intro to family pets

🐾 Preparing Before the Introduction

Check health & vaccines – Ensure the new puppy is up to date on vaccinations and deworming to protect the resident dogs.

Puppy-proof the home – Remove toys, food bowls, and chews that could trigger possessive behavior in the older dogs.

Exercise resident dogs – A good walk or play session beforehand helps release excess energy and reduce tension.

Plan neutral ground first – Introductions usually go smoother in a neutral space (like your back garden or yard) rather than inside the home.

🐾 The First Meeting – Step by Step

One-on-one introductions – Introduce the puppy to each resident dog separately before group interaction.

Keep dogs leashed initially – Use loose leashes to maintain control without creating tension.

Observe body language – Look for signs of calm curiosity (sniffing, relaxed posture) versus stress (growling, stiff body, raised hackles).

Short sessions – Allow brief sniffing interactions, then gently redirect with a walk or game. Repeat until both relax.

Reward calm behavior – Praise and treat all dogs when they behave politely.

intro to family pets

🐾 Bringing the Puppy Home

Controlled entry – Let the puppy explore the home in short intervals while other dogs observe calmly.

Supervise closely – Never leave the puppy unsupervised with adult dogs until you're confident in their relationship.

Separate resources – Provide separate food bowls, water bowls, beds, and toys to prevent competition.

Crate or gated area – Give the puppy a safe space where they can rest away from the other dogs.

🐾 Establishing a Routine

Equal attention – Spend quality time with each dog to prevent jealousy.

Group activities – Walk them together, play in the yard, or do short training sessions as a pack to build positive association.

Monitor play – Puppies can be overly enthusiastic; step in if play gets too rough or if an older dog looks annoyed.

Teach boundaries – Reward older dogs for tolerating the puppy, but also give them space when they need it.

🐾 Managing Challenges

Growling or snapping – Normal as older dogs set boundaries; don't punish but redirect the puppy to give space.

Resource guarding – If any dog shows possessiveness, manage environments (remove high-value items during group time).

Puppy pestering – Use time-outs (crate, pen, or separate room) to give both puppy and older dogs a break.

Regression in older dogs – Sometimes adult dogs act "puppyish" when a new pup arrives; reinforce good manners with training.

🐾 Long-Term Success

Consistency is key – Stick to routines so all dogs know what to expect.

Positive reinforcement – Reward calm coexistence and polite interactions regularly.

Patience – Relationships between dogs may take weeks or months to fully develop.

Professional help – If tension escalates, consult a dog trainer or behaviorist.

✅ With structured introductions, patience, and supervision, most dogs learn to accept (and even enjoy) a new puppy, creating a harmonious multi-dog household.