

PACIFIC CREST KEESHOND CLUB
Introducing Your Rescue Keeshond To Your Home

First things first – **CONGRATULATIONS!** - We are all so happy that you chose to help a Keeshond in need and were willing to open your home and hearts to this Smiling Dutch Dog.

The theme of this information packet is "**SET YOUR DOG UP TO SUCCEED!**" By understanding your new dog's behavior you can anticipate problems and correct them calmly and as quickly as possible. Be reasonable in your expectations. We want the adoption of your Keeshond to be a "win-win" situation on both sides!

Before you pick up your new Keeshond

Since you've chosen to adopt a Keeshond, you've probably educated yourself about:

1. The reasons this breed is unique (companion dog first, need to be a family member)
2. The breed's behavior characteristics (intensely loyal, protective, sensitive and playful)
3. The changes to your current lifestyle that this Keeshond will cause (time set aside daily for exercise and playtime, obedience, agility, tuggie).

The Pacific Crest Keeshond Club website (<http://pckclub.com>) has information about the uniqueness of this breed, Keeshond behavior and dog ownership that you might want to read. The adoption coordinator that you worked with told you about your Keeshond's history, veterinary information, evaluations and current eating, sleeping and activity routines so that their transition into your home can be easier. Dogs need order and are extremely routine oriented.

We recommend that you find out all you can about their routine and duplicate what you can before you start to reorient him to the rhythms and schedules of your home. Work out your house rules and dog care regimen in advance among the human members of your household. Who will walk the dog first thing in the morning? Who will feed him at night? Will Keeshond be allowed on the couch or bed? Where will he sleep at night? Will he be crated?

To ensure a smooth transition, you will receive at transfer; written history, vet records, rabies tag & microchip number, collar, leash, food, bowls.

Try and arrange the arrival of your new dog when you can be home for a few days for quality, hands on time. Introduce one good friend or a pet sitter who can come by mid-day to take him out for a recess walk in your yard. Keep a leash or long line on the dog. If you let them run free in the fenced yard. That way should he not come when called, his leash/long line can be casually picked up. Sit on something in the yard and when he comes over to you, praise him and give him a treat and roll up the leash/long line so he stays by you. You can get up and walk him around some more, releasing him to go out a few feet, then calling him back to you and giving it another treat. Treats should be easily digestible and not spicy. No upset tummies!

If you have **resident pets**, make sure they are up to date on their shots and in general good health before bringing home your new dog. Despite the best efforts of the rescue organization, previous owner or foster family, viruses can be spread and occasionally go home with adopted rescue dogs. You may wish to set up an appointment with your own vet to check out your new dog and set up an inoculation schedule, depending on the veterinary care your rescue dog has received.

Register for a positive training obedience class. Don't ignore this very important step in setting yourself and your Keeshond up for success! Be dogged about finding an obedience class or trainer. There are many positive reinforcement based dog obedience classes that teach dog manners, canine good citizenship and discipline. Try to register for a class starting about 3 to 4 weeks after your dog has come home with you. It is important that your new dog has some time to adjust to you and your home before putting him into the stimulating environment of an obedience class. Even the shortest "dog manners" course offered at a local pet store will reinforce the new bond between you and your new Keeshond, will give you a valuable face to face resource for questions about your dog's behavior, and will provide a powerful tool for moderating your rescue dog's less attractive behavior traits! Remember, Keeshonden need positive learning activities this is a really easy way to provide him with active, physical & mental work that you'll approve of! The rewards are obvious what a joy it is to have a well-mannered, trained Keeshond companion! If you have doggie friends who do obedience, see if you can meet with a few of them at a local park or school to work together for some fun positive, yet casual playdates. I would refrain from going to dog parks for several months. This may be way to stimulating your Kees.

New families often ask about changing the adopted dog's name. If you desire to, it is fine. Many times, the dogs are given names at random by a shelter. The dog will learn his new name if it's overused in the beginning. It is in no way traumatic to the dog to change his name.

When you arrive home...

Things to expect:

You should expect your new dog to act differently than how he did when you met him at the foster/owner's home. He will be excited, nervous and maybe tired after the trip to your house. Being routine oriented, your Keeshond may have just gotten comfortable at his foster home and now recognizes that the routine is changing yet again. He doesn't know the smells, the sounds, and importantly, the routines and rules of your house. This is very confusing for your Keeshond.

Dogs display **anxiety and nervousness** by: panting, pacing, lack of eye contact, "not listening," housebreaking accidents, excessive chewing, and gastric upset (vomiting, diarrhea, loose stools), crying, whining, jumpiness and barking. This is a litany of behaviors any and every dog owner dreads! As long as you understand where these behaviors originate, you can perhaps address them before they appear and deal effectively when they do! Your goal in the next weeks is to reduce the "noise & confusion in his head" and get him to relax, to be calm and show him how to be good. Despite your joy at adopting this Keeshond (and after a few enthusiastic hugs and kisses), you should be calm and gentle and firm with your Keeshond. Talk to him in a calm, low voice as you travel home, avoid playing the car radio and having too many people with you when you pick him up.

All rescue dogs go through a "honeymoon period." After the first day or so, the dog may be very quiet and extraordinarily controlled and "good." The "real" dog appears two to four weeks later after it's mostly figured out the house rules, the schedule of the days, and the characters of the new family. At this time, it will start testing out his position in the pack, and may "regress" to puppyhood behaviors and "bad" behavior. Be patient with him, firm in your expectations, praise him for appropriate behavior especially when he is lying quietly and behaving himself. Don't praise for nothing constantly the dog will learn to tune out your praise over time!

Things to Do:

LEASH YOUR DOG TO INTRODUCE HIM TO YOUR HOME

When you first bring your new dog home, make sure you have her on a leash! Spend the first 15 - 30 minutes walking her outside around the perimeter of your yard or the area that you will be with her most on your property. Walk slowly let her "lead" mostly and let her sniff and pause if she wants to. She is getting used to the "lay of the land" and all the smells associated with her new home. She will undoubtedly relieve herself this is her way of making herself at home by adding her mark to the smells of your home, and now her new home. Obviously you want this to happen outside! If you have a place you wish this to happen, encourage her to "get busy" in that area and praise her warmly when she does.

The excitement of the move and new family will cause her to have to relieve herself more often than normal. You must be prepared to give her plenty of opportunities to do this in the beginning!

Whenever the rescue dog is not confined, supervise it setting this dog up to win! You might want to consider isolating the new dog from your resident dogs during the first entry to your home. They will appreciate safe and quiet at first as he explores your home. Crate your resident dog or have someone take him for a walk while your new dog explores. Let the new dog explore the house leave them on a leash and make sure they are supervised AT ALL TIMES! We recommend leaving your new dog on leash in the house for the first day. Don't even leave the dog unsupervised while you answer the phone!

Once inside your house, a male may still accidentally mark a door, plant or chair when he first walks inside your home. This is out of nervousness (or he may smell another dog), so it is best to leave him on the leash indoors the first day. If he starts to lift his leg, give him a short jerk on the leash and say **UH OH!** That should stop him immediately and remind him of his housebreaking Manners without you shouting NO! **Do your best to NOT use NO with your rescue dog.** Follow up this correction by taking him outside in case he's not just marking! Bear in mind that if your Keeshond has a few accidents, it does not necessarily mean that he is not housebroken. We can't emphasize enough how much **nerves and excitement can cause uncharacteristic accidents.** Watch for typical pre-piddling behavior - circling, sniffing, etc. Do not scold or hit a dog for having an accident rather, verbally get their attention, grab the leash, and take them right outside to their spot to do his business. If they do it, praise them! Once they relax and learn the rhythms and routines of your home, all their manners will return!

Even in a fenced yard, you'll want to leave your rescued Keeshond on leash for the first week or so. This way, you can reinforce a recall command and help monitor pack behavior if you have other dogs. Until your new dog bonds to you and makes good eye contact, we recommend leaving her on leash.

PROVIDE QUIET TIME

Quiet time will be important for your new Keeshond in the first week. Because of his nervousness and anxiety, he will get worn out fast. His recent past may include a shelter stay which has worn him out with worry. Despite your excitement, try and resist inviting friends and relatives over to visit your Kees. Give it time to get used to your immediate family and resident pets only. If the dog does not solicit play or attention from you, let him alone to sleep or establish its self. Believe it or not, we don't want you to force him to play at first!

FEED YOUR NEW DOG

Feed your new dog twice a day; half in the morning, half at night. Ask and encourage the dog to sit before putting the bowl down. Put the food bowl down for 15 minutes. If the dog does not eat her food, pick up the bowl until the next mealtime. After a couple of days of this routine, even the most finicky of eaters will change their minds. Feeding this way you can monitor exactly how much she is eating. If you have other dogs, feed your rescue dog away from them but at the same time. I find that separation via a 'baby gate' works well. I also place the food dishes well away from the baby gate. This eliminates the 'fast eater' from hreatening the slow eater. If you have a food aggressive dog, make sure the dogs cannot see each other while eating. This will take the stress of both dogs. You may want to arrange having another adult in the feeding area for the first week of feedings to monitor the "pack behavior." Watch that each dog sticks to his own bowl. Keep vigilant over feeding time for a couple of months until the pack positions are worked out. You can feed each dog in their personal crate. Make sure the crates are not close to each other during feeding and if you have a food aggressive dog, drape a towel over its crate until all dogs have finished eating.

BEDTIME

Sleeping in their crate—no food/water if adult Kees:

Place the crate next to your side of the bed. Place a soft dog bed in the crate. This is comfortable for the dog and keeps the crate noise down when the Kees moves around during the night. Toss a yummy treat in the crate and close the door when the Kees enters the crate. Speak softly to him for a moment then tell him good night and turn off the light & hopefully go to sleep.

No crate or X-pen

Clip a 6' leash to his collar slip the loop handle over your wrist, tell him to lie down on the area you have prepared on the floor next to your side of the bed. Tell him to lie down & good night and turn off the light & hopefully go to sleep. If he gets restless during the night, you will know it by the leash pulling against your wrist. Get up and take him outside and then both of you back to your respective beds to try it again. Most Kees, if allowed to sleep on the bed will get down after a few moments as it is too warm for them.

Leaving the Kees unattended for any length of time – consider crating your dog

Get an extra-large crate if leaving the dog in it during the day. Put a snap on water dish in the crate ½ filled. Add a safe chew bone. No pig ears or rawhide these can swell in the dog's stomach and cause severe pain & lead to surgery or in rare instances, death.

Many of the Keeshonds that pass through rescue have been crate trained at one time or another. Every dog needs a place to escape to, a place to call his own, and a crate provides an answer to these needs! Your new Keeshond will have some degree of separation anxiety when you leave it for work or alone at home. Crating the dog in the beginning will eliminate accidents, chewing destruction, and other mischievous activity that is rooted in nervousness and insecurity. Your dog is safest in the crate when you are not home until you can totally trust him loose in the house. This is especially true if you have resident pets because you can't supervise their interactions when you're away or asleep! Children should be taught to leave the dog alone if he retreats to his crate. You should never use the crate for disciplining. The crate must be a dog's sanctuary for crate training to be effective. Crates are great for traveling with your dog later the dog will always have a familiar den to retreat to and feel comfortable and reassured.

Each time your dog is confined, make sure the dog knows she's a good girl. If the Keeshond is particularly emotional or anxious, try making good byes and hellos as unemotional & nonchalant as possible. While crating a dog helps make everybody safe, crating should NOT be abused by locking the dog in the crate all the time. Keeshonds need to be with you and should be with you unless they cannot be supervised or trusted alone in the house. For instance, if you are going to shower and the dog still sometimes chews, crate him for those 15 minutes for safety, but then let him out to be with you. If the dog is crated while you are work all day you MUST make an extra effort to let the dog "hang" with you in the house until he is reliable loose in the house.

If you prefer not to crate, make sure to set aside a safe, indestructible space in your home for your rescue dog. You may want to try using baby gates in the kitchen or hallway. Remember, you may really want to keep your dog on easy cleanup flooring at first!! If the area of confinement is too large, you may begin to have housebreaking accidents. We do not recommend the basement or garage, since your dog will not feel "part of the family" isolated away from it. If he can see and hear you, they will feel much better. This is why wire style crates are so effective in the house.

BE PATIENT DURING THE HONEYMOON PERIOD

There is a good chance that your rescued Keeshond will show his insecurity by following you everywhere! This will include trying to hang with you in the bathroom, watching TV with you, getting the mail, and undoubtedly wanting to sleep with you. It is not unusual for him to whine or cry or bark if confined away from you at night lights out at a new strange place is a stressful thing for him. If you put the crate close to your bedroom or somewhere he can see you, the problems are usually minimized. Safe chew toys in the crate at night will give him something to do if he's awake. Remember, during the first couple of weeks, the dog will probably get quite tired and worn out by the day's activities, so establishing a sleep schedule is usually not a big deal. As you wean him from the crating at night, make sure he has been well exercised a tired Keeshond is usually a really good Keeshond indoors.

ESTABLISH A ROUTINE

Try to develop and use a consistent daily routine for feeding, exercising, and bathroom duties. Dogs are creatures of habit and routine translates into security for them. If you do the same things in the same way and in the same order, they will settle in more quickly and learn what is expected of him and when. Let your new Keeshond out to air and take care of business as soon as you rise in the mornings. Feed him after a short walk or romp in the yard. Give them another chance to relieve themselves before you go to work. Upon return from work, immediately let the dog out for exercise and bathroom break (this is NOT the time to read the mail, make a phone call or flop yourself on the sofa!). If he's exercised heavily, wait 30 minutes or so before the evening feeding. He'll need another bathroom break anywhere from 30 minutes to several hours after the evening meal, depending on his age it'll be your job to figure this out. He should get another airing right before you go to bed.

SOCIALIZE YOUR RESCUED KEESHOND

Rescue dogs come from a variety of backgrounds, but all dogs can do with more socialization. After your dog has time to settle in your home and is starting to look to you with confidence (2 - 3 weeks), start providing new socialization opportunities.

Now you can start inviting your friends and relatives over. Do introductions to new people gradually. Introductions can take the form of petting, playing fetch, even going for a walk. Do not force the dog to accept new people do it positively, with lots of praise, allowing the dog to approach people rather than new people approaching your dog!!! Be sure to tell your visitors that your dog is new from rescue so they need to be more sensitive. Don't reach for

the dog right away let him come to them. If he does not go to the new person, that visitor should completely ignore the dog. Suggest after the dog has met/sniffed the new person that they pat the side of the dog's neck or side of the shoulder instead. Patting a dog on the top of the head is interpreted by dogs as a powerful dominance attempt and can be a challenge to some dogs, a frightening thing to others.

About a month in start taking your dog new places, nearby parks, dog allowed beaches and, especially to obedience classes. The opportunity will allow you to determine how your dog responds to strange people, dogs and places.

LOVE AND ENJOY YOUR NEW DOG

Authority without domination

Love without subservience

Respect without fear

This is an adage used by workers in German Shepherd Dog rescue. It is appropriate for rescued Keeshonds, too, and we'd like people to think about it as they live with and train their rescue dogs. You do not need to frighten you dog into complying with household obedience commands, or prove to him that you are the toughest creature around by using constant brute force. You DO need to show your dog that you are the leader in the household, a leader he should put his trust in following. You can do this by "telling" your dog this in a language he understands body language and daily habits. Respect is not something that you can force a creature into giving you. Above all, be patient, firm and consistent with your new Keeshond. Use positive reinforcement and lots of praise when she's good. When mistakes are made, correct them when it's happening, and praise them when they modify their behavior. Undoubtedly you will get lots of advice good and bad from other dog owners! Read and research as much as you can to prepare yourself.

Understand that sometimes you may need to try more than one approach to a problem because every Keeshond is different. Most rescue and adoption coordinators will follow up on the dogs they place. Most rescuers are backed up by dog behavior and health experts within their own local organization, so if they don't know the answer to a problem, they can ask others. Don't be afraid to ask questions, bring up new situations, and feelings of frustration that you may have!

Our goal is to make sure rescue dogs never have to be uprooted again, so we are quite interested in helping you troubleshoot any problems the sooner the better before they become big problems that threaten the placement!

Be prepared to give and receive more love, affection and loyalty than you ever thought possible! Enjoy your brown dog for many years to come and thanks again for helping us rescue Keeshonds!

Credit for many of these tips is due to German Shepherd Dog Rescue of New England, Inc., Labrador Retriever Rescue, Inc., Chesapeake Bay Retriever Club and the American Kennel Club.