

Tips for Introducing Your New Pet to Your Current Dogs

- It's a good idea for the dogs to meet each other in a neutral area, such as outside your house on the sidewalk or in a nearby park.
- Allow the dogs to sniff each other. Remember to keep the leashes loose and not taut—a tight leash can frustrate a dog and lead to aggression.
- Keep your voice and body language calm and relaxed, and speak to the dogs in a happy, upbeat tone of voice. Dogs can pick up on our emotions if we are tense. You want the dogs to think that meeting a new dog is a pleasant and non-threatening experience.
- Be vigilant about watching your dog's body language. Look for signs of stiffening, hackles up along the back, growling, raised and erect tail, or snarling. These signs indicate that there could be potential for an aggression problem.
- It's important to know that a wagging tail does not always mean a dog is friendly. Look for soft, gentle, "floppy" wagging. A hard, tight, rigid, erect tail wag indicates that the dog is stressed or possibly about to make an aggressive move.
- Look for signs of fear as well. If a tail is tucked between a dog's legs, the dog is excessively salivating and yawning, has a lowered body posture, is trembling, and cowering, this means the dog is afraid of the other dog. Do not force the dogs to interact—let the shy dog meet the new dog at his own pace.
- If the introduction goes well and both dogs seem relaxed, walk the two dogs side by side down the street to get them used to each other. When you feel ready, bring the new dog into the house, with the current dog entering first.
- During the first few weeks monitor all interactions between the dogs. Do not leave them alone together until you feel comfortable that the dogs are okay with each other. If you need to, use crates and baby gates to keep them separated until you are ready to let them be alone together.
- Feed the two dogs in separate areas. Some dogs can do well eating next to other dogs but some do not. Err on the side of caution and feed them so that they cannot see each other while eating. You can slowly experiment with feeding them together if you feel comfortable, but make sure you are supervising them closely the first few times.
- Monitor play time between the two dogs. You want to make sure that their play styles are a good match with each other. Some dogs can play too rough and this can lead to aggression or fear in the other dog. Some dogs are also very protective of toys, bones or rawhides so you should monitor this closely as well.



If you have questions about your new pet, please visit the Association of Pet Dog Trainers' Web site, www.apdt.com, for a list of members in your area who can help you with your new dog.

To locate a local professional pet sitter to provide dog walks or in-home pet-sitting visits, please visit the Pet Sitter Locator at www.petsit.com/locate.

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