

mini-critters

...for people who love their pets.

Bringing home, a new puppy is fun and exciting, but there's lots to consider before you add a furry family member. No matter what, there will be some challenges, but responsible pet ownership starts by being prepared and having patience.

Let us help you get off on the right foot...and paw.

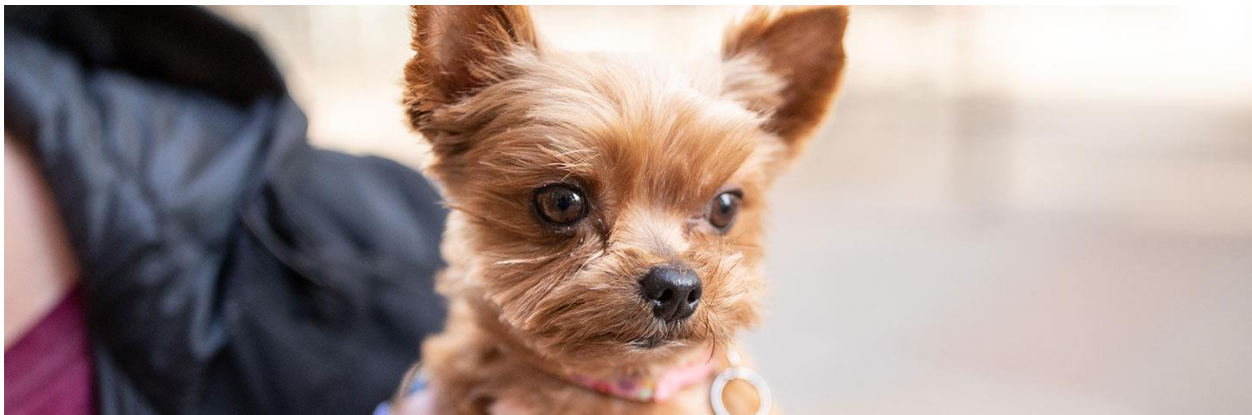


1. Puppy proof your home: Before your new puppy comes home, make sure you're bringing them into a safe space.

- **Set up baby gates** and close doors to keep your puppy from getting into or (out of) places they shouldn't.
- **Dog proof your trash cans** by keeping them covered and secured.
- **Cover and contain cords** to protect your puppy from an accidental shock or burns to the mouth. Deterrent sprays can also be used on cords, chargers, and power cables.
- **Keep electronic devices out of reach.** Remote controls, electronic toys, and any other devices that contain batteries can be tempting chew toys.
- **Watch out for poisonous plants.** Some plants can be harmful to dogs resulting in vomiting, diarrhea or even organ failure.
- **Keep cleaning supplies and medications in an enclosed area,** always away from your dog.
- **Put away small objects** like earrings or bobby pins. Puppies can get into anything, so make sure you're putting things away where they belong.

2. Set up a routine: By setting the schedule as soon as your puppy comes home, you're establishing structure that will lead to a happy and well-adjusted dog.

- **Meals:** Puppies usually eat three meals a day, keep it simple by matching your own breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Remember to appropriately portion meals to prevent your puppy from overeating.
- **Potty:** Schedule potty breaks first thing in the morning and right before you go to bed, and about 30 minutes after they eat (three to four times a day).
- **Exercise:** A tired puppy is a well-behaved puppy. Depending on how your puppy plays schedule several playtimes throughout the day for healthy exercise.
- **Vocabulary:** Take time to create a vocabulary list everyone will use. If someone says "down" when the puppy climbs on the couch, everyone should say "down" for the same action. Don't change the commands, or the result will be a confused dog.



3. Make sure you have a collar and leash.

Don't forget to put an ID tag on your puppy's collar as soon as possible. Collars are an important part of pet loss prevention. Make sure the collar is small enough to prevent slipping but can adjust as they grow. No more than two fingers should fit between the collar and your dog's neck. Puppies grow quickly so you may go through a few collars in the first year. Depending on your dog's breed, you might also want a harness.

4. Puppy food and bowls:

Get puppy food, it's designed specifically for the needs of young dogs, with twice the daily nutritional requirements of a mature dog. When it comes to the bowl, keep it simple. Look for non-skid stainless-steel bowls which are sanitary and easy to clean (dishwasher safe); they also don't break like ceramic bowls.

5. Chew toys:

All dogs love to chew, teething puppies most of all. Pick chew toys that are appropriately sized to prevent a choking hazard. We recommend getting lots of different textured toys to help when your puppy starts teething/chewing.



6. Grooming Tools:

It's never too early to start getting your puppy used to nail trims and brushing. Grooming is a great way to bond with your new puppy and can help identify skin and healthy issues early.

7. Treats.

Simple training can start on your puppy's first day home, so be ready with plenty of tasty rewards.

8. Find a good vet:

One of the most important decisions you will do is finding a quality health care provider for your furry friend. Do your research online and look for strong recommendations and ratings. Getting pet insurance can also be a great way to be protected against significant spending on your pet's routine healthcare.

9. Dog travel accessories:

Whether it's a trip to the park, a road trip through the state, or a flight across the country, your pup will always want to come along for adventures. If you do bring them on the go, make sure you have a travel crate, an auto harness and/or a travel carrier for your puppy. Practice using them long before your trip so they become familiar and your puppy feels comfortable when it's time to go.

10. Have fun:

Enjoy having a new puppy, play, laugh, and make memories.

Sincerely,

Ryan and the entire mini-critters staff!