



puppy checklist

Surfaces & Sounds

- Carpet
- Tile
- Laminate
- Gravel
- Mulch
- Slippery floors (minimal exposure)
- Vacuum
- Dish Washer/Washing Machine
- Traffic
- Dogs barking
- Sirens

Things to Do

- Visit safe, clean new locations
- Spend time being bored
- Learn how to relax in/out of crate
- Grooming (bathing, nails clipped, brushed)
- Meet people
- Have appropriate interactions with calm, stable, safe dogs
- Spend time on leash
- Spend time off leash if SAFE (fenced in yard)
- Frequent car rides (even around the block)
- Work for food
- Learn basic commands (recall, sit, down, place)
- Go swimming (optional)

Crate/Potty Training

- Crated daily in small crate
- Crated on and off throughout the day
- Crated overnight
- Crated without toys/blanket
- Crated in multiple locations in the house
- Crated in the car
- Crated in other places (i.e. friend's house)
- Crated while owners are home
- Crated with people/dogs around
- Pottying somewhere other than home
- Pottying in grass, mulch, dirt, etc.
- Pottying on leash

Things to Observe

- People
- Children
- Dogs
- Cats
- Bikes
- Runners
- Strollers
- Farm animals
- Traffic

For more information and resources, please visit:
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Items to Have

- A plan for care/potty breaks during the work day
- Resources for help when (not if!) you need it
- Small crate (~22-26")
- QUALITY puppy food
- Collar and light leash
- Safe toys
- Access to a reputable trainer

Things to AVOID

- Keeping your puppy inside until they have had all vaccines
- Forcing your puppy through a situation when they are nervous (i.e. being forced to greet people)
- Using potty pads
- Only using a harness
- Waiting until you have problems to hire a trainer
- Free-feeding
- Allowing your puppy to create habits you don't want your adult dog to have (such as biting/chewing/jumping)

Notes:

- Puppies need to spend plenty of time in a small crate that is just big enough for them (no room to potty in one section and sleep in another). This will significantly improve your potty training success and reduce the risk of separation anxiety.
- Puppies need more time crated and outside than free time inside. Prevent bad habits (potting inside/chewing up things) from starting by limiting free time inside.
- Puppies need to be given frequent opportunities to go potty outside. Do NOT expect them to tell you when they need to go out. Especially when they first come home, take them out every 20-30 minutes. If they don't potty outside, put them back in their crate for 10-15 minutes and try again. Do not give a puppy any free time inside if they haven't recently potted outside.
- Your puppy will absolutely whine/scream/hate being crated initially. This is normal! It is important that they experience this to develop coping mechanisms and learn to manage their own frustrations. Once your puppy is calm, even just for a few minutes, you may let them out. Being calm and quiet is what earns them their freedom!
- It's important that puppies are not constantly entertained. It is not realistic that we will entertain our adult dog all day everyday for their whole life. It is imperative that they learn as puppies that there are times for activity and there are times to be bored/rest.
- Quality over quantity when it comes to socialization! Make sure your puppy has GOOD experiences with new things. This is especially important for meeting new people and dogs! Only allow your puppy to meet calm, stable, appropriate, SAFE dogs.
- Puppies should eat 3 meals a day until 6 months old and be let out to potty at least every 4 hours until 12 weeks old.
- When training your puppy with food, try to always use their regular kibble. Avoid using too many treats, which are high calorie and can set the expectation to need higher value food.

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