**What To Expect From A Young Puppy**

Puppies are full of adorable cuteness!!! They have sharp teeth and claws! They get into everything and chew whatever is laying before them whether shoe, leather sofa or wood furniture. They have to go potty every few hours! They require regular grooming and brushing. Are you really ready for a fluff ball of adorable aggrevation?

They do grow out of this stage and with proper training your new furbaby will be the best investment you will ever make for the 14-16 years of love they will give you.

We give our puppies a good Head Start on life including some neurological, physical, social stimulation, enrichment play and quality food with filtered water. Now it’s your job to bond with your puppy, train him and introduce him to more of the world around you.

For the first few days, you can expect some whining and crying. He’s just gone through a major change in his life leaving his mom, littermates and breeder. So make him feel secure and welcome. Give him lots of love, toys, comfort, attention and a place that he can call his own (a crate is ideal). Set up a routine so he knows what to expect. You may want to have him sleep in his crate next to your bed so you can give him comfort when he wakes up all alone or take him outside if he needs to potty. Crying usually only lasts a few nights. A warm water bottle, large stuffed toy and a radio playing helps with making the puppy to feel more secure rather than alone.

**Crate Training**

Although some people think putting a dog in a crate must be cruel, it isn't. To a dog, a crate is nothing more than a den. In the wild, a dog would seek out a small hole to crawl into for shelter, to have puppies, and as a place to relax. A crate serves the same purpose.

A properly-sized crate can make housetraining (and other training) much easier. A crate can also prevent destructive chewing, protect your puppy from potentially dangerous household chemicals, help with separation anxiety, and provide a safe way to transport him. If you introduce your puppy to a crate when you bring him home, he will continue to seek it out even as an adult. A crate offers security and a place for your puppy to call his own.

We suggest a medium size crate with a divider placed. At a younger age, he needs a small space for proper house trainging. Then once they are house broken and older you can either move the divider back or remove it all together. Look at our product page to see the crate tops we have made so the crate looks like and serves as a piece of furniture, end table. We have 1 left.

To get started, your puppy will need to associate his crate with comfort and security. Put some toys and his bowl and water bottle in the crate. When he seems comfortable with the crate and is getting a little sleepy, put him inside and close the door.

Whenever you remove your pet from the crate, take him immediately outside to the area where you want him to potty. Praise praise praise him lavishly when he goes outside. If he makes a mistake in the house, it’s better not to scold him because he does not understand or comprehend that he has done anything wrong. He will still wag his tail thinking you are praising him. It is better to ignore negative behavior and praise positive behavior.

Once he’s emptied out you can bring him inside and play for a little while without worry. When you can’t supervise him, he should be confined to a puppy-proof area (with an easily cleanable floor) or inside his crate. A pen with a linoleum floor is great. You can seek a free or low cost remnant ½ - 1” bigger than the pen at a flooring company. Another idea is to tether him to you with a short leash.

Be sure that any children in your household know that the puppy is off limits when he is in his crate. This is where he can go to spend some quiet time alone. You will soon find your puppy seeks out his crate on his own.

When you do have to leave your puppy in his crate be sure to leave a few puppy-safe toys with him. We like Nylabones and stuffing-free squeak toys. Also, don't leave your puppy confined to a crate for long periods of time and don't use it as a way to punish your puppy when he does something wrong. Remember his crate is his safe haven.

**Manners / Obedience**

Once you have your puppy home and he is settled in, you can start teaching him his name, “no”, to come, sit and stay. Puppies will quickly learn his or her name and to come when called if he or she is rewarded upon arriving with verbal praise and safe treats that you can keep in your pocket. We’ve heard that shih tzu will do anything for a Cheerio!!! Get down low, call him, and reward him for coming. This way he learns his name, learns to come and that it’s fun to come to you.

**“Sit”** can also be quickly taught with food by holding a treat slightly behind his eyes and moving it toward his tail as you say “sit.” As his nose goes up to follow the treat, his rear will go down. Give him lots of praise and the treat as soon as he sits. **“Stay”** is taught by holding your stop hand up and he sees the palm of your hand. Can even push him firmly back and say “Stay”. Move very short distances and after some time he should stay momentarily after you are out of sight.

Play thinking games of hide-seek, retrieve, where’s your toy and continue this training for life. This provides the best bonding time and much enjoyment for you and your puppy.

During the first 15-16 weeks is an important bonding time at home with his human family and visitors. Remember your puppy doesn’t have full immunity until his 15-16 week vaccination. Though your young puppy can go outside to potty in a clean area in your yard, we discourage any area near woods that may be contaminated with wild life, pet stores, walking at a vet’s office or other public places until the last vaccinations.

After your puppy has received his 3rd and final puppy vaccination at 15-16 weeks old (except rabies is given around 20-24 wks or at time of spay/neuter), you can adventure your puppy more into the world around him. Take him to shopping malls, pet stores, parks, any place you can think of where he can see things and meet people. Provide plenty of comfort and security if he seems scared or overwhelmed. You can also attend a Puppy Kindergarten class.

Most important of all is to be consistent in everything you do with your puppy. The more you spend training, socializing and investing time with your puppy, the better family member you will have.

Be sure to enjoy this time with your new fury family. Puppy-hood is a brief time then they are grown.