



FREE GUIDE

New puppy checklist

Everything to prepare before and after

Introduction

There's a lot to think about before a puppy comes home, and it's easy to either over-buy or forget something you'll actually need on day one. This guide covers what to prepare in advance, what the first 24 hours usually look like, and how to think about vet care from the start.

Before you bring them home

Focus on the essentials rather than every product on a pet store shelf: a properly sized crate, food and water bowls, an appropriate food (ideally the same one they've been eating, to avoid stomach upset), a collar with ID, a leash, and a couple of safe chew toys. Puppy-proofing matters just as much — get down at puppy height and look for cords, small objects, and anything chewable within reach.

The first 24 hours

Keep it low-key. A long car ride, a house full of visitors, and a trip to the pet store on the same day is a lot for a puppy who's just left everything familiar. Let them explore one space at a time, offer food and water, and expect them to be quieter or more clingy than they'll be once they've settled in over the following days.

Setting up puppy-proof spaces

Rather than puppy-proofing the whole house at once, set up one contained area with everything they need, and expand their access gradually as they earn trust around the house. This also makes house-training far more manageable, since you can supervise a smaller space consistently.

Choosing a vet and first appointments

Aim to schedule a first vet visit within the first week, even if your puppy seems perfectly healthy — this establishes a vaccination and parasite prevention schedule and gives you a baseline for future visits. It's worth choosing a vet before you need one urgently, rather than searching during an emergency.

New puppy supplies checklist

- ☐ Appropriately sized crate and comfortable bedding
- ☐ Food and water bowls, plus a bag of their current food
- ☐ Collar with ID tag, and a leash
- ☐ Two or three safe chew toys and a food puzzle
- ☐ A puppy-proofed containment area for the first few weeks

☐ First vet appointment booked within the first week

Summary

A calm, well-prepared first day sets the tone for everything that follows. You don't need everything on day one — just the essentials, a safe space, and a vet visit on the calendar.

This guide is for general education only and is not a substitute for advice from a certified trainer, veterinarian, or veterinary behaviorist. If you're seeing signs of distress, aggression, or a sudden change in behavior, please consult a professional who can assess your pet directly.