



Purchasing your first puppy

Puppy checklist/Items you will need:

- Purchase a good quality age appropriate pet food or research a make at home diet suitable for a growing puppy.
- Flea & tick treatment
- All wormer
- Heart worming treatment (discuss with vet)
- A stainless steel feeding dish
- A ceramic water bowl
- A lead and harness or collar
- House breaking aids
- A teething bone
- A play rope bone
- Some squeaky toys
- A soft comfy toy for bedtime
- Grooming tools
- Suitable shampoo and coat conditioner
- A kennel to keep dry
- A selection of healthy age appropriate treats
- Training pads
- A teething bone
- House breaking aids

Bringing your puppy home

Owning a puppy will be one of the most enjoyable and rewarding things you will ever do. To enjoy all the benefits of owning a puppy, it is vital you take the steps to ensure he or she stays healthy and happy. This information care sheet will help you achieve this. While it's exciting bringing a new puppy home, remember the environment is new and your pup may be very apprehensive or scared. Act calm, not too rowdy, and provide a warm, soft and cosy area for your pup to feel secure. Providing a comfort toy or two will help in these early days.

What to feed and how often

Feed your pup their current diet for the first 2 weeks before aiming to integrate a premium quality puppy food or make at home diet along with raw bones. Keep the diet consistent as transitional diarrhoea can occur. Feed your pup 3-4 times per day until 12 weeks of age, then 2-3 times daily until they're 5- 6 months old. Check the premium food package recommendations as your puppy grows to ensure you adjust it accordingly. The quality of your pup's food can be indicated in the condition of their coat. Keep your pup on a puppy or growth diet until they're 12 months of age before switching to an adult dog food. There are certain foods that can be fatal to dogs and should be avoided in their daily diet. These include: cooked bones, onions, grapes, sultanas, avocado, coffee/tea, alcohol, chocolate and too much high energy human foods such as barbecued or cured meats. You should also avoid feeding raw eggs, fatty marrow bones and lily plants. TIP: After a pup is weaned from their mother, there is no need to give milk. Fresh water is far better and helps with digestion.

Get your pup vaccinated

Puppies are at risk of a number of serious diseases, including parvovirus, distemper and hepatitis among others. These diseases are debilitating and can be fatal so vaccinating against them is vital. Your vet will guide you on the right vaccination regime for your pup. The first vaccination is generally given at 6- 8 weeks of age, then at 12-14 weeks for the second vaccination, some vets recommend a third, others don't so consult your vet for current recommendations. Boosters are then recommended yearly. Excluding taking your puppy to the vet, it's a good idea to keep them at home until they are fully vaccinated to minimise any risks.

Worming

Your puppy should be treated for intestinal worms every two weeks until 12 weeks of age, then every four weeks until six months of age. After six months, worming should continue every three months for life. The most common intestinal worms include roundworm, All wormers' are a good way to protect your pup from all types of intestinal worms. Remember, worms can transfer from dogs to humans, so be diligent- especially if you have children.

Protect against fleas

Fleas carry tapeworm and can cause severe scratching and allergic reactions, known as flea allergy dermatitis. Cover your puppy with a good quality flea control product on a monthly basis, all year round. You can start from 6- 8 weeks of age and continue for life.

Heartworm

Heartworm is a parasite that lives in the heart and lungs of dogs and is spread by mosquitos. This disease is usually fatal without treatment and contrary to popular belief, is present in all states of Australia. It is vital to protect your puppy against heartworm rather than waiting for them to contract it. The old saying 'prevention is better than cure' definitely applies here. Heartworm prevention should start at 12 weeks of age, and comes in the form of yearly injections, tablets, chewables and spot-ons. Most 'all wormers' do not prevent heartworm, so check them carefully.

Microchipping

A microchip is a permanent identification device implanted under the skin, allowing a quick and easy return if your puppy ever gets lost. Pet microchipping is mandatory in most Australian states, so check with your local council if this is a requirement in your area. Your pup can be microchipped at any age but the earlier the better. Microchipping is quick and easy, causing very little discomfort. It's essential to inform the microchip registry if you move, or your contact number changes. As well as microchipping, it's a good idea to purchase an I.D tag for your puppy's collar, engraved with their name and your contact number or an ID collar that has your puppies name & your contact number embroidered on the collar. This will also increase their chance of finding their way home if they should get lost!

Training

Training should start as early as possible (usually before 14-16 weeks of age) and is vital for a happy and healthy relationship between you and your pet. Set your rules and stick to them. You should be fair and consistent. Always praise your puppy for good behaviour and correct undesirable behaviour with a firm 'no'. Rewarding with treats is a great way to train your puppy when he does things right. Puppy school is a great place to start. It's a great, fun way to socialise and train your pup in a group environment. Speak to your vet about what age your pup can start walking on a leash and mixing with other dogs.

Desexing

Due to various health and behaviour problems it is highly recommended your puppy is de-sexed at 5- 6 months of age. This will not change the personality of your puppy.