

PUPPY NEEDS

Items You Need Before Bringing your Furbaby home

There are certain items that you will need to have on hand before you bring your new puppy home. Items need not be expensive. As you shop, you will see that there is a huge market in pet supplies from the basic to the designer products. For my dollar, I would spend my money on the basics on bedding, collars, leads, etc. and spend my money on a quality food. It will save you money in the long run by reduced health problems meaning not as many visits to the vet.

Here is a basic list of the things that you will need to start:

*** Crate** - Purchase a size that your puppy can grow into and use later. I prefer the wire crate rather than the soft fabric crate as the fabric crates are hard to sanitize. They also stain easily. I've also had many a puppy claw through the mesh on the door. Be sure that if you buy a hard plastic crate that it is airline approved so that it can be used when you go on trips also.

***Crate Pad** - Your crate pad need not be fancy just functional. Those of you who are handy with the sewing machine can sew your own. There are many types that you can purchase and I suggest that you have at least two so that you have one available while the other is being washed. In a pinch, a towel will even work fine.

***Exercise Pen** - An exercise pen is a necessity in my humble opinion.. I use it as a "safe zone" for my babies right from the start.. Unless you can keep direct supervision of your furbaby 24/7, then you need a safe place for them to be, without having to be put into their crate.. I place their crate inside the exercise pen.. Along with a pee pad, and their food & water.. Then if you need to go for work, or appointments, they are safe and secure during that time.. My rule of thumb.. IF I CAN'T SEE THEM, THEY ARE NOT SAFE.. So they go into the exercise pen.. I promise, this WILL BE the best investment you will make for your new baby.. They are also nice to have to take when you go camping so you don't have to worry about your puppy getting into things he should not be into or wandering off. They can be purchased at Pet Smart, Petco, Pet Supply stores on the Internet or E-bay.

***Dishes for Food and Water** - I like the metal bowls that have the non slip bottoms. Plastic bowls tend to pick up odors of the food that has been in them before and they can discolor your dogs nose also.

***Indestructible Chew Toys** - Make sure they are well made and approved for dog use. Wash toys often and check them to make sure that they are not coming apart and the filling can come out. Ropes make a good choice. There are so many on the market. They need not be expensive, just safe

***Collars and Leashes** - There are so many different types available. The most important thing is that you check the collar often as your puppy is growing quickly and you do not want the collar too tight. I will first put the leash on in the house so that a puppy can get used to the weight before going outside with the collar and leash attached. I have found that by taking an older dog out with the younger dog, he will often imitate the older dog and walk right along and

BINGO, before you know it, your puppy is leash trained. Do not put your puppy in his crate with his collar on. Many accidents have happened where the collar gets caught and the puppy can strangle. Each night, I will hang the collar on the crate so it is ready for the next day.

***Name Tags** - Name tags can be purchased at Petco or Pet Smart right by the door where they have a machine that you get buy them for about \$6.00 and get them that day. For those of you who don't mind waiting, E-Bay has a large assortment of different name tags from just a few dollars to \$20.00. I buy all my name tags from E-Bay and have been quite pleased. Be sure that you have a good telephone number to reach you in case your little one happens to run off. You will be happy that you have that tag on him

***Grooming Tools** - I find that with a Shih Tzu a nice comb works best. When you puppy gets older, you will get a feel of what you really need. I wouldn't spend much in the beginning. I use regular combs in the small size to part hair for placing bows. The most important part is combing each day for even a few minutes.. It trains your baby for the life of him, and you can use this time as a bonding time too.. They really do start to look forward to their "special" time with Mom when grooming..

***Shampoo and Conditioners** - Again, there is a very large selection of these items. The most expensive are not necessarily the best. Do not use most shampoos for human hair. The worst is baby shampoo as it is very drying to the puppy's delicate skin. There are puppy shampoos that are specially formulated for puppies. I use Suave Shampoo & Conditioner. Yes these are human items, but they work great.. And are not drying for the babies fur.. Remember, our Tzu's fur is most like human hair. If you decide to use other items, just be sure and use shampoo for puppies, and they are milder than regular dog shampoo.. Be careful at this young age not to get water in their ears. Water in their ears can cause an ear infection in no time at all. Make sure that they are dried by a hair dryer set on low and make sure that they do not get a chill. If your puppy has fleas, use Dawn for dishes, rinse well, fill sink, add 1/3 cup vinegar, rinse puppy in vinegar solution and then rinse in plain water. I will then take a little bit of conditioner and gently rub over coat and give a final rinse then rub all over with a towel. This should clear up any problems with fleas. This also works with adult dogs. You might wonder if the Dawn is harsh on the skin, probably more so than puppy shampoo, but it takes care of the fleas and the conditioner puts moisture back in

YOUR VET CAN PROVIDE WORMING WHEN NEEDED ***Wormer** -I use Nemex II as suggested by my Vet... Follow your vets recommendations for treatment. Also ask your vet about heartworm treatment.

***Nutri-Cal**, This is great for hypoglycemia. Read up on this before your puppy comes home. Hypoglycemia can effect the toy breeds when they are small. Do your homework before bringing your puppy home. This is especially true if you are buying a smaller type Shih Tzu. – Your pupy will go home with some.

***Pedialyte** - Buy the unflavored type. Wal-Mart or Target has the best prices. You never know when you might have a situation that you might need to rehydrate a dehydrated puppy or even an adult. Never be caught without having a bottle on hand. Watch the expiration dates on the bottles

***Rectal Thermometer** - I prefer the digital ones, I just don't trust the batteries. They may go out just when you need them. You can buy these thermometers at Pet Supply Companies. I always have 2-3 on hand. Make yourself familiar with a puppy's normal temperature. If you think that your puppy is sick, the first thing that you should do is to take his temperature. A PUPPY'S NORMAL TEMP IS ANYWHERE BETWEEN 100-102.6

***Nail Clippers** - There are several different types. All seem to work equally as well. Your puppy's dew claws usually have been removed which makes this job much easier. I start working with them when they are just a few weeks old so they are used to having their paws handled but it is still not something that they enjoy! It is important that you keep up on this or have your groomer do it for you. You will also want to get some styptic powder in case you cut the nail too short and need to stop the bleeding.

***Small Scissors** - These are to remove the hair around the eyes in between visits to the groomer. I start the puppies early on this also to get them used to being handled, but this also is not one of their favorite activities

***Hemostats, Ear Powder and Ear Cleanser** - Shih Tzu have ear hairs that grow at a constant rate. The hairs create a moist environment that can be a perfect medium for fungal or bacterial infections. Pulling these ear hairs is probably the least favorite activity of Shih Tzu owners. Shih Tzu are not very fond of it either. Prior to twelve weeks, the ear canal membranes are too tender for them having been removed before you get your puppy. Your groomer will do this when they are groomed. But often the hair is fast growing and you will need to do this at home also. There is information on the net to explain how to do this. I sometimes use hemostats and sometimes use my bare hands with short nails. The powder has a resin in it, making the hairs easy to pull out. You will be surprised the amount of hair and gunk that comes out. When you have pulled all of the hair out, liberally squirt the ear cleaner in the canal and dab with a cotton ball. Do not use a q-tip as it can force debris back into the ear canal. I don't want to scare you but this is not a good time for bonding. They really don't like it. I consider it a necessary evil. Have your groomer show you how this is done and also expressing anal glands. They are both things that should be done on a regular basis. Please note that hemostats are not necessary in pulling ear hairs, many people simply pull with their fingers. Also, vets differ on their opinions about pulling of the ear hair, some say let the hair be. I myself pull all ear hair on a regular basis with the support of my vet.

***Toothbrush and toothpaste** - This is something that you should be doing for your dog also. There are several types of toothbrushes on the market. Do not use human toothpaste as they contain fluoride and fluoride is poison for dogs. There are special toothpastes in doggy flavors out now. Start them when they are young and they will tolerate you brushing their teeth. Their dental health is important.

***FOOD**- Last on the list is the most important and that is what you feed your dog. Your puppy has been fed Dry and Wet Wellness Small Breed Puppy food. You have been sent home with enough for at least a week. This is not an area to skimp. Do your research and if you decide to change foods, gradually increase amounts of the new food until it is entirely the new food. DO NOT FEED TABLE SCRAPS. It is not healthy and it can create annoying habits.

Please remember that if you have any questions that you need help with, I will be happy to listen and give you an answer if I am able or research and get back to you with a response. We both want your puppy to live a long and healthy life!

Thank you for allowing me to provide you with your new Furbaby.. I will be here for you and your baby whenever you need me.. Just remember, the only "dumb" question, is a question not asked

SO ASK AWAY!

AND WELCOME TO MY FAMILY!!!!