



Introducing Your New Dog to People

Having your dog meet new people can be fun for your dog and the people they meet but it can also bring some challenges. Friendly, excited dogs often jump on people, and fearful dogs may need a little space or help meeting new people. Have your dog meet people you know first, before having them meet strangers. Learn your dog's [body language](#), and watch for signs of stress, uncertainty, or fear. If your dog enjoys meeting new people, follow the tips below to help those greetings be successful.

Do's

- Have your dog on a loose leash while you are standing or sitting when greeting new people. This will help keep them close and allow you to remove them from the meeting if needed.
- Supervise your dog's interactions so you can be sure the friendly greeting is mutual; don't leave your dog unattended.
- Bring tasty treats with you and encourage people to give your dog treats when they meet – especially if your dog is shy. This will encourage your dog to like these interactions.
- Use a soft, happy voice to encourage your dog to say "hello" to the person. Ask the person to remain relaxed and still and allow the dog to sniff them.
- If your dog is really excited and starts jumping on anyone, ask your dog to 'sit' before being petted, or hold onto the leash so your dog cannot reach the person. Friends can be exciting, and your dog may need help to keep from jumping.
- Reinforce [training](#) with tricks or basics commands to keep your dog feeling confident in public interactions with strangers. Earning treats and praise from a stranger can help your dog feel like the "good dog" they are!

Don'ts

- Don't let people overwhelm your dog. Leaning over, hugging or crowding can be stressful. Give your dog space to move away, if and when needed.
- Don't let people put their face close to the dog's face, as this can cause them anxiety.
- Don't force your dog to receive petting or touch when he or she is showing [fearful body language](#), like moving away, tucking their tail, cowering, and/or trembling. Move your dog away from the person and don't continue the introduction or interaction.
- Some dogs can become reactive to people and lunge bark or growl if fearful. If your dog is barking and growling at people, please move away from the person and seek the help from your shelter/rescue organization, your foster coordinator, a positive reinforcement trainer or veterinary behaviorist. A little help can go a long way!



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