

## Puppy Care 101

Congratulations on your new addition! Getting a puppy is a huge responsibility. This free PDF covers a few key topics, but you can ask further questions and book training sessions at [www.aboutyourdog.info](http://www.aboutyourdog.info).

### Preparation for your puppy

Before your puppy comes home you need to have as many things covered as possible to prevent problems arising in a period that is already stressful.

### Health & Wellbeing

Part of being a responsible owner means trying to prevent illness and accidents, but also having strategies in place if something does go awry unexpectedly.

Key things to consider include:

- Registering your puppy with a vet
- Booking your puppy for their second vaccines to avoid delays
- Having suitable insurance in place from the day they are collected\*

\*Levels of cover needed vary depending on breed. If your breed is prone to health problems I'd advise that you don't go cheap on your insurance policy.

### “Puppy proofing”

“Puppy proofing” is essential for an easy transition into your home, but also to prevent any injuries and accidents. Essentially, you want to locate anything hazardous to your puppy and have it covered, moved or put away.

My top tips for puppy proofing are:

- Make use of stair gates
- Purchase puppy pens that can be used to block off certain areas or furniture items
- Make sure plants are out of reach and remove any poisonous flora from the garden
- Use Tupperware for **everything** – make sure everything goes into a box with a lid on it
- If you have children be sure to designate a play area that the dog cannot access, otherwise you are simply fighting a losing battle

### Common problem areas

#### Toilet training

You can start toilet training as soon as your puppy comes home. The key is to let your puppy out regularly, wait till they've toileted and then reward them. Ignore any indoor accidents, as punishing your puppy can mean that they start to toilet in secret out of fear of being told off.

Your puppy should be let out to toilet:

- Whenever they wake up from a nap
- When they finish a meal or a drink
- When something exciting has happened (e.g. a visitor has arrived or they've been playing)
- Generally every 20-30 minutes to start with, and then once every hour

#### Mouthing and biting

This is the single biggest problem I hear about when people bring a puppy home. Puppy biting **hurts**. Luckily, prevention and management of this issue is relatively easy if you stick to these rules:

- **SLEEP SLEEP SLEEP** – Pups should sleep 16-20 hours per 24 hour cycle, and I guarantee you that if your puppy is biting a lot they are over-tired
- Provide plenty of chewing material including toys, chews, vegetables, toilet roll tubes (supervised) and other enrichment options
- In a particularly bity episode remove yourself from the situation for 30 seconds to allow the puppy to breathe, and then try going back quietly for a calm interaction
- If you have a puppy who likes feet and ankles you may choose to invest in some cheap welly-boots to wear around the house until they lose interest

#### Top 3 resources

1. Easy Peasy Puppy Squeezy – Steve Mann
2. Life Skills for Puppies – Helen Zulch & Daniel Mills
3. Kiko Pup (Youtube)