

**Home to Conduct a Dog Adoption
Home Visit with A Resident Dog**

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These instructions should be used to conduct a successful home visit with your foster dog when the adopter(s) home has a resident dog. As a volunteer for our rescue who is assisting in the rehoming of your foster dog, you will find these instructions will guarantee a successful outcome, even if that outcome means your foster dog does not get adopted. These instructions can be used with any breed or size of dog as long as there is only one resident dog in the home.

Equipment and Supplies

- Dog Crate
- Poop Bags
- Harness
- Collar with Tags
- Leash
- Toys
- Treats
- Dog Bedding
- Dog Food
- Bowls
- Medications
- Vaccination Paperwork
- Foster to Adopt Contract (2 copies)

Note: Always bring bedding and toys that your foster dog is familiar with so he or she will have something familiar in the new home.

Note: Always bring a full bag of dog food and treats that your foster dog is already eating so there are no stomach issues caused by a sudden diet change.

Setting Up the Appointment

Before arriving at an adopter's home, it is important to set the visit up for success by following these important steps:

- 1) Call the adopter(s) on the phone
 - a. Ask the adopter(s) for a date and time when they do not have any time restrictions.
 - b. Inform the adopter(s) of the equipment and supplies you will be bringing.
 - c. Inform the adopter(s) of the full process and steps as described in this chapter.

- 2) Send a follow-up email to the adopter(s) with all of the agreed-upon information including the arrival date and time.
- 3) Text or call the adopter(s) on the morning of the appointment to confirm there have been no changes.

Caution:

If the adopter(s) say they have items from your equipment and supplies list, still bring them. There is always a chance they do not have the right size, or their equipment is not in suitable working order.

Meeting the Resident Dog On-Leash

First impressions are always important. To get the appointment started well, it is good to start with these basic steps:

- 1) Ask the adopter(s) to meet you outside in front of their home with the resident dog harnessed and leashed.
- 2) Ask the adopter(s) to go for a walk with the resident dog and follow at a safe distance.
- 3) Allow both dogs to gradually move closer together.
- 4) Discuss the next steps in the process during the walk.

Note: Be sure you have plenty of treats and doggy potty bags on your person for this step. Use the treats to reward positive interaction between the two dogs and use the potty bags as intended.

Caution:

Monitor both dogs' interactions closely at all times. If either dog presents negative body language as shown in Figure 1, calmly walk them away from each other to prevent a dog fight.

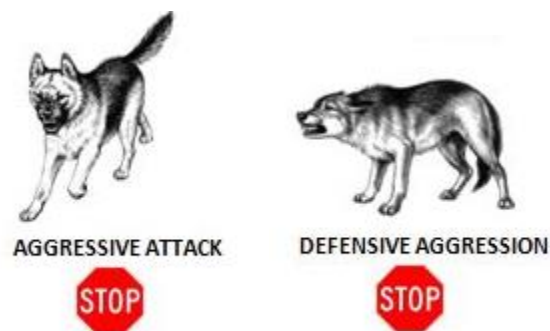


Figure 1. A Pet's Body Language and What It Means, May 2021. *Source:* <https://www.healthypawsanimalhospital.com/>

Meeting the Resident Dog Off-Leash

When you arrive back at the adopter(s) home from the walk both dogs should be tired and have had a few positive interactions on your walk. However, now you and your foster dog are going into the resident dog's personal space. To ensure this very important meeting goes well, follow these steps.

- 1) Take both dogs to the backyard through a side entry gate and keep them leashed.
- 2) Walk the yard and fence line with both dogs leashed for 15 minutes.
- 3) If interactions between both dogs continue to be positive, let them play off-leash.
- 4) Discuss the next steps in the process while both dogs play.

Note: While walking the yard and fence line with both dogs leashed, look for any areas in the fence that are not safe for your foster dog. You can not leave your foster dog if the fence is not secure or escapable.

Warning: Do not move too far away from your foster dog and the resident dog while they are playing. Monitor their interactions continually and be prepared to use the steps shown in Figure 2 should a dog fight break out.



Figure 2. Safely Break Up A Dog Fight, November 2009. Source: <https://www.thesprucepets.com/>

Beginning the Trial

Once both dogs have had plenty of time to interact with no negative behaviors and all parties agree that it is a good fit, it is time to begin the adoption trial. Follow the following steps to ensure you and your foster dog have everything needed before you leave.

- 1) Present the contract to be signed by the adopter(s) and make sure they read it in full and sign both copies.
- 2) Take pictures of the signed contract. Give one copy to the adopter(s) and keep one for yourself.
- 3) Give the adopter(s) a copy of your foster dog's vaccine paperwork.
- 4) Go over all medication dosing requirements with the adopter(s).
- 5) Bring all of the equipment and supplies into the home and set them up.
- 6) Go over the food and treat requirements with the adopter(s).
- 7) Exit the home.

Note: Never bring any of your foster dog's equipment or supplies into the home until the contract is signed. This way if the home visit doesn't work out you can quickly exit the home.

Exiting Without Leaving Your Foster Dog

During all the previous steps of the home visit, you will experience red flags. Use your best discernment to decide if you want to continue the process or exit the home visit. The best-case scenario is that the adopter(s) and you agree that your foster dog is not a good fit. However, occasionally this will come as a surprise to the adopter(s) and possibly make them angry. Follow these steps to exit the home visit calmly and safely with an angry adopter.

- 1) Tell the adopter(s) you would like to do a second home visit before beginning the trial.
- 2) Schedule a second home visit.
- 3) Exit the property.
- 4) Contact the adopter(s) the next day and decline their adoption via phone.

<p>DANGER: Do not allow Step 1 to turn into a long discussion or disagreement. An attempt at an explanation is not warranted and can feel like judgment to the adopter(s). Your only goal at this time is to exit safely with your foster dog.</p>

You have now completed a successful home visit, even if your foster dog did not get adopted. Confused? Let me explain. A successful home visit is a visit that has the best outcome for your foster dog, which can mean keeping your foster dog out of a home that isn't the right fit. This too is a success because it means you did your job well and now your foster dog will not be stuck in a home not suited to his or her needs.