



## PUPPY ADOPTION GUIDE:

**Some important information to start:** Puppies may be irresistible, but they are also extremely time-consuming. If you have never had a puppy, then you might not realize what you're about to get into. It's one thing to be ready to get a dog, especially an adult dog. Raising a puppy requires an even higher level of commitment.

Young puppies need to be fed three to four times a day. They need to be taken outside immediately after eating or drinking so they can eliminate appropriately and become house trained. Puppies will have accidents in the house while they are still being house trained. That can mean a lot of clean up.

A puppy might wake you up several times during the night. It might be because the puppy needs to go outside, or it might just be because the puppy is bored.

A young puppy can't be left alone for more than a few hours. The puppy should stay in a crate when alone; this aids in house training and keeps the puppy from chewing up everything in your house. However, after a few hours, a puppy can't hold its bladder (and sometimes bowels too).

Puppies can be destructive. They want to explore, chew, lick, and possibly even eat things in their environment. They don't know manners and may act unruly or hyperactive. All puppies need to be trained and socialized; they also need a lot of exercise. These things take a lot of time.

Are you prepared to come home from work midday to care for your puppy? Can you handle being woken up in the middle of the night? Are you able to spend several hours a week working on training and socialization? What about any other pets or people in your home? Will a puppy be too disruptive?

If you get a young puppy, be prepared to spend a lot of extra time with it, especially for the first few months. If this sounds like too much, but you still want a dog, consider adopting an adult dog.

## Proper vetting of a puppy:

Your new puppy should visit your veterinarian for the first time within a few days of coming home with you. It is important for the puppy to have a physical examination even if no vaccines are due. This is a chance to make sure there are no health problems that went undetected by shelter or rescue group.

It's best to find a good veterinarian before you bring home your puppy. Then you will have the vet lined up and not have to rush to find one. Look for a veterinary office with a great reputation in a convenient location for you. Make sure their prices are affordable for you. The best way to find a good vet is to ask around and research. Talk to friends and family members with pets. Look at online reviews. You might even want to go take a tour of the hospital and meet the staff to get a feel for the place.

On your puppy's first visit, be sure to bring all the paperwork provided to you. Your vet will do the examination and discuss the puppy vaccination schedule with you. Puppies should be first vaccinated between six and eight weeks of age. Vaccines need to be boosted up until they are about 16 to 18 weeks old. **Expect to visit the vet every three weeks or so until then.** Puppies that do not have all of their vaccinations CANNOT be on public ground where other possibly unvaccinated animals & wildlife have been. This includes no playing on park grass & no walks on sidewalks, etc until they are fully vaccinated. If you have a yard that is fine but if you live in an apartment you will need other arrangements like a roll of artificial grass on a balcony or grass pads inside to go potty. It is recommended that you do not take a puppy out in public so it is not exposed to disease before it has all of its shots.

**Cost of a puppy:** The ASPCA estimates that the total first-year costs range from **\$1,314 and \$1,843**, based on the size of your dog. Puppies can be more expensive than healthy adult dogs since they need more shots and veterinary procedures.

*\*Can you afford that in addition to the annual cost of a dog for the rest of their life?*

## Raising a puppy properly:

- Choose a healthy diet made specifically for puppies.
- Begin house training from the moment your puppy comes home. Understand that this may take many weeks to months.
- Begin obedience training at home, but start small. Be patient and consistent. However, don't be too strict; let your puppy be a puppy!
- Socialize your puppy well. Take your puppy lots of different places so it can experience sights, sounds, people, and pets that are new. However, be sure to only let your puppy meet healthy, vaccinated dogs.
- Sign up for puppy training classes with a good trainer. Not only will this help your puppy learn, but it will also provide socialization.
- Establish a routine that includes exercise.
- Stay on-schedule with puppy vet visits and vaccines.

***MOST IMPORTANTLY:*** Dogs are for life. The average lifespan of a dog is 13 years so make sure you are ready for a long dedicated commitment to your new furry friend.