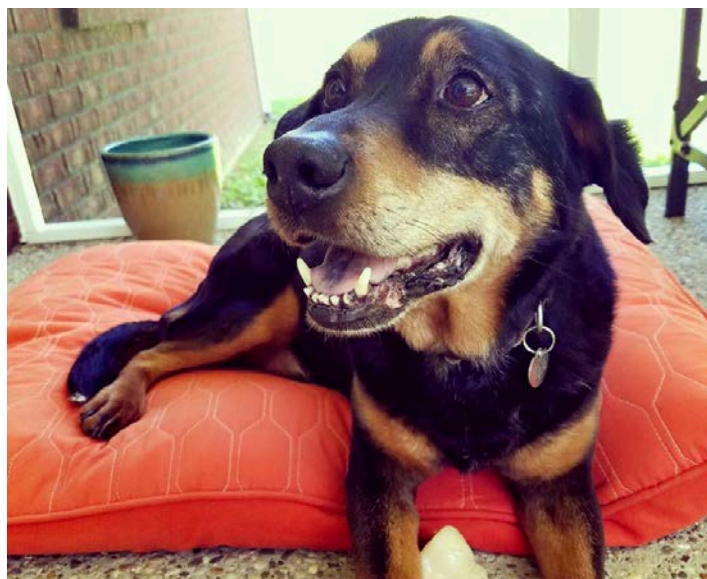




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FOSTER HANDBOOK





Welcome
to The
Arrow
Fund!!

Hello, and welcome to The Arrow Fund (TAF) foster program! We at the rescue are very grateful for your help - we couldn't help to save so many animals' lives without help from our volunteer base!

This handbook will serve as your go-to guide for anything and everything foster related. You can keep this handbook for referencing in the future and to add any valuable materials you might come across as your time as a foster parent. If you should have any questions, though, please do get in touch with us! We are here to help you every step of the way!

How Our Foster Program Works

Our program is based equally on the animals we help and our foster parents. The foster coordinator serves to match foster animals to the best foster lifestyle suited for him/her, assist foster animals and foster parents during foster time, and assist foster parents at the end of each foster case when it is time to say goodbye.

When an animal is needing foster: The foster coordinator will send out an e-mail with the animal's information, reason for needing foster, and approximate length of foster time. If you feel you are a good match, respond to the foster coordinator. While the responses will be accepted on a first come basis, the foster coordinator will also take into account the best fit for the foster animal.

Beginning a foster assignment: You will receive confirmation from the foster coordinator when you have been selected for a foster assignment. The foster coordinator will arrange pick-up with you for the foster animal. TAF will provide you with the animal's medical documentation, any medications (when applicable), and food when donations allow. If you require any additional supplies, please discuss this with the foster coordinator before pick-up.

During foster time: During a foster animal's time with you, the foster animal may need to visit the vet and potential

adopters. The foster coordinator will discuss any of these times with you before the required trips.

The end of a foster assignment: The foster coordinator will notify you when it is time for the foster animal to be united with his new furever home. Although it can be difficult to say goodbye to a foster animal, it is important to remember how much you have helped him! You gave this animal an opportunity for a second chance, when often times he would not have had one otherwise. The foster coordinator will assist with scheduling the transport; please let the foster coordinator know if you are unavailable to assist with transportation.

Why Foster?

TAF is a volunteer based rescue, which means we don't have a shelter environment to house our animals. There are many benefits to this - our animals all receive individual care in a loving foster home. They receive one-on-one care and never stand the chance of getting "lost in the system". This means that your time as a foster parent is all the more important! These animals cannot receive the individual care from TAF without your help.

Animals that we take under our wing may need socialization with humans or other animals, have compromised immune systems not strong enough for a shelter, or many other potential reasons. Whatever the reason an animal is in need of help, once he enters into TAF he will need a foster home. You will serve as his guide, and our team will be with you every step of the way!

The Experience of Fostering

Fostering can be hard work, emotionally and physically. Yet it is completely worth every moment! When you foster an animal, you will see a beautiful transformation.

Sometimes an animal will have had a hard past, will lack social experience with humans, animals, or both. Often times he will have lived as a stray to the point that the behavior has become second nature to him. When you bring a foster animal home, your animal will have many of these obstacles to overcome. If you can offer your home and love to your foster animal, you will help him to overcome these obstacles.

The transformation you will see in your animal will start the moment you bring him home. Watch closely. Within the first 24 hours, your animal may seek your affection when he didn't want anything to do with it during the first two hours. Within three days, your animal may seek out playtime with you and a carefully selected toy. And often within just the first week, you will meet a new animal that is entirely different from the animal you first brought home. This new animal will not only show affection, but actively seek it from you too. He will invite you to playtime, and he may even invite your pets to join in!

Your foster animal will become a perfect, loving and loveable pet for his new furever home. And you will have witnessed the beautiful transformation! The emotional reward for fostering is something that words cannot explain, but you will quickly understand after you complete your first foster case.

TAF Responsibilities:

In the foster program, it is our goal to equally care for both our foster animals and our foster parents equally. We are here to help you succeed in fostering! With that in mind, it is our promise to:

Respond to all of your requests within 24 hours

Support, educate, and mentor you during your foster time

The safety of our foster animals is top priority! TAF holds the right to reclaim foster animals at any time when we feel it is necessary. If we work together, though, we hope that this will never have to happen. Communication is key – if you ever need anything, ask us!

Foster Parent Responsibilities:

The safety of our foster animals is our top priority. With this in mind, we ask that you follow these few simple guidelines:

Communication: Communicate with your foster coordinator promptly whenever necessary. When the foster coordinator contacts you, it is usually either to ask for an update on your foster animal or to give you an update regarding your foster animal. Please respond to all requests from the foster coordinator within 24 hours. If this will not be possible, let the foster coordinator know this before accepting a new foster animal.

Animal Parks: Do not allow your foster animal to visit animal parks or unauthorized play dates. Although we do everything in our power to ensure the safety and health of our foster animals, it is undeniable that the animals have unknown histories. While animal parks can serve as a great outlet for socialization and exercise for animals, they can be dangerous to foster animals for several reasons:

- The foster animal is adjusting to a lot of new experiences and an animal park, so many new animals and a new environment can overload him.
- Stress can lower an animal's immune system, and with everything your foster animal has been through, he has been under a lot of stress. This leaves your foster animal vulnerable to contracting an illness from other animals at the park.
- High energy and activity at animal parks can remind foster animals of their lives before being in foster. This can set the animal back in his rehabilitation.
- Without proper supervision, animals who are unfamiliar with each other can become aggressive and cause harm to one-another.

Children and Resident Pets: Never leave your foster animal with children, resident pets, or visitors unattended. If you are unavailable to supervise your animal with your full attention, please put him in his “safe place” until you are available.

Contact Information and Emergency Protocols

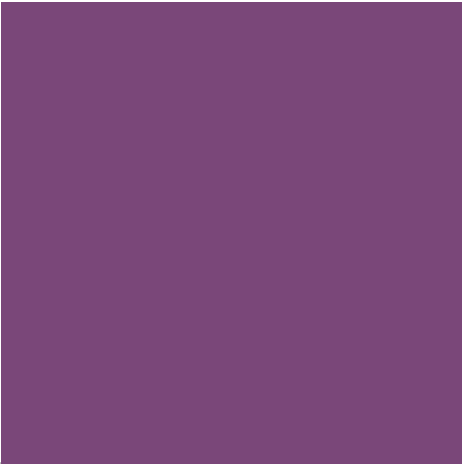
We are here to help you every step of the way! E-mail will typically serve as the primary form for communication, but should an emergency arise, please follow the timetable below to know whom to call.

No matter what the situation, the first point of contact will always be the foster coordinator. The foster coordinator serves to help you, and is ultimately responsible for the foster animal(s) in your care. If you have questions, an emergency, or need to transport the animal for any reason, please contact the foster coordinator first.

The Situation	Primary Contact	Contact Details
General Questions Unsure if Emergency	Foster Coordinator	
When Foster Coordinator is Unavailable	TAF President	
Medical Emergencies	Blue Pearl	13160 Magesterial Dr, 40223 502-244-3036

Life Happens

Sometimes life throws the unexpected at us, we understand this and ask that you keep in touch with us should the unexpected happen. If you know you have a trip coming up, please do not commit to taking on a foster animal. Should something arise and you cannot keep your foster animal, please contact the foster coordinator as soon as possible. The foster coordinator will arrange for a new foster home for the animal, either temporarily until you can take him back or until the foster time is completed. It can take time to arrange for a new foster home, so give the foster coordinator as much forewarning as possible



Preparing Your New Foster Animal

How to prepare for your foster animal is as important as how to foster an animal! Preparing for your foster animal requires both physical and emotional tasks. Emotionally, you need to be prepared to care for a new pet and to understand that when the time comes you will need to let him go to his forever home. Before taking on a new foster animal, ensure that you will have enough time to commit to the animal. Fostering requires a huge time commitment and it is only fair to you and the animal if you are honest with yourself regarding how much time you have to commit to the care.

Prepare Your Pets

Verify that your own pets are up-to-date on vaccinations. Inform your vet that you will be bringing foster pets into your home. Some pets are vaccinated based on their individual circumstances, health, and likelihood of being exposed to other animals. Your vet may choose to make a change in the vaccination protocol for your animals when you start fostering animals.

We recommend a quarantine period of at least 10 days where the foster animal can be separated from your other pets. If you choose not to follow this quarantine period, please know that you do so at your own risk. The health guidelines in this handbook will educate you on those risks and steps to prevent them.

Prepare a “Safe Place”

Set up a “safe place” for your foster animal. If you have a kennel available, this is best. Keep in mind that not all foster animals will be kennel trained, but it is important that the animal have a space to call his own. This will help him to feel safe in your home, and have a place to spend alone time when needed. Emphasize that this is a safe place for the animal. If the animal should get into trouble, do not use his “safe place” as a time-out location for punishment. This can confuse the animal and lose the attractiveness of having his own “safe place” to go to in an unfamiliar house.

If your animal does get into trouble, there are a few ways that you can communicate the wrongdoing. You can designate a “time out” place for your animal to go after getting into trouble. Alternatively, you can tell the animal what was “bad” and show him the better substitute of what is “good”. For example, if you catch your foster animal choosing on something inappropriate, tell him that the item is “bad” and show him a chew toy that is “good” to chew on.

Accidents Happen

With most of our foster animals, we cannot know their full history and background. Because of this, we often do not know if they are house broken or kennel trained. Expect that accidents will happen. Even animals that have not had an accident in years can still have accidents in an unfamiliar place. Accidents should not be punished; rather, if you catch an accident in the act, try to distract the animal to “stop the flow” and take him outside where he can have a “good potty”. Also, when setting up the animal’s safe place, be sure that the floor can handle potential accidents (tile is best).

Items You May Need

You will need some supplies for your foster cases. TAF will provide what we can where funds allow, but essentially it is up to you to ensure that you have these items available before taking on a new foster animal:

- Food and food bowls
- Crate
- Bedding – bedding should be easily washable. Try to stay away from items with stuffing, as you will never know if a animal likes to shred or pull stuffing from his bedding – this can become quite messy and also puts the animal at risk of ingesting the stuffing!
- Odor neutralizer – accidents happen, and eliminating the odor from these accidents will help to prevent more to come. Great brands for odor neutralizers include Cat-Off and Nature's Miracle
- Flea comb/brush
- Rubbing Alcohol - this can be used to kill fleas that you find, sterilize used syringes, etc. Baby gate(s)
- Toys - rope toys, Kongs, chewing toys, etc.
- Bitter spray - Some great brands are Bitter Bitter, Bitter End, and Fooley! These sprays deter pets from chewing on inappropriate items
- Healthy Treats - Carrots, green beans, lean treats, etc.

How To Animal Proof a Room

This is easier said than done. Mostly, animal-proofing a room is a trial and error process that you adapt over time to each specific foster case and situation. Each animal will be different - do they like to shred? chew? dig? You need to be prepared to adapt your situation to the animal and his natural habits. To get you started, here are a few pointers to follow:

Toys and more toys! Always give your animal something to keep himself occupied while you're away. Animals need mental stimulation as much as humans do. Can you imagine sitting in a kennel all day with no crossword puzzle to play with? Great toys to keep your animal company are Kong toys (filled with tasty treats!), rope toys, fleece toys, and chew toys. Be sure to always supervise your animal with these toys before leaving him alone to play with them. Giving an animal a new toy without supervision can be dangerous in the chance that he tears or shred the toy and can choke or ingest the pieces.

Protect the valuables: Make sure that anything of value to you is out of reach. And by out of reach, we typically mean out of the room.

Don't underestimate your foster animal: Did you know, that many animals could out-climb a cat in a tree? Or that some animals know how to unlatch a gate, kennel, or a door handle? It is important to not underestimate what your foster animal may be capable of doing, and protect him (and yourself) against these possibilities.

See the room from the animal's eye view: It may seem a little extreme, but if you have to, sit down on the floor of the room and see what the animal will see. What can the animal reach? Climb on? Chew? Make sure that everything is protected and anything loose is put away.

Ensure separation is possible: Make sure that your pets will be securely separated from the foster animal while you are away.

Cleaning Protocol

At the core to managing and controlling the spread of any disease is a good cleaning plan. Your cleaning protocol should occur with each foster animal you care for, before, during, and after his stay with you. We always recommend a quarantine period of at least 10 days to separate your foster animal from your other pets.

Preventing the Spread of Diseases

Practice good hand hygiene and clean your hands before and after handling pets or objects in the isolation area.

Alcohol-based hand sanitizers: Recommended when hands are not visibly soiled. They provide for a rapid kill of most transient microorganisms.

Soap and water: Recommended when significant soiling or risk is present.

Soaps and detergents: Cleaning agents that work by suspending dirt and grease and breaking up organic matter. Soaps do not necessarily kill germs. Dish and laundry soaps are common examples of detergents.

Disinfectants are chemical solutions that kill germs. The particular germs killed depend on the ingredients in the disinfectant. While some disinfectants serve a dual purpose and have some cleansing properties, many disinfectants do not effectively remove dirt and grease. Bleach, Trifectant, and quaternary ammonium products such as Roccal, A-33, and Kennelsol are examples of common disinfectants.

Cleaning and Disinfecting Objects and Surfaces in the Isolation Area

Cleaning and disinfecting items in the isolation area using the appropriate agents: Soaps and detergents are not the same as disinfectants. It's important to understand how these two groups of products work and to use them appropriately.

Surface/Object	Suggested Procedure
High contact surfaces	Daily cleaning with a detergent; weekly disinfection
Visibly soiled objects/surfaces	Cleaning with a detergent
Food bowls	Cleaning daily; disinfection weekly
All regular surfaces	Weekly cleaning and disinfection
When new animals are introduced	Thorough cleaning and disinfection between animal residents
Laundry	Remove organic material before laundering; use soap and bleach

Cleaning and Maintaining Toys

Your animal wrestles his toys to the ground. He shreds them in two. He literally beats the stuffing out of them. Ah the joy of an animal with his toys! What can be done? You hate to toss them out, but at what point

Are these dirty trashed toys just unsafe for play? Woof Report got the facts from Hartz.com on maintaining the stuff your animal loves, and we've added a few tips of our own too.

What to Toss

Pay your final respects to well-loved toys that are chewed beyond recognition, missing parts, dangling with choking hazards (i.e., stuffed animal eyes), or those that appear to be partially eaten by your animal. It's over. If you determine the toy is safe, you can try cleaning it.

What to Clean

Rubber and Plastic Toys. Get out the toothbrush and scrub inside grubby Kong toys and other hollow treat holders using soap and water. There are even cool cleaning brushes out there made just for the job. You can also pop Kongs into the dishwasher along with other nylon, plastic and rubber toys on a hot cycle without detergent to blast off the germs.

Rope Toys. These babies are breeding grounds for bacteria. To get them safe and clean, running them under hot water is not enough. Consider doing what the U.S. government recommends for sponges and other household cleaning items; zap rope toys in the microwave. Just wet the toy and microwave it for one minute to kill all the bacteria, yeast and mold. Be careful to remove any metal first and not to "overcook" it. Another option is to pop the rope toy in the dishwasher without detergent for the same squeaky-clean results.

Stuffed Animals. Your animal's favorite stuffed squirrel is germier than he looks. Every now and then, throw him and any yucky tennis balls in the washing machine with pet-safe detergent. Woof Report recommends hypoallergenic and dye free Seventh Generation detergent. Most stuffed animals can survive the dryer too. Let tennis balls air dry or toss them into the dryer with your towels before throwing them back into fetch duty.

Chew Toys. They're gross to us, but delectable to animals. So even though you may be tempted to scrub chewies or rawhides, resist the urge. Just keep an eye on your animal as he devours them. This way, you'll be right there if he bites off a bigger piece than he can chew.

What to Repair

As a pup parent, you double as an emergency stuffed toy surgeon. It's fine to rescue your animal's favorite stuffed toys, but just make sure holes are sewn tight so stuffing stays put or just remove the stuffing altogether. Then clip away any loose threads and release them to the care of your happy animal.

Traveling with Your Foster Animal

During foster time, a foster animal may need transporting to and from your home for vet visits and meeting potential adopters. Safety is important when transporting any animal! Please be sure to follow these guidelines

If a carrier is not available, use a leash to keep the animal in a restricted area. To do this, wrap the leash around a stable object in the car (such as a head rest), take the handle of the leash and pull the other end through the loop in the handle. Animals that are left to roam in the car can cause distractions to the driver, which can lead to a dangerous situation on the road.

If possible, travel with an adult to assist you in caring for the animal while you concentrate on driving.

You never know what to expect from an animal the first time riding in a car. Animals can sometimes become rowdy and over excited or may become fearful. It is important to keep this in mind and be prepared for all possibilities. Place a blanket or old towel over all surfaces where the animal will be riding to protect your car from accidents.

Welcoming a New Foster Animal

Welcoming a new foster animal into your home is an exciting day for you and your family! If you have young children (10 or younger) we suggest first bringing the animal into your home without the children present. The foster animal has a lot of adjusting to do and can use a quiet welcome home to start things off.

Bringing Your Foster Animal Home

When you first bring your foster animal home, allow him time in the yard to do his business alone before bringing him inside. Watch him closely, but from a distance. If you do not have a fenced yard, of course, use a leash but try to keep it loose and unrestricted. Once inside, show the animal where his “safe place” is and where the water bowl is. Leave the animal alone to settle in for a while. Check in on the animal often, but quietly, and give him frequent potty breaks every few hours until he is comfortable telling you when he needs to go. If you decide to quarantine the animal (which is always recommended), set the animal up in the quarantine area and let him settle in for the first 24 hours.

During the First Week

You will see the greatest development in your foster animal during the first week, especially during the first few days. A few points to consider are:

Start a schedule with your animal from the start. Keeping a strict routine will assist the animal in having structure during his time with you.

Keep stimulation to a minimum during the first few days. The animal has a lot to adjust to and over stimulation can cause the animal to become overwhelmed.

For the first 7-14 days, be prepared to see an enormous amount of growth in your foster animal. His true personality may not reveal itself until after the first week. Expect to see these changes and be prepared for the different

behaviors this may entail.

Do not introduce the foster animal to another animal for the first few days. You have not gotten to know your foster animal well enough yet, and cannot possibly know what to expect in terms of his reaction to the other animal.

Try to keep new meetings to a minimum in the first week. There is so much for your animal to adjust to with just your home, pets, and family, adding more introductions in the first week will just be too much for the animal. If you will be entertaining guests, make sure the animal is removed from the situation and in his “safe place” so as not to overwhelm him.

First Impressions: Your Family, Pets, and Foster Animals

When you first bring your foster animal home, it is important not to crowd him. Your house is a new environment for him, and everything in it is unknown territory.

If possible, introduce your foster animal to your family and pets one at a time. Children should never be left alone with the foster animal, as this can be dangerous for both the children and the animal. Pets should be introduced from a distance. If they seem to be getting along, you can gradually allow them to get closer. Never leave your foster animal free to roam the house while you are gone, especially when other pets are also loose in the home.

Keep in mind that your foster animal may not immediately bond with your family, both human and pet. Sometimes it can be a gradual process for both parties. It is important to work with your foster animal and let him guide the process. He will warm up to the family member, as he is ready.

For more information on how to introduce foster animals to your animals, cats, or children, refer to Appendix I, II, and III.

Some Common Mistakes

Many practices in fostering may not always be intuitive. Even for experienced foster parents, it is all too easy to become lost in the moment, forget your guidelines when you become busy, and to let your guard down. This is natural and we are all human, but it is important to guard against any situations that may put you, your family, and your foster animal at risk. With this in mind, here are some common mistakes that can happen that you will want to be aware of.

Too much, too soon: Foster animals can wiggle their way into your heart before you know it! A common mistake is allowing him too much freedom before he is ready. It is important to remember that his history is often unknown and you have only known him for a short time. Try to refrain from giving him too much leeway before he is ready by leaving him unattended in the house outside of the kennel, leaving children with him unattended, allowing him to play with new toys without supervision, introducing too many people and/or pets to him too soon, etc.

Mealtime: Many foster animals will have histories of being strays and needing to protect their food sources. Without knowing their history, it is important not to take any chances with feeding time. Foster animals should always be fed separately from other animals in the house. Be sure not to put your hands near food bowls while the foster animal is

eating. Food bowls should always be removed from the floor after the animal has finished eating to prevent possible resource guarding of the dishes.

Too much leash restriction: It is important that you supervise your foster animal closely during foster time, but this can sometimes lead to issues for the animal. Especially when the animal is leashed, restricting the animal too much can sometimes lead an animal to feel the need to retaliate. Some animals will blame the leash, and take their anger out on the object. However, some animals may make the connection that you are controlling the leash, and direct their anger towards you. This can become dangerous for both you and the animal. It is important to be aware of your foster animal's body language at all times. If he responds to less restriction positively, it is okay to "loosen the leash" a little, both literally and figuratively.

Foster Health Guidelines

Medical Risks

Due to the unknown history of many of the animals TAF cares for, the animals are susceptible to and are potential carriers of many infectious diseases, which may include intestinal parasites, as well as bacterial and viral infections. Some of these diseases, such as ringworm, can be transmitted to humans as well.

Your pets should receive vaccinations on a regular basis. You should discuss fostering pets with your veterinarian prior to starting the foster program. Your veterinarian may recommend other vaccines or a different scheduling for vaccines to further protect your pets. It is important to remember that vaccinations do not necessarily prevent disease. However, proper vaccination substantially decreases the likelihood of developing the disease.

Viral diseases have an incubation period, yet the pet shows no sign of disease. The pet may appear healthy, but with time, may break with disease. When the animal leaves the shelter, he begins to relax and the virus starts showing symptoms. This can happen quickly or after a few days. Your foster animal(s) should be kept isolated from your own pets for the duration of the foster time. This is to protect your pets from any potential illness that a foster animal might carry. Common contagious viral diseases in animals include Parvovirus and "Kennel Cough". "Kennel cough" and upper respiratory viruses cause flu-like symptoms, are usually self-limiting, and rarely lead to major illness. Parvovirus can cause substantial illness and may be fatal.

If you choose to allow the foster animal to interact with your pets, your pets should be up-to-date on all appropriate vaccinations. TAF is not responsible for any medical costs incurred should your pets become sick. By following the cleaning protocol in this handbook, you will minimize the spread of diseases and parasites to your family and pets.

Risks to humans can be increased if they have allergies, asthma, or an immunodeficiency disorder. If any of your family members has any of the above, it is important to speak to your doctor about bringing foster animals into the home. Remember, there are many ways to help these animals! It is not worth risking the safety of your family members with lower immune systems by bringing foster animals into the home.

How Diseases are Transmitted

Direct Contact – involves direct body contact from one animal to another or from an animal to a human.

Indirect Contact or Fomite – contact between susceptible animal and a contaminated inanimate object (a fomite), such as equipment, clothing, or surfaces. Often the result of poorly washed hands.

Droplet – small infectious droplets that do not remain suspended in the air but travel a short distance through the air and deposit on host's mucosal surfaces. Droplets can also land in the environment and lead to indirect contact transmission.

Airborne – infectious residue from dried droplets or dust remains suspended and able to travel distances through the air. This residue is infectious for long periods of time.

Vector – disease transmission occurs through another animal capable of transmitting disease host, such as a rodent, fly, mosquito, or tick.

Rabies

Rabies is caused by a virus transmitted through animal saliva. Signs of rabies include personality and behavioral changes, incoordination, difficulty swallowing, seizures, and death. Rabies is fatal -- there is no cure in man or animals. Protect yourself by not handling wild or stray animals and by having all your animals and cats vaccinated against rabies to serve as a buffer between you and the wild animal reservoir.

Ticks

Ticks can transmit diseases to animals and people. Common "wood ticks" can carry Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever (RMSF), and "deer ticks" can carry Lyme disease. Both diseases are caused by tiny organisms that are transmitted to people or animals from tick bites, and cause fevers, rashes, and joint pain. Neither disease is transmitted directly from pets to people; you must be bitten by the tick to get RMSF or Lyme disease. Protect yourself by wearing long sleeves and long pants tucked into boots when walking in woods or fields where ticks live, cutting back weeds and brush near your home, using tick repellent on yourself and your pets, and by looking for and removing ticks regularly.

Roundworms

Nearly every puppy is born with roundworms contracted from its mother. These worms can be transmitted to people, especially children. Most



Zoonotic Diseases

A zoonotic disease is a disease common to animals and humans. Pet owners should be aware of the potential risk of the zoonosis found in our area. In many of these zoonotic diseases, humans may not "catch" the disease directly from the pet. Instead, the animal serves as a barometer, signaling the presence of infectious agents in the environment.

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infections in people are so mild as to cause no signs at all, but the potential for severe illness exists. Migrating worms may damage the liver, eyes or brain. Because the eggs are transmitted in the puppy's stool, sanitation is essential; feces should be removed and disposed of daily and everyone who handles the puppy should wash their hands frequently. This is especially important in young children, who often put their fingers in their mouths. Protect yourself by having your veterinarian test several stool samples from your new puppy, and do yearly tests on adult animals. Some veterinarians prescribed regular dewormings even in the face of negative stool tests because of these risks.

Ringworm, Sarcoptic mange or scabies

Ringworm is not a worm at all, but a fungal infection of the skin. It can be difficult to diagnose in animals, as the lesions do not look the same from case to case. Some animals can carry the fungus in their hair coat without showing signs of itching, scaly skin, and hair loss. In people, the classic lesion is a raised, reddened, and itchy "ring." Another zoonotic skin condition in animals is sarcoptic mange or scabies. This mite burrows under the skin, and causes severe itching, scabs, and hair loss. In extreme cases, the animal may even have a generalized illness. Skin scrapings to find and identify the mite are often negative. In humans, a pinpoint red rash is often found on the chest and abdomen. Treatment in animals includes multiple dips to kill the mites, and medications for itching and secondary infections. A new injectable drug, ivermectin, can be used to treat mange, although it is not yet approved for this use, and should not be used in Collie animals. Protect yourself by having suspect skin lesions examined and treated by your veterinarian. Fungal cultures may be the only way to confirm a case of ringworm. Skin scraping tests should be done when mange is suspected, even though the results may be false. Suspected cases of ringworm or mange should be treated even if unconfirmed to prevent the spread of these diseases

Symptom	What to Do
Eyes: Clear discharge	Monitor the eyes. If discharge is excessive or progresses to a yellow or green color, please contact us.
Eyes: green or yellow discharge	Gently wipe eyes with a warm, damp cloth and contact us for medication.
Eyes: third eyelid exposed	If you can see this membrane for more than 24 hours, please contact us.
Ears	If you notice the animal scratching at his ears, shaking his head, a distasteful odor or discharge coming from the ears, or inflamed flaps, please contact us.
Vomiting	Remove all food for 4 to 5 hours. If vomiting stops, give a very small amount of food 4 to 5 times a day. Return to regular feeding if no more vomiting occurs. If vomiting persists, remove food and contact us for advice.
Diarrhea	Fecal analysis can rule out parasites as the cause of diarrhea. Please contact us to discuss.
Sneezing and/or Nasal Discharge	Monitor sneezing and contact us if sneezing fits increase or worsen. Nasal discharge: contact us if discharge is yellow or green.

Administering Medication

Medications come in many different forms and proper administration is essential for the animal to receive the maximum benefit from the prescribed treatment. For more ways to administer medications get in touch with us!

How to Apply Topical Flea & Heartworm Medication

While holding the tube in an upright position, remove the cap from the tube.

Turn the cap over and push the other end of cap onto the tip of the tube. Twist the cap to break the seal and then remove the cap from the tube.

Part the hair on the back of the animal between the shoulder blades until the skin is visible. Do not apply an amount of solution at any one location where the animal could easily lick it off.

Place the tip of the tube on the skin and apply the entire contents directly on the exposed skin at one spot between the shoulder blades.

Pills and Capsules

Pills may be administered in a small piece of cheese, peanut butter, or canned food. You can also purchase “Pill Pockets” from a local pet store; these are treats that are shaped with a hollow center to place a pill or capsule into it. The trick is to find the treat (that can hold the pill) that the animal likes the best, because then he will be less likely to notice the pill inside! Some animals will not welcome any treat that he knows has a pill inside. If hiding the treat fails, you can gently open the animal’s mouth and place the pill inside. Try to get the pill as far back into his mouth as possible; if you can get the pill behind the tongue, it will be more difficult for the animal to spit it back up.

Liquids

Liquids may be administered in one of two ways. You can tilt the animal’s head back, open its mouth and dribble the liquid onto the back of its tongue with a dropper or syringe. If the animal coughs or sputters, decrease the degree of the head tilt. Otherwise, you may tilt the animal’s head back slightly, hook the side of its cheek out to form a pouch and slowly dribble the liquid into the pouch with a syringe or dropper, allowing the animal time to swallow.

Ointments and Creams

Eyes: To administer ointment, keep the hand that you will be applying the ointment with against the animal’s face. If the animal moves his head, your hand will move with it without the risk of poking his eye. Tilt the animal’s head back slightly, squeeze a small amount of ointment inside the lower eyelid and close the eye to distribute the ointment evenly over the surface of the eye.

Ears: Grasp the tip of the ear with one hand and hold the earflap perpendicular to the head. With the other hand, drop in the prescribed number of drops or amount of ointment. Continue to hold the ear firmly to prevent the head from shaking and massage the base of the ear to work the medication down inside the ear canal.

Vaccines	Protects Against	Schedule
DHPP	Distemper, Hepatitis, Parvovirus, and Parainfluenza	Initial and 1 booster
Bordetella	Kennel cough	Once a year
Heartworm Test	Tests for heartworm	Once a year
Rabies	Rabies virus	Once a year
De-wormer	Treats presence of worms	Initial and 1 booster

When to Seek Veterinary Assistance

This list below provides some guidelines for when a visit to the vet is recommended.

- Not drinking for more than 24 hours
- Diarrhea that lasts for more than 2 days
- Diarrhea and occasional vomiting for more than 24 hours Vomiting more than 2 or 3 times in an hour
- Not eating for more than 2 or 3 days
- Lethargy without fever for more than 2 or 3 days

Puppies under 6 months old:

- Diarrhea that lasts more than a day
- Vomiting and diarrhea that lasts for more than 6 hours Vomiting more than once an hour
- Lethargy for more than 24 hours

Your Vet VS a TAF Approved Vet

TAF has approved vets that provide us discounted rates on their services. As a rescue, we try to have vets in areas where our foster parents live close-by, but this is not always possible.

It may be tempting to take your foster animal to your own vet. You may go to your own vet, but understand that the whole expense of the visit may not be reimbursed by TAF.

All vet visits must receive approval by the foster coordinator

If approved, we will be able to reimburse you for the cost that TAF would have incurred at our approved vet.

If the vet visit is not approved, we will not be able to reimburse you for the vet bill.

You should keep receipts for any supplies/services that you choose to purchase. If you itemize on your taxes, you may be able to deduct the expenses as a charitable donation. You may also be able to deduct mileage for any transportation given to the foster animal.

Death of a Foster Animal

Unfortunately, death is a possibility while in foster care. Signs of a “crashing” animal include extreme lethargy, a seeming unawareness of its surroundings, cool to the touch (hypothermia), no interest in or acknowledgement of food or water, a limp feeling when you hold them, periodic arching of their head and back, etc.

If you see these symptoms, contact your foster coordinator immediately.

Losing an animal either through unassisted death or euthanasia can be emotionally wrenching. Please take comfort in knowing that you gave the animal a chance that it would not have otherwise had. More importantly, it died knowing love, warmth, security, and a full belly it would not have known without your love and care. We cannot save every pet, but we can give the ones we can't save a humane and loving death.

Saying Goodbye

When the time comes for your foster animal to move on to his next location, the foster coordinator will communicate with you and arrange the details for the transfer. The foster animal should be accompanied by his medical records, completed Foster Care form, and any other medications, documents, or belongings that he obtained while in your care.

This will always be a bittersweet day for foster parents. It is difficult to say goodbye to an animal that has become a part of your life and family! It is important to remember, though, that you have saved this animal's life and prepared him for his forever home. He is healthier and stronger, both mentally and physically, because you gave him a second chance!

THANK YOU!!

Thank you so much for your support and participation in the The Arrow Fund Foster Program! The Foster Program could not exist without volunteers like you! Should you ever have any questions or need assistance, we are here to help you!

Appendix

I. Animal First-Aid Kit

Everyone who shares a home with an animal should have a basic canine first-aid kit on hand. A good kit will include:

- A good pet first-aid book
- Veterinarian
- Contact info of the nearest emergency veterinary clinic
- Poison-control center or hotline
- Medical Paperwork
- Proof of rabies vaccination status
- Copies of other important medical records
- Rectal thermometer (your animal's temperature should not rise above 103°F or fall below 100°F)
- Sterile gauze rolls and pads for bandages
- Adhesive tape
- Hydrogen peroxide
- Rubbing alcohol (isopropyl)
- Over-the-counter antibiotic ointment
- Tweezers
- Petroleum jelly
- Antiseptic lotion, powder or spray
- A nylon leash
- Cotton balls or swabs
- Splints and tongue depressors
- Towels
- A muzzle or strips of cotton to prevent biting
- Penlight or flashlight
- Scissors
- Needle-nosed pliers
- Ice pack
- Plastic eyedropper or syringe
- Sterile saline solution
- Glucose paste or corn syrup
- Styptic powder or pencil (sold at veterinary hospitals and pet supply stores)
- Latex gloves
- Ear-cleaning solution
- Nail clippers

II. Introducing Your Foster Animals to Animals

Choose a neutral location to introduce the animals. This can be any place that is new to both animals. Remove any items that could potentially cause a rivalry between the animals such as toys or food bowls.

Have two people available. Have each animal on a leash, with one person for each animal. During the introduction, both handlers should be positive and unobtrusive. Speak with an upbeat and positive tone and hold the leashes loosely.

Take your time and stay positive! Avoid letting the animals run to each other to meet head-on. Rather, keep the animals about 20 feet apart and let each handler spend a few minutes with their animal at a distance from the other animal. Have some treats on hand, and reward the animals every time they focus on the handler instead of the other animal.

Avoid direct eye contact between the animals. Once both animals are focusing well on their handlers, move a little closer together. Continue to keep the attention of each animal on his respective handler and praise whenever this is done well. Avoid direct eye contact between the animals for more than a few seconds.

Be aware of the body language of both animals. Good signs are a relaxed posture and body in the animal with no attempts at prolonged staring. If the animal becomes stiff, ears back, or stiffens his tail, take a step back. Avoid proceeding further until both animals can remain calm and successfully focus their attention on their handlers.

Keep it short and sweet! When both handlers feel comfortable letting the animals meet, begin to circle around each other as you gradually move closer to the other animal. Avoid meeting head-on with the other animal. Continue to speak in calm, relaxed tones and emphasize making this a positive experience for both animals. Allow the animals to sniff one another for 3-5 seconds and then return their focus back to their handlers. Offer great praise and treats if each animal responds well!

Be aware that each animal may respond differently. The response of each animal after sniffing each other for 3-5 seconds will tell you how to proceed from there.

If the animals respond playfully to the other by wagging their tail, licking, wiggling their body, etc., praise the animals on their good behavior! Allow them to play for short spurts of time, always bringing the focus back to the handler after a few minutes. If the play becomes too rough, take a short break and try again.

Animals may take the “bully approach” with the other animal by assuming a stiffened posture, raising the hair on their back, baring teeth, etc. If this happens, immediately say “Too bad!” and remove the animal from view of the other animal. Ignore the bully animal in his “time out” location for some time until he can calm down. After his time out, start again from the beginning, resuming the calm, positive tone as before. Continue to give time outs for any bullying behavior.

Animals may appear frightened of the other animal by assuming a stiff body posture, putting their tail between their legs, or trying to hide behind you. Should this happen, move the animal that is not scared away from the fearful animal. Reward the fearful animal whenever it looks at the other animal. Continue to make short introductions,

always moving the other animal away from the fearful animal and always praising the fearful animal when he responds well.

Go for a walk! If all introductions go well, an excellent way to let the two animals get to know one another is to take them for a walk. This gives them a structured activity to focus on while getting used to the other animal's presence.

Prepare for disagreements. As your animals get to know one another, prepare for some disagreements between them. This can be after making the initial introductions, or even a few hours (or days) later. Often times, this is healthy behavior in the sense that they are working out their relationship.

Always make safety your top priority! If you do not feel comfortable or prepared for these situations, do not allow your animals to interact. If you are comfortable giving it a shot, but still unsure of what to expect, keep them on their leashes and have a handler for each animal.

Often times, the spat will only last a few seconds and the animals will figure it out themselves. If the disagreement is over an object, such as a toy, remove the toy until a later time. Although it can be healthy for animals to figure it out themselves, it is not healthy for them to create possessiveness over an object, potentially instigating trouble in the future.

If the disagreement lasts for more than a few seconds it is time to remove the animals from the other's presence. Never jump in between two animals arguing. If they need to be separated, distract them by making a loud noise, spraying water at them, etc. If they have leashes on, after you've distracted them, pull them away from one another.

If puppies are involved, remember a few notes of caution. If either animal is a puppy, follow the steps above as normal. However, be sure to be extra cautious for each step to ensure the safety of everyone involved. Adult animals will often correct a puppy with a quick growl or snap. This is normal and healthy; in fact, it can give the puppy an excellent social learning opportunity! However, if the adult animal becomes aggressive in any way, remove the animals from each other's presence immediately. Take a step back in the introductions process, and try again after each has calmed down.

III. Introducing Your Foster Animals to Cats

Contrary to popular belief, cats and animals can make excellent pals! Not only can cats and animals “tolerate” living in the same house together, they can make great friends over time. It is important to remember, though, that cats and animals are different species with different ways of communicating. A miscommunication can potentially cause grave harm to the pets.

Separate the cat and animal for the first few days in the house. Even if the animal and/or cat has had a good track record of getting along with the other species, it is important to separate them for the first few days. This gives the newcomer a chance to adjust to the new surroundings. It also allows each pet to smell the presence of the other and adjust to the new smell while still keeping them a safe distance apart.

Create a safe place for your cat. Much as you offer your animal a safe place, create a space for your cat where he can get away from the animal if needed. Great safe places for cats are higher up where the animal cannot reach. An even better strategy is using a baby gate to block off a room - the cat will be able to jump over the baby gate while the animal cannot. Your foster animal should never be able to access the cat’s food bowl or litter box, even after the initial introductions are made. Cats typically appreciate their private time, and smelling the animal in these areas can cause stress to your cat and initiate a disagreement between the cat and animal.

After adequate separation time, allow the first introductions to take place. You will know how much time is “adequate” for each pet by reading their behavior over that time. Good signs include if the cat or animal has become comfortable being directly on opposite sides of the door from one another, will accept food or treats while they can clearly smell the other pet, and does not become agitated at the sound or smell of the other.

It is best if two people are present for the introduction, one person per pet. Before bringing the cat into the room, leash the animal and keep him on one side of the room. Perform some basic commands and make sure that the animal’s attention is focused on you. Treats and praise are crucial throughout the entire process!

Once you have the animal’s full attention, have the other person bring the cat into the room. As soon as the cat is in the room do not restrain the cat in any way. It is important that the cat has the option to escape if they feel the need to. Try to entertain the cat with toys or treats, or allow the cat to explore the room if he wants to. Reward and praise the animal for any positive reactions toward the cat.

Remember, many short introductions are always better than one long one.

If all goes well during the initial introduction, and neither pet seems agitated in any way, allow the animal to go off leash. Be sure that the cat still has the option to escape to his safe place if needed.

Supervise both pets at all times! Even after the initial introductions have been made and everything went well, remember that your foster animal’s history is unknown. Never allow a foster animal to roam the house with your cat while you are away, for the safety of all those involved.

IV. Introducing Your Foster Animals to Children

Ten Steps to discuss with children about safety with animals:

1. I will not stare into a animal's eyes
2. I will not tease the animal behind fences
3. I will not go near animals chained up in yards
4. I will not touch a animal I see loose (off-leash) outside
5. If I see a loose animal, I will tell an adult immediately
6. I will not run and scream if a loose animal comes near me
7. I will stand very still and will be very quiet if a animal comes near me
8. I will not touch or play with a animal while he is eating
9. I will not touch a animal when he is sleeping
10. I will only pet an animal if I have received permission from the animal's owner. Then I will ask permission of the animal by letting him sniff my closed hand.

In the Home

A child should never be left alone with an animal, especially a foster animal. Supervision is only sufficient if an adult is supervising (not an older child). The supervisor needs to be confident and comfortable that they can handle both the child and the animal. If they cannot do this, two adults are necessary - one to supervise the child and one to supervise the animal.

Although this concept ruins the favorite image people have of an animal making an excellent babysitter, it is simply unsafe for a child to be left alone with an animal (and vice versa).

On the child's part, the mental capacity for empathy-awareness of hurting another being isn't fully developed until 5-7 years of age. The child cannot understand that certain actions can hurt the animal. The child can give the right answers and behave properly when supervised, but may not do the same when an adult has turn their attention away. Testing the boundaries and experimentation is simply a process of a developing human brain, and can occur with both "good" and "bad" children.

Specific Behaviors

- An adult watching a child and animal interact is at a disadvantage when the adult does not know which behaviors from the child can potentially be threatening to the animal. You should never allow a child to: Pull the animal's ears
- Poke the animal with their fingers or any other objects
- Swing objects at the animal (even if the object is a animal toy)
- Pull the animal's tail
- Grab any part of the animal's body
- Chase the animal

- Tug or otherwise compete with the animal for food, toys, treats, etc. Suddenly get into the animal's face
- Run up to a resting animal
- Pet a animal through or over a fence or when the animal is on a lead Enter the animal's "safe place" (including the animal's crate)
- Ride an animal, lie down on the animal, or put any significant weight on the animal

From the Animal's Point of view

If an animal has had a bad experience with children, slow and patient rehabilitation is necessary before introducing the animal to children again. In the case of foster animals, we can never know what they have experienced in the past with children. Because of this, it is very important to make any time spent with children a positive experience. The foster animal needs to be able to trust that you will not allow the child to make him uncomfortable in any way. If the animal believes that you will stand by while a child torments, teases, or otherwise makes him uncomfortable, he will take things into his own hands. This often means retaliating. It is important to remember how the animal thinks before ever introducing him to children - if, in the animal's mind, retaliation is the only possible course of action to stop the discomfort, then the animal will take it.

A miscommunication between child and animal can cause devastating damage to the animal's view of children. It only takes a single moment where the animal does not feel safe and/or retaliates to ruin an animal's impression of any and all children.

It is important to remember that an animal who will "let children do anything to him" is never a good thing.

By this we mean the situation occurring in itself is not good. Even if the animal "tolerates" certain behavior with a child, it is ever affecting the animal's view of children. It can set the tone for interactions with all children in the future, and can often lead to an animal "snapping" to a new child introduced to the situation because the animal has simply had enough. Interactions between children and animals are a constant learning process for both parties - they are learning the proper behavior towards each other and learning how to effectively communicate with each other.

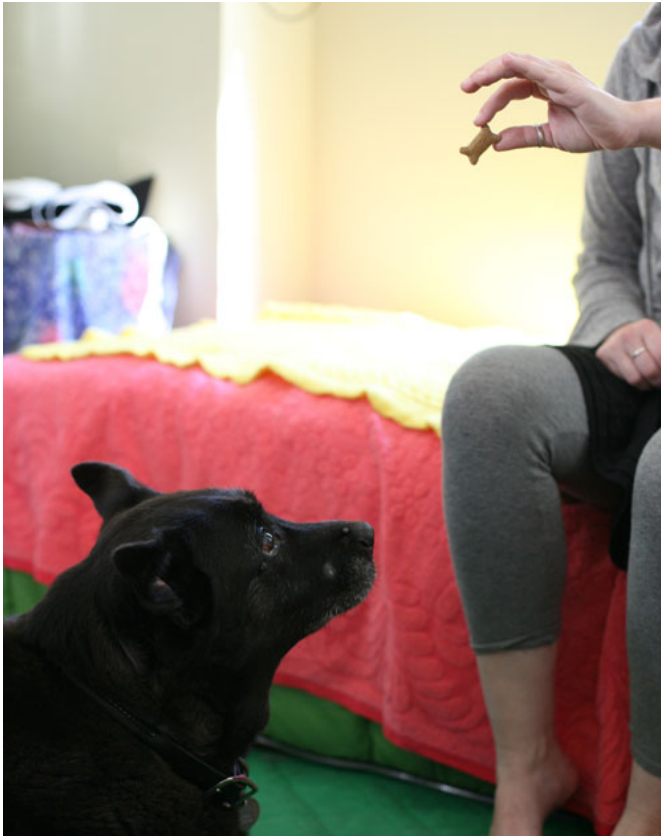
Animals and Children Can be a Great Source of Comfort for One Another!

When the interactions are done well and are supervised, children growing up with animals in the home have great advantages for both the child and the animal! A great deal of research indicates that children who grow up with well-cared-for-animals have mental and emotional advantages that extend throughout their life.

Learning how to handle an animal properly helps children to later become caring and empathetic individuals. People learn in many of the same ways that animals do, so learning how to interact with an animal will help children learn how to further communicate with other animals and humans.

In the end, remember that this is always a learning experience. It doesn't matter if the child has been introduced to 20 animals before this animal. The animal is new to the situation and the child and animal need to learn how to properly communicate with one another and to treat each other nicely. The situation should be supervised cautiously, but can lead to many benefits for both the foster animal and the child!

V. Taking Pictures of Your Foster Animal



1. The treat trick

Ahhh, the treat trick. Nothin' like some good old fashioned bribery to get your pup to do what you want. Sounds easy enough, but trust us when we say there's more to it than just waving a treat around.

Sweeten your pup up first by giving him a few small treats - comfortable and happy is the goal! Once he knows you have the treats and that you're freely giving them out, keep them in your hand and near your camera while you start to photograph.

Another option is taping the treat to the top of your camera - this way your pup's eyes will always be towards the lens! ('Course if you think your pooch might lunge for it, be cautious!)

2. Set up challenges you know your dog can't resist

We like to call these dog photo traps

Is there something your dogstinator can't resist? Drinking out of the toilet? An open screen door? An open bag of dog food conspicuously positioned smack dab in the middle of the kitchen? These are all ways to lure your dog out for some funny action shots!

Tailor it to your dog's quirks. For example, our poochface loves chasing leaves that are blowing in the wind. For some cute pics, we'll get him near a leaf pile. If there's no wind, we'll get a friend to help us get some up in the air!

3. Simple and colorful blankets, backgrounds and toys

Here's an easy one: simple backgrounds. They make for great dog photos! A simple, stuff-free background brings all the attention to your doggy. A blank wall, background, blanket - get your pup in front of one of these.

Colorful rugs, blankets and toys are the perfect way to brighten up the photo and will make your subject (aka pupperz) pop all the more.

4. How to make your dog smile

This trick works like a charm every time. Take your main woofers for a quick sprint around the backyard/block/living room. If pup's not in a sprinting mood, throw a toy around to get him active.

Bring him back to the spot you want to



photograph. At this point, your pup should be panting up a storm a.k.a. looking up at you with a big cute, tongue-hangy grin! Aim, shoot, "awww."

5. Candid photos: See what your dog is doing when you're not looking

There are three methods to candid photos of your canine companion. They work best when not used with flash since flash will grab your dog's attention. If you're indoors, instead of flash, set your camera on high ISO, sports mode, or any mode that lets you take photos in low-light conditions.

- **Sneak attack** - Take your shoes off, get in stealth mode, and sneak up on your pup. We keep our camera held up to our face while we do this, so as not to startle him with any sudden movements (i.e. bringing our camera up to our face). This one's the most difficult since dogs have such a keen sense of hearing.
- **Zoom** - Have zoom on your camera? Use it! This way you can stand far away from your dog and capture that adorable shot without distracting 'em.



6. Get on your dog's eye level

All those photos you have of your kibble-nibbler from above are lovely, but you're probably tired of seeing your feet in all of your shots. Get down to your poocherton's eye level.

Chances are they'll be less distracted by you hovering from above and if you sit at their level long enough, they will start to get more comfy with you and your camera. Getting on their level also softens the master/follower hierarchy - now, you see your dog as an equal!

7. Catch 'em in a chillaxed mood

Wait 'til after you take them to the park or on a walk for your photo session; they'll be in a more relaxed and comfortable mood. Chances are you'll get some great pics of your dog lounging or sleeping!

8. Prepare to shoot on special occasions!

Baths, dog-friend birthday parties, doggy pool time. You get the picture.

9. Make a doggy composite

Get close up shots of your dog's most adorable parts - tufted paws, curly tail, shiny round nose. Put the photos together to make a doggy composite! This would look especially sharp framed and hung together in a block on your wall.

The Don'ts

Don't use flash. This will eventually bother your pup, and it'll make his eyes look funky. Shoot in daylight or use high ISO, sports mode, and any low-light setting if you need to!

Don't have a nonstop dog photo session. Let them have a break! Mix play in.

Don't make 'em do things you know they'll hate (i.e. clothes, go places they don't like)

Don't think you need a fancy camera. Point and shoots/camera phones can do wonders!

Don't restrict yourself. Experiment!

Don't suddenly throw a camera in your puppy's face. Let them get used to the camera.

*This article was written for Dogster by [Photojojo](#), **Photos by:** Sarah Palmer and Lisbeth Ortega*

VI. How to Write Animal Bios

By Elizabeth Doyle, Best Friends senior creative copywriter and style editor

Here are some general guidelines for writing blurbs to go with your adoptables' photos.

1. Before you write anything, stop and think about your goal. You have to want this animal to find a home. You have to feel that want. Don't let any secondary thoughts interfere right now. Think "I'm her greatest hope for a home in this moment. I'm going to make it happen."

2. Write a show-stopping first sentence. Something that will make people stop and look at this animal. Do not write this sentence: *Joey is a 5 y.o. neutered male Shep/Pittie/Lab mix w/white markings, up-to-date on shots.* That's all useful information that you can share once you have readers' attention — and more important, their hearts. But first you have to grab their hearts.

How to do that? Look into the animal's eyes and say something true about him — something about who he is, not what he is. Perhaps something that describes his need. If you're working only with a photo, look into his eyes in the photo.

For example, in the photo below, you might see just a little bit of insecurity in the dog's eyes. With that in mind, here's one way to start the adoption profile: *"Are they gonna like me? Oh ... I don't think they're gonna like me. Do you think they'll want to adopt me?"*



In this one, you may see unconditional admiration. So you could start the profile this way: *"Amber loves you already — and you've only just met through a picture."*



And in this one, you might see a bit of pride and begin the profile like this: *“At your service! Samuel is just too proud to be homeless.”*



3. Then share the facts. Once you’ve grabbed readers’ attention, and made them take a look at the dog behind the name, age, breed and stats, then you can share factual information. But how you phrase that information is important. Some tips:

- List the positives first. Don’t say first that he hates cats. Say first that he loves other dogs! Sometimes, on a shelter’s behavior evaluation, it will not even list the positives; it will just have the “cannots” and “must haves.” So you have to read between the lines. If the behavior section is blank, that must mean that she’s an extremely well-behaved pet. Confirm that this is the case, and then put that information near the top. Before you mention that she has arthritis.
- Spend as much time on the positives as the negatives. Or even more. Ask more questions about the positives. Often, a dog’s shelter or caregiver will give us a book-length explanation of a bad behavior to make sure we fully understand, but unless we ask, we don’t know nearly as much about the good behaviors.

Focusing too much on the negatives results in blurbs like this: *“Andy unfortunately has leash reactivity, so although he can live peaceably with other dogs (as long as they’re submissive; he may challenge alpha dogs for dominance), he does behave threateningly toward other dogs when he’s on walks. With some training, you may be able to improve or even correct this behavior in time. But it will take a lot of patience. Andy is a loving boy, though, and so worth it!”*

Here’s how to focus on the positive instead: *“Andy is an empathic snuggle-bear! He’s that rare sort of pooch who is so thoughtful, and cares so much about how others feel, that he could easily become one of the most important ‘people’ in your life. He’ll come thump-thump-thumping over to you with his big Chewbacca paws and then sit his soft, scruffy self in your lap – oomph! That’s a lot to hold in your lap! And then he’ll look in your eyes like he knows exactly what kind of day you’ve had. This dog loves absolutely everyone. Well, except other dogs when he’s out on a walk. He’s bad with other pooches when he’s on leash. But other than that, he loves everyone. You should see him when you turn on the TV! The way he races to get to his favorite spot on the couch. But don’t worry — all it takes is the gentlest nudge to scoot him.”*

4. At the end, urge readers to take the next step. At the bottom of the blurb, remind them how much you want them to call, email you or approach the shelter desk.

Near the end of the blurb is also where many people mention absolute requirements for adopting a particular animal, such as “The yard must have a six-foot fence” or “She must be the only pet.” When writing about a restriction or requirement, try to sound warm and encouraging toward the reader. The greatest danger when talking about restrictions is that while trying to ward off the unqualified applicant, you might scare away the qualified one by sounding unfriendly.

It’s not wrong to say what the requirements are, but you want to avoid making it sound like you don’t want people to call. And that can affect the reader’s split-second decision about whether to pick up the phone, send an email or approach the shelter’s front desk.

Here’s an example:

Good: *“Please call. Eva is longing to be the only pet in a home with a six-foot fence. And if you can give her that, then you can give her a miracle.”*

Not so good: *“Qualified adopters only. Must have six-foot fence, pink linoleum in the kitchen, green in both baths. MUST HAVE NO OTHER PETS.”*

5. Finally, carefully reread the whole profile. Ask yourself, “Would this make ME call?” If the answer is “Well ...,” then that’s not good enough. Go back over it — with your heart.