



# for Taking Your DOG to WORK

Thinking of bringing Fido to the office? First decide if they are a good candidate—a dog that is shy and fearful around visitors or other dogs are better left at home. Master basic commands such as "come," "stay," "leave it," and "go to bed" before you bring them to work, and make sure they can ignore distractions. Then, check out the following tips to keep it a paws-itive experience—and to make sure you don't get dogged by colleagues for your poor pooch etiquette.

- 1 Always keep your dog on lead in public areas.** Ask your co-workers to do the same. Keeping all dogs on lead helps you manage the situation and control any interactions. Don't assume all dogs will be well-mannered and friendly.
- 2 Remember to bring your own water and food bowls.** No one wants to see you filling up the office popcorn bowl at the water cooler. Set up all supplies in advance so you don't have to juggle them while bringing in your dog.
- 3 Keep a dog pillow or blanket and toys in your office or area.** Bringing your dog's bedding will help them relax and feel more at home. While it's a good idea to have puzzle toys or chew toys to keep your dog entertained, remove them when other dogs are around to prevent scuffles over coveted items. Consider using a baby gate or a crate to confine your dog to your area.
- 4 Take the stairs.** Multiple dogs or even one dog, in an enclosed space like an elevator can quickly become a stressful situation for humans and canines alike; get some exercise and take the stairs, even if there are no other dogs or people in the elevator when you arrive.
- 5 Be prepared to clean up after your dog.** Get the OK for your dog to eliminate in the area surrounding your building, and bring the necessary supplies to pick up any mess. With lots of dogs in the same area, marking indoors can be a potential problem—it's best to have carpet cleaning and odour minimising supplies on hand.
- 6 Respect your colleagues' space.** Remember that not all people like or are comfortable with dogs. Let others approach your dog, not the other way around.
- 7 Don't force your dog to "make friends" with other dogs.** It's fine to let them sniff each other out if they want, but watch the dogs as they interact for any signs of aggression—growling, staring, stiff body posture. Never leave your dog alone with other dogs at work.
- 8 If a scuffle occurs, don't physically intervene.** This could result in your getting bitten and will only escalate the problem. Instead, throw one of the dogs' blankets over the heads of the fighting dogs, or use a water bottle to squirt them with water. This may confuse and distract the feisty pooches long enough for you to defuse the situation.
- 9 Get permission in advance to leave early if necessary.** If your dog becomes too stressed, overexcited or inhibited, it's best to just take them home. Don't ever leave them in a parked, hot vehicle, where brain and organ damage can occur very quickly.
- 10 Have fun and let your dog help you climb the corporate ladder!** A dog can be a great icebreaker to start up conversations with co-workers you may not know very well.

**Remember—good behaviour in public starts at home! The key to a safe and successful experience is to prepare yourself and your dog in advance. The privilege of taking your dog to work depends on you to demonstrate reasonable, consistent leadership and set boundaries for your dog's behaviour.**

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