

THE 3 DAYS, 3 WEEKS, 3 MONTHS RULE FOR ADOPTING A RESCUE DOG



In the first 3 days

- Feeling overwhelmed
- May be scared and unsure of what is going on
- Not comfortable enough to be themselves
- May not want to eat or drink
- Shut down and want to curl up in their crate or hide under a table
- Testing the boundaries



After 3 weeks

- Starting to settle in
- Feeling more comfortable
- Realizing this could possibly be their forever home
- Becoming familiarized with routine and environment
- Letting their guard down and may start showing their true personality
- Behavioral issues may start to show up



After 3 months

- Finally feeling completely comfortable in their home
- Building trust and a true bond
- Gained a complete sense of security with their new family
- Set in a routine

Contact us for help any time • bnt@humanesocietysoco.org





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How long does it take a rescue dog to adjust? The honest answer is... it depends. Every dog and situation is unique and each dog will adjust differently. Some may follow the 3-3-3 rule completely, others may take 6 months to a year to feel completely comfortable. The 3-3-3 rule is a general guideline to help you manage your expectations.

In the first 3 days,

your new dog may be overwhelmed with their new surroundings. They might not be comfortable enough to be themselves. Don't be alarmed if they don't want to eat for the first couple of days; many dogs don't eat when they are stressed. They may shut down and want to curl up in their crate or under the table. They may be scared and unsure of what is going on. Or they may do the opposite and test you to see what they can get away with, kind of like a teenager. During this important bonding time, please don't introduce your dog to new people or invite people over. It's best for your new family member to stay away from stores, parks and crowds. Please contact our Behavior & Training team at bnt@humanesocietysoco.org if you have questions or would like to schedule a complimentary consult.

After 3 weeks,

they're starting to settle in, feeling more comfortable, and realizing this may be their forever home. They have figured out their environment and are getting into the routine you have set. They let their guard down and may start showing their real personality. Behavior issues may start showing up at this time. This is the time to request a behavior consult. Please email us at bnt@humanesocietysoco.org.

After 3 months,

your dog is most likely completely comfortable in their home. You have built trust and a true bond with your dog, which gives them a complete sense of security with you. They are set in their routine and will come to expect their dinner at their usual time.

BUT... don't be alarmed if it takes a bit more time before your dog is 100% comfortable.

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