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Getting Started on the Right Paw with a New Puppy

Introduction:

Getting a new puppy should be a happy and an exciting event. Planning in advance and starting off right in the beginning will help make this fun for you and your puppy. But too often it becomes a confusing and frustrating time for both. Typically, this happens when we as humans expect too much of the puppy who does not automatically understand our language, thoughts and the rules of the new environment. This causes us stress and the puppy to get frustrated when rules are broken they did not even know exist. So we have to remember that they are not humans and come with different capabilities and communication systems to view the world around them. Thus, they need our gentle assistance in teaching them to better understand what is expected of them. Remember though puppies, like children need our love, care and protection throughout the process and beyond.

Getting Ready for the Puppy:

- The more prepared you are, the better.
- Prior to picking up the puppy chose a good veterinarian and have their phone number handy in the event of an emergency.
- Also get the phone number for the nearest 24-hour emergency veterinary clinic from the veterinarian you choose.
- Find out from the breeder the brand of food, amount and feeding schedule the puppy is currently on. Purchase the same brand of food to have on hand when the puppy arrives.
- Puppy proof the house
 - ◆ Remove and keep out of reach anything puppy can quickly pick up (children's toys, pillows and etc.)
 - ◆ All wiring or electric cords should be covered or inaccessible to the puppy.
 - ◆ All medicines and cleaning supplies should be located in a latched cabinet or inaccessible to the puppy.
 - ◆ Garage should be checked for items the puppy might get into and ingest (fertilizer, weed killer, bug poisons antifreeze and etc.)
- 6 foot leash (leather is the best depending on the dog size).
- 4 foot light nylon leash to be used as a dragline on the puppy in the house while be supervised.
- 30 to 36 inch long cable to be used as a tie-out in the house.



- Stainless steel bowls for food and water.
- Crate with a divider section (min. size 24"X36"X26").
- EX-pen (a good alternate for a crate when the puppy is not being supervised).
- Nature's Miracle for cleaning up potty accidents in the house.
- First aid kit for the puppy.
- Alcohol free baby wipes for cleaning around ears.
- Ear cleaner suggested by veterinarian.
- Puppy toothpaste and finger tooth brush.
- Toys (never use toys that can be ingested and cause intestinal blockages).
- Ask the breeder if they can send along a towel with his mother's and litter-mates smells on it, so when your puppy goes to bed at night you can place the towel in the crate with the puppy. He will find their familiar smell reassuring and comforting.

Picking up your puppy:

- If you are going to transport the puppy home in a crate, bring a vehicle that can accommodate the crate.
- Arrive early.
- Bring puppy waste clean-up materials.
- Bring a few soft chew toys.
- Realize that your puppy may be frightened. The puppy is in a strange place with new people, sights, smells and noises.
- Be sure you are in a secured area before opening the crate to eliminate the possibility of your puppy bolting beyond your control.
- If your pup has just arrived by plane put his leash on him as quickly as possible and let him relieve. Select an area that has not been used by other dogs but is considered an acceptable spot for dogs to use. Praise him if he relieves and clean up after him immediately.
- Offer him a drink of water, and return him to his crate or place him on a passenger's lap in the back seat for the ride home. Do not hold him if you are driving.
- Do not let him roam your car freely.
- Ignore his cries. Praise him when he is calm or quiet.
- Gently correct him with a quick tug on his collar if he struggles then stroke him gently after correcting him and he stops struggling.
- If he mouths the person holding him, have that person give a loud "YELP" or "OUCH", so that the puppy understands that mouthing is not acceptable. Hold him calmly and stroke him slowly and gently after correcting him and when he is not mouthing.
- It's up to you to get him into the friendly environment of his new home as quickly and efficiently as possible.



At your home:

- Put his leash on him as quickly as possible carry the puppy to your back yard to a place where you would like him to relieve or select an area that has not been used by other dogs and let him relieve. Praise him if he relieves and clean up after him immediately.
- Offer your puppy a drink of water and some puppy food if it is time for a feeding.
- Feed the puppy in his crate, this will help him understand that the crate is a good place to be. Don't let him out for half an hour and when you do, carry him outside to potty before you do anything else. Wait for him to have a bowel movement before bringing him back in. Some pups get their jobs done quickly, others may take half an hour.
- Any time he eats or drinks, make sure you take the puppy back outside to the same area to relieve him again.
- Put your puppy on-leash (drag line) and let him explore the house while you follow and supervise him. You may want to restrict him to non-carpeted areas initially.
- While you may be tempted to show him off, understand that your puppy needs time to adjust to his new surroundings.
- Introduce your puppy slowly to other human family members.
- Arrange some quiet time. Give the puppy some space. Too much attention and activity from people or other pets can overwhelm him.
- Instead of inviting a crowd of people to welcome him to his new home, wait a few days. Then allow only one or two visitors at a time.
- Place the puppy in his crate or Ex-Pen if he cannot be supervised.
- Take the puppy out frequently to relieve. Plan on taking the puppy outside every two hours (at least) while he's awake. If he's being slow, walk around the yard encouraging him to follow you. Walking tends to get things moving, so to speak!
- Offer the puppy food and water regularly, according to his feeding schedule provided by the breeder.
- Begin teaching your puppy your expectations immediately.
- Do not let him do anything now that will be unacceptable later, including mouthing, barking, jumping, inappropriate relieving, getting on furniture, etc.
- Allow him to meet other pets slowly, carefully and one at a time.
- Put the family pet dogs on leash and with the puppy also on a leash, slowly allow them to approach one another. It is best to make these introductions outside in the yard.
- Do not allow pet dogs and the puppy to be close enough to touch, mouth or bite each other.
- Keep the leashes loose and praise the existing family pet dogs for friendly behavior.



- Teach family pet dog to behave gently by giving them a leash and collar correction when they behave roughly.
- Delay introducing the puppy to pet cats until the next day if possible. Many cats adjust better when allowed to get used to the scent of the new puppy, rather than through forced introductions. Never attempt to restrain a cat while introducing a puppy.
- Show the puppy all the glass sliding doors in the house so he does not walk into them. You can temporarily put a bright sticker on the glass at the puppy's height.
- Keep the puppy out of the kitchen when you are cooking to avoid burn injuries.
- Don't leave your puppy loose and unattended. If you cannot watch the puppy (even for a moment), put him in a safe area such as a crate or Ex-Pen.
- Never allow the puppy outside of a fenced yard without a leash and always have a leash on the puppy when you open a door that leads to an unfenced area.
- When the doorbell rings, do not open the door until you have secured the puppy in a crate or have put a leash on him.
- Never leave your puppy unattended when attached to a tie-out.
- If you leave your puppy with anyone, make sure the person is experienced in puppy care.
- You should begin shaping your puppy's behavior right away. Young puppies are constantly learning, whether you are actively teaching them or not. The best time to mold their behavior is from 8 to 20 weeks of age. Older puppies still learn, but at 8 to 9 weeks, you are starting with a fresh slate.

Puppy's First Night Home:

- It is best to have his crate close by you in your bedroom at night to help him with dealing with his new environment. This will also prevent him from relieving in the house during the middle of the night. Most puppies will wake you when they need to go out.
- Have a gentle short play period just prior to bed time, then take the pup outside. Remember to praise his success.
- Then prior to putting the puppy to bed have your puppy sitting calmly in your lap and handle his paws, ears, mouth. Make sure you do this very calmly and quietly.
- Make sure the puppy is calm before putting him into his crate for the night.
- Give the puppy a Nylabone to chew, this will help comfort him.
- If he cries during the night, he probably has to go out. Carry him outside to potty, then put him back in the crate with a minimum of cuddling. If you play with him, he might decide he doesn't want to go back to sleep! Puppies usually sleep through the night within a few days.
- Make sure that you are not just giving in to his puppy crying. If you take him out and he relieves and he begins to cry shortly after you put him back in the crate, wait a while before taking out again. Ignore whining or barking, stay silent.



- The first thing when you let the puppy out of the crate is take the puppy outside and always **CARRY** the puppy to the door!! This is important. Puppies seem to have a reflex peeing action that takes affect the moment they step out of the crate. If you let him walk to the door, he'll probably have an accident before he gets there. Part of this training method is psychological — you want the puppy to feel grass under his feet when he goes to the bathroom, not your carpeting!

Daytime Schedule:

- Establish a regular schedule of potty trips and feedings. This helps you to control the times he has to go out and prevent accidents in the house. First thing in the morning — before you have your coffee — carry the puppy outside. He can then come in and play for an hour. Feed breakfast in the crate and don't let him out again for a half hour. Then carry him back outside for potty. Puppies usually have a bowel movement after each meal so give him time to accomplish it.
- Now he can have another inside playtime for an hour or so. Don't give him free run of the house, use baby gates or close doors to keep him out of rooms he shouldn't go in. (Puppies are notorious for finding out of the way corners to have accidents in — keep him in an area where you can watch him (Ex-Pen's are good for this). If you give him too much freedom too soon, he'll probably make a mistake. After playtime, take him outside again then tuck him into his crate for a nap.
- For the first month or so, you'll be feeding three or four meals per day. Repeat the same procedure throughout the day: potty outside first thing in the morning, one hour playtime, potty, meal in crate, potty, playtime, potty, nap, potty, playtime, meal, etc. The playtimes can be lengthened as the puppy gets older and is more reliable. Eventually the puppy will be letting you know when he needs to go out but remember — if you ignore his request or don't move quickly enough, he'll have an accident!
- This may sound like a lot of work and it is! The results will pay off in a well-housebroken puppy and clean carpets. Puppies who were allowed to use wire-bottom crates have less inclination to keep their crates clean. Puppies that were raised in garages or other large areas where they could “go” wherever will also be a little more difficult. Don't give up though - you can train them, it will just take a little longer.
- A word about paper-training: It seems harmless to leave papers about “just in case” and for us who work all day, it's a necessity. However, paper-training your pup will make the overall job of house training that much harder and take longer. By only allowing the pup to relieve itself outside, you're teaching it that it's not acceptable to use the house. Using newspapers will override this training. Also, be aware that many puppies get the notion that going potty NEAR the papers is as good as going ON them! If you must use newspapers when you're gone, keep to the regular house



training schedule when you're at home. Get the puppy outside often enough and don't leave papers out "just in case."

- Keep your dog's yard picked up and free of old stools. Many dogs choose an area to use as a bathroom. If left to become filthy, they'll refuse to use it and may do their business in the house instead! Picking up stools helps you keep tabs on your dog's health as well. Stools should be firm and fairly dry. Loose, sloppy stools can be an indication of worms, health problems, stress or digestive upset.