

Thank you for adopting! Included are some tips to help get you and your new family member off to a good start.

### **Decompression:**

Your new family member—let's call him "Buddy"—has been living in a shelter. He is stressed from the experience and needs time to decompress and settle into your home. What Buddy needs right now is a calm and quiet place to relax.

Have a safe and comfortable space, preferably a crate, where he can go. You may reward Buddy when he is in his crate with treats or something like a Kong filled with banana and peanut butter. Give him space and let him relax.

Buddy may need a week or two to decompress. He may need more time. That is okay; be patient.

Allow Buddy to explore your home with you, one room at a time, on a leash. Allow him time to sniff and learn about his new home. Show him where his food and water are located. Show him his crate; if he wants to go in it, let him. Then give him some time to himself.

Now is not the time to put social pressure on Buddy. There is no need to visit the pet store or have friends and family over for a visit. Let him decompress first. Walks are a good idea, as Buddy needs some exercise, but don't have him meet other dogs or your neighbors yet. If Buddy passes another dog or person while on a walk and he behaves well, give him a treat; praise him, and let him know he's doing the right thing.

Supervise him. If you're not able to watch Buddy at the moment, have him go to his crate until you can. He doesn't know that garbage cans, kitchen counters, and shoes are off limits. If he seems to go for the garbage can, get his attention; call him over and give him a treat. When it is time for Buddy to go to his crate, toss a treat or Kong into the crate to lure him in. Don't force him into the crate; you want Buddy to decide it is something he wants to do.

Now is not the time to let Buddy on the couch or the bed. If you want to allow that later, you can. But for now, you are teaching him boundaries. If he does jump up on the couch or bed, toss a treat on the ground and simply say "off". Don't use your hands to grab his collar or try to move him. You want him to make the right choice, and a tossed treat on the ground is a great way to do that.

For now, Buddy should stay on a leash when he's in your yard—even if it's fenced in. He could be a fence jumper or hide in the bushes. More than likely, he is not going to come when you call him. From the beginning you want to make it easy for Buddy to do the right thing, and you can do that by keeping him on a leash. Remember: Buddy doesn't know you yet. He is overwhelmed and trying to figure things out.

Be patient. Give Buddy some time. Soon, he will realize that he's hit the jackpot.

For questions, please contact Kris at 770-971-6093 or [kris@bestindog.com](mailto:kris@bestindog.com)  
[www.bestindog.com](http://www.bestindog.com)

Copyright 2019-2021 Kris Hale/Best In Dog LLC