



## **Puppy Necessities**

Before bringing your puppy home, purchase the following supplies. Preparing in advance for the arrival of your new pal will allow you and your puppy to spend time getting to know each other.

### **Food and Water Bowls**

Look for a bowl that won't easily tip over and is easy to clean. A separate bowl for food and water will keep your puppy's feeding area clean. You may want to buy smaller bowls at first, and upgrade to larger ones as your puppy grows.

### **Collar**

There are a variety of lightweight collars available for your puppy. Some have buckles and others snap. Regardless of the collar style you choose for your puppy, remember to attach an identification tag listing your puppy's name, your address and phone number.

Your puppy's first collar should be made of lightweight nylon or leather. To measure your puppy's collar size, measure his neck and add two inches. To ensure that the collar fits properly, you should be able to slide two fingers between the collar and your puppy's neck. If your fingers fit comfortably, you have the right size collar. If there is extra room, you need a smaller size. If both fingers don't fit, the collar is too small. It may take a while for your puppy to get used to wearing his collar, so don't be discouraged if he is uncomfortable and scratches his collar. Be sure to adjust the length as your puppy grows.

### **Leash**

Leashes come in a variety of styles – such as leather, nylon and retractable—and in variety of lengths. A six-foot leash is the ideal length for both training and walking.

Always keep your puppy on his leash unless he is in a confined area. Many states and cities have leash laws, which make it mandatory for your puppy to be on his leash at all times, even at public parks and playgrounds.

### **Grooming Supplies**

Make sure you have the proper grooming tools. These will differ depending on your puppy's coat. For shorthaired breeds, use a brush with natural bristles, a rubber currycomb or a hand mitt. A sturdy wide-toothed metal comb and perhaps a mat splitter are needed for longhaired breeds. Be sure to include a flea comb in your grooming supplies, and begin by establishing a weekly grooming program with your puppy as quickly as possible.

## **Toys**

All puppies need toys to help them exercise and to provide them with a safe way to satisfy their natural desire to chew. Be sure to choose toys that are made for puppies and cannot be splintered, torn apart or swallowed. Large rawhide chips, nylon chews and hard rubber balls are fun and safe. As a general rule, if the toy can fit comfortably in a puppy's mouth, it's too small.

Your puppy's Toy Chest should be free from the following items:

- Sponge toys or items with hard, sharp points or attachments, such as squeakers, which can break off and be dangerous if swallowed.
- Shoes or other personal clothing. Giving your puppy these items will only teach him that it's okay to chew your shoes and rip holes in your shirts.
- Balls of string, yarn, cellophane, twist ties, plastic baggies and other household goods that could get lodged in your puppy's throat causing him to choke or suffocate.
- Children's toys made of soft rubber, fur, wool, sponge or plastic. If your puppy swallows a small particle of any of these materials, it could cause digestive problems.

## **Puppy Food**

Start your puppy on the right track with the essential nutrition of a balanced puppy food. For more information on feeding and nutrition, visit our [Products section](#).

## **Crate or Sleeping Bed**

Your puppy will need a warm, comfortable place to sleep. A crate provides a den for your puppy when you are not home. Crates usually come in one of two types: a portable, enclosed, plastic crate with handles; or a wire crate. Your puppy's crate should be large enough for him to stand up, turn around and lie down and should have adequate ventilation. If you buy an adult-sized crate, purchase partitions or place a cardboard box in the back to provide a cozy space for your puppy. You may want to have a separate sleeping bed for him when you are at home. Make sure you buy a puppy-sized bed rather than an adult-sized bed, so your puppy will feel safe and snug. For more information on crating read our article on [house training](#).

## **Stain and scent remover**

Conventional household products may mask the odor to humans, but not puppies. Specially formulated stain and scent removers are needed to take the odor away from a puppy's more

sensitive nose, as well as yours. If you use a conventional household product to clean up after your puppy, don't be alarmed if he keeps repeating himself at the same spot. He's merely trying to mark his territory.

### **Book on puppy care**

Place this handy reference guide on a shelf in your bedroom, den or kitchen. You never know when you'll need a quick answer.