

# Your New Puppy

Canine Health



## CARE SHEET

Developed with and approved by a Qualified Veterinarian

Bringing home a puppy can be a fun, exciting, and overwhelming experience, for both you and your puppy. Preparing for the homecoming in advance, plus understanding what your puppy really needs will go a long way towards helping your new puppy to become a happy, well-behaved member of your family.

### Is a puppy the right companion animal for you?

Yes	No
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Check "Yes" or "No" after reading the following statements:

1. I have an appropriate location and space for the breed I am considering.
2. I will spay or neuter my puppy.
3. I have the time, patience and energy necessary to commit to training this puppy.
4. I have researched and can commit to providing proper care, veterinary attention, and nutrition for this puppy.
5. A mature person will provide responsible and primary care for this puppy.

If you answered "Yes" to all of these statements, a puppy may be the right choice for you! Continue reading about how to care for a puppy and consult with a PETCO associate to learn more. PETCO is committed to responsible companion animal care.

#### Finding Your Puppy

Local humane societies and animal shelters are a great place to start your search for the perfect puppy. The staff will have great information and advice as to breed, temperament, and adult sizes.

If your heart is set on a purebred, try contacting local breed clubs to find reputable breeders. Good breeders will not only answer your questions, but will also ask many of their own, since their main goal is to find responsible, permanent homes for their puppies. If possible observe the mother and father. Their personality will tell you a lot about what the puppies will be like. Puppies should stay with their mom at least 7 to 8 weeks to learn important socialization skills.

#### Before You Bring Puppy Home

Make certain your house has been puppy-proofed. Pick up anything small enough to be swallowed, and remove anything you would prefer the puppy not chew. Puppies chew, it is a natural and necessary part of puppyhood. Prevention is the best way to protect both your puppy and your possessions.

Decide where to put the puppy's crate, food and water dishes, and toys. You'll want to focus on your new puppy once you bring it home, not on where you want things to go.

Have a supply of good quality puppy food on hand, as well as the name and phone number of a local vet. If possible, have an appointment already made for a new puppy checkup, and to ensure all vaccinations are up to date.

#### Recommended Supplies

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kennel or crate    | <input type="checkbox"/> Food, water bowls | <input type="checkbox"/> Training treats                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Premium puppy food | <input type="checkbox"/> Toys              | <input type="checkbox"/> Enzymatic cleaner                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pet gate(s)        | <input type="checkbox"/> Chew toys         | <input type="checkbox"/> Books on dog breeds, training, puppy raising |

#### The Trip Home

The safest way to bring your puppy home is in a travel crate or kennel, not in your lap, tempting though that may be. Line the floor of the crate with an absorbent towel, since many puppies may experience motion sickness. Secure the kennel with a seatbelt, so that movement is kept to a minimum. Although everyone else in the car will be excited, your puppy may be scared and confused. Constantly reassuring him may lead the puppy to believe that there really is something to be afraid of. Instead, talk to him in a gentle, upbeat voice, as if this were an everyday occurrence.

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### Training and Socializing

Start out right with your new puppy. While behaviors like jumping up on you and chewing on your shoelaces may be cute in a tiny pup, they quickly become tiresome or even dangerous in the adult dog. Begin as you plan to end, and only encourage behaviors that would be acceptable in an adult dog.

Keep training sessions short and upbeat. Puppies have very short attention spans, and, like children, respond better to praise than punishment. Keep small, easily eaten treats on hand as rewards for desired behaviors. Positive reinforcement also increases self-esteem and self-confidence in the adult dog.

Decide how you will house train your puppy before you bring him home. Will you teach it to go outside, or use a litter box? Refer to the Housebreaking Your Dog Care Sheet for further information.

A regular schedule of feeding, potty breaks, and bedtimes will help ease the puppy through the transition into your home, and make house training much easier. Use an enzymatic cleaner to clean up accidents and eliminate odors.

Once your puppy has settled in, begin introducing him to basic grooming, and having every part of his body touched and handled. This will make future grooming and vet visits much more pleasant.

Introduce your puppy to new surroundings, new footings and new people in a variety of settings. Once his vaccinations are up to date, puppy training classes are wonderful ways to socialize him with both new people and new dogs. Socialization now will help avert aggression and fear responses later.

### Signs of a Healthy Animal

- Active, alert, and sociable
- Eats and drinks regularly
- Clean fur
- Walks normally
- Clear eyes and nose
- No bald patches

### Common Health Issues

Health Issue (alpha)	Symptoms or Causes	Suggested Action
Diarrhea	Loose stools caused by poor diet, a sudden change in diet, stress, or other illness	Consult with a veterinarian to determine cause and treatment. Keep vaccinations current
Mites, fleas, ticks	External parasites; cause itching, loss of hair, certain diseases	Contact a veterinarian for treatment

### Red Flags

- Missing fur
- Diarrhea or dirty bottom
- Uneven gait
- Distressed breathing
- Eye or nasal discharge
- Weight loss
- Lethargic
- Excessive thirst

**If you notice any of these signs, please contact your veterinarian.**

**Sources** *How to Raise a Puppy You Can Live With* by Clarice Rutherford & David H. Neil  
*Choosing a Dog for Life* by Andrew De Prisco, et al  
*Dog Training in 10 Minutes* by Carol Lea Benjamin

**Note:** The information on this Care Sheet is not a substitute for veterinary care. If you need additional information, please refer to the above sources or contact your veterinarian as appropriate.