

New Puppy Checklist

A new puppy checklist for bringing home a puppy, covering the first day and week of supplies, vet care, crate setup, and schedule.

Puppy supplies to buy first

- ☐ Pick up puppy food and appropriately sized food and water bowls.
- ☐ Get a crate, a soft bed, and washable bedding.
- ☐ Buy a collar with an ID tag, plus a leash and harness.
- ☐ Stock puppy pads or potty supplies and enzyme cleaner for accidents.
- ☐ Choose safe chew toys to soothe teething.
- ☐ Add grooming basics like a soft brush and puppy-safe shampoo.

Puppy-proofing the home

- ☐ Move cords, shoes, and small swallowable items out of reach.
- ☐ Secure toxic plants, foods, trash, and chemicals.
- ☐ Block stairs and off-limits rooms with gates.
- ☐ Set up a confined, easy-to-clean space for unsupervised time.
- ☐ Check the yard and fences for gaps a puppy could squeeze through.
- ☐ Designate a quiet spot for the crate and naps.

Crate and potty setup

- ☐ Size the crate so your puppy can stand, turn, and lie down comfortably.
- ☐ Make the crate positive with treats, toys, and short sessions.
- ☐ Choose a consistent potty spot and route outside.
Take young puppies out very frequently, including after meals and naps.
- ☐ Reward potty success immediately with praise or a treat.
- ☐ Keep enzyme cleaner ready for the accidents that will happen.
- ☐ Avoid leaving a young puppy crated longer than they can hold it.

First vet visit

- ☐ Schedule a wellness exam within the first few days home.
- ☐ Bring any breeder or shelter records and a stool sample if asked.
- ☐ Ask about the puppy vaccination schedule and timing.
- ☐ Discuss deworming and flea and tick prevention.
- ☐ Confirm the right food and feeding amounts for your puppy's age.
- ☐ Ask when to plan spay or neuter and microchipping.

First-week routine

- ☐ Feed small, frequent meals at consistent times.
- ☐ Offer frequent potty breaks and reward success.
- ☐ Balance short play and handling with plenty of naps.
- ☐ Introduce the crate and alone-time in tiny, positive steps.
- ☐ Keep introductions to people and pets calm and gradual.
- ☐ Start gentle name recognition and basic cues.

Health and safety basics

- ☐ Watch appetite, energy, and stool, and note any concerns.
- ☐ Keep your puppy warm, hydrated, and rested.
- ☐ Limit exposure to unknown dogs until vaccinations are underway.
- ☐ Handle paws, ears, and mouth gently to build tolerance for grooming.
- ☐ Save your vet and nearest emergency clinic numbers.
- ☐ Important: This is general information, not veterinary advice. Always consult a veterinarian about your puppy's vaccinations, diet, and health.