

# “First 48 Hours” Checklist: Welcoming Your New Puppy



## 1. Prepare Your Home and Puppy Zone

- Secure a safe “puppy zone” using a crate or pen in a quiet area for your puppy’s comfort.
- Puppy-proof by removing electrical cords, chemicals, small objects, and toxic plants. Use baby gates to block off unsafe areas.
- Gather essentials: a comfortable crate (ideally near your bed for the first nights), bedding, water and food bowls, high-quality puppy food, chew toys, grooming tools (especially puppy rated wipes), leash, collar, and ID tag.

## 2. Establish a Routine

- Stick to a predictable cycle of sleep, potty breaks, training/feeding, play, and then back to sleep.
- Offer meals three times a day, using most of the food for short, fun training sessions and the remainder in a bowl.
- Take your puppy outside to potty frequently (every 10 minutes when active, and always after naps, eating, or playing).

## 3. Emotional Security (LEGS® Model)

- **Learning:** Teach name recognition, simple commands like “sit” and “come,” and reward desired behaviors right away.
- **Environment:** Limit guests and new experiences at first. Keep things calm and allow your puppy to settle before broader socialization.
- **Genetics:** Learn about your breed’s unique needs for exercise, play, and stimulation, tailoring activities appropriately.
- **Self:** Observe your puppy’s personality and adapt routines to help them feel secure and confident.

## 4. First Veterinary Check

- Schedule a wellness check with your vet within the first 48 hours for vaccinations, microchip information, and a health assessment. Ideally your puppy should see your Veterinarian within 10 days of coming to live with you.
- Continue the breeder or shelter’s diet for a few days to a week before slowly transitioning to your chosen food, to avoid stomach upset. This should be discussed with and directed by your Veterinarian.

## **5. Supervision for Success**

- Closely supervise your puppy at all times; use the crate or pen when you can't actively supervise. Remove collars in the pen for safety. Evaluate toys for choking hazards and remove them from unsupervised play.
- Don't let your puppy roam freely until both potty and behavioral routines are well established.
- Record notes on your puppy's behaviors, potty schedule, and responses to different situations for future guidance in a "Puppy Journal" or notebook. This information can be invaluable to you for training.

## **6. Calm Introductions and Settling In**

- Limit new environments to just home and yard in the first days.
- Keep visits from friends and family to a minimum for the first few days so the puppy is allowed to ease in to the new home and lifestyle.
- Make new experiences positive; let your puppy approach at their own pace without being overwhelmed.
- Comfort your puppy at night, sleeping nearby can help reduce stress and foster bonding.

## **7. Paperwork and Community**

- Organize paperwork: vet records, microchip information, breeder or rescue instructions, and registration materials.
- Register with the AKC or appropriate breed organization to access lifelong resources and support.

## **Daily Habits for Success**

- Play short, positive training games throughout the day to foster attention, confidence, and bonding.
- Be patient: avoid punishments and use gentle guidance and redirection.
- Connect with trusted breeder or breed community for ongoing support.

*Disclaimer*

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*Border Collie HQ*