

PUPPY SURVIVAL GUIDE

How to get off to a great start with your new puppy.

Companionship

- Let the puppy sleep near you during the first few days and slowly wean them to sleep in their own bed and ultimate sleeping location if desired.
- Keep your puppy company, especially during the first few weeks. If you work long hours, get someone else to help out. Gradually get your dog used to spending time alone.
- Spend quality time with your puppy daily. Play with your dog using toys so they can chase, grab and tug.
- Invite people to your house. Take your puppy to work or social activities (take a crate so the puppy can rest undisturbed frequently).

House Training

- Invest the time to properly house train your puppy. Supervise, confine and reward. Never punish a puppy for eliminating where they shouldn't!

Socialisation.

- Take your puppy out into the world from the get go. If your dog only had their first vaccination, carry them on your arms or let them watch from the car.
- The importance of socialisation cannot be overstated. Create positive associations with lots of lots of

sounds, sights, people, other animals - anything your dog could possibly encounter in their lives.

- Prevent fear of strangers by introducing a large variety of humans in a positive manner including children. Let the stranger give your dog treats, but be careful the puppy does not get overwhelmed. Do not allow people to simply walk up and handle your puppy. Always watch your pup for signs of stress and back up if necessary.
- The primary time for you to socialise your dog is under about twelve weeks of age. Everything your dog experiences during that time will have an especially deep and lasting impact. Make sure the experiences are positive. Do not waste a day! After that period continue socialising your dog to maintain their skills and well-being.
- Attend a well-run puppy preschool which includes off leash play.
- If your puppy is shy, never force them! Allow them to explore the world at their own pace.

Body Handling.

- Teach your dog to enjoy being touched, held, squeezed, poked etc. by starting with brief handling and gradually

work up to more invasive handling. Always give a tasty treat after handling. The higher the value of your treats, the more the dog will enjoy being handled.

- Allow strangers, including children, to touch your dog but supervise closely to make sure your dog enjoys it. Always follow the handling with treats.
- Take your dog to the vet outside appointment times and give them treats in the waiting area, exam room and on the exam table. Perform mock vet exams to make them comfortable with various types of procedures.

Training.

- Attend a well-run puppy school which uses positive reinforcement training.
- Socialisation is the most important thing at this stage whereas training can be done at any time. Focus on three or four behaviours such as sit and drop/down, stay or wait and 'leave it' and do lots of repetitions in different places.
- Use rewards to train your puppy. Do not use coercive methods such as physical manipulation or yelling. Redirect unwanted behaviour towards other behaviours, e.g. ask the dog to sit or go fetch a toy in situations where they are likely to jump up.

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