

These questions may help you to decide which dog is best for you and your family:

- ▶ Do all members of my family want a dog?
- ▶ What size dog would best suit my living arrangements?
- ▶ What do I want from a dog?
- ▶ How much time will my dog have to spend on his/her own?
- ▶ What type of dog do I feel confident training?
- ▶ How much time can I spend exercising my dog daily?
- ▶ What coat type would I be comfortable caring for?
- ▶ What is my budget?
- ▶ Do I require permission from my landlord/council?
- ▶ Am I going to remain long term in this country?

CONSIDER THESE BASICS:

Choosing the right dog is essential for your happiness as well as theirs.

Size – the size of the dog does not necessarily indicate their temperament type. Large dogs can sometimes be gentler and more tolerant than smaller dogs. Very small dogs are often more suited to families/adults without very small children, as delicate handling is required

Exercise – being left in the backyard must never be a substitute for proper exercise. Every dog needs daily exercise – in all weather

Gender decision – dogs and bitches have pretty much the same temperaments

Purebred or Crossbred – every dog is an individual and the pedigree of the dog can only give you some common traits, however, like humans we can all exhibit individual character flaws and great training is the best solution with any breed

Time – consider the time you will need to dedicate to your puppy/dog daily

Cost – apart from the initial cost of your puppy you will need to provide housing, training, collar, lead, ID tag, grooming, health products and food. You will also have to consider ongoing vet care, insurance and boarding fees. So once you have discussed all of these options and you have decided on the type of puppy you would like, then you are in for a wonderful experience

GETTING YOUR NEW PUPPY HOME

Choose a day that you are able to spend the whole day/night with your new puppy and a few days after this as well if possible.

PREPARE YOUR HOUSE

Safety first

Think of your puppy as a four-legged toddler. They need their environment to be safe and secure.

- ▶ Choose the area where you are going to allow your puppy in and block access to other areas (a puppy gate is a great tool for this)
- ▶ De-clutter this area making sure that there are no household chemicals/poisons, live wires (cords for chewing), precious ornaments or objects in the area.

- ▶ Keep children's toys off the floor as they may be small enough for your puppy to swallow. If possible choose a room with an easy care floor surface, there will be accidents!
- ▶ Shut away other pets.
- ▶ Think about a toilet area for your new puppy and make sure that all family members know where this is.

Set up their house

Set up their bed with food and water bowls nearby. If you have a crate, set this up with the bed and line the bottom of the crate with newspaper. Keep the crate door open. Fill the water bowl with water. Keep other pets away from this area.

Arriving home

When you first get your puppy home take him to the toilet area outside first. If he toilets after the journey give him gentle praise and a treat. Let him explore for 10 to 20 minutes. Don't leave your puppy alone outside.

Gently pick your puppy up and carry him to the room with his crate, bed and bowls. Allow your puppy to venture into his new home on its own.

Provide plenty of chew toys for playing with and chewing on. Don't overcrowd him at this stage; keep visitors at bay and allow the puppy to gently get to know you and your family.

Shut any other pets away and ask your family members to be quiet and calm to ensure a positive experience for your puppy.

MEETING THE FAMILY

Children:

Teach your children how to pick up, hold and pat your new puppy. Help your children play gently and discourage jumping. Involve children in the correct training and explain that they need to respect the times your puppy is sleeping or feeding. Discourage them from teasing your new puppy with toys or treats as this may lead to jumping or excessive barking.

Dog to dog:

On the first meeting keep both dogs under control (on leads). Ensure that they are on level footing in a neutral environment which is not near either of their food bowls or beds.

Let them sniff each other and interact in normal dog ways but don't leave them alone together unsupervised. Keep both of your dogs on a lead. Use gentle and encouraging words when they are behaving well towards each other. Reassure the older dog with a gentle pat.

Reward good behaviour in both dogs. Remove the puppy or older dog if he/she demonstrates aggressive behaviour to a neutral area and ignore him. Don't punish the aggressor. Try again later.

Spend plenty of time with both of them and allow them increasing time together as all goes well. Make their interaction a fun experience. Don't feed your dogs together to begin with and keep their toys separate as well.

Dog to cat:

This is something that takes time. Have your new puppy on a lead and make sure that your cat has advantage point it can escape to.



If they seem to be acting well praise each pet and offer both a reward.

Be careful not to reward bad behaviour such as patting your dog if it is growling to calm him. This will reinforce the growling behaviour.

TOILET TRAINING

Prepare yourself for the fact that there will be accidents. It is how you respond to these that will determine the speed and effectiveness of your puppy's correct toilet habits.

Create a toileting routine and take your puppy to his toilet area at these times:

- ▶ Upon waking
- ▶ After playing
- ▶ After eating
- ▶ After crating
- ▶ When very young in the middle of the night.

Keep an eye out for signs that your puppy may want to toilet, such as turning in a circle or whining. Don't punish your puppy for his accidents but rather praise him when he goes in his designated area. Reinforcing a routine for your puppy that schedules roughly the same times for feeding, playing, training, toileting and rest is very beneficial.

FOOD

If your puppy is already on a super premium puppy food you are best to keep him on this. If you are not feeding super premium puppy food and wish to change your puppy's food you must do so over about five days. Gradually introduce the new food by mixing a little with your existing food. Over the following days gradually change the mix to favour the new food. For example the first couple of days will be $\frac{3}{4}$ old and $\frac{1}{4}$ new food, the second couple of days $\frac{1}{2}$ old and $\frac{1}{2}$ new food and the final day $\frac{1}{4}$ old and $\frac{3}{4}$ new food.

We recommend that you feed your puppy on a life stage specific super premium food. Do not give treats or left over's from your table as these may cause stomach upsets and encourage fussy eating in your puppy.

INSURANCE

It is a very good idea to consider purchasing medical cover for your puppy and continue it on throughout its life.

REGISTRATION

All dogs must be registered with your city council; however, each region has slightly different rules regarding this so contact your local council for further information.

GROOMING

All dogs need regular grooming whether short or long haired. Talk to our staff about which products are appropriate for your new puppy. It is good to begin professional grooming and bathing from a very young age so your puppy gets used to it.

Make the grooming experience a positive and regular event. Encourage and reward throughout the process.

TEETH

Dental care is often overlooked in dogs. Super premium food, dental treats and teeth cleaning go a long way in the care of your puppy's teeth from a very young age.

There are a variety of doggy dental products such as toothbrushes and toothpaste available. It is a good idea to get your puppy used to this at an early age. Please note that dogs cannot tolerate human toothpaste.

For smaller breeds, whom are more prone to dental decay, there is a Periovac Vaccine which aids in the prevention of decay. Talk to your vet about this option.

HEALTH CARE

Puppies need to be vaccinated, de-fleaed and wormed throughout their lives. We strongly recommend de-sexing. Please talk to your vet about de-sexing prior to your puppy reaching sexual maturity.

PUPPY DEVELOPMENTAL STAGES

8 weeks to 3 months:

- ▶ Chasing is a feature in this stage – their own tails, other pets, objects
- ▶ The bowel and bladder control begins to improve
- ▶ They start to recognise their own name
- ▶ They tend to be fearful of everything – this is not a time for harsh discipline.

3 months to 6 months:

- ▶ These are important ranking months where the puppy will decide who the pack leader is – this needs to be you.
- ▶ This is a period where great training and consistency is so essential.
- ▶ Teething – this is the chewing phase!

6 months to 18 months:

- ▶ You are very influential at this stage and it is a really effective time for ongoing training
- ▶ There will be dominance challenges during this phase for the pack leader position
- ▶ If not de-sexed then sexually mature behaviour will begin.

