

DIGGITY DOG ROMANIAN RESCUE





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ROMANIAN DOGS

Romania is home to an estimated 2 million stray dogs, and with few laws to protect these animals, dogs are left to fend for themselves or await the punishment of the dog catcher.

Many of the dogs are abandoned on the street by their families, puppies dumped because they are unwanted. People are taught to mistreat dogs, that they are simply vermin, to throw things at them or beat them on the street. Dog catchers drag dogs by the neck using a catch pole into public shelters with awful conditions where they are destined to be put down.

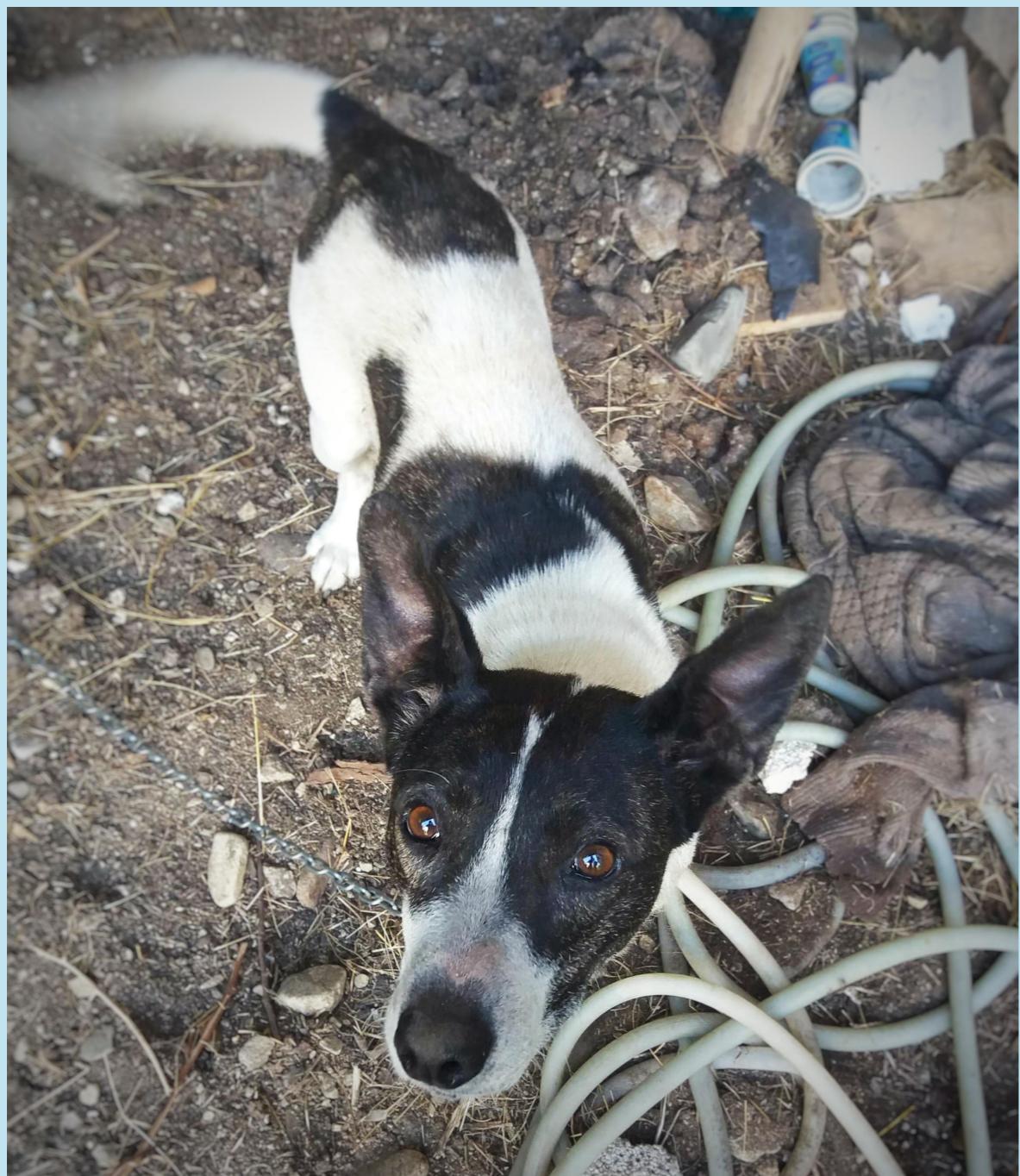
We work with individuals in Romania who do everything they can to save these poor dogs from the streets. They keep them in private shelters where they can be safe, or in foster homes. Every dog we can find a home for, gives them an extra space to save another dog. They run spay campaigns to help reduce the population of dogs on the street, and try to educate children on how to treat animals.

Together, we can make a difference and hopefully one day, every dog will have a safe and loving home!



WHAT THE RESCUERS SAY

ELISABETA PACURARU (MEHEDINTI, ROMANIA)



The first problem here is that most people don't understand that dogs feel pain, that they have feelings and can be scared and traumatised. They don't accept that you should spend money to offer them good food or medical care. Instead of spaying their dogs, they throw away their litters (usually in rivers) just a few days after they are born.

We don't have a culture about this, there is little education about animals and they don't know how many problems or illnesses their animals can get. They don't understand the pain that they are suffering because they don't vaccinate, deworm or neuter their dogs.

When you rescue a dog, or try to help feed or vaccinate a dog, most people think you are crazy.

I have recently been feeding a dog who lives chained and neglected. I spoke with her owner who thinks he is doing amazingly at looking after this dog, but he only visits her once a day with food that she can't even eat anyway because it's already rotten. She is all alone and crying every day in a small space to just be free. She didn't even have a collar, so I came and brought one so that she didn't have to feel the sharp metal pressing against her neck. I made her chain longer so she could move more, as it was only half a metre long before, and I gave her flea treatment.

People in rural areas keep their dogs outside and chained like this. They are not allowed to go inside because of their fur. They feed them once a day with their leftovers or bread. The dogs don't get a pot, or anything clean to eat on. Everything is dirty. When you get a dog from Romania, you should know that the dog (if adult) used to eat bread, and that when they find food, they bury it to keep for later.

People here shout a lot at dogs and beat them. If they don't listen to what the people order (even though no one ever trained them) they get punished. They aren't taught to walk on a leash or to sit or come back because they don't spend time with their animals. They just throw a piece of bread and that is it.

They like cows, pigs and chickens because they take meat from them, but have no respect for a single animal.

Gypsy communities don't even have a dog house - they sleep on the ground and are terrified when it rains, shaking with its cold, or panting when it's hot. Their owners don't cut their fur, or check if they have any problems. Even with the dog is sick, they decide that they will die instead of going to the vets.

Recently, people who earn little money working in other countries think it is very important to buy a breed dog, to make them look important to their friends and family, but they take them and neglect them.

They don't get good care, no proper meals, they stay outside almost all the time alone. They don't get taught anything and they almost become wild. For example, in my village some stupid people got some American Staffordshire Terriers, but most of them are already dead or thrown away because they were not able to take care of them. They think a famous breed will make them an important person. They don't adopt from the street, but they don't have the basic education to keep a dog, and in the end it is the dog suffers the most.

PREPARING FOR YOUR DOG'S ARRIVAL

HOW IS MY DOG PREPPED BEFORE ARRIVAL?

Congratulations! You've reserved your dog! So what happens now?

They will now be getting prepped for travel.

That means...

- All their vaccinations will need to be up to date
- They will get treatment for worms, fleas and ticks
- If they are older than 6 months old, they will be neutered if not already done so

They will also need...

- Rabies Vaccine (no less than 21 days before leaving Romania)
- Kennel Cough Vaccine (7-10 days before leaving Romania) [optional]
- Worming treatment (24 hours before leaving Romania)
- Microchip
- Passport

Their passport and papers will be with them when you collect your dog so make you you get them!

A **SLIP LEAD** is essential for your dog's first day. If your dog is coming directly from Romania, please bring your slip lead so they can put it on your dog before bringing them out. Your dog will be confused and scared and may try to run away during handover. A slip lead ensures they can make it safely into your home!

Have a **NON SLIP HARNESS** ready to use in conjunction with your *slip lead* as it keeps your dog safe when you're out and about. These dogs are often used to running from the terrifying dog catchers and are able to twist themselves out of many different harnesses and collars, so it's always best to have both the harness and slip lead on together.

Have **2 LEADS** ready for when you are using a harness and collar. You want two separate leads so that if they manage to get out of one, you have the other as a back up.

Always have a **COLLAR** with a **DOG ID TAG** on your dog from day one. The *Control of Dogs Order 1992* states that *any dog in a public place must wear a collar with the name and address (including postcode) of the owner engraved or written on it, or engraved on a tag. Your telephone number is optional (but we would recommend this).*

Don't forget their **BED** and their **SAFE SPACE** - a quiet part of the home where they can feel safe. They will be scared and confused and this will give them somewhere to settle into their new environment. A **BABY GATE** is also extremely useful to keep your dog safe, and aid slow introductions with other pets and family members.

Most importantly, **FOOD**! Your dog will have been on a long journey to get to you and will be hungry and tired. They often won't have had much consistency with food before and shelters often can only provide what they can afford. Check what the dog's used to eating, and just see what they like after they arrive. Some cooked chicken is a sure winner to help gain trust after they arrive!

PREPARING FOR YOUR DOG'S ARRIVAL

WHAT DO I NEED?

- **SLIP LEAD**
- **NON SLIP HARNESS**
- **2X LEADS**
- **COLLAR + DOG ID TAG**
- **BED**
- **CRATE/SAFE SPACE/BABY GATE**
- **FOOD**

PREPARING FOR YOUR DOG'S ARRIVAL

ARRIVAL DAY! NOW WHAT?

ARRIVAL DAY is the most important day in the run up to your dog getting here. Not every transport service is the same. The transport your dog is on may use a Facebook Messenger chat to update you with their location, or a WhatsApp chat, or some even have GPS trackers you can track online to see where the van is.

The dogs travel by road, so please be prepared for unexpected delays - a slowdown on the motorway, or a big queue at the entrance of the Eurotunnel. Once they arrive on UK soil, they will be able to give you accurate ETAs of your dog's arrival, so be prepared!

Don't forget to **take your slip lead to the van** so that they can put this on your dog to ensure they get safely from the van into your home! If you are picking your dog up from a collection point, do not forget to bring a **DOG SEAT BELT** or **CAR CRATE** to ensure your dog is safely secured in your car and use your **slip lead** to bring them safely into your home. Check before you open the car door that your dog hasn't silently chewed through their new lead or seat belt!

DO NOT try to take your dog out into the garden or for a walk on their first day. They will be scared and confused and may try to escape. Some may have never lived in a real home, or even seen indoors. Many foster homes abroad keep their dogs outside, so even if they were in foster, it doesn't mean they lived inside or had a real bed to sleep on. They have lived to survive on the streets and will often try to escape.

Keep your dog in your home for **48 HOURS** as DEFRA are allowed to visit uninvited. After that, they will call to arrange an appointment.

Give your dog plenty of **SPACE** from other pets and children. Give them a chance to get used to you and your home and let them approach in their own time as everything will already be overwhelming as it is.

We recommended you to not walk your dog for **2 WEEKS** and to keep your dog **ON LEAD** in your garden until you're confident they can't escape. They are resourceful dogs and even with a 6 foot fence, there is a chance they could still make an escape so it is always best to be vigilant.

Feed your dog separately from other pets until to begin with and see how it goes. They will be hungry from the journey, and may be underweight as the shelters can only feed them so much. They may be used to fighting for their food and won't understand that they they are safe now.

Any unusual sound may scare them - a television, a washing machine, a vacuum cleaner, a doorbell, a radio, anything. Please be mindful that all these things are new experiences to them!

They may fear a collar or harness is the loop from the *catch pole* used by a dog catcher, and run. Please be patient, give them time to get used to it, let them have a sniff of the collar/harness so they know it is not something bad before putting it on.

They may not like to walk, or know how to walk on a lead. Please be patient and let them walk at their own pace. Sit in a park with them and let them watch the world and learn that they have nothing to worry about anymore. If your dog is particularly anxious, it may be worth getting a lead cover or harness that Kindly asks for others to give your dog space (see the recommendations page) while they are still learning.

Please avoid guests in the first few weeks, so that they have a chance to trust their new families first. Try to keep the home calm and peaceful for this adjustment period.

Put yourself in your dog's shoes. Imagine if you were asked to trust, without question, a species which has only ever caused you harm.

PREPARING FOR YOUR DOG'S ARRIVAL

THE FIRST FEW WEEKS AND MONTHS

RECOMMENDATIONS

Update your dog's microchip!

If you're adopting a dog from UK foster, then check with the rescue as their chip may already be registered and a Transfer Code can be provided. Otherwise, please use the following link: <https://www.petlog.org.uk/recording-a-pet-with-an-overseas-microchip/>

Recall lines (so they can explore your garden safely and securely)

- CLIX 10m Recall Long Line (<https://www.companyofanimals.co.uk/product/clix-10m-recall-long-line>)

For dogs that like to escape

- Harnesses (<https://www.facebook.com/1533996696895219/posts/1843899485904937/>)

For dogs that need some space

- Yellow Dog UK (<https://www.yellowdoguk.co.uk>)
- My Anxious Dog (<https://www.bellascollars.co.uk>)

Useful Links

- Listings for Secure Dog Walking Fields (<https://dogwalkingfields.co.uk>)

RECOMMENDED READING

- **Adopting a Romanian Rescue Dog** <http://thedogspov.com/adopting-romanian-rescue-dog-step-step-guide/>
- **Recommend Do's and Don't's for settling your Romanian Rescue Dog** <http://thedogspov.com/recommended-dos-donts-settling-romanian-rescue-dog/>
- **All you need to know about Romanian Rescue Dogs** <http://thedogspov.com/need-know-romanian-rescue-dogs/>
- **Living With Romanian Rescue Dogs Advice on Fearfulness** <http://thedogspov.com/romanian-rescue-dogs-advice-fearfulness/>
- **CARE (Counterconditioning and Positive Reinforcement (R+) are Essential) for Reactive Dogs** <http://www.careforreactivedogs.com>
- **Hyper Awareness** <https://denisefenzipetdogs.com/2015/12/22/hyper-awareness/>
- **Charlie: The dog who came in from the wild by** by Lisa Tenzin-Dolma ISBN 978-1845847845

