs and Cats	16
Poison Free Homes	17
Weather Tips	18
Animal Health	19
Upper Respiratory Infections	20
Intestinal Parasites	20
Heartworm Disease	21-22
Parvovirus	23
Post Adoption	24
Returns	25

## Adjustments

*Bringing A New Dog Home* When you adopt a dog, it is important to set everyone up for success – your family, your pets and your new dog! Remember to go slowly and allow everyone time to adjust. Your adopted dog may need time to transition from shelter life to home life – we call it “decompressing.” Other family members and pets in the home may also need time to adjust. Patience is key! Adopting a dog or puppy is a long term commitment! Dogs have an average lifespan of 10-12 years, but some dogs can live much longer! Your commitment to being a responsible dog guardian during the duration of your dog’s life includes:

- Providing food, clean water, medical care, a safe and comfortable environment, appropriate exercise, and training for your dog.
- Complying with state and local ordinances related to keeping a dog.
- Providing a collar and ID tag with your name and phone number(s) for your dog to wear, and ensuring his/her microchip is registered with updated contact information
- Addressing all behavior and health issues that may arise in a humane and timely manner

On average, it can take dogs 2-6 months to become fully acclimated to their new home life. During this time, you should expect there to be some adjusting and boundary testing from your new dog. It is important to establish what the house rules are in advance before bringing your new dog home so that everyone is on the same page! If you have more than one person living in your home, everyone should agree on a set of rules. Inconsistency among members of the household can lead to a confused and inconsistent dog. For example:

- Is the dog allowed on the sofa or the bed?
- Will the dog be crated or confined to a room when you are away?
- How do you plan to train your dog?

*Giving your new dog a shutdown period.* This allows them to catch up on sleep, bond with their new family, and get to know their environment and schedules. If possible, try to limit visitors and outings during this adjustment time. If you do have visitors over, remember to give your new dog a break before becoming overwhelmed.

*Keep your schedule as consistent as possible* This is to give your new dog structure and security. Scheduled meal times will help with house-training and monitoring your dog’s weight and health. The more structure and consistency you can provide your dog, the more confident they will feel in their new world. The more frequently we reward behaviors that we want, the more often our dogs will offer those behaviors.

*Limiting your dog’s access to their new home* This prevents their world from quickly becoming large and overwhelming. Baby gates and crates are a great way to ease a dog into a new environment and can help with house-training. Even house-trained dogs will need time to adapt to new schedules. As your new dog adjusts, you can begin to give them more freedom

*If you have other pets at home* Please remember to give them time to bond and adjust to each other as well. Whether initial meetings occurred at the shelter or at home, you will want to set each dog up for success when bringing them home. You can use baby gates or crates to give breaks when needed. Remember, it may take your dog some time to realize that this new dog is not just a playmate, but also a roommate. Feeding separately and keeping toys and bones separate can help prevent any disagreements while your dogs get to know one another.

## Fear Free Happy Homes

### *What is Fear Free?*

Founded upon the mission of preventing and alleviating fear, anxiety, and stress in pets, Fear Free® provides online education to veterinary professionals, pet professionals, animal welfare communities, and pet owners. Our programs equip professionals and pet lovers with the knowledge and tools to look after both a pet's physical and emotional wellbeing.

Fear Free Happy Homes is just for you—the loving, doting pet owner. We're here to give you full (and completely FREE) access to the most cutting-edge content and education that will enable you to help your pets live their happiest, healthiest, fullest lives at home, at the vet, at the groomer, and everywhere in between.

Adopters can go to the Fear Free Website and learn how to adjust with their adopted animals to provide the smoothest transition into their home and learn more about their pet's physical and emotional wellbeing.

## Safely Interacting With Dogs

Dogs are complex animals that may display a variety of different behaviors in any given situation. Any dog- from your best friend to the stray dog on the street- will react differently, and possibly unexpectedly to people, places, and other animals.

Animal behavior can shift from moment to moment, so it is important to constantly be aware of changes in the dog's behavior and in the environment. The dog's personality plays a major role in how it will interact with, or react to, situations and people. Because there is such variation with each dog and environment, it is important to understand how to interact with dogs in as safe a manner as possible in any situation.

Approach the dog in a safe manner

- Before you interact with a dog, it is important to be aware of the body signals you are exhibiting.
- Present your side to the dog- not your front- from a standing or squatting position.
- Don't lean over the dog.
- Let the dog come to you rather than approaching the dog.
- Avoid direct eye contact initially.
- Extend your hand towards the dog.
- Don't ever put your face to the dog's face.
- Talk in a calm, friendly voice that is not too high pitched or loud.

Based on dog communication signals, it is important to know when to back off and when it is OK to continue

- A change in the dog's behavior from loose wagging postures to a tense body.
- Sudden changes in the environment (loud noises, lighting changes, another animal approaching, etc)

## Kids and Dogs

Dogs and children can be a great combination if they have learned how to interact safely. Some dogs love children and seem to naturally know how to act around them. These dogs still need training and socialization. It's important that they know their boundaries. Not all dogs will get along with kids. In fact, some dogs are even afraid of children. Many of these dogs can be trained to behave around kids at a safe distance, but some will never be able to safely interact with them. If you have children living in or visiting your home, it's vital to ensure they are always safe around your dog and that you are setting the animals up for success.

*Socialize your dog-* Puppies go through a critical period of development between the ages of about 8 and 16 weeks. They are more likely to learn to accept and be comfortable with a variety of people and situations if they are introduced to them during this time. If you have a new puppy, introduce it to children in a positive way. Make sure it meets different children of various ages in a variety of situations. The children should be well-behaved around dogs and gentle. If your dog has good experiences with kids, it will associate them with good feelings. If you have an adult dog, socializing it with children is still extremely important but will look a little different. The process should go more slowly and gently. Make sure to offer plenty of valuable treats and praise. Remove your dog from the situation at the first sign of stress and make sure they have a safe place to retreat to such as a kennel.

*Start Training Now-* Having a well-behaved dog is the first step in ensuring the safety of children in your home. Teach your dog basic commands, such as sit and down, and you will be able to teach it how to behave around kids. For example, if its first impulse is to jump up to kiss visitors, teaching it to lie down instead will allow you to direct it to more appropriate behavior. You may wish to take your dog to training classes to get assistance from professional trainers. Dog training classes are more affordable than one-on-one professional training and allow your dog to learn to behave around other dogs.

*Practice Handling Exercises-* Even the most well-behaved child sometimes can't keep itself from throwing their arms around a dog's neck or tugging on a dog's tail. Prepare your dog for this kind of attention before it runs into a child. Give it lots of praise and maybe even a few treats while you gently pull its tail, hold its paws, hug it, and check out its ears. If your dog exhibits fear or anxiety at this gentle prodding, then it may be best to keep the kids at a distance.

*Crate Train your Dog-* Dogs often do better around children if they have a safe space. Crate train your dog so that it is happy and comfortable in a crate. Make it clear to any children in your home that the crate is off-limits to them. This way your dog can interact with the children when it wants to, but it also has a safe place to take a break.

*Don't Force Anything-* Some people think that holding a dog so a child can pet it is a good way to introduce dogs and kids. Not true! If a dog is afraid of children, holding it while a child approaches and pets it can be a terrifying experience. A dog who is afraid can become aggressive and growl, snap or bite in an effort to escape from the object of its fears—in this case, children. Instead allow your dog as much time as it needs to get comfortable around kids, and give it the chance to approach its own terms. The best way to build a good relationship between your dog and children is to use positive reinforcement. When your dog is behaving well around children, be sure to give it lots of praise, treats, and attention. Your dog will learn that good things happen whenever kids are around.

## Microchip Information

*Is my pet microchipped?* All animals leave Companion Animal Alliance microchipped! If a microchip was implanted at Companion Animal Alliance it will be automatically registered to 24PetWatch when the adoption is completed. If an animal came to Companion Animal Alliance with a pre-existing microchip, adopters will need to contact the microchip company to update the contact information associated with the microchip.

*Do I need to pay an annual or registration fee for my pet's microchip to be registered?* No! Your adoption fee includes lifetime registration with 24PetWatch. 24PetWatch offers a fee-based annual membership with enhanced benefits that you may wish to purchase, but basic membership (included with adoption) is all you need to make sure your pet can be traced to you. There is no annual fee for basic membership.

*How do I update or verify that my pet's microchip information is current?*

Visit [www.24PetWatch.com](http://www.24PetWatch.com)! On their main page the top toolbar has "Microchip Registration" as an option! On the drop down menu you can select "Change My Contact Details". This should be changed anytime you move or your contact information changes! This is the only way a finder will be able to trace your pet's microchip to you.

*What if my pet has a non-24PetWatch microchip?* If your pet came into CAA with a non-24PetWatch microchip, you will be notified during the adoption process. The original chip company will not have your contact information unless you give it to them. If your adopted pet goes missing, anyone scanning that microchip will contact the previous owner. Therefore, you must call that chip company and give them your contact information. The company may charge a fee to update the information, CAA is not responsible for that fee.

## Shopping Lists

- ❖ Food
  - CAA will provide a starter bag of food your dog has been eating at our shelter (based on availability). While you may feed your dog any nutritious food you choose, you should transition your dog gradually from our food to your new brand of food.
  - To transition any dog to a new food, start with a ratio of  $\frac{3}{4}$  current dog food to  $\frac{1}{4}$  new food for several days. Increase the amount of new food in the ration daily to slowly transition your dog and hopefully avoid gastrointestinal upset.
  - All dogs at CAA are fed either Purina One Smartblend Chicken & Rice or Purina One Smartblend Healthy Puppy formula.
  - Dogs are fed once a day at CAA in the mornings, but adopters should follow the recommended guidelines of food based on their dog's age and weight. The recommended guidelines can be found on the back of the dog food bag.
- ❖ Food/Water Bowls (stainless steel is recommended but there are many options)
- ❖ Crate (choose one that is sturdy, safely locks, and is size appropriate)
- ❖ Collar ( you may also need a harness or different type of collar if your dog pulls)
- ❖ Leash (beware of retractable leashes- they are not recommended and can result in lower control over animals)
- ❖ Identification Tag (always keep this information current, include cell phone numbers)
- ❖ Nail Clippers/Grooming Brush
- ❖ Toys/Treats

## Dog Toys and How to Use Them

For dogs and other animal companions, toys are not a luxury, but a necessity. Toys help fight boredom in dogs left alone and possibly prevent some behavioral problems from developing.

Dogs are often willing to play with any object they can get their paws on. That means you'll need to be particularly careful when monitoring your dog's playtime to prevent an "unscheduled" activity.

- ❖ "Safe" Toys
  - Many factors contribute to the safety or danger of a toy, and a number of them depend on your dog's size, activity level, and preferences. Another factor is the environment in which your dog spends its time. Although CAA can't guarantee your dog's enthusiasm or safety with any specific toy, we can offer the following guidelines!
- ❖ Be Cautious
  - The things that are usually most attractive to dogs are often the very things that are the most dangerous. Dog-proof your home by safely storing anything that can be ingested away from their reach.
  - Toys should be appropriate for your dog's size. Balls and other toys that are too small can easily be swallowed or become lodged in your dog's throat. Toys should ideally be large enough that they don't fit entirely in your animal's mouth.



- Avoid or alter any toys that aren't "dog proof" by removing ribbons, strings, eyes, or other parts that could be chewed off or ingested. Discard toys that start to break into pieces or have pieces torn off.
- Avoid "tug of war" games in your household with dogs who have dominant personalities or resource guarding issues.
- Ask your veterinarian which rawhide toys are safe and which aren't. Unless your veterinarian says otherwise, "chewies" like hooves, pig's ears, and rawhides should be played with under your supervision. Very hard rubber toys are safe and last longer.
- Take note of any toy that contains a "squeaker" buried in the center. If your dog destroys toys to get to the center should note this and avoid these toys as your dog could ingest the stuffing.

❖ Recommended Toys

- Active Toys- Very hard rubber toys, such as Nylabone-type products and Kong-type products are available in a variety of shapes and sizes. These toys are fun for chewing and carrying around and are often durable. Rope toys and tennis balls can also make for great dog toys, but you should keep an eye out for any that could be chewed through. Any toys that are starting to fray, tear, etc should be thrown away.
- Distraction Toys- Kong-type toys, especially when filled with broken-up treats, food, or peanut butter- can keep a puppy or dog busy for hours. Only by chewing or licking diligently can your dog get to the treat, and then only in small bits.
- Comfort Toys- Soft stuffed toys are good for several purposes but aren't appropriate for all dogs. For some dogs, the stuffed toys can bring comfort and something to cuddle with. For other dogs, the stuffed toys can bring out a way to act on their prey drive to "kill" the toy. Either way, stuffed toys should only be given if the animal does not destroy and ingest the stuffed or cloth material.

❖ Get the Most out of Toys!

- Rotate out your dog's toys weekly by making only a few toys available at a time. Keep a variety of types easily accessible. If your dog has a favorite, like a soft "baby", you may want to leave it out all the time and buy multiples.
- Hide-and-seek is a fun game for dogs. "Found" toys are often much more attractive than a toy which is obviously introduced. Making an interactive game out of finding toys or treats is a good "rainy-day" activity for your dog, using up energy without the need for a lot of space.
- Some of your dog's toys should be interactive. Interactive play is very important for your dog because it needs active "people time"- and such play also enhances the bond between you and your pet. By focusing on a specific task- such as repeatedly returning a ball, kong, or frisbee, or playing hide-and-seek with treats or toys- your dog can expel pent up mental and physical energy. This greatly reduces stress due to confinement, isolation, and boredom.

# Training Information

## Top Dog Training Tips

- ❖ Expect your dog to act like a dog. Don't take it personally when they exhibit typical canine behavior. They are not being "bad", they are just being a dog.
- ❖ No more "free lunch" during training. Make your pup work for their food and treats, like stuffing it inside chew toys, hiding it around the house, or teaching them tricks for food/treat rewards.
- ❖ Start off "tight" and slack off later, rather than letting the dog run wild for the first few weeks then clamping down when the behavior isn't as new and cute anymore
- ❖ Don't wait for your new dog to develop bad habits, like chewing the furniture or urinating on the carpet, before you intervene. Assume this behavior is likely to happen, and act preemptively to manage it before it develops.
- ❖ Supply your dog with acceptable outlets for doggy behavior, rather than punishing it.
- ❖ Don't lay guilt trips on your new dog if they do have an accident or display other unwanted behavior. Instead, work to proactively prevent it from happening again.
- ❖ Provide a variety of social interactions to your new dog. Dogs are social animals and should be socialized with other people and other animals in a safe and controlled environment.
- ❖ If you have a puppy, handle him or her as much as possible. Make it a pleasant experience so they will associate it with good feelings. Begin handling their feet, trimming their nails, picking them up, etc as soon as possible.
- ❖ Enroll in a good training course. There are local training courses offered at every level, at reasonable prices. CAA adoption counselors can recommend specific information as well. Information to training is also listed on our website at <https://www.caabr.org/pet-behavior-help>

## Behavior Library

Companion Animal Alliance offers basic training advice. Some of the main things every dog owner should know are located in this packet. Other information on basic dog training tips for commonly seen issues can be found on our website at <https://www.caabr.org/pet-behavior-help>. These issues include leash reactivity, separation anxiety, destructive behavior, etc.

CAA also has a list of some, not all, available professional dog trainers in Baton Rouge. These trainers are very knowledgeable, professional assets for pet parents! Professional trainers can help pet parents understand a situation and hopefully find a solution.

## Socializing

The greatest window of learning in a dog's life starts around 3 weeks of age and starts closing between 16 and 20 weeks. This period allows puppies to be exposed to a wide variety of sights, sounds, smells, and sensations without becoming fearful. Puppies who miss out on these experiences may have a harder time learning to be comfortable around unfamiliar things, paving the way for anxiety, fear, and aggression later on in life. Working on socializing your new dog as soon as possible will help you and them! Follow these steps to give your puppy the best start possible:

*Handling-* Young puppies should be cuddled and handled daily by as many different people as possible. Keep the contact gentle and pleasant for the puppy. Hold the puppy in different positions, gently finger their feet, rub their muzzle, stroke their back and sides, look in their ears. Older dogs should also be handled as often as possible, but you may need to take a slower and more cautious approach to see how your dog will react.

*Sounds-* Acclimate your dog to lots of different sounds, being careful not to overwhelm them with too much noise too fast. Expose them to kitchen sounds, telephones ringing, children playing, sportscasters yelling on TV, radios playing, buses moving by, and so on.

*Food bowl exercises -* Teach your young puppy to enjoy having people approach their bowl while they are eating. This will help to prevent resource guarding, which occurs when dogs feel anxious about others approaching their own valued resources. Walk up to your puppy while they're eating their food, drop an even tastier treat into the dish, and walk away. Repeat once or twice during each meal until your puppy is visibly excited about your approach. Then walk up, physically pick up the dish, put in a treat, give the dish back, and walk away. The same approach can be applied for older dogs, but you should always use caution and assess the situation with new, unfamiliar dogs.

*Teach your dog to be alone-* Puppies and dogs should learn to tolerate being completely separate from other people and animals every day to avoid developing separation anxiety! Learn more about preventing separation anxiety in puppies on our website. Scheduling daily alone time with neither people nor other pets nearby is critical to prevent future separation anxiety. You can use a baby gate or crates to prevent your dog from shadowing you constantly when you're home such as in the kitchen cooking, or place them in a separate room while you are showering. You can also ask a friend to pet sit for an hour regularly so your dog becomes familiar with new environments and people!

*Introduce your dog/puppy to new people-* Introduce your puppy to several new people every day, keeping the interactions pleasant and unthreatening. Focus especially on setting up pleasant encounters with unfamiliar men and well-behaved children. This can take place on daily walks, visits to the park, while going to the bathroom outside, having visitors over, doggy day-care, etc.

*Introduce your puppy to new animals-* Introduce your puppy to other animals it does not live with after it has received all of its vaccinations! There are lots of ways to do this: dog parks, play groups, play dates with friends' dogs, and simple leash walks can all help accomplish this. Without this experience, dogs can lose their ability to know how to behave appropriately around other dogs.

*Preventing biting-* Provide appropriate toys to redirect your puppy's biting. When your puppy bites too hard during play, make a sudden noise ("Ow!") and end the game to help them learn to use his mouth gently. Never squeeze your puppy's mouth shut, yell at them, or hold them down. This will frighten them and likely make biting worse. Note that while puppies under five months tend to explore the world with their mouths, dogs past this age are considered adolescents and should no longer be play biting.

## Crate Training

Crate training makes it easier to supervise your dog and prevents them from having complete access to the house where they could get into mischief. It also helps with housetraining, because dogs have a natural tendency not to soil their den or sleeping area. Follow these tips to make the crate a positive place your dog is happy to use for the rest of their life.

What to know before starting crate training- Crate training doesn't happen overnight and introducing your dog to a crate should take place over a long period of time (several weeks or more). Young dogs can only be expected to control their bladder and bowels for a few hours, not an entire work day or overnight.

While you are introducing your dog to their crate, use another space to safely house them for extended periods of time when you are unavailable, such as during the work day or at night. Create a dog-safe environment like a small bathroom, kitchen, gated-off area of a room, or an ex-pen (a small, freestanding pen) containing the dog's crate (with door removed), water, toys, and potty area. The potty area can consist of newspaper, pee pads or even a square of sod in a cat litter box. This allows your dog to sleep in their crate but potty on an approved, easy-to-clean surface.

Use this space to house your dog anytime you leave your dog for longer than they can hold their bowels and bladder. Use your puppy's age in months plus one to determine the number of hours they can be crated.

How long does crate training take?- Crate training can be accomplished in several days, or may take several weeks depending on your dog's age, temperament, and previous experiences.

*How do I crate train my dog?*

*Step 1: Introduce your dog to the crate*

Put the crate in an area of your house where you spend a lot of time, such as the family room or kitchen. Put a soft sleeping blanket or towel in the crate. Bring your dog over to the crate and talk to them in an excited, happy tone of voice. Make sure the door to the crate is securely fastened open so it won't accidentally hit your dog and frighten them.

Drop some treats around the crate, just inside the door, and then gradually all the way inside to encourage your dog to enter. If they don't go all the way in at first to get the food, that's fine. Don't force them to enter.

Repeat this experience until your dog will calmly walk into the crate to get a treat. If your dog isn't interested in food, try tossing a favorite toy in the crate instead. This process may take just a few minutes, or as long as several days.

*Step 2: Feed your dog in the crate-* After your dog has been introduced to the crate, you can start feeding them regular meals near the crate for a while. This will create pleasant associations with the crate and decrease any fear they have of the crate. Each time you feed them, place the dish a little more toward the back of the crate. Once your dog is comfortably eating their food while standing in the crate, you can close the door while they are eating.

First, open the door as soon as they finish their meal, let them out, and praise them. Slowly increase the amount of time they spend in the crate after finishing their meal up to 10 minutes. If they begin to whine to be let out, you may have increased the duration of crating too quickly. Next time, try leaving them for a shorter time. Be sure to release them from the crate when they are not whining or barking. If vocalizing results in being let out of the crate, they are more likely to do it again (and for longer and louder) next time!

*Step 3: Extend time in the crate -*After your dog is eating their regular meals in the crate with no sign of fear or anxiety, you can begin to confine them there for short periods while you are home. Give them a command to enter such as "kennel up." You can encourage them to do so by pointing to the inside of the crate with a tidbit of a favorite food in your hand.

After your dog enters the crate, reward them with a treat and close the door. Sit quietly near the crate for 5-10 minutes and then go out of sight into another room for a few minutes. When you return, sit quietly again for a short time, and then release your dog. Repeat this procedure several times a day. With each repetition, gradually increase the length of time the dog is crated, and the length of time you are out of sight. Once your dog will quietly remain in the crate for about 30 minutes, you can begin leaving them crated when you are gone for short periods, and/or letting them sleep there at night but remember to still let them outside periodically to create good housetraining habits until they are able to “hold it” for extended periods of time.

*How do I manage whining?* If your dog whines or cries while in the crate at night, it may be difficult to decide whether they are whining to be let out of the crate, or if they need to be let outside to eliminate. Initially you can ignore the whining. Your dog may stop if they are just testing to see if they’ll be let out. If the whining continues after you have ignored it for several minutes, you can repeat the phrase your dog has associated with going outside to eliminate. If they respond and become excited, take them outside. This should be a trip with a purpose, not play time.

If you are convinced that your dog does not need to eliminate, the best response is to ignore the whining completely. Most attempts at punishing the behavior actually end up inadvertently reinforcing it because the dog is getting attention from you. During the process of ignoring whining, expect it to get worse before it gets better. If the problem becomes unmanageable, you may need to restart the crate training process from the very beginning.

#### *What to avoid when crate training*

- Don't yell at her or pound on the crate if they are whining, because this will likely make it worse.
- Don't give in when the whining or behavior gets worse! Your dog is throwing a temper tantrum which you don't want to reinforce by giving them what they want.
- Don't use the crate as a punishment for bad behavior. Again, you want to associate the crate with only good things so your dog is happy to use the crate.

## House Training

Whether you're housetraining a puppy or an adult dog, these simple guidelines will help you get started.

*Schedule regular potty breaks-* Take your dog outside on leash once an hour. Stay outside until your dog uses the bathroom. This could take 5-10 minutes, so give yourself time. When they go to the bathroom, praise them and give them a treat.

*Supervise or confine-* An unattended dog will have accidents and won't understand why it's a problem, so supervise or confine your dog while housetraining. A hands-free leash is a great option for keeping an eye on your dog. When you can't supervise your dog, crate them in a kennel.

Young puppies can only be crated for short periods of time. Use your puppy's age in months plus one to determine the number of hours he can be crated. If your puppy must be left alone for longer than he can hold it, create a dog-safe environment like a small bathroom, kitchen, gated-off area of a room or an ex-pen (a small, freestanding pen) containing the dog's crate (with door removed), water, toys, and potty area. The potty area can consist of newspaper, pee pads or even a square of sod in a cat litter box.

Note that even though your dog's messes will be contained to one area, they are still allowed to use the bathroom inside, so teaching them to use the bathroom outside may take longer.

Slowly give your dog more freedom as they become more reliable. Don't go too fast. Each time you expand their freedom, take extra care to watch them and give them extra opportunities to go outside.

*Interrupt, don't punish-* Punishing mistakes (including yelling "No!") will only teach your dog to use the bathroom inside when you're not present. They won't know that it's wrong to eliminate inside, only that it's dangerous. If you catch your dog having an accident inside, interrupt them and take them outside right away. You can gently clap your hands and say "Outside!" The goal is to distract them from using the bathroom without scaring them. If you find the mess after the fact, simply clean it up and make a point to confine them when unattended.

*Reward appropriate behavior-* When you take them out to go potty, always bring treats. Keep them on leash so they're close to you when they go — that way you can instantly reward them with praise and a treat. As they're going potty you can verbally praise them, and give them the treat immediately afterward. Timing is everything! You want them to know it's eliminating outside that is being rewarded. If you wait until they get back inside, they'll think they're being rewarded for coming into the house.

*Cleaning up a mess-* Clean up any messes using an enzyme-based cleaner like Nature's Miracle so your dog can't smell it anymore and there's no residue signaling "use the bathroom here".

# Initial Introductions

## Introducing Dogs

When you're introducing two dogs to each other, first impressions matter. How the dogs interact in their first few encounters can set the tone for their entire relationship, so follow these steps to set their relationship up for success.

*Let them get to know each other slowly-* Throwing them together in the backyard and letting them work it out can lead to heartbreak, and occasionally serious injury, if the integration fails.

*Have the dogs meet on leash-* Keep this meeting on neutral territory like a neighbor's yard, a training center, or a tennis court. Have both dogs on-leash. Take the dogs for a walk together, keeping 10 feet between them so that they can't greet each other or stare. The idea is to acclimate them to each other's presence without causing tension.

*Have the dogs meet with the leashes dragging-* Keep this meeting on neutral territory. Avoid problem areas like gates, doorways, or closely confined space: The more room they have to move, the less tension there will be. Wait two minutes while they sniff each other, then call them away. If they start to play and it seems to be going well, let them play for a few minutes and then end the session. End each initial session on a good note!

*Have the dogs meet at home-* First in the yard, then inside the house. Before the in-house introduction, take the resident dog out to the yard, then bring your new dog inside. Bringing the new dog inside to meet your resident dog can cause a negative reaction. Keep each interaction short and pleasant. If signs of tension arise, separate the dogs immediately and try again later. Remember that the introduction will set the tone for their relationship, so it's important to set everyone up for success.

*Keep the dogs separate while you are away-* Either in separate rooms or crates. This is both to prevent fighting and injuries, and to prevent your new dog from developing behavior like chewing and house soiling.

*Work to prevent conflict-* While dogs can settle minor disputes with each other (such as growling the other off of a toy or their own food bowl), they shouldn't be limiting each other's access to you, your family or common areas of the home. In multi-dog households, there isn't usually a dominant dog or submissive dog. Instead, dogs' roles change depending on the context involved. For example, a dog that claims access to a favorite toy may let the other dog claim the couch. Reward polite behavior and manage the environment to prevent conflicts from developing.

## Introducing Dogs and Cats

Despite the stereotype, many dogs and cats learn to live together peacefully. Be patient and take the introduction process slowly, but know that whether or not your pets get along will also depend on their individual personalities. Follow these steps to maximize the chances of success.

*Getting Started* -Make sure the cat has access to a dog-free sanctuary at all times.

- Sanctuary rooms can be any size but must have a secure door and ceiling.
- The space should include a litter box, scratching post, water, food bowl, and toys.
- Make sure to cat-proof the space by removing any poisonous plants, medicines, fragile knick knacks, and hiding or tying up cords.
- You might also set up some hiding places or tunnels to help the cat feel safer.

Be prepared to manage your pets' interactions for the next several weeks, if not longer. Ideally, your living spaces will have multiple high areas, like shelving or furniture that your cats are allowed on so they can easily escape the dog if needed.

*Keep the pets separate at first*- Keep the pets separate for at least the first 3-4 days. Prevent any contact until your new pet has had his vet checkup and been cleared of illness. Confine your new pet in a sanctuary room with the door closed or a separate floor of your house. The goal is to allow the pets to get used to each other's presence without face-to-face contact. Even if they can't see each other, they can hear and smell each other.

*Teach Basic Commands*- If your new pet is a dog, start teaching him basic obedience cues, such as "sit" and "down." Keep training sessions short, pleasant, and rewarding for the dog.

*Begin Face-to-Face Meetings*- Once your pets can smell each other through the door, conduct meet and greets in a common area of the house. Don't use either animal's sanctuary area. Keep the first few sessions short and calm. Keep the dog on a leash and let the cat come and go as he wishes. Do not restrain either pet in your arms, as injury could result if either pet behaves aggressively. Ask the dog to sit and reward them with small tasty treats for calm behavior. Give your cat treats as well. If either pet demonstrates aggression, calmly distract and redirect them. Toss a toy for the cat to lure them from the room, or call the dog's name and reward his attention. Return the pets to their confinement areas.

*Repeat Sessions Daily*- Repeat these face-to-face sessions daily. Save your pets' favorite treats for when they are together. If the cat attempts to leave the room, allow them to do so, and do not let the dog chase them. Try to end each session before either pet shows stress or aggression.

*Allow Pets Loose Together*- When the animals appear to be getting along well, allow them loose in the room together, keeping the dog's leash attached and dragging on the floor so that you can step on it and prevent them from chasing the cat if he gets excited. If tension erupts, go back to the earlier introduction steps and repeat the process. Make sure the cat has access to a dog-proof sanctuary room at all times.

*Proceed with Caution*- Continue to separate the pets when you are not there to supervise.



## Poison Free Homes

Dogs have a way of getting into things that aren't good for them. Pet parents should do their best to pet-proof their homes. The first step to pet-proofing your home is to know what to look out for! Below are some of the most common poisonous food and plants that could be harmful to your pup.

### Poisonous Foods

Alcoholic Beverages	Apple Seeds	Apricot Pits	Avocados
Cherry Pits	Candy/Chocolate	Coffee	Grapes
Hops	Macadamia Nuts	Moldy Foods	Mushroom Plants
Mustard Seeds	Onions/Onion Powder	Peach Pits	Potato leaves/stems
Raisins	Rhubarb Leaves	Salt	Sugar Free foods
Tomato leaves/stems	Walnuts	Yeast Dough	

### Poisonous Plants

Aloe	Avocado	Azaleas	Calla Lily
Castor Bean	Cyclamen	Daffodil	English Ivy
Hyacinth	Iris	Lanchoe	Lilies
Marijuana	Mistletoe	Morning Glory	Oleander
Philodendron	Rhododendron	Sago Palm	Tomato Plant
Tulip	Yew	Yucca	

## Cold Weather Tips for Dogs

- Thoroughly wipe off your dog's legs and stomach when they come in out of the rain, snow, or ice. Check their sensitive paw pads. Also, beware of salt, antifreeze, or other chemicals that could hurt your dog if they ingest them while licking their paws.
- Don't leave your dog alone in a car during cold weather, the same rule you would follow if it was hot. A car can act as a refrigerator during cold weather and retain the cool.
- If your dog is sensitive to cold due to age, illness, or breed type, take them outdoors in shorter increments.
- Puppies do not tolerate the cold as well as older dogs. They may be difficult to housetrain during the winter. If necessary, you may need to train your puppy inside using sod or puppy pads if they appear to be sensitive to the weather.
- Whether your dog lives inside or outside, make sure they have a warm place to sleep far away from drafts and the elements. If your dog does spend large amounts of time outside, ensure they have a covered, insulated place to be. Pet owners should pay attention to the weather and bring their animals inside during inclement weather.

## Hot Weather Tips for Dogs

- Overheating can kill an animal. Animals should not be left alone in vehicles, since even with the windows open cars can retain heat and act as a furnace.
- Don't force your animal to exercise in inclement weather. If a higher energy dog requires frequent activity, exercise them in the cool of the early morning or evening.
- In extremely hot weather, dogs should not be left to stand on concrete, asphalt, or other surfaces that can retain heat and burn their paw pads.
- Always provide plenty of shade and water for animals staying outside the house. A properly constructed doghouse serves best. Bringing your animal inside during the heat of the day is ideal. If animals are staying outside, having fans available or misters are also great options.
- Be sensitive to old, overweight, or emaciated animals in hot weather. Brachycephalic dogs (short nosed like bulldog mixes, boston terriers, boxers, shihtzus, etc) and those with heart or lung disease should be kept indoors in air conditioning as much as possible.

## Animal Health

Companion Animal Alliance is committed to the health and welfare of the animals in our shelter. However, dogs are living beings who are forever changing and we can not guarantee their health or behavior. In a large-scale kennel environment (whether it is a boarding facility, kennel, breeder, or a shelter), a number of transmittable illnesses can be passed among animals. Some animals may not exhibit symptoms during their stay at the shelter and may only show signs of illness once they have been placed in a loving home. By adopting, you have committed to providing your new dog with any medical care they may require. Additionally, CAA is prohibited by law from providing medical care to owned animals once they leave our care, so all medical expenses are the responsibility of the adopter after the 7 day window.

**If you notice any health concerns with your adopted dog within 7 days after the adoption, an appointment can be made with CAA to have our Veterinarians examine the animal. This does not include traumatic events such as being hit by a car, ingesting something, etc. Appointments must be made with CAA staff and are available Sunday-Friday from 2:30-4:00 pm. If you seek veterinary care from a personal or emergency veterinarian within the 7 day window CAA will not reimburse those costs.**

CAA provides medical information to the adopter when it is available. However, CAA provides a safe haven for many stray and owned animals who arrive without a medical history. CAA recommends that you visit a full service veterinarian within 10 days of adoption. Any medical or care fees are the adopters sole responsibility.

If your animal recently underwent spay or neuter surgery or some other procedure at CAA, you need to follow the instructions found in your dog's medical records to ensure your dog is healing properly.

## Veterinarians

CAA strongly encourages that you take the opportunity to visit a local veterinarian and establish a lifelong relationship for you and your new pet. While CAA strives to adopt out pets in good health, many animals come to us with unknown medical histories and can develop illnesses that may not be evident until they are in their new home environment. Baton Rouge has many wonderful veterinarians available to you! To find a full list of these, please visit our website to see the names and contact information for available vets.

When visiting the veterinarian for the first time with your new dog, take the medical records provided by CAA with you. Check your adoption packet for additional health waivers or inserts that may have been provided as well. This will alert the doctor to any vaccines, parasite treatment, surgery or other procedures that were performed. CAA gives all dogs the basic DA2PP vaccine, bordetella vaccine, heartworm and flea preventative, and dewormer.

## Upper Respiratory Infections

Upper Respiratory Infections, or “kennel cough” is the common name for a contagious virus in dogs. It is caused by a combination of viruses and bacteria. URI’s are transmitted in ways similar to the common cold in humans- via sneezing, coughing, or direct contact with nasal secretions.

This affects the upper respiratory tract of dogs. Common symptoms include coughing, sneezing, mild nasal discharge, loss of appetite, etc. Affected dogs are usually otherwise alert and active with a healthy appetite and no fever. In severe cases, signs can be more progressed such as loss of appetite, difficulty breathing, etc.

URI is usually a self-limiting condition, meaning most dogs will get better on their own without treatment. The best thing to do is to provide your dog a warm, stress-free home. Sometimes antibiotics and other medications are used, and are prescribed by a licensed veterinarian.

## Intestinal Parasites

Dogs going up for adoption receive a screening test for intestinal parasites at time of surgery. Not all types of intestinal parasites can be easily seen on these screening tests especially if the animal does not have a heavy load. There are many types of intestinal parasites that can affect dogs. Dogs can contract intestinal parasites from drinking contaminated water, eating feces, flea and mosquito bites, etc. Intestinal parasites are contagious to other animals and humans and can be passed in the feces. The infective larvae then inhabit the soil around the feces, leaving other dogs, and children, vulnerable to accidental ingestion and subsequent infection. To help prevent human infection always pick up thoroughly after your pet uses the restroom, do not go barefooted where animals use the restroom, always wash your hands and areas of contact after handling your pet. CAA always recommends following up with your veterinarian about future screening tests and continued deworming.

## Heartworm Disease

Most dogs that end up in animal shelters can become wonderful companions, and may have been caught up in unfortunate life circumstances through no fault of their own. Some animals come to us with conditions that our own shelter does not have the ability to treat, but we don't think this should prevent their chance for adoption.

*What is heartworm disease and how is it transmitted?* Canine heartworm disease is a serious and potentially fatal disease in dogs. Long white worms that make a home in their heart are the culprit. Adult worms, which can reach a length of 6-14 inches, live in the right side of the heart. Adult female heartworms produce offspring called microfilaria that float freely in the blood of an infected dog. When a mosquito feeds on the blood of a heartworm infected dog, it ingests the microfilaria, now making it a carrier of heartworm disease. The adult heartworms, if allowed to continue developing and reproducing, can cause extensive damage to the heart and lungs. Heartworm disease is easy to prevent with regular use of preventative medication available through veterinarians.

*Are all dogs at risk?* Yes! All dogs are at risk of being infected with heartworms. Louisiana has a higher incidence of heartworm disease because mosquito season is longer than northern states. Annual testing with your vet is important to avoid delay in detecting early infection.

*What are some signs my dog may exhibit?* Heartworm disease isn't immediately obvious. Dogs can live for a number of years showing no outward signs of the disease. At the point where a dog shows outward signs of the disease, it has progressed to the moderate or severe stage of heartworm disease. The most common clinical signs include: coughing, exercise intolerance, difficulty breathing, weight loss, anorexia, and depression.

*How do I prevent my heartworm negative dog from becoming positive?* Heartworm prevention medications are very effective when given properly on the prescribed schedule year round. Heartworm prevention should come from your veterinarian. Combining prevention with a mosquito repellent is an even more effective strategy.

*Is it possible that a dog could have a "negative" test and still be infected?* Yes! A dog can have a "negative" or "below detectable limits" test and still harbor heartworms. This could be from a variety of things such as: the heartworm microfilaria are still young and immature, the infection is with a single sex, the dog's immune system is killing off microfilaria as they are produced, the microfilaria were not present at the time of testing, the worms have been exposed to medications that kill microfilaria but do not kill the adults, etc

*How was my dog diagnosed with heartworm disease?* A blood sample was drawn from this dog and a test was run. If a blood smear was performed, the blood sample is looked at under a microscope for microfilaria. If microfilaria are seen, the dog is positive for heartworms. If no blood is seen from this sample, further testing is performed. If an antigen test was run, a blood sample was drawn and dispensed into a special test. This test detects the presence of antigens (proteins) produced by adult heartworms. If antigens are detected, the dog is positive for heartworms. If no antigens are detected at this time, the dog should be retested in 6 months. Every dog over 6 months old at CAA is tested for heartworm disease. If your dog tested positive for heartworms this test doesn't tell us how long the dog has been affected, how many worms are present, or whether any serious damage has already occurred. If a dog is tested positive at Companion Animal Alliance, they are started on a 30 day supply of antibiotics which is the first step in any treatment!

*Can a dog be infected even though it has been on a heartworm preventative?* Yes! Even the most diligent owner can forget a dose now and then. Not all pills are swallowed and not all topical prevention is applied properly- resulting in a pet that may be less protected than we think! This is why regular testing at your veterinarian is important.

*What treatment is available for a dog with heartworm disease?* Many dogs can be successfully treated for heartworms. A thorough examination and pre-treatment evaluation by your veterinarian will determine if your dog is a candidate for treatment. Depending on the severity of the disease and type of treatment elected it can be costly and can be hard for both animal and owner, but there are multiple types of treatment options available. You should consult your veterinarian about treatment options, but keep in mind that every vet is able to offer different options at different price ranges.

*What will heartworm treatment be like for my dog?* Dogs with heartworm disease can live high quality lives as long as they are given the appropriate care. Without treatment, however, heartworm disease will worsen and can lead to more serious illness in your dog's heart and lungs. While heartworm treatment is very effective, it requires patience as treatment takes place in stages over a period of time. Depending on the type of treatment, cage rest is important so you will have to plan to keep your dog quiet but entertained through the treatment period.

*Will CAA pay for my dog's heartworm treatment?* As much as we would like to fully treat our shelter animals for all their conditions, we simply cannot afford to do so with the amount of heartworm positive animals we get in. We are grateful to you for partnering with us to save this dog's life! All dogs are kept on flea and heartworm prevention while in CAA's care in addition to being started on a 30-day treatment of doxycycline following a positive heartworm test. Following medical expenses for testing, necessary treatment, and prevention are the responsibility of the adopter.

*What is this Doxycycline medication my heartworm positive dog was sent home with?* Administration of an antibiotic (either doxycycline or minocycline) is used to kill the bacteria that has a symbiotic relationship with heartworms, thus weakening the heartworms. By giving this antibiotic prior to the medication that will kill your dog's adult heartworms, we decrease the likelihood of complications from the treatment and optimize the chance for complete elimination of the infection. Give your dog's pill with a moist treat or small amount of liquid.

*Are there any vets you recommend?* All veterinarians are fantastic, but these listed are very familiar with heartworm treatment, the shelter's capabilities, and are happy to see recently adopted dogs!

-Associated Veterinary Services

-Spay Spa

-Azalea Lakes

*Well now I'm really confused! What does it mean and what do I do?* Talk with your veterinarian about the steps to take with your newly adopted dog! Whether your dog is heartworm positive or negative, your dog should be kept on preventative year-round and should be tested every year! If you have any further questions you can ask Companion Animal Alliance staff!

## Parvovirus

*How is canine parvovirus diagnosed and treated?* Veterinarians and staff can diagnose canine parvovirus on the basis of clinical appearance and laboratory tests. There is no specific drug available that will kill the virus in infected dogs. Treatment should be started immediately and consists primarily of efforts to combat dehydration by replacing electrolytes and fluid losses, controlling vomiting and diarrhea, and preventing secondary infections. Sick dogs should be kept warm, receive good nursing care, and separated from other dogs. Proper cleaning and disinfection of contaminated kennels and other areas is essential to control the spread of parvovirus.

*How is parvovirus prevented?* Vaccinations and good hygiene are critical components of canine parvovirus prevention. All dogs are vaccinated upon arrival at the shelter, but not all dogs received veterinary care prior to that.

Vaccinations are important. Young puppies are very susceptible to infection, particularly because the natural immunity provided by their mothers may wear off before the puppies' own immune systems are mature enough to fight the infection. If a puppy is exposed to parvovirus during this gap in protection, it may become ill. An additional concern is that immunity provided by the mothers may interfere with an effective response to vaccination. This means even vaccinated puppies may succumb to parvovirus. To narrow the gaps in protection and provide optimal protection against parvovirus during the first few months of life, a series of puppy vaccinations are administered. To protect all dogs, pet owners should be sure that their dog's vaccinations are up-to-date and check with your veterinarian.

**Hygiene:** Until a puppy has received its complete series of vaccinations, pet owners should use caution when bringing their pet to places where animals congregate (eg: pet shops, parks, puppy classes, obedience classes, doggy daycares, etc). Contact with known infected dogs and their premises should be avoided. Finally, do not allow your puppy or dog to come into contact with the waste of other dogs while walking or playing outdoors. Prompt and proper disposal of waste material is always advisable as a way to limit spread of canine parvovirus.

## Post Adoption Follow Ups/Alumni

*We Invite you into the CAA family-* We hope the adoption process has made you feel like a member of the CAA family, and encourage you to explore other ways to become involved. CAA offers a variety of fun opportunities to participate in helping animals. You may want to join us by volunteering, becoming a foster family or participating in one of our events such as Cap City Beer Fest or FurBall. You can learn more about these events and programs for young kids at <https://www.caabr.org/> under our “Get Involved” tab! In addition to this, we always appreciate receiving updates on our adopted animals. Updates can be sent to [adopt@caabr.org](mailto:adopt@caabr.org)!

Follow us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/companionanimalalliance>

Follow us on Instagram: @caapets

*You adopted your best friend from CAA, now what?*

It's important that an adopter's involvement at CAA doesn't end at the time of adoption. That's why the Companion Animal Alliance Alumni Association was created in February 2021, giving adopters an opportunity to stay connected with our animal-loving community post-adoption. For an annual fee of \$75, members have access to resources, Alum merchandise and events exclusive only to those within the association – think a Dog Days of Summer BBQ and Dog Park LSU Tailgate.

As an Alumni Association Member, you have the opportunity to help further CAA's mission of caring for the lost, abandoned and abused animals of East Baton Rouge while also experiencing the community that comes with being a CAA Alumnus.



## What if it's not the right fit?

Sometimes, unfortunately an animal won't be the right fit for you or your family! CAA recommends giving a proper period of time to adjust, for both the animal and yourself. If it is necessary to return your animal, please contact CAA. CAA accepts owned animals, including those adopted from us, by appointments. Appointments can be made on our website! If the animal adopted is not suitable for you and/or your household, CAA allows "exchanges" within two weeks of the original adoption. The adoption fee originally paid will go towards the second animal adopted. No monetary refunds will be provided and adopters will need to pay any additional differences in fees. If it is out of the two week period, we will always accept our animals back and help you find a new animal that may be a better fit, it just will not be considered an exchange! Animals do not have to be returned to CAA if you are able to safely rehome the animal yourself, we just ask to be notified so we can update our information! Always ensure microchip information is up to date.

*What You Should Expect-* Companion Animal Alliance is the only open intake facility for East Baton Rouge Parish, meaning that we can never turn away an animal in need. We care for more than 7,000-8,000 animals annually. We can not provide positive outcomes for every animal that is brought to our shelter- but we can immediately start offering support and assistance through our Project Safety Net programs. We want to prepare as much as possible for each animal coming into our shelter, therefore we take in owner surrendered animals by appointment. We charge a modest owner surrender fee for dogs and cats, which will be applied to the costs we will incur providing care to the animal. If you do not have the funds to pay a surrender fee, please share that information with our staff.

*How the Process Works-* Each day, Companion Animal Alliance Admissions staff works to take in appointments and make the transition into the shelter as smooth as possible for our shelter staff, you, and your animal. We are typically unable to accept same-day appointments, but we do our best to keep the surrender process moving quickly.

*How to Prepare-* Email [intake@caabr.org](mailto:intake@caabr.org) to speak with an Admissions counselor about the surrender process, and when appropriate, set an appointment. Admissions Appointment requests will be made through our website after speaking with our staff. If you are unable to communicate through email, call (225)408-5360. We receive a high volume of phone calls daily, which are returned in the order received. Send all veterinary records to [intake@caabr.org](mailto:intake@caabr.org) as soon as possible.

*What to Do When You Arrive-* Upon arrival, an Admissions staff member will confirm your appointment with you and bring you and your animal into our lobby. An Admissions staff member will begin filling out the documents to take an animal into our care. Companion Animal Alliance requires the owner's signature in order to relinquish the animal to us. If the animal will be brought to the appointment by someone other than the owner, please let our Admissions Department know in advance. At this time, we will ask you to fill out an Animal Personality Questionnaire for each animal being surrendered (if you have not already done so). Your surrender fee will be collected if applicable. Accepted forms of payment are cash or credit/debit card