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The First 72 Hours: Arrival Checklist

FOSTERS & ADOPTERS

Before arrival

Prepare a dog-proofed crate, secure room, or exercise pen with bedding and water. Put away medications, cleaners, cords, trash, food, and small objects. Check gates, doors, leash, collar/harness fit, and identification. Plan a quiet route inside.

Arrival day

Take the dog directly to a safe potty area on leash. Bring them to their prepared space; offer water and a small meal according to instructions. Keep household activity low. Do not arrange a welcome party, dog-park visit, or immediate meet-and-greet.

First night

Provide a comfortable place to sleep, consistent potty opportunities, and quiet. Do not force crate use if the dog panics. Use a secure room or pen instead, subject to the dog's individual care plan.

Days 2–3

Maintain predictable feeding and walks. Keep pets separated until planned introductions are appropriate. Observe appetite, elimination, sleep, body language, and any medical concerns. Allow voluntary contact.

Daily check

Is the dog eating, drinking, urinating, defecating, resting, and moving comfortably? Are barriers secure? Is everyone in the household respecting the dog's retreat? Report concerns early.

Non-negotiable

Children and new dogs are never left together without active adult supervision. Separate the dog from resident pets whenever direct supervision is unavailable until an individualized plan allows otherwise.