



3368 S. Robertson Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90034
310-558-9037
www.isaidsit.com

5 Tips for Bringing Home a New Puppy

The love of a puppy is one of life's great pleasures. If you're considering bringing a puppy in to your home, it's important to consider such factors as breed traits, how big the dog will be as an adult, access to exercise, your personal schedule, and the long-term cost of caring for your pet. A dog's personality is largely shaped by its early experiences and with proper care and planning; both dog and owner can thrive. These 5 steps can help ensure a lifetime of happiness for you and your puppy.

1. Prepare Your Home

Puppies are naturally curious so setting up your home in advance is essential. Lock away all household chemicals, keep any potentially poisonous houseplants out of reach, try to tie back any electrical cords and keep doors closed. It's also important to create a specific "home base" for the new puppy by using portable gates or an indoor kennel to keep the puppy away from trouble as well as helping the puppy to feel safe without the sense of abandonment that comes from being locked alone in a room. Don't give in to the occasional whining and mix solitude with "together time."

2. Diligence Now Brings Happiness Later

Dogs have incredible memories and they'll never forget something that is fun or rewarding. It only takes one time getting on the couch or finding scraps in the garbage for them to learn that "the sofa is really comfortable" or "there's free food in the trash." If they do, they will remember those pleasant things forever; it is better if your dog never learns the wrong things at all. Set your puppy for success and manage the environment.

3. Stay Positive

Right from the start it's crucial to always use positive reinforcement to train your puppy. A reward and praise for waiting at the door will be a lot more effective than chasing them down the street trying to teach them they shouldn't have run out. Showing puppies what they have done wrong, especially with an angry voice, makes them "hide" and virtually eliminates the ability to teach them what's right. Avoid letting puppies learn to do something wrong and praise them immediately for a job well done.

4. Proper Socialization

A young puppy must have enough positive, happy, and fun experiences with a wide variety of different life experiences before it is 3 months old. It is critical for your dog to be socialized before the shots are completed and a conversation with your vet and trainer will give you options on how to do that safely. The truth is that more dogs are euthanized due to behaviors that stem from fear issues than are lost to illness. Proper socialization will help you have a balanced, well-adjusted pet as an adult. Don't hesitate to take your dog to different places, introduce them to a variety of environments, and meet lots of people, but be safe and careful choosing how to introduce your puppy to other dogs. Play dates and puppy classes are great, but dog park visits need to wait until all vaccinations are completed.

5. Be Patient

Puppies are products of their environment and will behave in accordance with what they see and hear. Your early days and months with your new puppy will be filled with teaching moments. And while there will be moments of frustration, like that 'present' you find in the middle of the kitchen floor or a well-chewed slipper, just remember that how you react now will make a huge difference later. Patience, love, and guidance go a lot farther than aggression, anger, and unrealistic demands.

If your puppy is experiencing any level of fear or aggression, seek the help of a qualified, positively oriented trainer or behaviorist. It is possible that doing the wrong thing will make the problems worse and harder to fix in the long run.