

Fight For Life

Akita and Rottweiler males may never be a peaceful pair.

By September Morn

Q. I have a 5-year-old Akita—neutered male—and have recently taken in a Rottweiler pup, also male. The Akita is not happy and I need help to raise them together. Can you offer any advice?

A. Though there are no “always-or-never” answers about how two dogs will get along as housemates over time, Akitas and Rottweilers are both breeds that tend to have strong preferences regarding canine housemates. Male Akitas and Rottweilers both often get along better with female dogs as housemates than with males. At age 5, your Akita's personality is fully formed, and if he has not already developed strong friendships with other male dogs, he may not be willing to change. You say he's already unhappy about this new dog, even though the Rottweiler is just a pup. His dislike for the male pup could very likely grow worse as the Rottweiler matures and starts demanding his share of the “kingdom.” Your Akita might never be happy about sharing his home and his person with another male dog.

You may be able to manage the situation by training both dogs in obedience, so they'll both quickly heed your commands. You'll also need to carefully monitor their interactions now and throughout their lives, intervening whenever they start to compete over space, toys, bones, food and other resources. You'll need to really study dog body language so you'll know when to intervene. You and your attention will very likely be the resource both dogs will consider most valuable and they may both compete vigorously for “ownership” of you.

With these two large, strong, opinionated, guard-type breeds, you could be setting yourself up for years of prickly competitive behavior between your dogs. If you're not up for that, it may be in the best interests of both you and the dogs to re-home the puppy before you become too attached to him. I realize that sounds harsh, but if your Akita really doesn't want to share you with another male dog, there may be some serious fights when the Rottweiler grows up.