



# Rule of 3 for Rescue Pets

Helping a dog adjust—whether in foster care or after adoption—doesn't happen overnight. Every dog is unique and will settle in at their own pace, but the 3/3/3 rule provides a general guideline for what to expect during the transition period. Be patient and give them the time they need to move through these important stages.



## DAYS

### TO DECOMPRESS

*In the first few days, common behavior includes:*

- *Feeling overwhelmed*
- *Acting fearful or unsure of their new environment*
- *Not behaving like their usual self*
- *Lack of interest in food*
- *Hiding under furniture or shutting down*
- *Testing boundaries*



## WEEKS

### TO LEARN THE ROUTINE

*As the dog begins to adjust, you may notice:*

- *They start settling in*
- *Growing comfortable in their new surroundings*
- *A sense of security developing*
- *Their true personality emerging*
- *Potential behavioral challenges surfacing*



## MONTHS

### TO FEEL AT HOME

*By three months, the dog will likely:*

- *Feel completely comfortable in their home*
- *Build trust and form a strong bond with their foster or adoptive family*
- *Gain a true sense of security*
- *Fully settle into their new routine*