

FIRST-YEAR PUPPY GUIDE



HealthyPupTips



www.healthypuptips.com

About Us

HealthyPupTips makes puppy care simple and accessible with free, easy-to-understand guides informed by trusted veterinary recommendations, including the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA).

From vaccines and nutrition to training and daily routines, our guides help you understand your puppy's needs throughout their first year.

Simple, reliable guidance to help you raise a healthy puppy with confidence.



**THE FIRST YEAR
SHAPES YOUR
PUPPY'S LIFELONG
HEALTH.**

KEEP YOUR PUPPY HEALTHY

VET VISITS AND VACCINES

Why are Vet Visits Important?

Regular vet visits help keep your puppy healthy and catch problems early. This can save you money.

- **First year:** Your puppy needs more vet visits.
- **After the first year:** Visit the vet once a year.
- **Make vet visits less scary:** Reward your puppy with treats and praise at the vet.

Where can I get vet care?

- **Private Vet Clinics:** Offer checkups, vaccines, tests, and care for sick or injured pets.
- **Low-Cost Clinics:** Offer affordable checkups, vaccines, and spay/neuter surgery. Some may not provide emergency care.

Why does my puppy need vaccines?

- Vaccines help protect your puppy from serious diseases.
- They also help protect other pets and people.
- Some vaccines are required by law or by pet services like grooming and boarding.

Are vaccine side effects normal?

Most side effects are mild and go away within 1–2 days. Here's what to watch for:

- **Common:** Soreness, tiredness, mild fever, or eating less.
- **Call your vet right away:** Vomiting or diarrhea.
- **Get emergency care:** Trouble breathing, swelling, hives, or collapse.



SAMPLE VACCINE SCHEDULE



KEEP YOUR PUPPY PROTECTED FROM SERIOUS DISEASES

VACCINE	FIRST DOSE	NEXT DOSE	BOOSTER
DHPP Distemper, parvovirus and other serious diseases	6-8 wks	Every 2-4 wks until at least 16 wks	Within 1 yr, then every 3 yrs
Bordetella Kennel cough	Often 8+ wks	Depends on vaccine	Usually yearly
Leptospirosis Kidney and liver infection	Usually 12 wks	2-4 wks after first dose	Yearly
Rabies Deadly virus	Usually 12-16 wks	-----	1 yr later, then every 1-3 yrs per local law
Lyme Tick-borne disease affecting joints and kidneys	Based on risk and age	2-4 wks after first dose	Yearly, if recommended

Remember: Your vet will choose the best vaccine schedule based on your puppy's needs. Not all puppies need every vaccine.

FIRST-YEAR PUPPY CARE TIPS

NUTRITION TIPS

- **Choose puppy food:** Look for “complete and balanced” for growth.
- **Set a feeding schedule:** Feed your puppy at regular times.
- **Measure food:** Ask your vet how much to feed.
- **Limit treats:** Keep treats under 10% of daily calories.
- **Provide fresh water:** Keep clean water available.
- **Avoid toxic foods:** No chocolate, grapes, raisins, or xylitol (a sugar substitute).
- **Change food slowly:** Mix new food with old food over 5–7 days.



BEHAVIOR & TRAINING TIPS

- **Introduce new things:** Puppies learn best about new things during their first 3–14 weeks. Slowly introduce your puppy to new people, places, sounds, and vaccinated dogs. Don't force them if they're scared.
- **Reward good behavior:** Give treats, praise, or play when your puppy does something right. Never hit or scare them.
- **Practice every day:** Teach your puppy where to go potty, simple commands like “sit,” and how to stay alone for short periods.

SLEEP AND DAILY ROUTINE TIPS

- **Get enough sleep:** Young puppies need about 18–20 hours of sleep each day.
- **Create a routine:** Set regular times for meals, play, potty breaks, and sleep.
- **Practice crate training:** Start with short times and reward your puppy. Never use it as punishment.
- **Brush their teeth:** Use dog toothpaste and a soft toothbrush. Never use human toothpaste.
- **Keep your puppy safe:** Use an ID tag and ask your vet about microchipping.
- **Travel safely:** Use a secure carrier or dog seat belt. Never leave your puppy alone in a car.



HealthyPupTips

Your puppy's wellness checklist

- ✓ Schedule vet visits
- ✓ Track Vaccines
- ✓ Give Nutritious Meals
- ✓ Practice Positive Training
- ✓ Establish Healthy Routines

Contact Us:

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Disclaimer: HealthyPupTips provides general educational information, not a substitute for veterinary advice.

Every puppy is different.

Consult your veterinarian about your puppy's health, vaccines, nutrition, and care.

Sources: AVMA, Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine, Cornell Animal Hospital, AAHA, AKC,

and Merck Veterinary Manual.

Full references: healthypuptips.com

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