Puppy Checklist

A puppy checklist covering first-year milestones, including vet care, vaccinations, training, and socialization.

Vet care and vaccinations

- [ ] Keep every scheduled vaccination and booster appointment.
- [ ] Follow your vet's deworming and parasite-prevention plan.
- [ ] Discuss spay or neuter timing for your puppy.
- [ ] Confirm microchip registration is up to date.
- [ ] Track weight and growth at each visit.
  Ask your veterinarian what is healthy for your breed.
- [ ] Important: This is general information, not veterinary advice. Always follow your veterinarian's schedule for vaccinations and health care.

House training and crate

- [ ] Maintain a consistent potty schedule and reward success.
- [ ] Build positive crate association with short, happy sessions.
- [ ] Gradually increase alone-time to prevent separation anxiety.
- [ ] Use enzyme cleaner and stay patient with accidents.
- [ ] Set clear house rules everyone follows consistently.
- [ ] Establish predictable feeding, potty, and rest routines.

Socialization

- [ ] Introduce new people, sounds, and surfaces positively and gradually.
- [ ] Expose your puppy to gentle handling of paws, ears, and mouth.
- [ ] Arrange safe, supervised meetings with vaccinated dogs.
- [ ] Practice calm car rides and short outings.
- [ ] Reward confidence and never force a fearful puppy.
- [ ] Consider a reputable puppy socialization class.

Basic training

- [ ] Teach name recognition and a reliable recall.
- [ ] Start with sit, down, stay, and leave it using rewards.
- [ ] Practice loose-leash walking in short sessions.
- [ ] Redirect biting and chewing to appropriate toys.
- [ ] Keep training short, positive, and consistent.
- [ ] Reinforce calm behavior and gentle greetings.

Nutrition and growth

- [ ] Feed an age-appropriate puppy food in measured meals.
- [ ] Transition foods gradually to avoid stomach upset.

- [ ] Adjust portions as your puppy grows.
  Confirm amounts with your veterinarian.
- [ ] Provide fresh water at all times.
- [ ] Limit treats and avoid foods toxic to dogs.
- [ ] Plan the switch to adult food on your vet's timeline.

Grooming and health habits

- [ ] Brush the coat regularly to build tolerance and reduce shedding.
- [ ] Introduce nail trims, ear checks, and tooth care gently.
- [ ] Bathe occasionally with a puppy-safe shampoo.
- [ ] Check skin and coat for fleas, ticks, and irritation.
- [ ] Watch appetite, energy, and stool for any changes.
- [ ] Provide daily exercise suited to your puppy's stage and breed.