

Tavé's Puppy Checklist

A short list intended to help new puppy owners to prepare for their pet's arrival

Brushing Teeth

Purchase dog toothpaste and a dog toothbrush. Any toothbrush will work, but dog brushes are made with a different shape that can make it easier to clean the teeth. Don't use regular toothpaste on dogs as it is foaming. The dog pastes you can buy are more or less just to entice the dog into letting you get the brush into it's mouth. Start by showing the brush. Put paste on and offer it to the dog to smell or lick. Then grasp the dog's jaw and gently open it and while restraining the dog brush the surfaces of the teeth as you would your own.

Grooming

Purchase a Slicker Brush and a Pin Brush It's a good idea to brush your puppy nightly just to get it used to being groomed.

Hair bands if you are planning on letting your puppies top knot grow... this is the hair on the top of its head and as it starts to fall into their eyes little rubber bands can be used to make pig tails to keep it up if that's a concern for you. As the hair gets longer it can be pulled into one in the middle and banded rather than in 2 or 3 bands as at first. The rubber bands are the same size you'd use on braces. They can also be found in salon supply stores and occasionally a close version sold in the hair accessories aisle in your supermarket... Scunci I makes a few different sizes.

Purchase a clipper if you depend on doing your own clipping. I use an Oster II. It's a high quality clipper that can be used on canines or people. You just use different size blades. A 10 is an all purpose blade for most pet owners. If you are wanting a very close shave then use the 10 cutting toward the hair growth rather than with it. a 30 is also a good all-purpose blade... use it for close shaves or with the growth of the hair for a tad longer hair. A 40 is a surgical blade that shaves nearly to the skin and is what may show owners might choose. I use a 10 for general stuff and when I want a show look or very close shave I use a 40 blade.

Clipping Nails

Purchase some adult medium dog size, sturdy nail clippers. Nails should be clipped 1-2 times per week depending on their rate of growth.

Plucking and Cleaning Ears

Hemostats - for plucking the hair inside the ear canal. You'll start to do this around 3-4 months of age about every month or so. You can use your fingers to pluck, but a hemostat works great for getting down deep in the ear canal where hair grows, but your fingers can't reach. These can be purchased online or through in the fly fishing section of sporting good stores as well as at medical supply stores.

Ear cleaner or a vinegar and water solution when they are young - used to clean the pup's ears weekly.

Bedding and Enclosures

Purchase a crate for potty training and to serve as a den for the puppy. Get one big enough that it can grow into it... you can always block off the back to make it smaller while the pup is still little so that it can be effectively used for potty training. I like to have a crate for the kitchen area or wherever the puppy is going to be in the daytime and one in the bedroom for at night. This is not necessary, as one can just be moved. It's what you prefer for convenience.

Purchase two or three Polar Tech blankets. I like to line the crate with one. If the puppy has a pee accident it wicks the moisture away from the puppy. You can then switch out the blankets to wash as need be. I like to use a matching one as a traveling "Puppy Area". I fold it up and take it to whatever room I'm in with the puppy and its chew bone and a toy as it grows and place it at my feet so the pup knows that is its area. This can help aid stress of traveling to new homes and hotels as well for those who love to take their dog(s) everywhere with them, as I do.

Getting a ready-made cedar or other filled bed is fine, if you like, though not necessary.

Recreation

I recommend having a Nylabone on hand.

Raw or Cooked big meat bones are also great for the puppy to chew on, clean his teeth and keep him busy. Always put a toy and bone into the puppy's crate when he/she is in there.

Don't get puppy toys that look like shoes unless you'd like to invite your dog to chew regularly on your shoes. You can also use things from your house... an old towel can be knotted up (so it doesn't look like you are encouraging your dog to go after your bath towels) for a chew toy/puppy pillow. Don't ever play tug with your pup, though. Tops of jars or old plastic bottles that roll are fun toys for the kitchen.

Feeding

Food and Water Bowls. I like to use stainless steel and weighted ones are nice to keep them from being tipped over. I also like to get four -- two for water and two for food. Each day I just swap out yesterday's bowls for clean ones and put the dirty ones in the dishwasher for that night's wash cycle. Feed in clean bowls each day. Also, even if there is water left and you are using the same bowl, dump out, wash out and put in fresh water daily. Watch too, because puppies and some dogs go through a lot of water and it may need to be refilled a couple times a day.

Dog food - Not puppy food. Wellness Chicken, Eukanuba lamb and rice, or Purina One Chicken

Liver treats - or whatever you like, if you want to use dog treats in your dog training. Using food to treat is something you will have to decide on your own if you want to do. There are people all for it, and others against it. Using keys to jingle or a clicker or even clapping your hands are good methods as well and the treat would be praise "Good girl/boy/dog/puppies name" in a higher tone than when doing commands followed by some nice petting.

Protecting Your Home

Purchase some Green Apple spray to spray on anything the pup shows an interest in chewing that it shouldn't... such as house plants, wood cabinetry, etc. You should be with your pup constantly in the early stages of bringing your puppy home and will notice if it wants to go for anything it shouldn't. You'd then say "Nah" or "Eh Eh" or "Leave it" and then offer the Nylabone (or whatever you are using for it to chew on) and say "take it". Then go get your spray and spray whatever puppy showed an interest in. It won't be touching it any time soon, because it tastes terrible to them.

Purchase some Odor Neutralizer spray for any place that puppy has an accident. Again, you'd be with your pup and hopefully be taking him/her out as soon as it wakes up in the morning or any nap, after it eats, and after it's played a bit, before it goes down for its next nap. If you are diligent, you will have few accidents. If you catch the puppy sniffing around on the floor like it's trying to go or starting to squat (male dog owners: don't worry, the boy puppy will eventually learn to lift its leg on its own, but it doesn't happen right away... they do more of a lean back instead) you say "Nah" or clap your hands loudly to startle it. The pup should/might stop and you scoop it up and take it right outside to where you want it to go and say "Go Pee" or "Do your stuff" or whatever key phrase you use and then praise the puppy as it goes or finishes. If you miss and there's an accident, this odor neutralizer will take out the smell, so as not to encourage the pup to go in this place again. On hard floors, if you don't have odor neutralizer available, a bleach and water solution can be used.

Walking

Purchase a collar and leash. A nylon collar is good, and for those wanting to practice conformation a herringbone link choker is needed. The herringbone variety won't get hair clogged into it the way others will. Some who are trying to grow coat on their pups don't put them in a collar at home, but it's needed when you leave the house, even if your young pup isn't touching the ground.

A leash that will attach to the collar is also used for at the house for training as well as when you are going out and about.

A Martingale collar/leash is nice for those wanting to just slip one thing over the dog's head and go. They are not chokers, but leashes with an adjustable collar made especially for dogs that slip out of their collars easily. They are nice to have at the front and back door and I like to keep one in my car.

A name tag with your puppy's name, your name and address and phone number to wear on a collar when you are out. Plan to also have your pup microchipped.

Learning More

Purchase a good dog training book. Again, I love *The Art of Raising a Puppy* and *How To Be Your Dogs Best Friend* above the rest. You will need to work on things at home, whether you plan to have your dog professionally trained or not. Easy training at home will help your puppy get the basics down at home so you have a polite dog. If you don't have a trainer that you already use, Petsmart offers pretty nice puppy classes. They are run by professional dog trainers and can be a nice supplemental training for you and your pup (I believe they still allow children to come too) and the workbook they supply is very direct and easy to follow. Classes are usually once a week and you work on a new command each week. You can also bring questions or concerns to your trainer for answers.