



FOSTER DOG MANUAL

WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN YOU'RE FOS'PECTING



FOSTER DOGS

INTRODUCTION



CONGRATULATIONS— IT'S A... DOG!



Welcome to the wonderful and rewarding world of fostering! We hope this foster manual helps you get prepared when you're fostering.

According to the ASPCA, of the 3.9 million dogs entering shelters every year, “approximately 35% are adopted, 31% are euthanized and 26% of dogs who came in as strays are returned to their owner.” Foster dogs come from all backgrounds: some are from other countries, some have suffered abuse, while others once lived in nice homes but the owner was no longer able to keep the dog. All of them, however, depend on us for help.



A dog in a foster home is a life saved. As a foster dog parent, you are helping a homeless dog by providing a loving and stable home. This helps prepare him or her for adoption.

Let's not forget that this can also be fun and rewarding! Fostering a dog can be challenging at times, but you are certainly not alone. There are many support systems in place to help you: the rescue organization, other dog-lovers, and—of course—Foster Dogs, Inc.

FOSTER PARENTS' BILL OF RIGHTS

Thank you for volunteering your time and energy to a very deserving dog! Whether you are preparing for your first foster dog or you are a seasoned foster parent, it is always important to keep your rights as a foster parent in mind. Your well-being is just as important as that of your foster dog.

WORK WITH A RESCUE GROUP OR SHELTER WHOM YOU TRUST. You can volunteer with a group, and/or ask your dog-loving friends if they have recommendations. There are many organizations, so you will want to find the right fit by doing a little research and asking questions. As a foster volunteer, you are an invaluable resource!

BE FLEXIBLE, BUT STAND UP FOR YOURSELF AND/OR YOUR FOSTER DOG. Rescue organizations frequently deal with stressful situations, so if they do not immediately reply to your questions, try to be understanding and flexible. However, do speak up if you experience serious concerns.

DO NOT FEEL OBLIGATED TO ADOPT YOUR FOSTER DOG. Good foster homes are priceless, so keep on fostering over and over; you will become addicted!

KNOW WHERE TO FIND HELPFUL INFORMATION AND RESOURCES. FosterDogsNYC.com is a great place to start if you have fostering questions. You can also talk to your rescue group to find out their preferred vets, trainers, or dog-sitters.

YOU CAN BE PART OF THE ADOPTION PROCESS. Many organizations will let you be a part of the adoption process, especially if you have been with the dog for an extended period of time. If you want to be a part of the adoption decision, just ask how you can be more involved!

STAY IN TOUCH ONCE YOUR FOSTER DOG IS ADOPTED! If you want an update on how your foster dog is doing, offer your contact information to the adopter. Especially with email and social media (Instagram, Facebook, etc.), it is becoming easier to stay in touch once your foster is adopted.

BEFORE YOU FOSTER

HERE'S WHAT TO ASK YOURSELF



FOR HOW
LONG CAN
I FOSTER
THIS DOG?



WHAT WILL
I DO WITH THE
DOG WHILE
I'M AT WORK?



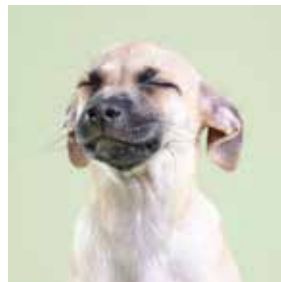
DOES MY
BUILDING
ALLOW DOGS?



HOW WILL
MY RESIDENT
PET HANDLE A
NEW GUEST?



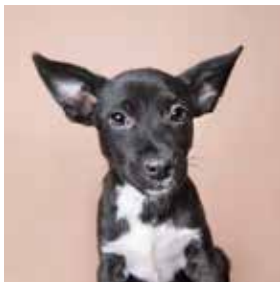
WHERE
WILL
THE DOG
SLEEP?



ARE MY
ROOMMATES
ON BOARD?



WHAT TYPE
OF DOG CAN
I HANDLE?



Once you have decided on logistics, make sure that you communicate your comfort level to the rescue group so they can successfully pair you with a dog that is the right fit. You'll start to bond, and may feel sad when he/she gets adopted. Sure, saying "goodbye" can be tough and emotional, but you will recover and then jump back into fostering another pup!

For more frequently asked questions, visit
FOSTERDOGSNYC.COM/CHECKLIST

GET READY

TIME TO DOGGY-PROOF YOUR HOUSE!

IT IS GREAT TO BE PROACTIVE AND MAKE YOUR HOUSE SAFE FOR A NEW DOG.

Make sure to tuck away things at dog height that your foster may get into, such as wires, shoes, houseplants, and open garbage cans. You will potentially need the following items: food, leash, collar, harness, dog ID tag, and an “Adopt Me” bandana. Once you are approved by the rescue group to begin fostering and confirm your commitment to fostering for a certain duration, please keep your promise. It is important that you follow through with your commitment, for the pup’s sake.

If you buy supplies for your foster dog, they may be tax-deductible!*



from the trainer

1. Opening your home and your heart to animals in need is an extremely rewarding experience in endless ways, one of which is to have the opportunity to learn an enormous amount about animal behavior, how to build trust and confidence in a dog, and how to help them learn behaviors that will increase their odds of being adopted into a loving forever home.
2. Every foster dog will adjust differently to their new, temporary home.

FIRST FEW DAYS WITH THE DOG

YOUR FOSTER DOG IS HERE! NOW WHAT?

Depending on the situation from which the dog comes, your foster dog may need a little (or lot) of time to decompress. Ask the rescue group what they think, but be flexible and observe the dog. First, see if the dog needs a bath; check for fleas and ticks.

Once in your home, the dog might act differently than predicted. If the dog is shying away, let him/her settle down. Do not seek out contact or interactions until the dog comes to you. You can encourage him/her with treats by either sitting on the floor and letting him/her come to you, or by gently calling the dog. Understand that it might take time for your dog to acclimate to you and your home. It is best to take things slow—no parties, limit visitors, and slowly introduce your dog to walks, other dogs, etc...until your foster dog seems more comfortable.

Also, establish a routine. Dogs respond well to walks, meals, and bedtime happening on a consistent schedule. It is normal for your foster dog to have less of an appetite, fear of urinating on the sidewalk, or sleep a lot for the first few days or so. Keep an eye out for anything unusual. Alert the rescue organization if you think there is something serious going on with your foster dog.



from the trainer

1. Even if you think your foster dog is house trained, it is common for mistakes to happen while they adjust to a new environment, potentially new food, and a new schedule.
2. Many rescue dogs go through a difficult journey. They may have been neglected or treated unkindly in a previous home. Some dogs recover quickly and others need more time, patience, and effort to flourish. Your consistent, calm, and kind behavior will help them develop a fresh new perspective about people.

YOUR ROLE

YOUR PRIMARY ROLE AS
A FOSTER
PARENT IS...



YOUR ROLE

...to be a loving and patient caretaker while your foster dog acclimates to domestic life. You are his/her biggest advocate! Your “job” as a foster parent is to learn about your foster dog’s personality and behaviors, in order to help find a great adopter. You can help facilitate the process by doing the following:

BE PATIENT. Part of fostering is about taking a risk—an exciting one!—and you cannot always know everything about your incoming foster dog before they arrive. Stay patient and understanding when learning about your foster dog’s personality and behaviors. It will be a big help to the rescuers and to the dog’s future adopter!

WORK ON A LITTLE TRAINING. Many dogs are treat-motivated and respond well to positive reinforcement. Consistency is key!

SLOWLY AND SAFELY EXPOSE THE DOG TO NEW THINGS. Ask the rescue group if it is okay to take your foster dog to the dog park, or to introduce the dog to kids, other dogs, and cats.

HELP THE RESCUE GROUP IN PROMOTING THE DOG. Wearing “Adopt Me” paraphernalia on walks will help your dog get noticed. You can make business cards with your contact info and the dog’s name, to distribute to people who may be interested in adopting. Download and print cards yourself! fosterdogsnyc.com/manual

TAKE GOOD PHOTOS AND VIDEOS. Cheerful and flattering pictures of your foster dog can significantly improve adopter interest. Check out our tips and tricks: fosterdogsnyc.com/photo-tips

USE SOCIAL MEDIA (AND ADOPTION EVENTS) TO PROMOTE YOUR DOG. It can be fun for you, and helpful for your foster dog and rescue group. Keep your messaging positive! Go to adoption events near you, when possible. Meeting in-person can make a world of difference.

SHARE WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNED WITH THE NEW ADOPTER. After spending days, weeks, or months with your foster dog, you have gained knowledge about this dog’s temperament and interests. Complete a helpful sheet for the dog’s new home: fosterdogsnyc.com/all-about-me


Additional tips: FOSTERDOGSNYC.COM/YOUR-ROLE

from the trainer

1. The key to helping your foster dog adjust and flourish is to provide a calm, consistent environment, appropriate management, clear guidelines in regards to their behavior, and of course lots of love.
2. It’s important to provide your foster dog with frequent exposure to the world they are going to live in, but in many cases this must be done in very small doses so as not to overwhelm him/her.

POO HAPPENS

DON'T SWEAT THE SMALL STUFF



PEE OR POO IN THE HOUSE
WORMS, FLEAS, TICKS
VOMIT, DIARRHEA
CHEW, NIBBLE, SCRATCH
PANT, PACE, BARK, WHINE
PULL ON LEASH
SEPARATION ANXIETY
WHIMPER DURING THE NIGHT

RESOURCES

YOU CAN FIND
ADDITIONAL
RESOURCES...

...on FosterDogsNYC.com, under “Foster Manual.”

SUBMISSION FORM (NYC-AREA ONLY):

fosterdogsnyc.com/submit-your-adoptable-dog

FORM FOR NEW ADOPTERS, FROM FOSTER PARENT:

fosterdogsnyc.com/all-about-me

FOSTER CHECKLIST (QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF AND THE RESCUE GROUP):

fosterdogsnyc.com/checklists

PHOTOGRAPHY TIPS:

fosterdogsnyc.com/photo-tips

CRATE TRAINING AND HOUSING TRAINING TIPS:

fosterdogsnyc.com/training-tips

FOSTER BUSINESS CARDS (DOWNLOAD THEM YOURSELF!):

fosterdogsnyc.com/business-cards

FOSTER DOG FORUM FOR CONNECTING WITH OTHER FOSTERS:

facebook.com/groups/fosterdogforum

MISSION



FOSTER DOGS

Foster Dogs is the connection between people who want to help a shelter dog, and the dogs who need help. Foster Dogs helps animal rescuers find temporary homes for their available dogs, while providing potential foster caretakers with the knowledge and resources to have a positive foster experience.

A 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

fosterdogsnyc.com

Thank you to the following for your donation to this manual:

PHOTOGRAPHY BY SOPHIE GAMAND | SophieGamand.com | [@SophieGamand](https://twitter.com/SophieGamand)

GRAPHIC DESIGN BY DORIE HERMAN | DorieHerman.com | [@DorieDesignNYC](https://twitter.com/DorieDesignNYC)

TRAINING TIPS BY ANDREA ARDEN | AndreaArden.com | [@AndreaArden](https://twitter.com/AndreaArden)

Foster Dogs is so grateful for your support and for your unwavering dedication to dog rescue.