

Preparing for your Puppy

Here are some things to think about, so you will have a smooth transition into puppyhood.

Well Check

Within a day, or so, of receiving your pup, make an appointment at the appointed Animal Hospital for a physical exam. Currently we have agreements with South Boulder Animal Hospital in Boulder. They will instruct you re public exposure, and other health concerns for the first few weeks.

Food

Unless our vet directs something else, we will be using Fromm Family Gold brand, donated by The Four Paws Pet Store in Longmont. If you can conveniently pick it up at the store, that would be helpful. However, still contact your team leader before pickup, so we can inform them of your visit. If not convenient for you, notify your team leader of your need, and we will arrange to pick it up for you. Feed according to the instructions on the bag. Feed three times daily until the vet directs you to switch to two times per day.

Kennel(s)

You will need a bedroom kennel which is large enough for an adult dog to stretch out comfortably (minimum 36" long). You will need to find some object(s) which can be placed in the kennel to minimize the space. I.e., the small puppy should be able to just stretch out. Cardboard boxes are Ok, but depending upon the pup, they may get chewed up. As the puppy grows, you will gradually increase its available space, until it is reliably house broken, when you can use the entire kennel space.

You will probably want a smaller kennel, for the kitchen, or other exercise area. DON'T BUY ONE without consulting other Academy members, as one may be available to borrow until the puppy is reliably house broken. Again, depending upon the size of the borrowed crate, a box, or something must limit their space when very young.

Beds

Dogs do not need, or want, a big fluffy pillow bed. They are perfectly comfortable on the floor or on a thin mat/rug. If you use a rug, be sure that it is not the woven type, where long strings can be unraveled. They can ingest these, and they can become entangled in their intestines. It is ok if they can chew off small pieces and swallow them. We recommend the UPCO brand (www.upco.com) fleece beds. They are a compromise thickness – a little padding, but basically flat. They are washable.

Leashes/Collars

You will ultimately need several collars, as the pup grows. I prefer a fairly broad woven collar for small pups, graduating to a rolled leather collar as the pup grows. We can loan you small collars, as they grow out of them so fast. You do not need a really heavy leash. By the time that you might need one, they will hopefully be trained not to tug, anyway. I prefer a narrow (3/8") leather leash. They are hard to find! You will need a length of about 20 feet of clothesline rope with a snap at one end, for some training purposes. We do not use the popular retractable leashes. They give the dog a sense of freedom that is bad. We want the dog to feel constrained when on-leash

Depending upon the pup's temperament, we may use "gentle leaders".

Toys

Beware of cloth toys with a "squeaker". The squeaker can be chewed out and swallowed. Remove it, and re-sew the toy, if necessary.

No rawhide chews. Again, they can chew off big pieces and choke on them.

No natural bones! Dry bones (especially chicken bones) tend to splinter and get caught in their throat

OK are hard rubber toys, hard Nylabones (they love them) and knotted rope toys.

Training Treats

For small puppies, "Charlie Bears" work great. They are low calorie and small (about the size of an oyster cracker). For larger dogs a "Milk Bone" (small) works well.

Hazards

Puppies will attempt to taste and eat anything! Obvious concerns are medications and caustic cleaning supplies. Store them high enough that an adult dog cannot reach. Cabinet doors do get left open! Antifreeze is especially appealing to dogs and is highly poisonous. If possible eliminate all pest poisons (ant poison, mouse poison, dry insecticides, etc) from your home, or lock them securely. Also be aware of small objects of any kind that could be ingested causing choking. Small items of clothing (socks, handkerchiefs, etc.) can be swallowed, causing intestinal blockage and costly surgery. When, working around the house, I find myself asking "if I swallowed that, would it be good for me?" Never feed table food (bad for digestion), grapes/raisins, etc. (bad for Kidneys) or chocolate (bad for heart).

Many house plants are poisonous. They will eat anything, so keep them all out of reach.