



Preparing For Your New Puppy

Food

We normally feed our puppies and dogs Kirkland brand dog food. It is brand found at Costco and is a really good food that we have had no problems with in the past. In the past we have fed our puppies Kirkland Signature Nature's Domain Puppy Food (Chicken & Pea Formula). It is a 4.5/5 star food according to www.dogfoodadvisor.com. Our new local Costco in Knoxville does not stock Kirkland's puppy food so we have switched to Diamond Naturals All Life Stages dog food. This puppy food is 5/5 stars. We upgrade our puppies to Kirkland Signature Super Premium Adult Dog Food (Chicken, Rice, and Vegetable Formula), which is also 5/5 stars, when they reach their first birthday. We highly recommend Dog Food Advisor when doing research on dog food brands.

Before you change the puppy's diet to another brand, please visit www.dogfoodadvisor.com to check out the review first. We also highly recommend reading "The Shocking Truth about Commercial Dog Foods" on Dog Food Adviser. You will be surprised to find the hidden ingredients in some dog foods.

Bulldogs can have sensitive allergies and skin so a high-quality food is a must for their health and well-being. You wouldn't want to feed your new family member low grade food regardless! Just like humans, the better food you eat, the healthier you are.

We include a sample of the puppy food we feed our puppies in our puppy packs and if you plan to change their food, please do so slowly by gradually mixing in the new food with their old food. If you change their diet too quickly it can give your puppy diarrhea and cause dehydration.

Supplements

Salmon oil is very beneficial for your puppy and should be added to their food if possible. The omega-3 fatty acids are good for their skin, coat, joints, heart, and eyes. We use the Grizzly brand of salmon oil for our own dogs and highly recommend it!

Treats

The brand of dog food you feed will also offer treats. We recommend using the same brand as the food you feed your puppy. Unless you have done research, we advise not giving them any kind of jerky treats. For years, jerky treats have been subject to numerous recalls. We just avoid them altogether. If you have a Costco membership, we give our dogs Kirkland Dog Biscuits (Chicken Meal & Rice). We also like Blue Buffalo's Health Bars and small training treats. Whatever you choose, opt for natural ingredients over anything with by-products.

Chews

You'll want to have plenty of chew bones around to keep your teething puppy busy so they don't chew on things they aren't supposed to, like your shoes or furniture! The best chews to give them are bully stick chews, but they are more expensive than regular chews and treats. The puppies also love them! Once again, try to keep things natural when possible.

Toys

This one is simple. Pretty much any toy will do! Just be careful if your puppy tears one up into pieces! Puppies love soft plush toys to play with. You will want to have lots of toys to keep them busy and help prevent them from getting bored and being destructive. We recommend buying a variety of toys (plush, hard, ropes, etc.) and seeing what your puppy is most fond of. You'll also end up figuring out which toys are best for YOU. We avoid toys that have large amounts of stuffing in them. Our dogs inevitably figure out a way to tear them apart and we find the stuffing everywhere!

Crates & Puppy Pads

First, if you haven't heard of it already, we want to introduce you to a website called www.chewy.com. They have great prices on crates and other doggy goodies and in our experience provide fantastic customer service!

Crate training is the fastest way to housebreak a puppy. It teaches them to hold their bladder for longer periods of time because they typically do not want to go potty where they normally stay.

If possible, purchase a crate that comes with dividers. That way, you can increase the size of the area for your puppy as he/she grows. Do not give your puppy too much space in the crate or they will use the bathroom in one corner and sleep in the other. You'll also want to put newspaper or a puppy pad inside of the crate so that if they do have an accident, there is something in the crate to absorb your puppy's waste. This helps prevent the puppy from getting it all over themselves as they move around in the crate.

When the puppy is out of the crate, we recommend laying out numerous puppy pads all around to teach them to use those to "go potty" if they have to go before you take them outside. Then, slowly, over the next few weeks take up a few of those puppy pads at a time. Then, keep the puppy pads by the door that you take them out of. Soon enough you won't need the puppy pads at all and you will have a fully house-trained puppy!

The Humane Society has a few good tips on house-training your puppy. Below are some parts we agree with on how to do this effectively:

"Like babies, puppies do best on a regular schedule. The schedule teaches them that there are times to eat, times to play and times to do their business. Generally speaking, a puppy can control their bladder one hour for every month of age. So if your puppy is two months old, they can hold it for about two hours. Don't go longer than this between bathroom breaks or they're guaranteed to have an accident.

Take your puppy outside frequently—at least every two hours—and immediately after they wake up, during and after playing, and after eating or drinking.

Pick a bathroom spot outside, and always take your puppy (on a leash) to that spot. While your puppy is relieving themselves, use a specific word or phrase that you can eventually use before they go to remind them what to do. Take them out for a longer walk or some playtime only after they have eliminated.

Reward your puppy every time they eliminate outdoors. Praise or give treats—but remember to do so immediately after they've finished, not after they come back inside. This step is vital, because rewarding your dog for going outdoors is the only way to teach what's expected of them. Before rewarding, be sure they're finished. Puppies are easily distracted and if you praise too soon, they may forget to finish until they're back in the house.

Pick up your puppy's water dish about two and a half hours before bedtime to reduce the likelihood that they'll need to relieve themselves during the night. Most puppies can sleep for approximately seven hours without needing a bathroom break. If your puppy does wake you up in the night, don't make a big deal of it; otherwise they will think it is time to play and won't want to go back to sleep. Turn on as few lights as possible, don't talk to or play with your puppy, take them out and then return them to bed."

Grooming & Fleas

Fortunately, French Bulldogs are very easy to groom at home. They can be bathed just once or twice a month. If they are over-bathed it increases the likelihood of their skin becoming too dry. We recommend Honest Company baby shampoo when they're still very young puppies. As they get older, we begin to use Burt's Bees Oatmeal puppy and dog products.

Please DO NOT EVER use flea shampoos, flea collars, or flea powders on your puppy! These products contain harsh chemicals that can absorb into your puppy's skin and make them very sick. It is poison for your puppy and most bottles will advise you not to use them on puppies under a certain age. Use a once a month flea medicine to prevent ticks and fleas. You will also need to get a heartworm preventative from your vet a once a month. Heartworm medicine is very important, particularly during spring and summer months. It is also very important to test your puppy yearly for heartworms. Heartworms are often fatal, particularly when left untreated or if treated too late.

We use Trifexis, a heartworm, parasite, and flea medication. Talk to your vet about various medications available for your pup.

Collars & Microchip

Your puppy will need a collar with a tag just in case they ever get separated from you. We advise not buying buckle collars for your puppy. These can be very dangerous in the event that the collar gets stuck on something that leaves your puppy being choked by it. We recommend buying collars with clasps. These clasps are plastic and will have a better chance of coming undone or breaking if a large amount of force is placed on them. We have heard horror stories of dogs jumping over things or fences and having their collars caught on them, subsequently killing them because the collars do not break and release them.

Your puppy is micro-chipped and you will need to register the chip as soon as possible. We use AKCReunite.org to register all of our dog's chips and we love the company! They are one of the few companies we have found that do not charge you a yearly fee to keep your puppy registered. They also do not charge a fee if you move or change your phone number and need to update your information with them. All of the updates can be done easily on your online profile or with a quick phone call free of charge.

Veterinarians & General Health

Your puppy will come to you with all their shots up to date and with a health & shot record. The shot record will let you know when the next shots are due to be given. Please do NOT let any veterinarian "re-do" the shots that the puppy has already received. Over-vaccinating a puppy can cause issues to develop later on in the puppy's life. Some money-focused vet offices will want to re-do shots to increase your vet bill. This puts the health of your puppy at risk and we recommend not using that veterinarian. We purposely put the vaccine stickers from your puppy's shots on their health record to prove your puppy has actually received these vaccinations.

All puppies have intestinal worms. Do not be alarmed if you see worms in your puppy's waste. They are not life threatening. They need to be de-wormed every two to three weeks until they are 16-20 weeks old. Your vet should de-worm them at the time their next shots are due.

Please DO NOT let your puppy play outside (where unknown pets have been) or take your puppy to pet stores or dog parks until it has at least received its third round of vaccinations (approximately 12 weeks). Keep your puppy safe at home until it has received its necessary vaccinations to protect them.

When you take your puppy to the vet, bring it in a travel crate or hold it in a blanket and do not let it down on the ground or around other dogs. Other animals have been there before you and could have been very sick. We DO NOT recommend taking your puppy to any Banfield pet hospital (the hospital typically found in PetSmart locations). **Doing so will void your health guarantee.** We have had numerous negative experiences with our buyers taking their new puppies to these hospitals and have found that they frequently over-vaccinate the puppies. Banfield veterinarians are typically new in the field and run unnecessary tests on your puppy which only increases your bill. We had had enough problems with this hospital that we had to no longer guarantee a puppy if they are taken there.