

BRINGING HOME A PUPPY?



HERE'S HOW TO GET READY.

Congratulations on the new addition to your family! Now that you have found the right breed and temperament for your lifestyle, it's time to get things in order around the house before your new furry family member arrives. Consult this handy checklist to ensure a smooth, successful transition to your (and their!) home.

-  **Research and choose a veterinarian** who shares your medical philosophies. Book an appointment to verify health, microchipping, vaccinations, and other necessities. Follow your vet's recommendations for diet and other health-related issues, then continue with regular visits.
-  **Acquire a crate** for home and car use. This "den" will help your dog feel safe and secure when you are away, as well as be valuable for housetraining.
-  **Purchase soft toys and bedding** for your puppy. Bring them with you to pick up your new arrival, so they can acquire the scent of the littermates and mother. Place them in the crate.
-  **Cover the crate for the ride home** so your pup can see you but has limited vision of the scenery outside.
-  **Get some of your pup's current food** from the breeder or shelter and use it to transition to new food if appropriate.
-  **Puppy-proof your home and yard** to ensure safety. Remove potential hazards that would make an enticing chew toy (like power cords, house plants, or clothing), or anything that might be swallowed by a curious puppy (like small rocks, fertilizers, or household chemicals or objects). Move anything cherished or breakable to higher ground.
-  **Arrange to bring your puppy home** early in the day to give them more time to acclimate to their new surroundings. If possible, make the transition when you have a few days off to oversee the process more closely.
-  **Allow your pup to investigate their new surroundings** when they arrive.
-  **Introduce your puppy to their new den (crate)** in a quiet area of house. Leave the door open and feed them inside.
-  **Try to avoid naps on the first day** so they are tired by your bedtime.
-  **An hour before you want to go to sleep,** take your pup outside for toileting, then into their den. Only take them out when they are quiet and settled.
-  **Confine your pup to specific areas until good toileting habits are established.** No free roam in the house.
-  **Practice good leadership from the start.** Do not react to your pup. You determine when playtime is, when attention is given, when feeding time is, etc. Stay consistent.
-  **Establish structure.** Creating and maintaining a schedule is vital for housetraining your puppy.
-  **Be patient.** Acclimation takes time, and accidents will happen, but do not reprimand your puppy for mistakes. Do praise them profusely, however, for positive behaviour.
-  **Get training.** Early, consistent training means establishing leadership traits that are key to managing your dog's behaviour. Consult your local Bark Busters trainer to get started.