



Dogs' Homes of Tasmania

Operated by the Tasmanian Canine Defence League.
Locations at Hobart, Devonport, & Burnie.

Post Office Box 7
Lindisfarne TAS 7015

www.dogshomesoftas.com.au

Love this dogshome

Caring for Dogs~ Maintaining Health & Wellbeing

When Dog Meets Dog



Introducing your new dog to your resident dog.

Plan ahead for friendly and calm 'dog introductions'.

Choose a neutral location

Dogs establish a social structure within their group to maintain order, reduce conflict and promote cooperation. Dogs also establish territories which they may defend against rivals or intruders. Their social and territorial nature means we need to plan ahead to manage 'dog introductions'.

Introduce your dogs in a neutral location so that your resident dog is less likely to view the newcomer as a territorial intruder. Each dog should be handled by a separate person. With both on leash, take them to an area with which neither is familiar, such as a park or a neighbour's yard. If you frequently walk your resident dog in a park near your house, choose another site that's unfamiliar.

We ask you to bring your resident dog with you to the Dogs' Home and introduce him or her to the new dog before adopting.

Be aware of your dogs' body language

One body posture which indicates that things are going well is the 'play-bow'. One dog will crouch with their front legs on the ground and the hind end in the air. This is an invitation to play that usually elicits friendly behaviour from the other dog.

Watch carefully for body postures that indicate an aggressive response including hair standing up on the dog's back (hackles-raised), teeth-baring, deep growls, a stiff legged gait or a prolonged stare. If you see such postures, interrupt the interaction immediately by calmly and positively getting each dog interested in something else.

For example, both handlers can call their dogs to them, have them sit and reward with a food treat. The dogs will become interested in the treats which will prevent the situation from escalating into aggression. Try letting the dogs interact again, but this time for a shorter period and at a greater distance from each other.

Use positive reinforcement

From the first meeting, you want both dogs to expect 'good things' to happen when they're in each other's presence. Praise, 'happy talk', food treats are all important in this process. While things are progressing calmly and smoothly, talk in a happy voice and praise both dogs. If there are signs of aggression, don't use a threatening tone of voice but simply distract the dogs. Don't allow the dogs to investigate and sniff each other for a prolonged time as this may lead to some aggression. Start with very short sessions and build up, rewarding calm behaviour in both dogs. When the dogs are tolerating each other without fear or aggression, it's time to take them home. Whether you take them home in the same vehicle or not will depend on their size and how trouble-free the introduction was.

If you have more than one resident dog in your household, it is best to introduce the resident dogs to the new dog one at a time. Two or more dogs may have a tendency to 'gang-up' on the newcomer.

Introducing puppies to adult dogs

Puppies usually pester adult dogs unmercifully. Before the age of four months, puppies may not recognise subtle body postures from adult dogs who try to signal that they've had enough!

Well socialised adult dogs with good temperaments may set limits with puppies by growling or snarling. These behaviours are normal and should be allowed. Adult dogs that aren't as well socialised may attempt to set limits with more aggressive behaviours such as biting, which could harm a puppy. For this reason, a puppy shouldn't be left alone with an adult dog until you're confident the puppy isn't in any danger. Be sure to give the adult dogs some quiet time away from puppy as well as some individual attention.



Burnie Dogs' Home

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Burnie TAS 7320**

Ph: (03) 6431 6199

Devonport Dogs' Home

**Spreyton Park Racecourse
Devonport TAS 7310**

Ph: (03) 6427 2178

Hobart Dogs' Home

**101 Scotts Rd.,
Risdon Vale TAS 7016**

Ph: (03) 6243 5177

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