



## **A NOTE FROM YOUR NEW SOI DOG**

Thank you so much for adopting me! Now I have arrived at your home, please be patient with me. There's a huge difference between my life at a shelter and my new home here with you. I will probably be feeling confused, anxious or unsure. Although everything here is normal to you, everything here is new to me. With time and support I will grow to feel more comfortable, and I will learn to trust you. If you are patient with me, I will give you my heart.

It is so great that I have finally found you. I have waited so long to be part of your family. However, I will need your help during these first weeks and months, as I may have been at the shelter for a long time. I might feel sad, scared and stressed for a while, because I have just lost my home. At the Soi Dog shelter I had gotten used to the sights, sounds and smells. I was also around a lot of other dogs, and I may miss some of them. I might also miss my care giver and the volunteers who spent time with me. I am now in a new world and I have different routines to learn. But I am sure that with your help, I can adapt to this new world, and that we will make each other very happy. The following information will help you to help me:

### **IMPORTANT SAFETY EQUIPMENT PROTOCOLS**

#### **ALL ADOPTED OR FOSTERED SOI DOGS MUST BE SUPPORTED WITH THE FOLLOWING SAFETY EQUIPMENT:**

- 1. A well fitted three-point harness that is snug and that the dog cannot back out of. This should be tested within the safety of your home before you take your dog for the first walk. The dog must NOT be able to back out of the harness if he/she panics. We recommend Ruffwear Webmaster or Doubleback harnesses. The harness must be attached to a clip lead when walking the dog. We recommend you keep this lead taught, and hold it in your hand.**
- 2. A snug fitting collar that the dog cannot back out of (we recommend a martingale collar). This collar must be attached to a second clip lead when walking your dog. We recommend you attach this lead to your body (e.g. belt strap) using a carabiner clip.**
- 3. A second snug fitting collar that the dog cannot back out of. This collar must have the dog's charged GPS tracker and id tag attached to it. This collar must remain on your dog at all times, and must NEVER be attached to a lead. This collar should be placed on your dog first (i.e. closest to the dog's body).**

**4. When walking your dog, you must ensure your dog is wearing both collars, a harness and both leads.**

**Please never assume your dog cannot get over your fence. A dog in panic mode can accomplish amazing escapes, and have been known to scale 6 foot fences.**

**Whilst these safety precautions may seem extreme, we have sadly experienced far too many cases where dogs have bolted from what appeared to be adequate safety equipment. We do not want this to happen to your dog, and so we appreciate you taking the steps to keep him/her safe.**

**When I first arrive please do not let me out of my crate until I'm in a secure area, preferably inside your house, as I may be very scared and want to escape! If I was to become lost it would be very hard to catch me. I would be scared and alone, so you must ensure you let me out of my crate in a secure environment.**

**I will arrive with a microchip already inserted. Please make sure you register this chip with your local authorities PRIOR to my arrival. In the unlikely event that I get lost, this will help you to find me quickly. My microchip number is on the adoption agreement that you signed.**



**Please keep my GPS tracker on me AT ALL TIMES, EVEN WHEN I'M IN THE HOME. Only take it off when you are charging the battery, and make sure I'm in a secure area when you do this. Please make sure you use the app to support my tracker - you can do this via your smartphone or pc. If I get lost, the GPS tracker is the most effective way to find me quickly.**

**IMMEDIATELY upon my arrival at your home, please have my new collar waiting for me and please ensure it has a tag attached with your home phone number. I need to wear my collar at all times. If I get lost, this will ensure anyone who finds me can call you and we can**



**be re-united as soon as possible. Make sure I have other required tags that might be specific to your home country, like a dog license or rabies tag.**

### **My New Home**

When I arrive in the house, let me have a sniff and a look around **WHILE STILL ON AT LEAST ONE LEAD**. First let's do this together without your other pets. Remember, it is OK for me to be kept away from some areas of our home until I have learned not to damage things and where I should go to toilet, or to keep me safe.

### **Give Me Time**

Please allow me plenty of time to get to know you, and to feel comfortable in my new home. I may need even longer to get used to other new family members, friends, and all the other new things that I will encounter. I cannot tell you how long it will take for me to feel comfortable, but if you let me decide the pace, I am sure that I will get there. Especially with your help.

When I first arrive, I will probably have a lot of stress hormones in my body, which can take days or weeks to go away. Please take this into account if I am nervous or fearful. Because of my past, many of the things I encounter in our home are completely new to me. If I show you signs that I am uncomfortable, such as moving away or growling, help me feel more relaxed so that I don't get overwhelmed. This will help make sure I don't overreact and snap at someone. This document provides advice on how you can make me feel more relaxed.



### A Note On My Behaviour

Please don't worry if I do not sleep in my new bed or play with the new toys you gave me right away, or if I don't want to go for walks at first. I might not have had a bed or toys of my own before, and new sounds could frighten me. When I first arrive, I may guard my food and it might take me a while to learn that no one will take it from me. Playing might be new to me, so I may show no interest in toys and games at first. I may pee inside the house, because being indoors could be new to me. I may be fearful of your touch, as I am not used to new people touching me. Please don't be upset by this: it is only because everything is new to me. As I get used to all these things, I will learn, and start to adapt to my new life.

Give me positive guidelines to follow and let me know what behaviour is wanted and acceptable through treats and positive reinforcement. If I chew on something I am not supposed to, or do something you don't like, it is probably because I do not understand, so give me something else to focus on, or show me what you want me to do instead.

### Introduce Me Gradually

I know you want to share me with family and friends, but please can we take this very slowly? I first need to feel relaxed and fully at home with you, and willing to engage with you, both when I want and when you want me to. Until then, please do nothing to add to my stress. If strangers of any age come to visit, please ask them to leave me alone for now. And please tell your friends not to do anything to make me feel uncomfortable, like approaching me directly or moving their hand over my head. It might scare me. Once I feel safe, introductions to other people and animals should be done slowly, allowing me to make the choice about whether to interact with them.

When you do have to leave me at home please start doing it gradually so I get used to you being away from me, perhaps for an hour, then two. Make sure I am in an area where I can't chew on cables or destroy any of your possessions as I may find this stressful at first. Putting me in the kitchen behind a baby gate with a bed, toys and a bowl of water will keep me and your belongings safe until I can be trusted on my own.



**Baby gates** are a useful tool to section off parts of the house.

If I am shy, or show signs of stress, you may have to introduce me gradually to each new person, animal, and place, one by one.

Please tell visitors to your home that I'm like a stranger from another country who does not understand your language, doesn't know how you do things, who needs help understanding the rules of this new place, and that you are teaching me all of this. It is best that they ignore me and I will approach them when I feel comfortable.



**Baby gates** at the front door prevent unwanted escapes and mean that you can greet visitors without having to worry about me.

If I begin to show signs of stress, please quietly remove whatever triggered my behaviour, or take me far enough away to allow me to relax. Please wait for me to do so. Stand quietly with me. If you remain calm and talk to me in a gentle voice, I will understand that all is well and I can relax.

### Help Me Relax

Allowing me my own space, not pressuring me, and being calm around me will all help me to relax. There are also other things you can use to support this. One is something called "dog appeasing pheromone", which normally comes in a special bottle that you can plug into the electric socket, or as a liquid you can sprinkle onto my bed. Flower essences and calming classical music are also things that you can try with me. When I am comfortable with your touch, gentle stroking or massage could also relax me.

### Other Pets

When it's time to meet your other pets, please introduce me to them one at a time. It is not a good idea to introduce me to your other dogs in our home: they might get aggressive with me as it was their home first. A local park would be a great place to introduce me to another dog. When we return home, please remove all toys and food bowls so that it doesn't trigger any guarding issues. If I am nervous about your other pets inside my new home, let me get used to them through a barrier like a baby gate. When I calm down, then let us be together with you there to supervise us.

If you have cats, please keep me separated from them and don't leave us unsupervised, until we've had time to get used to each other and until you're sure we're safe together.

## Going Out

When we go out for a walk, keep me on leash for at least 3 months. I may have lived at the shelter for a very long time and it will take me some time to realise that you are my new family and this is my new home. Once I have been with you for 3 months, please don't let me off the leash until we have bonded and I want to stay safely near you. I will also need some training before you let me off leash, so that I know to come when I am called. I need time to get used to my new surroundings, and strange noises may frighten me. You could use a 20-foot leash to help me learn the 'come' command. Please don't let me outside on my own because I will not be familiar with my new surroundings. I may also get distracted by something and want to give chase or investigate.



### Ideally secured dog:

- 3-point harness
- clip lead to attach to harness
- GPS tracker
- 2 collars (one for the GPS/id tag, one to attach the second lead)

**3-point harness**



**clip lead**



**martingale collar**



## A Safe Place

I may need a safe place of my own where I can relax to get used to my new home. This could be a space under the stairs, or a favourite corner or spot in the house. You can put a blanket or bed down for me so that I am comfortable. I can have treats and chew toys there so that I feel good, but please don't shut me into a small space: allow me to come and go as I please.

### **PLEASE DON'T CRATE ME!**

I am not used to being in such a confined space and crating is not something I'm likely to enjoy. Please allow me to settle into my surroundings without being crated.

If you need to separate me at meal times you can use a baby gate. Make sure the gate is secure and that I can't get my head/paws caught or jump over it.



### **My Diet**

Let me get used to my new diet gradually. The stress of changing homes may make my tummy unhappy with new foods. While I was at the shelter I was fed with dry food once a day. Chicken and rice for the first few days might help my tummy settle and then you can gradually introduce my new food a little at a time over the following weeks. I do like treats but please pay attention to what kind of treats they are (so that I don't get an upset tummy), and how many I have (so that I don't get out of shape). If you are giving me food as a reward or as part of my training, please adjust my meals to accommodate this.

### **My New Routines**

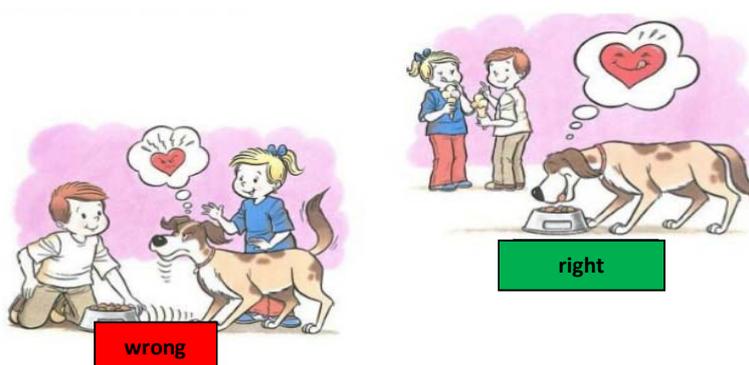
Start right away with the routines I must follow. Take me out regularly to learn to use the toilet in the garden and make a fuss of me after I do my business, as I will learn that what I am doing is something that pleases you. Do this often so that I can quickly learn where to go and so I won't have accidents in our house. But please understand that I might have some accidents in the beginning. A good time to take me out for toilet breaks is first thing in the morning and last thing at night, and also after my meals. I may not go to toilet on walks for the first few weeks, but with your help I will get used to the fact that it's OK to go on walks.

Please start right away by showing me house routines like where I will sleep at night and what I should do when you are eating dinner. Please tell me how good I am when I do what you want.

If you have more than one dog please feed us separately for the first weeks!

## Children

Show your children how to play politely with me and always be there to make sure we are being polite with each other. Dogs like me who've grown up at the shelter, or spent time on the streets, are not usually used to being around children. Closely supervise children around me at all times, and don't let children near me when I'm eating. Sometimes I can get too excited, tired or irritated just like a child can. So please separate us if I become uncomfortable with their attention, so that I can feel more relaxed again. If I have positive experiences with children, it will be easier for me to learn that they are nothing to be worried about.



Don't disturb the dog, while it is eating or sleeping.

## Vet check up

It is a good idea to take me to your veterinarian within the first week to get me checked over. I have flown a long way and am now in a different environment, so I want to be a healthy dog.



## Training Classes

I may be uncomfortable with strange dogs or people outside of my new home so taking me to a basic positive reinforcement dog training course might help me socialise with new dogs and people, and help me build my confidence. Learning some new things will also help me adjust to my new life, and to understand what is expected of me. It will also help you understand how to help me! But please give me some time to adjust to my new life first. Too many new things at once might overwhelm me, and I cannot learn well when I am stressed. Discuss with a trainer when is a good time for me to join a class.

## Be patient!

Remember that if I do something wrong, it is probably because I don't understand. I am not doing it deliberately, so help me learn what I should be doing instead.

If you have concerns about my behaviour, please ask for help.

**With your help, I can do this! I can stay with you for the rest of my life.**

