

FIRST WEEK HOME

HELPING YOUR PUPPY SETTLE INTO THEIR NEW HOME

by Planet Pup Dog Training

WELCOME!

Bringing home a new puppy is exciting, but those first few days can also feel overwhelming.

Your puppy has just left everything they've ever known. They don't need perfection—they need patience, routine, sleep and lots of positive experiences.

The first week is a great opportunity to start teaching the behaviours you want to see in your adult dog.

You don't have to wait for problems to appear before you start preventing them.

CONTACT PLANET PUP:

 083 858 4097

 www.planetpup.ie



BEFORE PUPPY COMES HOME

PUPPY-PROOF YOUR HOME

Get down to your puppy's level and look around.

What can they reach?

What can they chew?

What can they knock over?

What could they swallow?

SECURE OR REMOVE:

- Electrical cables
- Cleaning products
- Medicines
- Small objects
- Children's toys
- Shoes
- Socks
- Bin contents
- Houseplants that may be toxic
- Accessible food
- Anything fragile or dangerous



Remember that puppies explore with their mouths.

Don't wait for your puppy to learn that something is forbidden if you can simply prevent access to it.

Management isn't cheating. It is part of training.

ESSENTIAL PUPPY EQUIPMENT

Have these essentials ready:

- ☐ Food recommended by the breeder or rescue
- ☐ Food and water bowls
- ☐ Collar or harness with ID tag
- ☐ Lead
- ☐ Comfortable bed
- ☐ Crate or puppy pen (if using one)
- ☐ Safe chew toys
- ☐ Urine enzyme cleaner for accidents
- ☐ Treats
- ☐ Poop bags
- ☐ Grooming brush
- ☐ Baby gates if needed



SET UP A SAFE RESTING SPACE

Your puppy should have somewhere they can rest without being disturbed.

This might be:

- A crate
- A puppy pen
- A bed behind a baby gate
- A quiet room in the house

Everyone in the household should understand that when your puppy is resting, they are not to be disturbed. This is especially important if you have children.

A puppy who learns that their bed is a safe place to relax is more likely to develop good settling habits.

Think of this space like a cot for a baby. It should be used for resting and to keep puppy safe if you can't have eyes on them.

[See our free guide on crate training...](#)



THE FIRST WEEK

Keep things calm. Your puppy has just left everything they've known, so avoid overwhelming them with visitors and activities. A simple routine helps:

Wake → Toilet → Food → Toilet → Play/Training → Rest

Puppies need a lot of sleep — often around 18–20 hours a day. An overtired puppy can become bitey, frantic, barksy, and unable to settle. Just like a toddler, tired puppies tend to make emotional and often poor decisions.

Sometimes the answer isn't more exercise. Sometimes your puppy just needs a nap.

TOILET TRAINING

Take puppy out:

- After waking
- After eating or drinking
- After playing
- After excitement
- Before bed
- Whenever they show signs they need to go



When they toilet outside, reward immediately.

If they have an accident, don't punish them. Clean it thoroughly and increase the frequency of toilet trips.

For more detailed advice, see our free [Puppy Potty Training Guide](#).

PREVENT PROBLEMS BEFORE THEY START

The Golden Rule: Reward the behaviour you want to see when your pup is grown.

Puppies repeat behaviours that result in something they value.

So notice and reward the good stuff.

If your puppy:

- Sits instead of jumping → reward
- Lies quietly → reward
- Settles on their bed → reward
- Chooses their toy instead of your shoe → reward
- Looks at you → reward
- Walks calmly beside you → reward
- Watches another dog calmly → reward
- Waits at a doorway → reward
- Comes when called → reward



Don't wait for perfect behaviour. Reinforce the small steps in the right direction.

JUMPING UP: DON'T ACCIDENTALLY TRAIN IT

Jumping is one of the easiest behaviours to accidentally reinforce.

If you bend down, love on them, laugh and stroke them when they are jumping on you - from your puppy's perspective, jumping worked.

Even pushing a puppy away can provide attention and can seem like a game.

Although a puppy jumping all over you is adorable, imagine if you really want that behaviour when they are fully grown, and instead, teach what you actually want.

When your puppy approaches you, reward for four paws on the floor. If they jump up, stand up and turn away slightly.

The instant their paws hit the floor:
"Yes!" → treat.

YOUR PUPPY BEGINS TO LEARN:

Four paws on the floor = attention

Jumping = attention stops



START TEACHING APPROPRIATE CHEWING

Puppies need to chew and explore with their mouths. Your job is to teach them what is appropriate to chew.

Provide plenty of suitable options:

- Puppy-safe chew toys
- Food-stuffed enrichment toys
- Appropriate edible chews
- Toys for interactive play



If puppy grabs something inappropriate:

1. Stay calm.
2. Offer an appropriate alternative.
3. Praise them when they take it.
4. Manage access to the original item.

Don't turn stolen objects into a chase game.

If puppy becomes particularly bitey or frantic, consider whether they're overtired or overstimulated.

And remember: putting shoes, socks and children's toys away isn't giving in — it's preventing your puppy from rehearsing behaviours you don't want later.

HANDLING, GROOMING, SOCIALISATION

Your puppy will eventually need to tolerate nail care, brushing, ear checks, dental care and veterinary examinations.

Reward them as you touch their paws, ears and other parts of their body.

GROOMING

Don't wait until your puppy needs their first full groom.

If possible, arrange a short, positive introduction to the grooming environment before they need a full appointment. Treats, gentle handling and short experiences can help build positive associations.



SOCIALISATION

Socialisation isn't about meeting everyone.

It's about helping your puppy feel comfortable in the world.

Let them experience people, dogs, sounds, surfaces and new environments at a pace they can handle. Teaching them to ignore other dogs and focus on you is as important as teaching gentle and calm interaction.

For a full list of experiences to work through, see our [Puppy Socialisation Checklist](#).

YOUR FIRST WEEK CHECKLIST

DAY 1

- ☐ Calm arrival
- ☐ Introduce safe space
- ☐ Toilet routine
- ☐ Plenty of sleep
- ☐ Appropriate chews

DAYS 2–3

- ☐ Establish a routine
- ☐ Reward calm behaviour
- ☐ Reward four paws on the floor
- ☐ Practise puppy's name
- ☐ Begin gentle handling

DAYS 4–5

- ☐ Practise appropriate chewing
- ☐ Reward calmness around people
- ☐ Short independence exercises
- ☐ Positive harness/lead experiences
- ☐ Gentle grooming practice

DAYS 6–7

- ☐ Continue positive socialisation
- ☐ Reward calm observation of people/dogs
- ☐ Practise recall indoors
- ☐ Continue rewarding settling
- ☐ Identify anything puppy is struggling with



Don't worry if you can't tick every box. Your puppy's confidence and wellbeing matter more than completing a checklist.

WHEN TO ASK FOR HELP

Speak to your vet if you're concerned about your puppy's health or notice a sudden change in behaviour.

PUPPY TRAINING

You don't need to wait for a problem to develop before seeking professional support. Many puppy owners choose training simply because they want guidance from the start, feel confident they're getting things right, and want to give their puppy the best possible foundation.

Professional support can be particularly helpful if you'd like guidance with:

- Building good habits and teaching your puppy what to do from the start
- Helping your puppy develop confidence and cope well with everyday life
- Settling, independence and being comfortable when left alone
- Handling and cooperative care
- Preventing or navigating behaviours such as fear, guarding, reactivity or aggression

Visit www.planetpup.ie for more free puppy resources and information about our reward-based puppy training in Cork.