

Your Puppy Survival Guide

New puppies are cute and fun but can be hard work if you are not prepared. Use this survival guide to help you and your puppy learn about each other through those first weeks or months. For additional advice, don't hesitate to contact an APDT dog trainer.



Be prepared

Before even getting a puppy, take the time to research the type of dog that will be suitable for your lifestyle when they become an adult. Cute images of puppies on social media don't display the wants and needs of the dog and the time required for care and training.

Another aspect you must also be aware of is that several popular dog breeds or crosses may have medical issues that can be very costly to repair or manage. Brachycephalic breeds, including Bulldogs (French and English), Boxer Dogs, Boston Terriers, Pekingese, Chinese Shar-Pei, Pugs, Lhasa Apsos, Shih Tzus, and Bull Mastiffs can suffer from breathing and heat-intolerance.

Go to dog shows and speak to breeders or chat to a local veterinarian before you purchase any dog to ensure you are making an informed decision. Remember, most dogs live between 10–15 years.

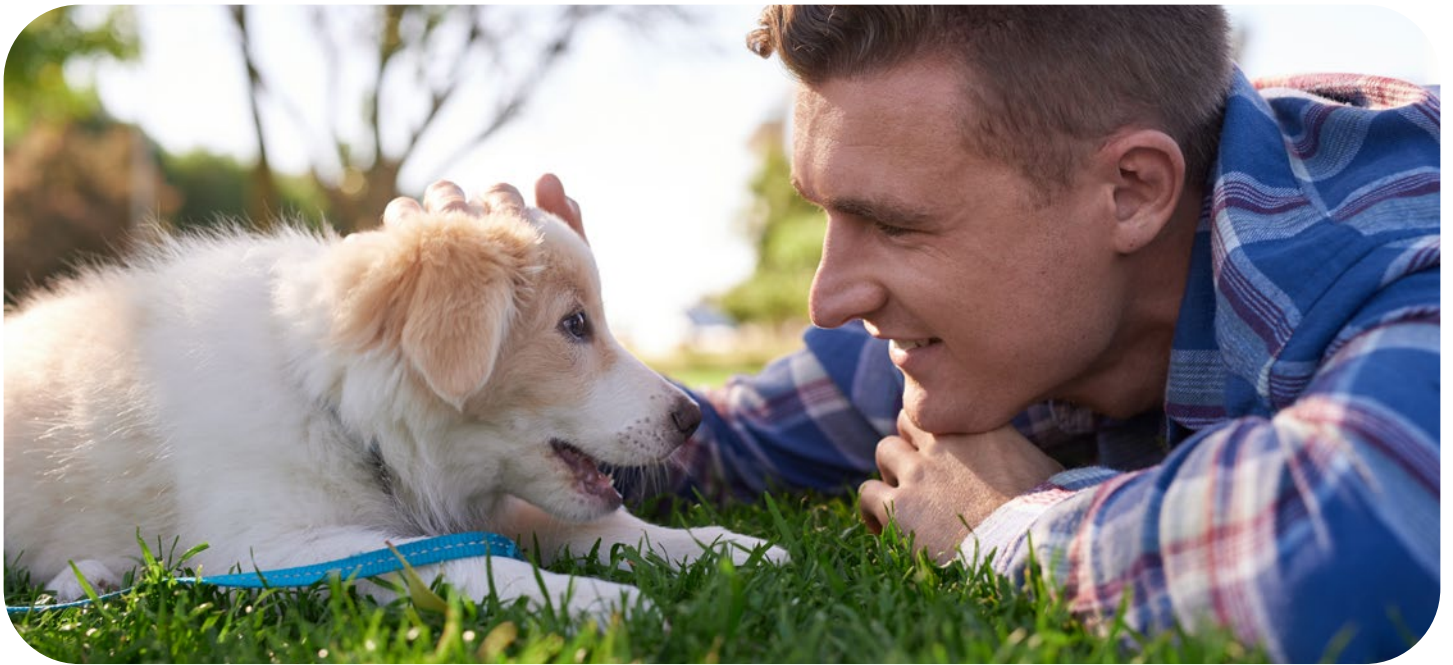


Potential purchases

When it comes to purchasing items for your new puppy, dog owners are inundated with choices. Here are some of the essentials you may need:

- collar with ID tag
- lead and house line
- bowls for food and water
- specific puppy food
- training rewards or use your puppy's daily food allowance
- mat, bed and crate
- toys (plush, squeaky, rope, balls)
- enrichment toys such as treat balls and Kongs
- long-lasting chews
- baby gates
- Adaptil (calming pheromone) and calming music.

When purchasing anything for your dog, consider how it will interact with the item, what the object is made from and whether it will last your dog's life.



Survival hints and tips

- Use your puppy's daily food allowance for crate training. Reward calmness and appropriate crate interactions to build a love for the crate environment. The crate will become your puppy's safe space and resting place now and into the future.
- Consider puppy preschool – you'll learn a lot and make new friends.
- Train your puppy at every opportunity, every day, for just a few minutes.
- Train your puppy to sit, drop, stand, come, give, leave it and wait. Reward all the behaviours you want and ignore the ones you don't want.
- Have food in your pockets at all times so that they are ready and handy when you see something you want to reward or distract/redirect your pup from something undesirable – like chewing your furniture – to something you want – like choosing to chew a dog toy or sitting calmly.
- Make toilet training a breeze by keeping your pup under constant supervision indoors. Young puppies often go to the toilet immediately after waking, playing, or eating. Take them outside and praise and reward all toileting events.
- Associate a word or phrase to go to the toilet, such as 'hurry up' and reward them for going. This cue will be convenient when on road trips, rainy days or whenever you need your dog to toilet on request.
- If your puppy has an accident and toilets inside, calmly clean up the mess using an enzymatic cleaner to remove all odours.
- Do not punish your puppy for any toileting accidents. Be more alert and faster next time when getting your puppy outdoors.

- Baby gates and crates help manage access, block off rooms, and make puppy supervision easier when focussing on other tasks.
- Grow calmness with your puppy with low-energy activities indoors. Puppies require up to 18–20 hours of sleep every day! Provide your puppy with a quiet place to experience deep sleep using canine calming music and calming pheromones, if appropriate.
- Puppy-proof your home. Remove all items the puppy can take or chew and replace them with things your puppy can play with or chew. Give your puppy toys, long-lasting chews, cardboard boxes, plastic tubs, pine cones, Kongs – the list is endless, but do supervise your pup to ensure non-food items aren't swallowed.
- Dogs are social animals, so having your puppy sleep indoors at night – preferably close to you, e.g. a bed on the floor or in a crate in your room – will help them settle.
- Indoor dogs have many more training and socialisation opportunities than outdoor dogs because they get to spend more time with you.

A word about socialisation

- Instead of socialisation, think of exposure.
- Your puppy does not need to meet 100 people and numerous dogs by a certain age.
- Your puppy needs the opportunity to explore the world with you calmly. This activity could be sitting in your front yard and watching people, dogs and traffic going past.
- Mark moments with a calm marker when anything goes by, even if your dog doesn't react and reward your dog.
- The aim is to associate world events with low-energy outcomes and calm emotions.