



# The 10 best ways to bond with your new Puppy/Dog

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**Bringing home a new dog is an exciting time, and we all want to start our dogs off on the right foot. For many of us, that means creating a strong bond with our new best friend. Like any relationship creating a deep bond takes time, but there are ways to strengthening it from day one. Here's 10 ways to bond with your new dog:**

## **1. Be Patient**

Each dog has its own personality, and some dogs take longer than others to warm up to new people and surroundings. Just like us, when dogs are put in a new

situation there's an adjustment period. Therefore, before we get into some of the fun & exciting ways to bond with your new dog I want to emphasize how important it is to have patience.

Not all dogs will bond immediately with a new owner – don't take it personally. They're in a brand new environment getting used to new sights, smells, and sounds. It can be a stressful time for your new dog, and you can help make them comfortable by **keeping things calm and positive** during those first couple of days.

I know it's tempting to go out and do all of the things with your new dog, but sometimes patience is key. If your dog seems shy or fearful take it slow; give them time to check out their new home and family. Although it's tempting don't overwhelm them by inviting everyone over to meet your new dog on the first day if they're showing any signs of stress or fearfulness.

## 2. Stick to a Schedule

Dogs love having a routine, so sticking to a set schedule from day one can help your new dog adjust. Routines provide comfort, and they'll teach your dog what's expected of them at any given time. Since dogs **thrive on routine** the sooner your new dog learns how your home functions the more comfortable he'll be. You can help your new dog adjust to your home by:

- Feeding at the same time every day
- Going outside for potty breaks consistently
- Going for your daily walk at the same time
- Going to bed around the same time each night

This also includes exercise time, cuddle time or any other **daily games or activities** she'll be involved with. I know many owners want to spend as much time as possible with their new dog, and that's wonderful. But try to incorporate at least some of your normal activities into the day during those first few weeks to help your dog adjust to what will become her normal routine.

## 3. Be Consistent With Rules

When it comes to bonding with your new dog remember to be consistent and clear. Make sure everyone in the family is on the same page when it comes to training. Have a family sit down and make sure everyone agrees on what behaviours are not OK, and which ones to reward. The quickest way to confuse and frustrate a dog is to have a different set of rules depending on whose giving out the orders.

If you don't want your dog on the furniture be sure everyone sticks to that rule, and make sure everyone is rewarding the same behaviours. It's not fair to your dog to punish them for a behaviour you disapprove of but your husband encourages. You can avoid frustration by ensuring that everyone in the family agrees on what behaviours are acceptable.



If you want to create a strong bond with your dog be clear and consistent, and be sure everyone is on board. If you don't want your dog to beg make sure dad isn't sneaking extra table scraps to Fido.

#### 4. Give Them Their Own Space

Imagine yourself in your dog's shoes (or paws) for a moment – surrounded by strangers in a new place where everything is unknown. It's a bit scary to say the least. Some dogs may feel overwhelmed those first couple of days, and one way to help alleviate some of that fear is by giving them their own special place.

To make your new dog more comfortable consider give him his own comfy bed, crate, or safe spot where he can retreat to when he's tired. Some dogs need a place to just chill out every once in a while, especially with the stress of being in a new environment. If your dog does retreat to his special place, remember not to take it personally and give him some time to decompress – being in a brand new place can be overwhelming.

#### 5. Engage Your Dog in Play

One of the funniest ways to bond with a new dog is to engage in some interactive play with them. Some dogs will be ready to play the instant they come home, and others might need to be coaxed. If your dog isn't willing to play it may be because he's still overwhelmed by his new surroundings; let him settle in for a bit and try again later.

If you want to engage your dog in play try a simple game of chase/fetch. Try rolling a toy around on the ground and see if you can get them excited about chasing it. If they're still not interested show them how it's done; chase the toy yourself to show them how much fun it is. Here are some other **fun dog games** to try with your new dog:

- Frisbee
- Find It (**hiding treats**)
- Tug of War

- Food dispensing toys



Engaging in play will strengthen the bond you have with your dog, and it can also help cut down on problem behaviours. Studies **have found** that a lack of play increases the likelihood of dogs developing behavioural problems such as whining, jumping up, and not coming when called.

## 6. Relax Together

When it comes to bonding with a new dog it's hard to go wrong with just spending some quality one on one time chilling out together. Invite your dog up onto the couch with you for some cuddle time, or get down onto the ground and invite your dog over to show off your doggie massage techniques.

Laika and I have our own cuddle time on the couch every evening. Chilling out is a nice way to spend some quality time together before bed, and by working it into your routine you can teach your dog that 9PM (or whatever time you choose) is time for settling down.

## 7. Exercise with Your Dog

Giving your dog enough physical exercise is important to their well-being, and there's plenty of ways to make it a fun bonding experience. And it's good for you too, all that fresh air and physical activity can be quite the stress reliever.

One of the best ways to bond with your new dog is to take them out for a walk to explore their new neighbourhood. Since they're unfamiliar with the area be sure to give them some extra time to explore and check out all the exciting new sights & smells. Other fun ways to exercise with your dog include:

- Frisbee
- Fetch
- Swimming
- Jogging
- Tug of war

## 8. Practice Some Hand Feeding

**Hand feeding** your dog is simply feeding your dog out of your hand, and it's especially useful for shy or fearful dogs. It's an exercise that will build trust between you and your dog, and it's a good way to start strengthening that bond.

If you're not too keen on having your dog take food directly out of your hand you can have your dog sit nicely as you give them treats. That closeness still builds trust (and can improve their **manners**), and helps to teach your dog that you are the provider of good things (which is very helpful when it comes to training).



Hand feeding is a quick way to build trust and strengthen the bond between you and your new dog. Hand feeding also improves impulse control; helps teach some bite inhibition and can slow down fast eaters.

## 9. Work on Some Simple Tricks

Puppies aren't too young to learn some basic tricks, and training is a great way to bond with your new dog. Just be mindful that their attention span is limited, so remember to keep your training sessions on the short side. You'll also want to teach your dog to come when called, so it's a good idea to start laying down the foundation for a **reliable recall**.

Not sure where to begin with training your new dog? Here are some of the simple tricks you can start with:

- Sit
- Stay
- Lie Down
- Shake

## 10. Encourage Behaviours You Like

When you bring your new dog home remember that they don't know what the rules are, and they're not going to be familiar with your preferences. If your dog does something you approve of, is sure to let them know with verbal praise or affection. If your dog waits patiently as you prepare dinner let them know what a good girl they

are. And if your dog sits nicely as you put on his leash before taking him out let him know he's a good boy. By clearly communicating with your dog that they're doing *something* good you can encourage them to repeat those desired behaviours later on.

## **Be Patient, Consistent and Positive**

Each dog is different, and they each come with their own experiences and personalities. Your dog might start to settle in and bond with you in an hour or it may take months.

Give your new dog some time, consistency, a steady schedule, and his own space and he'll start to feel settled in his new environment. Stay positive and be patient; your new dog will be your best friend before you know it.