

NEW PUPPY CHECKLIST

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Page 1 of 2

BEFORE PICKUP DAY Applies, puppy-proof your home, choose a vet, and schedule the first appointment. Don't wait until the night before — set everything up at least 3-5 days in advance.

■ Supplies to Buy

- ☐ Crate sized to adult breed — use divider now
Too-big crate lets puppies toilet one end
- ☐ Crate pad or washable mat
- ☐ Food and water bowls (stainless steel)
- ☐ Age-appropriate puppy food
Ask breeder/shelter what they're currently feeding
- ☐ Collar with ID tag
Include your phone number — not the puppy's name
- ☐ 4-6 foot leash
- ☐ Puppy chew toys — 3+ different textures
- ☐ Kong or puzzle toy for mental stimulation
- ☐ Puppy shampoo and coat brush
- ☐ Nail clippers and styptic powder
- ☐ Enzymatic cleaner — buy before you need it
Regular cleaners don't eliminate urine odor
- ☐ Poop bags and leash dispenser
- ☐ Training treats — pea-sized and soft
Small enough to give 20-30 per session
- ☐ Baby gate or exercise pen
- ☐ Puppy potty pads
- ☐ Old towels that can get dirty

■ Puppy-Proof Your Home

- ☐ Secure or hide all electrical cords
Cord chewing is the #1 electrical hazard
- ☐ Remove toxic plants from reach
Pothos, sago palm, aloe, lilies are toxic
- ☐ Store cleaning products in closed cabinets
- ☐ Secure trash cans with lids
- ☐ Put away shoes, socks, small chewable items
- ☐ Move medications to high shelves
Xylitol in gum/supplements is toxic to dogs
- ☐ Check for gaps behind appliances
- ☐ Inspect backyard fence for escape routes
- ☐ Block stairs with baby gates
- ☐ Clear floor of coins, batteries, rubber bands
- ☐ Set up crate in quiet corner of bedroom
- ☐ Designate puppy-safe zones in the house

■ Vet Care & Health

- ☐ Choose a vet BEFORE pickup day
Many won't see new patients without advance booking
- ☐ Book first visit within 48-72 hours
- ☐ Bring all health records from breeder/shelter
- ☐ Discuss core vaccine series (DHPP + rabies)
- ☐ Start flea, tick, and heartworm prevention
- ☐ Discuss deworming schedule
- ☐ Ask about spay/neuter timing for your breed
- ☐ Get microchipped if not already done
Most reliable permanent ID — collar can fall off
- ☐ Ask about diet and portion sizes
- ☐ Save emergency vet number in your phone

■ First Week at Home

- ☐ Keep first days calm — limit visitors
Puppy just left everything familiar. Don't overwhelm
- ☐ Same feeding, potty, sleep schedule every day
- ☐ Take outside every 1-2 hours during the day
- ☐ Expect accidents — clean with enzymatic cleaner
- ☐ Let puppy explore at their own pace
- ☐ Handle paws, ears, mouth daily
Builds comfort with grooming and vet exams for life
- ☐ Keep journal of feeding, potty, sleep times

■ Training Basics (Start Day 1)

- ☐ Set feeding schedule — same times every day
Puppies toilet 15-30 min after eating
- ☐ Establish one outdoor potty spot and use it
- ☐ Start crate training from night one
Crate training is the most important early habit
- ☐ Teach 'sit' and 'come' in 5-min sessions
- ☐ Research local puppy socialization classes
Socialization window closes at 12-16 weeks
- ☐ Socialize with people, sounds, environments daily
- ☐ Agree on house rules with all household members
Inconsistency is the #1 training killer
- ☐ Never use punishment — redirect and reward

■ PRO PUPPY TIPS

- Buy supplies at least 3-5 days before pickup — not the night before.
- The socialization window closes at 12-16 weeks. Expose your puppy to everything now.
- Enzymatic cleaner is non-negotiable — regular cleaners leave scent that attracts puppies back.
- Start crate training night one. Opening the crate for whining teaches whining works.
- Keep training sessions to 5 minutes — puppies lose focus fast. End on a success every time.

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