



New Puppy Checklist

Congratulations, bringing home a new puppy is an exciting time! As exciting as it is, there can be a lot to prepare before bringing home your new furry companion. Below is a checklist of items, places, and concepts you should review to make sure you have all your ducks in a row. And remember: have fun!

Items

- Water bowl
- Food
 - kibble with no corn; no animal byproducts; no "meal" as first ingredient
 - raw food if desired
- Treat pouch
- Kibble-dispensing puzzle for meals + other mental enrichment toys
- Kong + Kong fillers
- Prey/tug toy
- Chew items
- Leash + collar (chest-leading harness if desired)
 - 15' leash for recall training
- Treats (easily broken into half-fingernail sizes; minimal or no chemicals/preservatives)
- Crate + X-pen
- Bedding
- Pee pads (if necessary)
- Clicker (if necessary)

Places

- I have researched and selected a veterinarian to bring my puppy to soon after adopting
- I understand the 4-16 week old critical exposure window of socialization and:
 - I have signed my puppy up for puppy socialization group meet ups and/or puppy class
 - I have found human-populated areas to take my puppy (cafes, home depot, farmers markets, etc.)
 - I am ready to invite as many people as possible to my home to give my puppy positive experiences to strangers on my property
 - I have found an elementary school or playground nearby to take my puppy to positively meet small children and their parents
 - I know of busy roads or construction areas to desensitize my puppy to loud sounds

- I have a designated “potty” area and:
 - Understand how to use the crate as a tool for potty training and accident prevention
 - Understand my puppy can approximately hold his/her bladder 1 hour for every month of age during puppyhood
 - I am committed to possibly losing some sleep for a few weeks getting up during the night to take my puppy out to urinate if necessary

Concepts

- I know of, and have a plan for, providing daily outlets for the five canine main drive behaviors
 - Chewing: chew items
 - Digging (does not necessarily have to be daily): designate a digging area
 - Scavenging: work-to-eat puzzles; scattered kibble or treats; hide-and-seek with food or people
 - Hunting: ball chasing/fetch; tug toys; flirt pole toy
 - Dissecting: plush toys with stuffing
- I have a basic understanding of lure-reward training
- I have a basic understanding of capturing behaviors that I like and want to reinforce
- I understand that everything within my puppy’s reach is “fair game” until otherwise instructed and will utilize a confinement area (e.g. X-pen) when I cannot devote my entire attention to my puppy
- I understand what Acquired Bite Inhibition (ABI) is and understand the great importance of continued puppy socialization, as well as how to instruct soft biting during puppy-human play, before 16 weeks of age
- I understand that it is not my puppy’s fault when he/she has an accident, chews on the wrong item, digs in the wrong place, and investigates the wrong area, and therefore should not be punished. Instead, I will calmly interrupt unwanted behaviors and constructively teach my puppy the correct places to eliminate, items to chew on, areas to dig, and things to scavenge for.



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