

Do's and Don'ts For Your New Puppy



DO's

DO make early, regular visits to your veterinarian for vaccinations and routine health care. The old “ounce of prevention” saying really holds true.

DO feed regular meals, usually offer food for about 10-20 minutes then remove the food. Feed three times a day until 6-9 months, then twice a day as adults.

DO feed quality puppy food. For larger breeds, we usually recommend transitioning to adult food between 4-7 months of age. For smaller breeds, the transition can occur a little bit later, around 6-9 months of age.

DO offer different SAFE chew toys, such as Nylabones®, Kongs®, or similar quality products. Puppies have a natural tendency to chew and need a suitable outlet.

DO reward good behavior. Try to catch them doing something right and reinforce it with praise and/or a small tidbit of their favorite food.

DO take your puppy outside frequently, including after meals or drinking and about every two to three hours when they are young. Since the smell of urine and feces will stimulate elimination, take them to the same place every time and praise them if they eliminate. Crate training can be very helpful in your puppy's house-training.

DO expose your puppy to known people and Pets on a gradual but steady basis. Since the first year of a puppy's life is the equivalent of 15 human years, good socialization makes for a well-adjusted, outgoing, and friendly Pet.

DON'Ts

DON'T wait until your puppy is sick to see a veterinarian. Puppies have weaker immune systems than adults and commonly have been exposed to parasites. Your veterinarian will have several effective and inexpensive recommendations to help prevent illness in your new family member.

DON'T leave food available all the time. Dogs often gain excessive weight and may become finicky eaters if allowed to eat any time of the day.

DON'T feed generic or low quality brands of food. There are plenty of high-quality reasonably priced diets on the market that will keep your friend happy and healthy for many years to come. Ask your veterinarian for suggestions.

DON'T allow your puppy to chew on your hands or other parts of your body. This can become a serious problem that is difficult to break and may cause injury when the dog is older. Also, don't let him or her chew on shoes, socks, or other clothes. Dogs cannot distinguish between good items and old items and will likely chew up the wrong thing if they are left alone.

DON'T use heavy-handed discipline. Excessive punishment can often make a dog fearful and create behavior problems. Only discipline a dog with a loud deep noise or grip on the nape of the neck if you catch him or her “in the act.” If more than three seconds have passed, the dog will not associate the punishment with the discipline.

DON'T leave your puppy unattended for long periods of time, especially in the first few formative months. If you have to be away for work or other long periods, try to leave your puppy with someone at home or a friend, or take them with you!

DON'T take your puppy to dog parks, public areas or unknown areas where disease contamination may be high. Puppies cannot be considered fully protected by their vaccines until after four months of age.



**Animal Health
Care Center**
of Hershey