New Dog Checklist

A new dog checklist for bringing home an adult or any dog, covering supplies, settling in, and building a routine.

Supplies to have ready

- [ ] Stock the food your dog already eats to avoid stomach upset.
- [ ] Get sturdy food and water bowls.
- [ ] Buy a collar with an ID tag, plus a leash and harness.
- [ ] Provide a comfortable bed and a crate or quiet safe space.
- [ ] Choose a few durable toys and chews.
- [ ] Keep cleanup supplies and enzyme cleaner on hand.

Preparing your home

- [ ] Dog-proof rooms by securing trash, cords, and hazards.
- [ ] Set up a calm, defined space where your dog can decompress.
- [ ] Check that fences, gates, and doors are secure with no gaps.
- [ ] Remove or store anything you do not want chewed early on.
- [ ] Decide house rules and share them with everyone at home.
- [ ] Plan to be home for the first days to ease the transition.

First vet visit

- [ ] Schedule a wellness exam soon after bringing your dog home.
- [ ] Bring any records and a stool sample if requested.
- [ ] Confirm vaccination status and any boosters needed.
- [ ] Discuss flea, tick, and worm prevention.
- [ ] Ask about the right food and amounts for your dog's size and age.
- [ ] Update microchip details and ask about spay or neuter if not done.

Settling in calmly

- [ ] Keep the homecoming low-key and the dog leashed at first.
- [ ] Introduce one room before opening up the whole house.
- [ ] Limit visitors and loud activity for the first days.
  Give your dog time and space to decompress.
- [ ] Let your dog approach you rather than crowding them.
- [ ] Provide a quiet retreat your dog can return to.
- [ ] Watch for stress signals and give space when needed.

Building a routine

- [ ] Set consistent feeding times right away.
- [ ] Establish a regular potty and walk schedule.
- [ ] Add daily exercise suited to your dog's energy.

- [ ] Reinforce basic cues gently and positively.
- [ ] Keep rest, play, and downtime predictable.
- [ ] Introduce alone-time gradually to prevent anxiety.

Introductions and safety

- [ ] Introduce existing pets slowly and under supervision.
- [ ] Supervise all interactions with children and teach gentle handling.
- [ ] Keep ID and a recent photo in case your dog gets out.
- [ ] Avoid off-leash areas until you know your dog's recall.
- [ ] Save your vet and nearest emergency clinic numbers.
- [ ] Important: This is general information, not veterinary advice. Always consult a veterinarian about your dog's vaccinations, diet, and health.