Your Puppy’s First Week At Home
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Photo by Tima Miroshnichenko

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Bringing home a new puppy is one of the most exciting moments for pet parents, but it’s also natural to be a bit nervous, especially if this is your first time bringing home a fur baby. But with a little know-how, you’ll be in a good position to help your pup settle in nicely, so they’ll feel at home in no time.

Why the first week at home is important

A puppy's first week at home is not only a big change but also a crucial time for them to get to know you, their new home, and learn your routine. Your puppy will be adjusting to a new normal without their mother and littermates, so it can be a confusing and stressful time. Luckily, there's plenty that you can do to make their move as comfortable as possible.

Your new pup will also be at a stage in their life where they're developing their social skills and behaviour, so it's important to make sure they have lots of positive experiences that will help shape their personality. Everything from playing and building a routine, to eventually socialising with people and other dogs, are fundamental skills for your puppy to learn. But first, we need to ensure their homecoming is as smooth as possible.

Welcoming your puppy into their new home

Ahead of bringing home a new puppy, you'll want to prep the house so that the two of you are set up for success. Your home should be ready for your new doggo to step into and feel comfortable in straightaway, so make sure you place anything you don't want chewed safely out of reach!

Settling your puppy into their new environment

When you're bringing your new puppy home, it can be helpful to keep them in a smaller space at first, such as a dedicated room. This way, they won't get too overwhelmed with new sights, sounds, and smells. For the first two days, let them get used to their surroundings with easy access to their food, water, toys, and blanket or bed. Then, let them explore the rest of their new home at their own pace.

Of course, puppies love taste-testing everything they see, so don't forget to make sure your home is puppy-proof ahead of time. You'll want to:

• keep anything you don't want chewed out of reach (such as slippers, electrical cords and books)

• remove anything dangerous (such as choking hazards, chemicals, foods or plants that could poison your pup)

• ensure your garden is secure and safe for your new fur baby

Helping them feel safe

To bond with your puppy and help them feel secure, you'll need to spend plenty of time with them, especially on the first day. If you can, take a few days off work and stay home with your new fur baby. When you do have to leave, make sure it's only for short periods (around 5-10 minutes), and gradually increase the amount of time you're gone for. This will help reduce the chance of your pup experiencing separation anxiety and will help when you

eventually must leave your dog alone for longer periods of time.

Make sure your new puppy gets the chance to settle in quietly. Everyone will want to meet your new furry friend, but your pooch should spend the first few days exploring your home and only meeting your immediate family so they don't get too overwhelmed. When you think your pup has settled, you can start introducing them to small groups.

Setting a routine

Dogs thrive on routine, so establishing one during your puppy's first week at home is a great way to help them feel secure and safe. Set regular times to take your pup to the toilet, feed them and play with them. Try to stick to the routine as best you can, we know life can throw curve balls, so just do your best!

When you're ready to introduce daily walks, try to do so at a fixed time. Initially, start small and walk your pup around your garden. Once they've had their core vaccinations, been microchipped, and are registered with your local council, you can venture further afield with your puppy. Above all, make sure to enjoy this exciting time with your new family member! During the first week at home with your new puppy, you'll learn so much about each other. Together, you'll craft a routine that works for both of you, and your pup will start to feel secure in just a matter of time. For more tips on keeping your pup safe, check out our blog.

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