



# Puppy Care Sheet



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## **Dog Food, Treats, and Chewies**

Quality dog food should have meat as the first ingredient (preferably not a by-product.) The first ingredient should not be corn. Corn is usually associated with lower quality dog food, so buying corn-free food is a good rule of thumb.

For treats, I usually feed my dogs freeze-dried meat bits for training purposes, but I have also used minced hot dogs, egg, and cheese. When training, dogs appreciate a lot of smaller treats rather than a few big ones as this allows more constant positive reinforcement.

Chew toys are important for a dog's dental health, and can prevent a dog from getting bored or nervous. My preferred chewies are cow hooves. I have found that bones, even those sold specifically for dogs, often splinter and cause choking. I have heard that rawhide can cause choking, but I doubt that it does so any more frequently than many other supposedly safe items.

## **Health**

Note that a puppy can still get sick even after his or her first shots. Until the last vaccination at about 18 weeks the puppy may not be fully protected. After that, vaccinations should be continued throughout the dog's life yearly. Carrying your dog in your arms, a tote, or a stroller through areas that are frequented by other dogs is a good idea until the last vaccination. I do not advise keeping your dog at home because socialization is so important.

It is important to watch for problems such as unexplained weight gain or loss, potty training issues that begin with no obvious cause (this can be a sign of a bladder infection among other things), and difficulty eating or pickiness with food. Dental health is probably the hardest thing to monitor, so I advise periodic checkups and cleanings at least every couple of years.

Dogs will likely develop behavior and health problems if they are not spayed and neutered. Male dogs will often start marking in the house if they are not neutered, and once these behaviors begin they are very hard to stop. I strongly suggest spaying and neutering before the puppy reaches maturity.

I suggest Revolution for flea, tick, and heartworm control, although I often use alternatives. Revolution can also be used on cats, unlike permethrin-based products.

## **Training**

I recommend Emily Larlham's training videos: <https://www.youtube.com/user/kikopup>  
Her personal website is: <https://dogmantics.com/>

Most important is teaching your dog to come. Call it to you in many environments, always rewarding it when it comes, and *never ever* call it to you to punish it no matter what it has done. The second most important command is "sit", which should be accompanied by a release command such as "OK" so the dog will sit until it is allowed to move.