

## Puppies

Once you have chosen the type of puppy you want, be sure that you receive all the required health records pertaining to him. This should include the dates of inoculations, the type of serum given and the record of wormings the puppy has received.

Remember to introduce your puppy to family members and other pets as slowly as possible. Refrain from play and strenuous activity until he has had time to acclimate himself. Take your new puppy to the veterinarian as soon as possible. Bring the health and worming records with you, along with a stool sample.

You should also purchase those necessary items for the general maintenance of your new pet.

**FOOD:** The brand of food your puppy has been eating should be purchased at the same time you bring your puppy home. A new home, which is a totally new and challenging environment for your puppy, is stressful enough without drastically changing his diet as well. A complete change in diet can result in diarrhea and be a strain on the system. If you do decide to change the brand of food the puppy is eating, feed him the old food for at least a week and then gradually change to the new food by mixing it with the old. This should be done over the course of at least a week.

The food bowl should be large enough to compensate for your puppy's rapid growth over the first few months of life and large enough not to be tipped over. Both the food and water dishes should be located as far away from the training papers as possible.

Feeding should be done on a regularly scheduled basis, which will greatly aid in housebreaking your puppy.

**WATER:** The water dish, like the food bowl, should be heavy enough to avoid tipping. Clean, fresh water should always be available, especially if the puppy is on a diet of dry food.

**BED:** The new puppy should be provided with a location that he can consider his own. A dog bed will help by giving the new puppy a sense of security in an area

that he can call his own. The bed should be placed on the other side of the room from the training papers.

**HOUSEBREAKING AIDS:** Housebreaking a dog is generally an easy process. Sometimes a puppy will miss the papers or be harder to train. Housebreaking aids can speed the process or give the puppy the right idea about where to go. These are available as drops that can be put on the newspapers that will attract the puppy. There are also sheets that have drops already on them, which are plastic lined and can be used in place of newspaper for housebreaking purposes. Remember to reward your puppy for using the paper and keep it as clean as possible.

### PUPPY SHAMPOO

Sometimes the new arrival will arrive home in need of a bath. It is probably better to wait a few days at least until your puppy has had time to acclimate to his new surroundings. If he is washed, make sure that he is dried thoroughly and try to avoid drafts. Like all babies, they are susceptible to colds. Wash him using a shampoo designed specifically for puppies, one that is less harsh than shampoos used for adult dogs. Do not use shampoo made for humans.

**GROOMING TOOLS:** The new puppy, regardless of the length of his coat, will need some brushing. In the longer coated breeds, daily grooming is necessary to avoid mats as the puppy fur falls out and the adult fur starts growing in. All dogs will become accustomed to brushing and it provides a good opportunity to spend some time, quietly, with your pet. Slicker type brushes, pin brushes and various other shapes and sizes are available in pet supply stores. A comb, preferably metal, is useful as well, especially with the longer coated dogs. Speaking to your puppy in a calm, soothing voice will help to calm him while grooming. "No," in a loud voice or clapping your hands should be used to discourage behaviour you consider unacceptable.

**COLLAR AND LEASH:** The puppy should have a collar as soon as possible, if only to have him familiar with wearing one. These are available in leather, chain and nylon. Be careful to keep a watchful eye on the size of the collar, especially as the puppy is growing. Puppies can quickly outgrow their collars; a collar that fit perfectly two weeks ago may be too tight now. A leash, also in leather, chain or nylon, can be used when walking your puppy and may help to prevent dangerous accidents.

**TOYS:** As with any new arrival, a puppy needs to play. The new puppy should have a few toys that he can call his own. These will give him the necessary diversions he requires and help to prevent boredom. Rotate the toys periodically or provide him with new ones. Toys can be used to help prevent your puppy from chewing unacceptable objects. As mentioned above, say "no" in a loud voice or clap your hands to show your disapproval, then show him the toy and encourage him to chew on it and not the furniture. Remember that puppies have an inherent need to chew, especially as their teeth develop.

**A PET CARRIER:** If the puppy is small enough, he can be transported in a portable pet carrier. These should have plenty of air holes and be large enough to provide him room in which to move around. Food and water dishes should be attached. Try not to take your pet anywhere until he has had time to acclimate to his new surroundings. The pet carrier can also be used as a training aid.

**CAGES:** Many people use cages, or crates, as a means of housebreaking their pets. The crate also can house his bed and some of his toys. The crate should be left open when the puppy is loose in the room or home so he can use it whenever he feels the need, providing him with an area that can offer security and privacy. At night, while you are away or when he cannot be supervised, the puppy should be kept in the crate with the door closed.

Puppies, by nature, will not soil the area in which they sleep. If they are kept in a crate in the evening, they can be more easily trained. Puppies generally sleep for long periods of time and wake to eat and play. Puppies will generally need to eliminate wastes immediately after they have eaten or just after they wake up. They should be taken to the newspapers, or outside since, by nature, they will not want to use their own special areas. They should then be praised to reinforce this behaviour. If the puppy uses an area other than the designated spot, shout or clap your hands in an effort to distract him and immediately take him outside or to the paper. Do not punish the puppy with methods that could later develop into aggressive behaviour.

Patience will be rewarded, developing a lasting, loving relationship with your pet.