

New Puppy Quick Start Guide - By Petstore Kenya

You have decided to get a puppy! Congratulations! You have just signed up for one of life's most rewarding and fulfilling experiences.

This guide will outline what you need to take care of your new puppy and outline some basic guidelines on puppy care

Most breeds should remain with the mother for 4-6 weeks.

1. New Puppy Supplies

- Dog bed: pick a sturdy dog bed that can easily be lined with blankets / Shukas that are easily washable – it doesn't have to be fancy
- Bowls: Get 2 bowls, one for food and one for water. These can be stainless steel or plastic
- Collar and Leash: it's a great idea to get these now and get the puppy used to them as early as possible
- Harness: this is optional but some people prefer to use harnesses instead of collars for specific types of dogs for specific activities
- Brush/Comb: depending on the breed of your new pup, she may benefit from being combed at an early age if possible
- Toys: Puppies need entertainment and to use up their energy, they will make anything a toy, so you might as well get them one or two toys. Eg. A simple tennis ball and possibly a rope toy. There are many types of toys available you can spoil your pup as you see fit and remember that toys can become interesting or boring without prior notice!
- Chew toys: Find a good and safe BPA free chew toy as puppies love to chew on anything they can find. Some chew toys allow for putting kibble or pastes into them these are particularly effective. Give them access to chew "their stuff" so they don't chew "your stuff"
- Dog shampoo

2. Puppy Proof your Home

- Protect your puppy and save your belongings!
- Ensure that small things that could be swallowed are out of sight to avoid the puppy choking
- Any shoes or items that you absolutely love should be kept in a cupboard or somewhere else a puppy can't access
- Put barriers / gates in place if you plan to restrict access for the puppy from certain areas of the house
- Remember that until potty training is complete, your puppy could pee or poop anywhere so put away carpets or anything else you are worried may get soiled until the pup is trained
- Pee pads and pee posts with attractants are available in some places and may prove helpful
- Be especially vigilant about extension cables and wiring that is a floor level – puppies love to chew wires so keep them safely away

3. Puppy Food

- From 3 to 10-12 weeks you can get any "Starter" Puppy Product Such as Spectrum Puppy Starter 30
- It is critical to start your Puppy's feeding journey with a "Starter" product as this is a transitional step from mothers' milk to dry food or whatever you choose to feed next. A good starter product contains easy to digest dehydrated and hydrolysed proteins, specific levels of vitamins and minerals for optimal growth and immune boosters to ensure wellness

- After 12 weeks, you can shift to a regular “puppy” food until adult hood. 1 year is a general mark of adulthood, but in general the smaller the breed the faster it reaches adult hood and vice versa

4. Feeding Guidelines

- Check the packaging of your starter product to determine how many grams of the food is required per day based on the weight of your puppy. Take this amount and divide it into 4 feedings.
- Stick to 4 feedings per day until 8 weeks of age and as you see fit you can divide the daily allowance to 3 feeds a day until the dog is 6 months of age. From 6 months onwards we recommend feeding twice a day.
- Always have Fresh water available for the puppy – change it daily

5. Treats

- Treats are not required at this stage but if you do decide to give treats choose the most natural treats you can find. Things like meat may be natural but it will take some time for the puppy stomach to digest meats properly so take it slow.

6. What not to feed your Puppy

- Cow’s milk – This is for baby cows.
- Human scraps / food – don’t do this as it will develop the habit of begging and most human food has the wrong levels of sugar, salt and spices for most dogs
- Dog Rice – We recommend staying away from dog rice for the first year until you have decided how you plan to feed your adult dog, then you can learn about using “Dog Rice” overall we discourage the use of Dog Rice as it is human rice that didn’t make it and the regulations around its processing and aflatoxin are a grey area
- Adult dog food – adult dogfood usually has a larger kibble size and different nutrient profile and your puppy will not get all the nutrients required for growth.
- Weetabix, mystery powders, flours and “meals” – these are not suitable for young puppies and should be avoided
- Raw meat, cooked meat, eggs, vegetables, fruit and nuts – don’t feed any until 6 months of age then do your research on how to incorporate these into your puppy’s diet
- Bones – don’t give any bones to your puppy until at least 6 months or preferably 12 months of age and do your research on Bones. All bones are not created equal and some can be harmful. Bones are not a required part of a dog’s diet.
- Raw hide – these are chews made from cow’s hide that are heated, bleached, ground, pressed and packaged for dogs to chew on. We recommend you stay away from Raw Hide as there can be various amounts of chemicals still present and when they break off they can create a choking hazard. There are plenty of safer chew toy options.

7. Vaccinations / Vet / Flea & Tick prevention

- The Breeder you got the puppy from should give you a history of any vaccinations already done and give you a vaccination certificate. If not select a vet and ask them to give you the plan for when your puppy will need vaccinations
- Ask your vet about the schedule for deworming
- Consider a natural or electronic flea / tick control solution until 8 weeks of age, then from 8 weeks you can select something like Bravecto or a chemical free product like Tickless Pet.