

Puppy Training Checklist

A puppy training checklist for owners covering house-training, crate, commands and socialization.

Set up for success

- ☐ Choose a quiet, consistent spot for training sessions.
- ☐ Stock up on small, soft, high-value training treats.
- ☐ Pick a marker word or clicker to signal correct behavior.
- ☐ Agree on house rules so everyone is consistent.
- ☐ Set a daily routine for meals, potty, play and rest.
- ☐ Keep early sessions short, around 3 to 5 minutes.

House-training

- ☐ Take your puppy out first thing, after meals, naps and play.
- ☐ Choose one outdoor potty spot and return to it each time.
- ☐ Reward immediately the moment your puppy goes outside.
- ☐ Supervise closely indoors and watch for sniffing or circling.
- ☐ Clean accidents with an enzymatic cleaner to remove odor.
- ☐ Avoid punishing accidents, which can create fear and setbacks.

Frequent accidents can signal a health issue worth checking with your veterinarian.

Crate training

- ☐ Size the crate so your puppy can stand, turn and lie down.
- ☐ Make the crate cozy with a bed and a safe chew toy.
- ☐ Feed meals near or inside the crate to build a positive link.
- ☐ Start with short closed-door periods and build up slowly.
- ☐ Use the crate for naps and quiet time, never as punishment.
- ☐ Take your puppy out for a potty break right after crate time.

Basic commands

- ☐ Teach name recognition so your puppy looks at you when called.
- ☐ Practice sit using a lure and reward when the rear touches down.
- ☐ Build a reliable recall with happy tones and great rewards.
- ☐ Introduce down, stay and leave it in short steps.
- ☐ Reward calm behavior and gentle, polite greetings.
- ☐ Phase out treats gradually as commands become reliable.

Socialization

- ☐ Introduce new sounds, surfaces and household objects gently.
- ☐ Let your puppy meet calm, vaccinated dogs in safe settings.
- ☐ Expose your puppy to friendly people of different ages.
- ☐ Practice gentle handling of paws, ears and mouth for vet and grooming.
- ☐ Keep every new experience positive and reward calm responses.
- ☐ Avoid overwhelming situations and let your puppy retreat if needed.

Ask your veterinarian about safe socialization timing before vaccinations are complete.

Leash skills

- ☐ Let your puppy wear a flat collar or harness indoors first.
- ☐ Attach a light leash and let your puppy drag it under supervision.
- ☐ Reward your puppy for walking near you without pulling.
- ☐ Stop walking when the leash tightens, and resume when it loosens.
- ☐ Practice short, upbeat walks before long outings.
- ☐ Bring treats and water for positive walks in new places.
- ☐ Important: This is general information, not professional advice. Consult a professional trainer for behavior issues and your veterinarian for any health concerns with your puppy.