



RESCUE RULE OF 3

The Rule of 3 explains how dogs typically settle in after adoption. Understanding these stages helps you support your new family member as they decompress, adjust, and finally feel at home.



IN THE FIRST 3 DAYS: DECOMPRESSION

In the first three days, your new dog is simply trying to understand what's happening.

Everything is new, and they may feel overwhelmed, shut down, clingy, or unsure. This is the “survival mode” phase, where rest, predictability, and gentle support help them begin to feel safe.



IN THE FIRST 3 WEEKS: ADJUSTMENT



By three weeks, your dog starts to settle into your routine and show more of their true personality. They're learning your expectations, exploring the home, and figuring out how life works with you. This is when confidence grows — and sometimes when boundary-testing begins.



IN THE FIRST 3 MONTHS: FEELING HOME

Around three months, most dogs finally feel like they belong. Trust deepens, routines feel familiar, and your dog understands they're safe. This is when you'll see their real personality shine and the bond between you truly takes root.

