

SO YOU'VE ADOPTED A DOG... HERE'S WHAT YOU'LL NEED!

To help you start off on the right “paw,” here are some things your new dog should have ready at home! Please note, however, that each dog has their own individual needs, so preferences may differ from dog to dog!

Food

While staying with us, your dog has been fed _____ dog food, and getting _____ cup(s) of food twice a day. We will give you a sample-sized bag to take home, or if your dog is on a special diet, we will happily give you the remainder of the bag. If a dog won't eat just dry food, we will often mix in water or some wet dog food to entice them to eat. If you have a specific brand of food you'd like to use, we recommend transitioning over to the new food over a period of a few days, to ease any discomfort your pet may have. To help transition, begin mixing the old food with the new food starting a few days after you arrive home until the old food is gone. In some cases, we will feed the dogs using a special feeder, sometimes called a slow feeder or an interactive/fun feeder. We use these special bowls in cases where the dog eats too quickly, or even just to provide our dogs with mental stimulation. Please note: if you already have a dog at home, you will need to feed your dogs separately until your dogs have acclimated to each other, which will take time.

Leash and collar

We will provide you with a leash and collar for your newly adopted dog! All of the dogs staying with us have a special collar, referred to as a martingale collar, which prevents them from slipping out of their collars. Martingale collars also prevent dogs from choking themselves if or when they pull. For leashes, we do not recommend using retractable leashes, also known as flexi-leads. In cases where a dog is over-excited or distracted, the thin cord can easily snap, and your dog is suddenly off-leash. Fearful or anxious dogs can also become afraid of the noises a retractable leash can make. Flexi-leads also encourage dogs to pull on the leash; when dogs pull while on a retractable leash, they are learning that pulling extends the lead. Standard, flat leashes are safer for both the owner and the dog!

Harness

Some dogs staying with us have been trained to use a special harness, called an E-Z walk harness. These harnesses have a strap that goes under the dog's chest to help deter the dog from pulling. Your adoption counselor can show you how to put on and take off the harness, as well as how to attach the leash to the harness.

Toys!

Dogs love a variety of toys, and they come in every size, shape, and function you can think of! From tennis balls and nylabones, squeaky toys and stuffed toys, your adoption counselor can tell you what types of toys your new family member will love to play with! Please note that some of our dogs will ingest certain types of toys; your adoption counselor will tell you what your dog can safely play with to avoid risk of ingestion. You should always monitor your dog when you give them a new toy, just in case.

Treats & Kongs

What dog doesn't love treats? There are different types of treats for every type of dog! Small, bite-sized treats are great for training with your dog. Other treats, like dental chews and nylabones, are great to keep your dog's teeth healthy by controlling tartar and plaque build-up, while promoting positive chewing habits! Kongs--hard, rubber toys with a hollow middle--are fantastic toys for dogs that like to chew! To make a longer lasting snack for your dog, fill the Kong halfway with your dog's dry food, and the rest with peanut butter or wet dog food. Stick it in the freezer overnight, and the next day you'll have a mentally stimulating treat to entertain your dog!

Optional Items (these may help your dog adjust)

Crate

Some dogs benefit from sleeping in a crate. Other dogs can be trained to use a crate because they can “redecorate” when left to their own devices. When looking to purchase a crate, you'll need to find one that is large enough for your dog to stand up, turn around, and lie down in. Your adoption counselor can talk to you about how to get your dog used to a crate (and if needed, give you a handout on crate-training).

Bed

Most dogs, but not all, enjoy laying on their beds or a comforter in their kennels. Something soft and squishy may help make your dog's transition to a new home easier. Oftentimes, we will give you something from your dog's kennel here to take home so they can have something that smells familiar with them.