Welcome Home!

Congratulations on your new family member!

You've just changed a life—yours and your dog's.
We're here to help you every step of the way.

THE FIRST 24–48 HOURS

The first couple of days are all about helping your dog feel safe.

Your new dog may feel overwhelmed, confused or scared. This is normal.

Patience, kindness and a calm environment will help them settle in.

GIVE YOUR DOG TIME TO ADJUST

Let them explore at their own pace. Avoid too much attention or too many new experiences right away.

CREATING A SAFE SPACE

Set up a quiet space with a comfy bed, fresh water and toys. This is their "safe zone" to relax and recharge.

INTRODUCING FAMILY MEMBERS

Introduce one or two people at a time. Let your dog approach and greet on their own terms.

INTRODUCING OTHER PETS

Take it slow. Keep initial meetings short and positive. Supervise all interactions and give everyone space.

THINGS YOUR DOG MAY EXPERIENCE

HIDING
It's natural for your dog to hide or seek a quiet place. Don't force them out. Let them come to you when they're ready.

NOT EATING
Many dogs don't eat much (or at all) in the first few days. This should improve as they feel more comfortable.

ACCIDENTS
Even housetrained dogs may have accidents while they learn their new routine. Be patient and consistent.

BARKING OR WHINING
They may vocalize due to stress, excitement or being alone. Keep calm and avoid giving attention when barking for attention.

THE 3-3-3 RULE

3 DAYS TO DECOMPRESS

- Feeling overwhelmed
- Not comfortable enough to be themselves
- May not want to eat or drink
- Testing the new environment

3 WEEKS TO LEARN YOUR ROUTINE

- Starting to settle in
- Learning the rules
- Feeling more comfortable
- Understanding this could be their forever home

3 MONTHS TO FEEL AT HOME

- Building trust and a bond
- Gaining confidence
- Learning to relax
- Truly becoming part of the family

Every dog is different Some dogs may take more time — and that's okay!

EMERGENCY CONTACT NUMBERS

Humane Society of the BVI (Shelter – Josiah's Bay)	284-494-9008
After Hours Emergency (Vijay)	284-540-2299
Canine Cat's and Critters (vet)	284-545-5964

Rescue. Rehabilitate Rehome. Repeat.

THE HUMANE SOCIETY British Virgin Islands

THANK YOU FOR ADOPTING AND CHOOSING TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

Daily Care

A consistent daily routine helps your dog feel secure, happy and healthy. Below are the essentials every dog needs.

Thank you for giving your dog the love and care they deserve!

FEEDING SCHEDULE

Feed your dog high-quality food that's appropriate for their age, size and activity level. Puppies usually need 3–4 small meals a day, while adult dogs do well with 2 meals a day. Stick to a regular schedule to support healthy digestion and prevent begging or overeating.

FRESH WATER

Clean, fresh water should always be available. Change it daily and keep the bowl clean. Proper hydration is essential, especially in our warm, tropical climate.

EXERCISE NEEDS

Daily exercise keeps your dog physically healthy and mentally balanced. Most dogs benefit from at least 30–60 minutes of activity each day, such as walks, playtime, or supervised off-leash time in a safe area.

TOILET ROUTINE

Take your dog out first thing in the morning, after meals, after playtime and before bed. Praise and reward them for going in the right spot. Consistency is key to successful house training.

GROOMING

Regular grooming keeps your dog clean, comfortable and healthy. Brush their coat to reduce shedding and check for skin issues. Trim nails regularly and clean ears gently. How often depends on your dog's coat type and lifestyle.

SLEEPING ARRANGEMENTS

Provide a comfortable, quiet and secure place for your dog to rest. Their bed should be the right size, in a safe area away from heavy foot traffic and loud noises. A well-rested dog is a happy dog!

TOYS AND ENRICHMENT

Toys provide fun and help prevent boredom and destructive behaviour. Offer a variety of toys such as chew toys, balls and puzzle toys. Rotate them regularly to keep things exciting.

MENTAL STIMULATION

Mental exercise is just as important as physical exercise. Teach new commands, use puzzle feeder toys, practice tricks and provide scent games to keep your dog's mind sharp.

CHEWING – WHAT'S OKAY AND WHAT'S NOT

Chewing is natural for dogs, but choose safe and appropriate items. Good choices include chew toys, rubber toys and dental chews. Avoid giving cooked bones, antlers, hard hooves or anything that can splinter. Keep shoes, furniture and other valuables out of reach!

HEAT SAFETY
(ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT IN THE BVI)

Dogs can overheat quickly in our tropical climate. Always provide shade and fresh water. Exercise your dog during cooler parts of the day (early morning or evening). Watch for signs of heat stress: heavy panting, drooling, weakness or bright red gums. If in doubt, cool them down and contact a vet.

NEVER LEAVE DOGS IN VEHICLES

Even with the windows cracked, the temperature inside a car can rise dangerously fast. Leaving your dog in a vehicle can lead to heatstroke, serious injury or death.

If you wouldn't do it to a child, don't do it to your dog.

A LITTLE CARE EVERY DAY ♡ A LIFETIME OF LOVE IN RETURN

Training & Health

Training, socialization and good healthcare are the building blocks for a happy, well-adjusted dog. Use positive, reward-based methods and be patient – your dog is learning every day.

Together, we can help your dog live their best life!

POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT

Reward your dog for good behaviour with treats, praise, toys or affection. Positive reinforcement builds trust, strengthens your bond and helps your dog learn faster and with confidence. Never use punishment – it creates fear and can damage your relationship.

HOUSE TRAINING

Take your dog out first thing in the morning, after meals, after playtime and before bed. Praise and reward them when they go in the right spot. Consistency, patience and routine are the keys to success.

BASIC COMMANDS

Start with short, fun training sessions.
Keep it positive and practice every day.

SIT

Ask your dog to sit before meals, going outside or greeting people.

STAY

Teach your dog to stay in place until you release them. Start with just a few seconds and build up.

COME

Always reward your dog when they come to you. This could be a life-saving command one day.

LEAVE IT

Helps keep your dog safe by teaching them to ignore things they shouldn't pick up or chase.

CONSISTENCY, PATIENCE AND LOVE ARE YOUR DOG'S BEST TEACHERS.

SOCIALIZATION

Expose your dog to new people, dogs, sights, sounds and experiences in a positive way. Good socialization helps prevent fear and aggression and builds a confident dog.

WALKING ON A LEAD

Use a properly fitted collar or harness and a sturdy lead.
Keep walks positive and enjoyable.
Avoid pulling – stop walking when they pull and start again when the lead is loose.

VETERINARY CARE

Regular vet visits are essential for your dog's health. Early detection of problems can save lives.

Annual check-ups help keep your dog happy and healthy.

Prevention is always better than cure!

VACCINATIONS

Keep vaccinations up to date to protect your dog from serious and potentially deadly diseases.

DEWORMING

Regular deworming protects your dog from intestinal parasites and keeps them – and your family – safe.

FLEA & TICK PREVENTION

Use vet-recommended products year-round to protect your dog from fleas and ticks, which can cause skin problems and disease.

HEARTWORM PREVENTION

Mosquitoes are active all year in the BVI. Monthly prevention is the best way to protect your dog from heartworm – a serious and potentially fatal disease.

MICROCHIP REGISTRATION

Ensure your dog's microchip is registered with your current contact details. It greatly increases the chance of a happy reunion if your dog is lost.

SPAYING / NEUTERING (IF APPLICABLE)

Spaying or neutering helps prevent unwanted litters and reduces the risk of certain health problems. Ask your vet what's best for your dog.

Every small step today builds a stronger bond and a brighter future.

A WELL-TRAINED AND HEALTHY DOG IS A JOY FOR LIFE.

Being a Responsible Dog Owner

A RESPONSIBLE OWNER GIVES THEIR DOG A SAFE, HAPPY AND HEALTHY LIFE — EVERY DAY.

DOG REGISTRATION / LICENSING

Register your dog and keep your license up to date as required by local law. It helps reunite lost dogs with their families and supports animal welfare in the BVI.

IDENTIFICATION TAGS

Always keep an ID tag with your current contact details on your dog's collar. This is essential even if your dog is microchipped.

KEEPING YOUR DOG SECURE

Ensure your dog cannot escape your yard or property. Check fences, gates and latches regularly. A secure dog is a safe dog.

PICKING UP AFTER YOUR DOG

Always clean up after your dog, on the beach, on the road, in parks and in your neighbourhood. It's respectful, responsible and required by law.

NEVER ABANDON OR REHOME WITHOUT CONTACTING THE HUMANE SOCIETY

If you can no longer care for your dog, please contact us first. We will help find the best solution for your dog's well-being.

TRAVELING WITH YOUR DOG

Plan ahead and bring what your dog needs: food, water, leash, ID tags, waste bags and any medications. Never leave your dog unattended in a vehicle.

COMMON POISONOUS FOODS AND PLANTS

Keep chocolate, grapes, raisins, onions, garlic, xylitol (sugar-free gum), alcohol, caffeine and macadamia nuts away from dogs.
Also avoid plants such as sago palm, lilies, oleander, dieffenbachia and aloe vera. When in doubt, keep it out!

SIGNS YOUR DOG NEEDS A VET IMMEDIATELY

Contact a vet right away if your dog shows any of the following: difficulty breathing, pale gums, collapse, seizures, vomiting repeatedly, bloody diarrhea, unwillingness to eat for more than 24 hours, sudden swelling, severe pain or if they have eaten something toxic.

DID YOU KNOW?

- Dogs sleep 14–18 hours a day.
- It can take several months before your dog completely trusts you.
- Mental exercise can tire a dog just as much as physical exercise.
- Routine, love and patience are the keys to a happy dog.

REMEMBER

Your dog doesn't need perfection — they need patience, consistency and love.

CALL A VET IMMEDIATELY IF YOUR DOG:

- Won't eat for more than 24 hours
- Has difficulty breathing
- Vomits repeatedly
- Has bloody diarrhea
- Collapses or seems very weak
- Has seizures
- Eats chocolate, grapes, xylitol, medications or other toxins

SCAN FOR MORE INFO!

HUMANE SOCIETY WEBSITE	VOLUNTEER PAGE	FACEBOOK PAGE

THANK YOU FOR BEING THE BEST THING IN YOUR DOG'S LIFE!

Your responsible choices today create a better future for all dogs.

THE HUMANE SOCIETY British Virgin Islands

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THANK YOU FOR MAKING A DIFFERENCE!