

Puppy Supplies You'll Need

Bringing a new puppy home is a thrilling experience, but if you don't have everything in place upon its arrival, the experience can turn from happy to harrowing. We've assembled a checklist of items you may already have on hand, and a few to [purchase ahead of time](#).

1. An appropriate-sized crate. Dogs are den animals, and they love the comfort and security offered by a snug space of their own. Ideally, the crate will have three "walls," with a front gate your dog can see through. It's important to find a crate that's just the right size for your puppy. If the crate has too much room, the puppy is likely to have an "accident" inside of it. But the crate should not be so small that he doesn't have room to sit up or stretch out. Add some bedding, like old sheets, T-shirts, or towels or a crate pad, so puppy has something soft to sleep on, and be sure to leave him a few chew toys.



2. Wire playpen. We recommend these wire panels, which can be configured to any size or shape you might need. They can also be used to block doorways to rooms you'd like to keep off-limits.



3. Wee-Wee Pads and holder. These are essential for puppies not fully immunized and not yet allowed outside. They may also be a permanent solution for apartment dwellers or others who find outdoor housetraining impractical. Make sure you get the ones with an attractant in it. Or you can buy a separate attractant



4. Pet Bed. Any pet bed is fine. Puppies are not picky. They just want something soft. Put a pillow case over the bed (pillow shams are best because they close or zip on both ends, and the puppies can't climb inside the case) This will keep their sharp claws from ripping all the stuffing out when they're "fluffing" their bed. It's also easier to wash if they have an accident or come in with muddy feet. Years of replacing dog beds and I finally learned that trick!

5. Chew Toys. A new puppy will chew anything in his path: your shoes, furniture, DVDs. Make sure you have plenty of toys to chew instead, and always offer a toy when you catch him chewing a non-toy. We recommend starting with a variety, as different breeds and individual puppies gravitate toward different things. It will take some trial and error to figure out what your dog likes best. Start with a multipack of puppy bones, squeak toys, furry toys, and rubber balls. Puppy safe toys are always good to keep in a basket that they can reach. It will keep them from chewing on other things if they know what they are allowed to play with. Find something recommended to help with cutting their teeth. Soft toys are fun, but they do need something harder as well, otherwise, they'll find your furniture!

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6. Leash harness and collar A halter is best when walking small dogs since it takes pressure off the trachea. The collar is good for holding name tags and rabies tags. A six foot leash is common.

Even if your puppy is not fully immunized and therefore not ready to go outside, you can introduce him to his leash and collar, and get him accustomed to wearing it. Our favorite "collar" Comfort Soft Sport Wrap Adjustable Harness because it is a step in harness. No fighting to get it over pups head!



7. Bitter Apple Spray. After puppy-proofing your home, there may still be a few items you can't just place out of puppy's reach, like the corners of your furniture. Bitter Apple Spray can be applied to most household items. It's scentless for humans, but tastes nasty to dogs, and keeps their curious mouths away.



8. Nature's Miracle or other enzyme cleaner. Even the best-trained puppy will have an indoor accident at some point, and it should be cleaned up within seconds, when possible. The difference between enzyme cleansers and your regular household spray is that the enzymes will eliminate odors that only your dog can smell, reducing any reminder that he's gone potty in any particular part of your house. Also, avoid any cleaning agent that contains ammonia — the chemical smells just like pee to a dog, and dogs love "going" where they've "gone" before.



9. Food and water bowls. This is obvious, as puppies need to eat about three times a day and require a bowl of fresh water nearby most of the time. Stainless steel, ceramic or glass bowls collect less bacteria than plastic.

10. High Quality Puppy Food: Always buy a puppy food with meat as the first ingredient (lamb or chicken is best) and that uses few fillers. Feed 3 times a day until 1 year old. At first free feed.

11. Grooming Accessories: Small rounded grooming scissors (for trimming the hair out of the eyes), dog brush and metal comb (to make sure you get down to the skin and prevent mats from forming), and small nail clippers (usually found in cat section). Human nail files works great to round off any sharp edges the clippers leave.



12. Dog Shampoo: Make sure you choose a shampoo for puppies. I like anything with oatmeal and aloe.

