

Bringing your Lab home is a very exciting time but also a bit scary for them to be in a new home where they don't know what is expected of them. The first few days are the hardest for them as you get to know them and they get to know you. They may experience panting and pacing, gas, loose stool, excessive shedding for the first few days from the stress of new people, new environment etc. When you first walk them into your home they should be walked around the entire home on leash if he starts to go into or near things you do not want them to then give a short pop motion on the leash and say "ah, ah" or no, then the leash should be dropped and dragged around the house again and if he goes into things or areas step on leash or pull leash and say "ah ah" or "no".

In your home the dog should be offered as much direction as possible - you would not leave a guest just hanging in your hallway - treat the dog the same as you would a guest -bring them in - show them where to sit, where to lie down, where to get a drink - the back door - go in the yard with them (they should not be going out unattended in a gated backyard for the first week) tell them where and when to lie down etc. Dogs thrive on consistency, routine and structure. Stay out of the dogs face - the dog is new you have the rest of his and your life for kisses on the nose and face, do not overwhelm them in the first days, if a stranger walked up to you and kissed you on the nose, in the first few days you would be very cautious of that person, the same is said for the dog.

Food dishes should not be picked back up when put down. If he /she does not eat the first day or two do not be worried as long as he /she is taking snacks from you be it cookies, vegetables etc if they are eating treats but not kibble and this goes on to day three then notify a Lab Rescue agent as there could be a more serious issue at hand. Gain trust while you are doing this - do a little hand feeding of kibble from your hands of snacks - treats are great especially if changing the dogs name - chews , rawhides (which we are not big fans of) are not great ideas in the first few weeks as they are very high valued items and dogs who are not confident in their new surroundings may feel forced to resource guard these items - Kongs stuffed with peanut butter or canned dog food are great ( put in the freezer so tougher to get out when you go out - even better!)

The first few days you need to go out as tempting as it is to stay home and look at your new dog you do not want to create separation anxiety. The second day you should go out for several short intervals - even if you have to go sit in your parked car- get your new dog understanding that you coming and going is fine. To make the wait until you



return home more interesting you can give them a hard bone with peanut butter lightly covered in the inside or a kong with some cookies they can try and get out -something to amuse them in your absence.

Do not make a big deal upon your departure or return - no baby voices , no crooning , no "your okay" - use short upbeat tones, make it short and sweet and when you come home the same idea - if kept nonchalant the dog's response will be the same - separation anxiety is created and enabled by people.

He should be shown outside as much as possible and when they do their business this should be made into a big deal – "Hooray - yeaa!!" Try to use the same catch phrase - "do your business"/ "pee pee time"/ "potty" whatever you want to use. Some of the best mannered dogs have accidents in the house if this happens say nothing pick it up or blot the urine with a paper towel - go outside and put the stool down or blot the ground with the wet paper towel - say "potty" or whatever the catch phrase is that you are using, then act as though they did (even though he did in the house) and then say "Hooray" whatever and go back in. It is very important NOT to reprimand your dog over an accident in the house and shoving their nose in it dies with the dinosaurs - dogs do not understand why being reprimanded they translate or cross the signal into that you do not like when they go to the bathroom this creates a dog who sneaks off to other rooms to do their business or behind sofas etc.

Your new dog should be limited to areas when you are not at home at first - if needs to be crated then should be confined to a crate during this time period in an area heavily trafficked by the whole family, kitchens, family rooms are great areas. If too old for a crate then should be cordoned off to rooms that are dog proofed and are comfortable, bright and warm, this can be done by shutting doors or by baby gates. Then as time passes and you test the waters for short periods that they are left alone you can graduate to the whole home.

It may be tempting to invite over the whole neighbourhood and their dog, please refrain from doing this. Let them settle in first (think of the first time you met your boyfriend /girlfriends family - now imagine that the boyfriend /girlfriend was not there-pretty scary) get to know your dog first. Same with leash free wait a month at least until you know your dog's likes/ dislikes of people, other animals, body language etc.



Your new dog should not be off leash anywhere without contained fencing in the first month, anything can be of more interest than you, and it puts the dog at risk of injury and or getting lost.

For the first couple weeks try to keep the same direction and route for your walks, dogs are creatures of habit and if he got lost there is a good chance he would stay to a known path, ideally one that would lead them back home. Always keeping the same direction is a huge plus as would give indicator as to what direction he probably went in if he took off on his own from your driveway

We supply a Lab Rescue ID tag when they leave our care please remember to replace the tag with your current info.

If you lose your dog please contact us immediately, we love your dog as much as you do and are experienced and organized to deal with emergencies such as this and can help direct you as to who to contact and to arrange for volunteers to help you look.

In the first week please do not bath or trim your new dog's nails again let them settle in and build a trust factor.

To change your dogs name is not a big issue, the easiest way is to walk around your house backwards, forwards etc say dogs name when they respond by looking they get rewarded with a treat and Yes or Good boy / girl etc.- eventually they will look at you every time you say that name as he will be looking for his reward then start to use his name with a command etc to build a command base.

Lastly, please keep us informed as much as possible regarding your Lab. If you require any further assistance on integrating your Lab or obedience issues please do not hesitate to call.