



PUPPY CHECKLIST

A Labrador puppy can be a wonderful addition to your household. They are playful and quickly become a very important member of your family.

Once you have brought your new addition home, please be sure to take your puppy to a veterinarian for a check-up and shots at 9 weeks of age. This is important for the future health of your dog. If you are in need of a veterinarian referral, please let us know and we will be happy to assist you.

The following is a list of suggested items for the care of your new Labrador:

Read “*The Art of Raising a Puppy*” by The Monks of New Skete:

Trust us – if you have never raised a puppy before (or it’s been a long time), this book will help immensely. We want to make sure that both you and your puppy are happy for a lifetime.

Food:

Several local pet/feed stores offer a variety of premium pet food to meet your dog’s nutritional requirements from puppy hood through adulthood. All dogs at *Trident Retrievers* are fed Purina Pro Plan food and the puppies are fed Purina Pro Plan LARGE BREED PUPPY. We recommend continuing your puppy on this same food to ease the transition into his/her new home.

If you choose to change the brand of food, please do it gradually over time. As an alternative to the Purina Pro Plan, we also recommend either Eukanuba or Hill’s Science Diet. Please remember that it is important to feed your dog a LARGE BREED PUPPY formula until 6 months of age. Whatever you do, please do not feed your dog cheap, low grade food (no matter how nice the bag looks).

We recommend feeding your puppy/dog dry kibble 99% of the time. You can mix a little water in if you would like (not hot water), but feeding dry food is very good for the dog’s dental health.

Finally, we will send home with you some food to get you started and a coupon for your first bag of premium food. We will also give you some more detailed information on the nutritional need of the Labrador puppy/dog.

ID Tags:

A necessary item that attaches to your pets collar for identification should you and your pet become separated. Please check with your local laws regarding registering your dog and rabies identification.

Collars and Leashes:

A wide variety of collars and leashes are available. While your puppy will come home with a high quality puppy collar, be sure to adjust the collar with enough room for growth but not so large as to allow your puppy to chew on it while he's wearing it. When a collar is adjusted properly, you should be able to slip 2 fingers easily between the dog and the collar, but the collar should not be able to slip over the head unless unbuckled. Choker collars, which are made to slip over a dog's head, should only be used for training purposes. When there is no pressure applied on this type of collar it is loose enough for a dog to remove. Getting your puppy used to a leash early will ease the training process later.

 Food and Water Bowls:

Pet bowls are made to facilitate easy cleaning. You may choose from plastic, ceramic or stainless steel, individual dishes or double diners. We recommend stainless steel (easy to clean, hard to chew). While choosing your pet's dish is a personal preference, take into consideration your lifestyle. If giving your new pet water is going to be your child's responsibility stay away from ceramic, which will break if dropped. Non-tip dishes are designed to make it harder for your playful new pet to tip his dish over while pet placemats are available to contain any dish overflow. Remember to wash your dog's bowls daily to prevent bacteria from forming.

 Toys and Chews:

You will need to provide your puppy with chew toys (or he'll go in the closet and find his own!). While puppies may be teething, chewing also provides entertainment for your pet as well as exercise and a way to relieve frustration. Select a variety of toys with different surfaces to supplement your pet's chewing needs and provide mental stimulation. We recommend choosing from cotton ropes, rubber chew toys (such as a Kong) or dental toys (such as a NylaBone). We recommend NOT giving your dog tennis balls to chew on as they wear teeth very quickly.

 Read “*The Art of Raising a Puppy*” by The Monks of New Skete:

Yes, we're repeating ourselves. This book is widely used and was a lifesaver for us when we started. We know it will make for a happy dog (and owner!).

 Treats:

Treats are a great way to reward your dog with a special treat. Choices include: bones, jerky snacks, cookies or nuggets in different shapes and sizes both vitamin enriched and regular. You may also use treats in the training process as a reward for a job well done. We recommend NOT giving your dog real bones (i.e. knuckles, bones from the table, soup bones, etc) as they easily splinter and can/will lodge in your dog's mouth, throat, stomach, etc.

 Vitamins/Skin and Coat Supplements:

If you feed your puppy a high quality, large breed food (such as Purina Pro Plan, Eukanuba or Hill's Science Diet), you do not need to add supplements to the food. After six months, you may elect to add glucosamine and/or fatty acids for your dog's health. Please consult your veterinarian on the need for any supplements or vitamins.

Grooming: Shampoo/Comb/Brush/Dental:

Because the pH level in a dog's skin is different from ours, it is important to use shampoos designed specifically for use on puppies or dogs.

Slicker brushes, pin brushes, soft bristle brushes, combs and shedding blades are just some of your options for grooming. We will be happy to show you what we use to aid in your purchase.

Dental brushes and pastes are available to care for your dog's teeth. Brushing your dog's teeth on a regular basis will prevent future problems. It's also a good idea to start brushing your dog's teeth early (even if it's just for fun!). Like so much in training, the more exposure the dog has to it a younger age, the easier it is when they get older.

 Flea Control:

Flea and ticks can make your dog's life miserable, as well as being a health risk. The traditional flea sprays, powders and collars are available as well as newer drops and flea pills. Whatever method of flea control you select remember to also treat the environment using home sprays and outdoor yard and kennel sprays. Please consult your veterinarian on the need for such treatment in your area of the country before proceeding.

 Housing:

House training is essential to making your puppy an accepted member of the family. Dog-training crates are the key to making this happen quickly and effectively. Dogs are den animals by nature and will feel more secure (especially in a new environment) if they have a place that's just for them. Pick a crate that is big enough so the dog can stand and lie down in comfortably but also grow with your pet. Too much room will allow your puppy to eliminate in one end of the crate and sleep in the other end thus making training more difficult. To prevent this, separate crate dividers are available allowing you to expand your pet's space as he grows.

 Stain Removers and Deodorizers:

There are various pet stain removers and deodorizers that will help remove puppy stains from your carpet if an accident should occur while training is in progress. It is important to not only remove the stain but also the odor since the odor is what will attract your dog back to that same spot. We will be happy to share with you what we have found to be good working products.

 Beds:

Once crate trained, a bed provides your pet with a place to stretch out and call his own. We recommend not using a bed until the pup is very well crate trained (about 1 year old).

 Read *"The Art of Raising a Puppy"* by The Monks of New Skete:

Seriously.

Remember that a dog is a man's best friend and like any good friendship requires trust, love, patience and understanding. As part of our service to you, we are always available for follow-up questions, no matter how long after you bring your new Lab home.