

Preparing for your New Labradoodle or Cockapoo Puppy

Darby Park Doodles

Your #1 priority is to maintain good health in your puppy

- 1. Start by scheduling an appointment with your veterinarian.** Your appointment will need to be within 72 hours from the time you receive your puppy as stated in our Sales Contract. Be sure to bring in a fresh stool sample the day of your appointment. Any health concerns must be reported back to the breeder within the 72 hours. *Your puppy will have already been checked by our veterinarian, but this appointment is very important for you and your puppy to establish a relationship with your Veterinarian. Your Veterinarian will assist you with scheduling all follow-up vaccinations, de-wormings, and provide preventative treatments for flea, tick, and heartworm control.
- 2. We highly recommend Pet Insurance!** Pet Insurance can provide great coverage for assisting in the expenses of routine care, as well as covering the high cost of emergency room visits due to unexpected accidents. Even the most careful and responsible pet owner can not prevent all accidents. Trupanion is one of the current leading pet insurance providers, but there are many to choose from. www.trupanion.com
- 3. Do not bring your puppy to Pet associated places until ALL puppy vaccinations are completed.** If you stay on schedule, your puppy's vaccines should be completed at 4 months of age. Although they are welcome at pet stores, PLEASE do not bring them there. Steer clear of high traffic pet areas, especially dog parks, rest areas, gas stations, etc. while traveling, and do not bring them in the pet areas in the airports. Even areas directly outside the airport are high risk. Also, do not put your puppy on the floor at your vets office, or anywhere outside the vets office. Remember, sick pets go through their daily.
So where can you bring your puppy?? As early as 10 weeks old, start bringing your pup to stores like Home Depot, Lowe's, Hobby Lobby, Home Goods, Old Navy, etc. These are all pet friendly stores, and there's more! Also, bring them to your children's sporting events, and even just riding in the car to and from school, or a drive-thru. This type of socialization and exposure to the outside world is essential in the upbringing of your pup. Without it, you risk behavioral problems such as separation anxiety, car anxiety, over protectiveness, nervousness/skittishness related to people, noises, and other dogs.
- 4. Continue feeding the same brand of puppy food we are feeding your puppy for at least 1 week.** We feed our Doodles only premium quality dry puppy foods to ensure proper nutrition. We will provide you with a small bag of food to start, in case you decide on a different premium quality food you would like to transition over to. It's very important when switching foods to do it gradually. At least over a 10 day period to avoid an upset tummy and diarrhea. Canned food is typically not a good option. It can cause softer, smellier stools, and it promotes early tooth decay. However, Raw Food Diets, which are softer, can be very beneficial. There are great selections in the refrigerated section of your pet store.
Do not over feed your puppy, or free feed, if he eats obsessively or too quickly. It is recommended to set a feeding time for morning and evening. Each brand of food calls for different feeding portions. Refer to the feeding chart on your bag of puppy food. You may switch from puppy, food to adult food, between 10-12 months of age, unless you are feeding a premium quality All-Stage Food or Raw Food Diet from the beginning. Then no switch is necessary. Consult with your veterinarian on what the best time will be for your puppy to switch foods.
- 5. Ear maintenance is needed.** It is important to keep your puppy's ears Clean and Dry to prevent ear infections. There are cleaning and drying products available at pet stores or at your veterinarian's office. Often Doodles (just like poodles) can have a lot of hair in the ear canal, which may need to be plucked by your veterinarian or groomer ONCE in the first year. Although, It's VERY important that you do not allow your groomer to continue plucking at every grooming appointment thereafter. Ear plucking CAN CAUSE an ear infection because of the over stimulation. Gently cleaning the ears monthly can help prevent ear infections. Always keep water out of the ears. Dry ears thoroughly with a towel after swimming, but also applying a drying solution can help. A light setting on a blow dryer can really be effective for the hair un their cheeks under the ear, BUT be very careful not to overstimulate by blowing directly into the ear or having it on too hot of a setting. Always start by towel drying first.
- 6. Do not RUN or JOG with your puppy until he is about 18 months old.** Repetitive movement on a leash can cause stress on their joints. You could cause, or contribute, to joint problems that could affect your dog for the rest of their life. Basic walks, leash training, free play, and exercise off leash are all ok.

Your 2nd priority is to train and properly socialize your puppy

- 1. Take your puppy to a training or obedience class.** At 3 months of age is a great time to start. Earlier classes are available for younger pups, but remember your puppy will not be fully vaccinated yet. So be aware of the risks should you start before all vaccines are given. The earlier classes do provide basic training and tips to prevent behavior problems before they start, so there is a definite benefit to these early classes especially if you have children in your home. I also recommend a book called "Raising Puppies with Kids"- A Parents Guide. Your first year with your puppy requires a lot of time and energy. It is up to you to help your puppy become a well-behaved member of your family, one that you will all enjoy spending time with.
*Give treats only when you are ready to start consistently training. Never give treats "Just Because". Also, never feed table scraps, unless you want your dog begging or getting on the tables and counters all the time. Some treats can often upset a young pup's tummy too. It is best to save treats for training, and when your dog is an adult and already trained. We highly recommend Dried Liver Treats. Only one ingredient, and a long shelf life to.
- 2. Socializing your puppy is important to maintain a well-rounded temperament.** This is something we touched base with in the section above regarding taking your pup pet friendly 'people places'. It's also essential you let your puppy play with other pups and dogs. Pick dogs that are homebody dogs that do not frequent high traffic dog areas like dog parks or pet stores. Don't be afraid to ask owners what time of lifestyle their dog has, and if they are current on vaccines and preventive parasite care. Make sure you choose playdates with other puppy owners that are as careful and like-minded as you. Puppy socializing and play groups are offered through pet stores and can be a great way for you and your puppy to experience other dogs and people. Expose your puppy to as many people of all ages on a regular basis. Early in the puppy months, start going to your groomer, or vet for basic nail clips or ear cleaning. These are places many dogs don't like to go later, so early exposure can help. Also, frequent short car rides are important to prevent stress when traveling in the future to the vet, groomer, parks, etc.
- 3. Protect your puppy from young children.** This is a very important step in successfully raising your new puppy with your children or grandchildren. A puppy must have their own space, where he is safe, and can retreat to when feeling overwhelmed by a young child. All too often temperaments of puppy's change for the worse due to being left unattended with a young child. Check your book stores and pet stores for the great books that are available regarding raising a puppy and child together.

What to buy to be prepared

- **Puppy Food- Ask your breeder what your puppy is currently eating**
- **Feeding Bowls-** Stainless steel, separate dishes that have a wider bottom than top so it can not be tipped or over turned, avoid double dishes. Crock dishes are also nice, and most untipable.
- **Collar-** Puppy training classes often require a collar with a buckle, not plastic clasps.
- **Leash-** Leash Training can start as early as 8 weeks old. Puppy training classes often require a 6 foot leash rather than the 4-foot. Leather is durable and easy on the hands when training.
- **Crate-** Either a wire or plastic crate. A wire crate is great because the puppy can see what's going on around him, but at night you'll want to cover it with a blanket to avoid drafts, and also to encourage sleeping. Most wire crates come with a divider to make it smaller, for easier potty training. A plastic crate works great too, and is easy to wash down. If you get the crate with the divider, you can essentially purchase a crate that will be a suitable size for your puppy once he is full grown too. You simply slowly make the inside crate space larger as they grow by moving the divider.
- **Exercise Pen-** This can be used both for training and/or playtime. Buy one that is no taller than 30". This pen should be used when you are unable to pay attention to the pup. This will provide a safe place for your pup to sleep and play when you are not available to keep a close eye on him. This can also be an alternative living space if your pup will not tolerate a crate. It is also highly recommended to be used outdoors in the yard as well. So buying 2 can be so helpful! The back yard can be such large and overwhelming place for the pup to get lost in, and it will also help protect him from chewing on poisonous plants and flowers, and can also be used for a focused potty training area. It folds up flat for easy storage and travel. I highly recommend your indoor pen have ONLY vertical bars. Doodles are master climbers. These gates are often sold as dual purpose for kids and pets, and typically have a door on them. My recommendation for the outdoor gate is the less expensive, light weight, easily moveable, black wire exercise/playpen found in all pet stores, and online. There are numerous brands.
- **Bedding-** Washable bedding is best for the crate (be prepared for potty accidents). Also, a separate bed that can be used around the house. It will be great for training your puppy to lay on it, so he won't be under your feet all the time. Washable and chew proof! Foam beds covered in thin materials are often disasters.

- **Carpet Cleaner-** It's inevitable to have potty accidents in the house. Be prepared with a product that will take care of the stains and eliminate odors that can cause the pup to return to the same spot. I recommend Nature's Miracle or Simple Solution stain and odor remover.
- **Bitter Apple-** This product will help train your pup on what NOT to chew on. It is safe for plants, carpeting, furniture, shoes. Have this one on hand before something you love gets chewed on.
- **Chews-** A good variety of chews will help keep your pup occupied during your less attentive times. Enzymatic Chews are my top recommendation. Also, Bully Sticks, and any 100% digestible chews. Stuffed Kongs are also great.
- **Play toys-** Stuffed toys with squeakers are often favored. Although, it's essential to start with a variety of textured and styles of toys to see what your puppy likes, but also to keep them from getting bored.
- **Treats-** Treats should be very limited until about 3 months old, or until regular consistent training begins. Training can be more effective if your puppy is not used to always getting treats, plus a lot of treats are not sized appropriately for training, or they can cause stomach upset and loose stools. Start by using your pup's kibble for training. For food motivated dogs this works great. When using treats for training becomes necessary, I highly recommend Dried Liver treats. One ingredient, lots of varieties, and a long shelf life.
- **For Grooming-**
 - Shampoo-** Choose a tearless sulfate free puppy shampoo. Only wash your puppy about once a month. Over bathing can cause skin problems or irritation.
 - Cowboy Magic-** This grooming product is great in helping eliminate early signs of matting.
 - Brushes-** For new pups, I recommend a plastic tipped pin brush to start, as its gentle and helps them get used to a brush. Later, move on to a more effective slicker brush, etc. A comb can be essential too.
 - Ear Cleaner-** Clean the ears once a month. Buy a cleaning solution and if needed a drying powder.
 - Nail Clippers and Kwik Stop** – As a pup, 'tip trim' the nails once a week. Keep Kwik Stop on hand in case you cut the nail back too far. Bleeding will be difficult to stop without it.
 - Round end Trimming Scissors-** For trimming between eyes, feet, etc.

You will need to do a lot of extra brushing during the time your puppy's coat transitions into an adult coat. This will remove the dead puppy coat, so the adult coat will not matt into it. This transition occurs after 8-10 months, and can last a good 6 months before stabilizing. Don't be surprised if around 6 month old the coat starts to matt and get unruly. Try and stay on top of it. It's not uncommon for new Doodle owners to come to a sad conclusion they have to shave the pup down and start over. Non-shedding dogs take time to get used to if you have never experienced their coats before.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have questions about caring for your pup. My support is always available to you. Most training questions will need to be directed to a licensed trainer.

Thank You! Malinda DeVincenzi.

Darbypark@sbcglobal.net