

Ducktown Lodge

30-Day Transition Outline for Newly Graduated Dogs

Clear structure. Calm follow-through. Long-term success.

Purpose

This outline gives you a clear, realistic plan for the first 30 days at home after training. Your dog has the skills. This phase is about helping those skills transfer into real life through structure, consistency, and clear expectations. We are either training or untraining every day.

Foundational Rules

- One set of rules for everyone in the household
- On-leash structure before off-leash freedom
- Short, successful reps over long sessions
- If something slips, reduce distractions immediately

Week 1: Stabilize the Transition

- Keep routines predictable for meals, walks, and rest
- Use on-leash guidance indoors and outdoors
- Practice Place and recall in quiet, familiar areas
- Avoid high-distraction environments entirely

Week 2: Reinforce the Basics With Intention

This week focuses on clarity, not challenge. Your dog is learning that the same basics still apply at home.

- Practice core skills your dog already knows
- Keep distractions low and environments familiar
- Watch for hesitation or slow responses and adjust early

Week 3: Strengthen Basics as Distractions Increase

Once responses are consistent again, begin layering mild to moderate distractions.

- Add one variable at a time
- Hold structure steady while the environment changes
- If clarity fades, distractions are too high—scale back

Week 4: Earned Freedom

- Begin off-leash practice only after consistent on-leash success
- Start in secure, familiar spaces
- End sessions on success and return to leash if responses slow

VERY IMPORTANT: DISTRACTIONS & OBEDIENCE CLASSES

We strongly recommend not taking your newly graduated dog into high-distraction environments until you have attended at least two Saturday obedience classes.

These classes help:

- Proof skills around distractions
- Maintain accountability
- Prevent regression before it starts
- Support long-term off-leash goals

Skipping this step is one of the most common causes of setbacks we see.

COMMON PITFALLS WE SEE (AND HOW TO AVOID THEM)

- Giving freedom too fast
- Inconsistent rules between people
- Letting structure slide “just this once”
- Waiting too long to ask for help

Most follow-up calls we get a month later start with:

“My dog isn’t listening to me anymore.”

That almost always means structure faded before the dog was ready.

HOW WE SUPPORT YOU AFTER GRADUATION

Ducktown Lodge offers:

- Follow-up lessons to transfer training into your home
- Saturday obedience classes for distraction work and accountability
- Open communication for questions or guidance
- Optional tune-up sessions whenever you want support

If something feels off, call us early. Small adjustments prevent big problems.

■ 770-733-0836

FINAL REMINDER

Your dog’s success depends less on what they learned in training and more on how consistently it’s handled at home.

Your dog doesn’t need perfection.

They need clarity.

They need follow-through.

They need leadership.

We’re proud of you and your dog — and we’re here to help every step of the way.

Lucinda & Sara

Ducktown Lodge & Dog Training