# Prepping Your Home for Your New Puppy: Tips, Tricks and Best Practices

You've just added a new paw member to your home. Congratulations! Your human family members can't wait to play and bond with him during those usually dull afternoons.

But new faces and surroundings make new pets uncomfortable. And everything from walking to feeding the dog can quickly become challenging if you don't play your cards well.

That's why we have put together tried-and-true tricks that will help you prep your home for him. From buying supplies to finding a trainer, we know what works and what doesn't.

## What To Buy

Here are some of the things to include on your shopping list:

### 1. A Puppy Crate

A comfortable crate offers your pet a safe place when you aren't around to supervise him. And if he's a mouthy puppy, the crate will prevent him from chewing hazardous or precious items.

But avoid crates that are too big or too small and go for one large enough to let the pup turn comfortably inside it. The trick here is to buy a crate that has a divider that you can move further back as the dog grows. Most wire crates come with such a feature.

Avoid buying a soft-sided crate if the puppy isn't house-trained or kennel-trained. Such options are harder to clean, and the puppy can break out easily. On the other hand, a hard-sided option allows for easy cleanup.

A crate with moat indentation on the inner help contain liquids from your pup's mess. For bedding, throw in a blanket or towel that won't be too hard to clean—only go for luxurious options when your puppy is fully house-trained.

### 2. Puppy Food and Treats

Remember to cherry-pick healthy and nutritious food for your new puppy. Don't have any idea about your pet's specific nutritional needs? Don't worry; you can try various options to see what works and what doesn't. Better still, your veterinarian can come to your rescue here.

Ensure your new puppy likes the food's flavor and avoid switching it frequently—you don't want to upset his tummy. The trick is to stock enough food that will last for at least a month or two. That way, you don't have to rush back to the pet food shop during the first few weeks and sweep anything off the shelf.

### 3. Food and Water Bowls

While food quality is crucial, the bowls containing them are equally important. They can impact your puppy's posture, appetite, risk of infection, and other things.

Over time, cheaper plastic bowls develop tiny cracks which can harbor harmful disease-causing organisms. On the other hand, stainless steel and ceramic bowls are durable, making them easier to clean.

It's also difficult for your puppy to move ceramic bowls around, thanks to their weight. This reduces excess mess that may cause infections. And if you fancy beautiful aesthetics, ceramics come in various colors that can augment your room's color scheme.

Poor eating posture can not only lead to strains but also reduce appetite. Therefore, consider raising and tilting the bowls to relieve pressure on your puppy's cervical spine. His breed, snout shape, and body type will dictate the bowl's elevation and tilt.

### 4. Puppy Toys

Puppies love playing with toys. But you need to purchase various types of toys and rotate them frequently—lest your pet loses interest and returns to your shoes. Luckily, you can never run out of ideas here.

No one likes the sight of litter scattered around the house or compound. However, your pet may get homesick for missing litter mates at his new home. How about buying them a soft toy to snuggle up with? That's perfect.

Pups love chewing, especially when teething. Give them chew toys stuffed with treats, and they'll be too busy to think about your precious sofa sets. Ensure they're made of soft rubber to prevent your pup from hurting the pup's growing teeth.

Rope toys are other options for pups with chewing urges. The toys can also bring exciting tug-of-war between your puppy and human members of your family—just ensure the war is under control and doesn't spill out of hand.

Don't forget easy-to-carry dog fetch toys such as balls and rubber sticks. Playing fetch with safe toys (not sharp sticks or heavy objects) will cement the bond between you and the dog without risks of injuries.

Squeaky toys are other options you can add to your shopping cart. They help stimulate the puppy's hunting instincts and sense of hearing.

### 5. Collar and Leash

Beautifully colored collars and leashes help complete your fashion statement. However, remember to focus on these items' functionalities instead of their cuteness.

Ensure the collar is snug enough around your puppy's neck. Does your dog pull heavily? A prong collar will work better than a buckle one. The latter distributes pressure uniformly around the neck to prevent trachea damage. Whatever your options, avoid cheaper collars that become loose with time.

Some leashes remove the need for buckle collars as they can slip around the neck quickly. They save you the hassle of attaching the collar and the leash when the dog needs to go to the potty.

### 6. Spot Cleaner

A spot cleaner helps keep your dog's crate and surrounding clean after a mess. That way, you can keep infections at bay and maintain overall cleanliness.

## Prepping Kids for Your New Puppy

No one will be happier than your kids when the new family member comes home. They know their summertime, and school breaks won't be boring anymore. But prepare the kids for the pup before they begin creating memories.

Your kids are already energetic companions who tend to be mischievous sometimes, so adding a pet brings in an extra ball of energy. Therefore, set clear dos and don'ts to ensure the fun moments don't spill over to regrets. They should know how, where, and when to play with the pup.

Teach the kids to be gentle with the dog and avoid excess roughhousing. Show your children how to pet him gently and let them know that hurtful actions such as pulling the dog by its ears or tail may earn them serious bites. Remember, the dog, too, needs training to control any unruly behavior (you might need a professional to offer a helping hand here). Involve your kids and other family members in this homework to ensure everyone is on the same page.

It's not always play and fun all day long. Someone must clean the poo, bathe, groom, feed, and walk the pet. But these tasks can help family members bond with the dog at a deeper level if managed well. You can assign them to your kids based on their age—For example, the younger children may groom the dog, and older ones can walk and take him to the vet.

## Create a Daily Routine for You and Your Puppy

A daily schedule is an excellent way of helping your paw member feel secure and adapt to their new home. It also eases the life of his human companions.

Little dogs need puppy food thrice. That means you can easily plan their mealtimes to coincide with those of other family members. On the other hand, mature dogs eat only a meal or two per day.

Setting regular potty breaks is another crucial scheduling activity, especially if you're house-training your new puppy. Stick to a schedule of taking the dog out after every 2-4 hours, and he'll soon get the drift.

Schedule the playtime to ensure your puppy gets enough fun, interactions, and exercises daily. For instance, during the late afternoon, your kids and the pup can play with toys, run around the compound, and walk around the neighborhood, and bond as they watch a movie. Consider the puppy's breed and age to ensure the playing session isn't too strenuous or prolonged.

Scheduling nap time helps your puppies grab enough ZZZs to rejuvenate their growing body. Note that small dogs may need up to a whopping 18-hour period of sleep per day. Therefore, place their crate in a quiet place and teach your kids to leave them alone until they wake up. Yeah, let the sleeping dog lie, literally.

## Find a Vet

Sickness may rob the entire family of all that fun, excitement or even the new puppy's life. So ensure you get the best healthcare for his vaccinations, preventive checkups, and necessary treatments.

Vets aren't created equal. While most veterinarians may handle different types of animals, choose one with deep experience and expertise in treating dogs. A great professional also has a robust wellness and prevention approach that goes beyond just administering medication.

Be sure your vet and any technician under them are licensed to practice in your state before they handle your puppy. The veterinary medicine board in your state can help you confirm their registration status.

Other considerations when looking for a vet include their location, cost, and the facility's cleanliness. You should ask for recommendations from friends and colleagues to ensure you're getting the best vet for your pet.

## Find a Puppy Trainer

Training your puppy in basic obedience is crucial. If your plate is already packed with other tasks or you're new in the world of pets, an experienced puppy trainer can happily take up the job. Some can even turn your pup into a sports dog within a few months.

You know the drill here: Do due diligence before settling for any trainer. Choose one that employs positive reinforcement—such an approach will encourage the dog to be a lifetime learner and help you forge a deeper bond with him.

Does your dog have specific learning needs or inappropriate behaviors like jumping on human visitors? Ask the trainer if they offer private or special classes to help him drop such behaviors.

Remember to inquire about your potential trainer's educational background or experience. While certification isn't crucial, it shows that the trainer is dedicated to turning disobedient pups into obedient ones.

But don't stop there. Meet them in person to get a feel of their personality. Are they patient, respectful, and encouraging? How do they interact with the dogs and pet owners during those classes?

## Conclusion

You now know how to make your puppy feel part and parcel of his new family. But you don't have to do all these on your own. Contact DDIY today, and let us do all the legwork for you.

## FAQs

*How do I introduce my new puppy and my kids?*

During the introduction, ensure the kids sit quietly and calmly. Naturally, dogs are curious. They'll approach your kids to know them better. Guide your kids to speak to your puppy softly and pat him gently under the chin and on the back.

*Is crate training a must?*

Crate training is crucial since it makes your dog feel secure. You'll also get peace of mind knowing your dog is safe and not up to mischief.

#### How long does it take for a new puppy to adjust to a new home?

Generally, your dog will need up to around three weeks to start feeling at home and bring out their true nature. It's crucial to help them feel comfortable and welcomed once they become part of your family.