

THE FIRST 48 HOURS

Hooray! It's finally time to bring home your new puppy! Some of the preparations that need to take place before that happens are:

Puppy Proofing:

Create a safe and friendly environment by making sure all hazardous household items are secured behind a locked cabinet door, poisonous plants are removed from the home (or placed on a high shelf), and electrical cords are out of reach. Look closely at your home from your puppy's point of view and remove anything that appears enticing.

Supplies You Need in Advance:

- Food & water bowls (Two 2-quart stainless bowls will last you for years)
- 8-12 inch adjustable collar
- 6 foot leash
- Soft brush
- Nail clippers
- Kong
- Crate
- Baby Gates

Feeding:

We feed **Purina Pro Plan Performance All Life Stages Formula**. Please keep the puppy on this brand for at least the first year. If you wish to switch to another high quality food like (Solid Gold, Canidae, etc.) that is fine. Please avoid any food you can purchase at the grocery store. The ingredients are lower quality, and while you may save a few bucks on a bag of food, the long-term good-health of your puppy will make up for the cost difference.

Puppies and adult dogs also have different nutritional needs. We recommend the following guidelines:

Be Consistent! Feed your puppy the same food, at the same time, every day. Up until 9 weeks, your puppy should be fed 4 times per day. After 9 weeks, divide the amount of food over three feedings instead of four. After 12 weeks, divide the amount of food over two feedings.

Don't Overfeed! Studies have shown that puppies kept at the proper weight have better development than those that are under- or over fed. When your puppy goes home, it will be eating about 2 cups of food per day, divided over 4 feeding times, or approximately ½ cup per feeding. You will have to increase this amount when the pup has a growth spurt. You should always be able to easily feel ribs under the slight fat cover on your pup. If your pup starts to look pudgy, keep the food at the same amount for two weeks. Often they will have another growth spurt and lose the pudgy.

Don't be Alarmed if Your Pup's Appetite Changes! Occasional loss of appetite or digestive upset is normal for growing puppies. Along with rapid growth, they are also experiencing teething, and adjusting to a new environment. If the upset should become severe or last more than 2 days, contact your veterinarian.

The First Week:

To help the puppy transition into your home:

Decide on a name and use it constantly. It will make things even more confusing for your pup if it has 6 different names in as many days.

Limit visitors for the first week. It is very exciting to get a new puppy, and very fun to show it off your friends. Let your puppy become comfortable in your home before it has even more new things happen.

Keep the puppy within your line of sight every single second it is loose. If you can't watch the puppy, put it into a crate. Not only does this keep it from having an accident on the floor, it also prevents other bad habits (like chewing) from forming.

Do not disturb a sleeping puppy! They need to sleep a lot for proper development, just like a human baby. It is normal for them to sleep 18-20 hours a day.

Teach your family the proper way to pick up and hold a puppy. Place one hand under the hindquarters and the other under the chest, supporting his weight. Never pick a puppy up by the scruff of the neck or the front paws.

Never leave a new puppy unattended with children or other family pets until you're sure all involved are ready and able to handle the situation.

House-Breaking:

This is the most important training exercise you will ever do with your dog. Animal behaviorists recommend the following approach:

Establish a routine and stick to it. Your puppy needs to go out first thing in the morning, the very last thing at night, within 15 minutes after they eat, and at least once for every 45 minutes they are awake.

Until your puppy is trained, keep a constant eye on him or her. After your pup has been home for a bit, you will start to pick up on their body language for when they have to "go" and you will learn to get them out at the very first signal.

Designate a potty area. Train your puppy to use the designated area by consistently taking him/her there and using the command "Go potty." Before you know it, pup will be going to this area on its own.

Correct your puppy's mistakes *only* when you catch them in the act. With a firm "NO!" pick up your puppy and carry it to the designated potty area. When they resume potty, tell them "Good puppy! Good potty!" Remember your puppy is a baby and that accidents will happen. With patience, consistence, and gentle corrections, your puppy will be house-broken in no time.