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.