

Are you ready to bring your new puppy home?

Make sure you and your family are **READY** for for your new puppy. He will need a warm comfortable bed and a secure yard.

Give him plenty of attention and affection while he settles in to his new home, and re-assurance and praise as he grows.

Checklist for preparations

- Are your premises secure?
- Do you have living and sleeping areas ready?
- Have you purchased food and equipment?
- Is the whole family happy about your new acquisition?
- Have you considered other pets in the family?
- Are you prepared to put in the time, effort and a few sleep-disturbed nights?

Breeders must supply you with

- ✓ Complete vaccination records
- ✓ Puppy care and diet sheet
- ✓ Further help and advice

Remember

A dog can bring joy and happiness to any home when care and thought is given to its needs. The time and effort spent will be returned many times over in companionship, devotion and unquestioned love.

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For further assistance contact:

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April 2002 – Perth, Australia



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Promoting responsible dog ownership

It's time to bring your puppy home ... are you ready?

Now you understand some of the things the future holds in store for you and your new family member, you are ready to select your puppy and bring him home. Congratulations. But before you collect the puppy, you need to have prepared for him to come home.

First and foremost, are your premises secure?

Whether your choice of breed is large or small, you must have secure premises; no gaps or holes in fences, no gates without proper locks. Also remember steps and stairs; can the puppy get under the house, or can he escape into the front garden or onto the street? You must ensure the puppy is safe and secure at all times.

Have you prepared the puppy's area and sleeping quarters?

Whether the puppy is to live in the house or in the yard, he NEEDS an AREA TO CALL HIS OWN. A safe comfortable kennel outside, a box or basket inside, it doesn't matter, but the puppy must have his own place. Two spots are ideal, one inside and one outside and a good supply of blankets and bedding will be necessary.

Have you purchased the puppy's food and equipment?

Have you asked the breeder what food to buy so your puppy can start off eating what he has been accustomed to? A change of diet usually causes diarrhoea, so if you want to change the puppy's basic food, you need to do it gradually.

Regardless of the breed you have selected, in addition to the puppy's food and bedding, he will need food and water bowls, a collar, lead and brush. A daily brush not only keeps your dog's coat in good condition, but is part of the socialising and bonding process. A small, light collar and a light lead are essential in the early weeks to facilitate lead training. As the puppy grows, a heavier collar and/or lead and additional grooming equipment will probably be necessary.

Now it's time to collect the puppy

If you are happy with your preparations and both you and your family are ready for some busy days and sleep-disturbed

nights, then it's time to pick up your new little charge. When you go to collect the puppy remember there are other things you will need to take home with you. Vaccination records, perhaps signed registration certificate and a copy of the pedigree. A puppy care and diet sheet must be provided. Your breeder is there to help you, so don't be afraid to call for advice as your puppy settles in.

The transition to the puppy's new home environment

The transition from mother and kennel mates to a new home is probably the most dramatic change your dog will ever go through! So make it easy for him and you! Your puppy will be counting on you to provide security, love and affection.

A puppy crate or big open cardboard box with an old blanket is ideal to take him home in. The ideal time to bring a puppy home is when he is about 8 to 10 weeks of age. This is the period when a puppy learns the most, and is ready to learn.

His first day in a new place will be most exciting for him. He will experience new smells, a car ride, new people and strange places. Collect your puppy early in the day so he has time to "suss out" his new home before going to bed "on his own"! Keep yourself and your children calm and quiet. Don't let him get over-excited or over-tired and allow the puppy to look around at his own pace. Show the puppy his water bowl and his bed and have his newspaper in the spot where you wish the puppy to relieve himself.

Housetraining

All puppies have weak bladders and need to relieve themselves frequently. It is a good idea to take the puppy out every hour or so initially, but always immediately upon waking, after playing, after feeding, and before going to bed at night. Take him to the same spot each time and praise the puppy or a 'job well done'! When inside have plenty of newspaper near his bed or in the room in which the puppy will be sleeping. Do not scold the puppy if he has an accident, and **never** rub his nose in it! Most puppies will not soil their bed and are usually quick to learn that outside is the correct place to go. After a few weeks most puppies will be house-trained.

Health requirements – have you consulted your vet?

Your puppy will have had his first vaccination and have been treated for worms by his breeder. The puppy will require vaccinating again at 12 and 16 weeks of age, and worming at approximately 10 and 12 weeks. Consult your vet on products available for worming, flea control and heartworm prevention. If you do not have plans for future breeding, de-sexing is recommended.

Have you considered the needs of your other pets?

Do not change the habits or routine of existing pets when you bring a new puppy home. They might feel a bit jealous, especially as the new puppy will need constant attention with housetraining and other things, and of course three or four meals each day.

Give them time to acquaint themselves. The first meeting is best done outside rather than inside the house, as there is more space for both to feel comfortable or to escape if the going gets tough. Supervise the introduction and only let them play for short periods at a time. You don't want either of them to get over-excited or hurt. You can gradually increase the time they spend playing together until they settle down, but you must always be near to supervise them.

Calm, patience and attention

Your puppy will probably take a few days to settle down at night as the puppy will miss his mother and litter-mates and is sure to cry, howl or bark when left alone. Do not shout at the puppy or smack him, do not give in to him. If you go to puppy once during the night, he will howl again every time you leave him. A toy to cuddle up with or a ticking clock may well be appreciated and help the puppy settle.

In the first few weeks, you must give the puppy your constant attention. You can teach him some basic commands, like "sit" and "come", or play ball to teach him to "fetch". Always be patient with the puppy, give him plenty of reassurance, praise and cuddles. Enjoy your new puppy!