

## Bonus Chapter

### **Now That You've Got Your Name: 5 Things You Absolutely Must Know About Owning a New Puppy**

Welcome, and thank you so much for taking the time to not only read *What to Name Your Female Dog*, but to also now check out the bonus chapter I promised you. You're showing just how much your sweet girl means to you by putting the effort into researching everything you need to know about owning a puppy. You will certainly have an easier time adjusting to your life as a new puppy parent because of that dedication.

So many people fail to think beyond the excitement of bringing a puppy home. They are caught up in the sweet puppy kisses and the warmth of that puppy breath against their skin, and they forget that raising a puppy requires more than just love. This is a long-term commitment you have just made, and puppies are a lot like toddlers in the beginning – defiant and unaware of the rules and expectations that apply to them.

As a new dog owner, it is your responsibility to ensure your pup is well cared for and that all her needs are being attended to. But it is also your responsibility to train her into a dog who won't destroy your house and who will get along well with others. There is a lot more to puppy ownership than just the sweet puppy kisses. But that's why you're here – you already know that. And you know that I am here to help.

So let's get to the 5 biggest factors of owning a new puppy that you are going to want to educate yourself on. This certainly isn't an all-encompassing list, but it should get you started with the most crucial bits of information to know.

## **Behaviors and Needs Vary By Breed**

People don't usually spend a whole lot of time thinking about a breed before choosing their dog. They might like the way a certain breed looks, or perhaps they grew up with a pup they are hoping to get a carbon copy of in adulthood. Some might have even had their hearts set on adopting a puppy from the pound, and therefore didn't care much about breed – they just wanted to give a home to a pup who might otherwise be homeless.

Whatever the case may be, it is rare for people to do much research on breeds prior to getting a puppy. But now that you have her, I would highly recommend spending some time learning about the unique characteristics of the breed you have chosen.

You may not realize it, but different breeds vary greatly in a lot of areas. From personality to shedding, and medical issues to temperament; your pup's breed has plenty to do with the kind of dog she might become. Some breeds aren't great around kids, for example, and others require more exercise than others. Plenty of breeds also have medical issues specific to their bloodline that you should be aware of and on the lookout for if you hope to raise your puppy into a happy and healthy adulthood.

There are some breeds that are known to be more aggressive around other dogs as well, which is a good thing to know before you attempt to bring your puppy to the dog park. Then there are the breeds known for their high energy levels, or those who are prone to digging. All of these little details could potentially affect how you train and socialize your pup. Which is why educating yourself now on her needs and the unique qualities of her breed is important.

Knowledge is power. Arm yourself with as much information about her breed as you can today, so that you can be better prepared to be a quality puppy parent tomorrow.

## All Dog Foods Are Not Created Equal

In your excitement over getting a pup, it's possible (maybe even probable) that you didn't think through some of the smaller details... like food. You certainly wouldn't be the first pet owner to be driving away from the breeder with your puppy in your arms, only to realize you have nothing to feed her at home.

Don't panic. Puppy food is a lot like people food – it is almost always readily available. You can certainly pull into a pet store, or even a grocery store, to get what your puppy needs in order to remain sated. But one thing to keep in mind is that not all dog foods are created equal – which means that picking up the biggest bag of the cheapest brand is probably not the best thing for your sweet girl.

First of all, puppies have different dietary needs than grown dogs. Just like infants need more vitamins and nutrients than their adult counterparts, a growing pup is going to need food specifically formulated for her. Puppy food.

Beyond that, plenty of dog foods have by-products and additives that you are going to want to avoid. This is a hard line to walk, because there are so many options and it can often be overwhelming to decide what to get. But just as you wouldn't necessarily feed your child the cheapest food from the store, you are going to want to opt for some level of quality for your pup.

I know that standing in that aisle looking at all the puppy food options can feel extremely confusing. And I'm going to make it even more so by telling you that I can't directly advise you as to the "right brand" – there are just far too many factors to consider and so many things that can vary even from puppy to puppy. My best advice to you is going to be to consult with a vet about the puppy food brand they recommend. It's possible your puppy may even have certain health ailments already that would require special food. So again, your vet is your best resource.

But until you can talk to your vet, try to choose a food that avoids artificial preservatives and by-products. Often, these are foods that

wouldn't be fit for human consumption, so they are certainly made of things you wouldn't want to feed your pup. You also want to look for foods with identified protein sources, meaning the labeling makes it perfectly clear exactly what kind of meat was used to create the food. And you want natural preservatives like Vitamin E, and whole grains whenever possible.

When in doubt, try to find a store employee who knows what he or she is talking about when it comes to dog food. You don't necessarily have to opt for the most expensive food available, and you should certainly avoid buying too much before you talk to your vet, but try to choose a quality brand that will hold you over until you can get your girl in for an appointment.

For the most part, you will also want to avoid giving her human food, especially in those early weeks as her digestive system is still developing. This is another subject to discuss with your vet, but generally – human food isn't ever a great fit for your dog.

## **Potty Training Takes Work**

One of the biggest complaints new puppy owners have is that their little one keeps peeing and pooping all around the house. I'm sorry to tell you, that's just the nature of the beast when it comes to owning a pup.

Your girl is going to have accidents. And in the beginning, they aren't even going to be accidents. She is going to intentionally walk over to a corner, right in front of you, and leave a little present on the floor. You might as well prepare yourself for that now.

Just like with babies, puppies are not born knowing when and where to go to the bathroom. They are simply following their natural instincts when they go wherever it is that the urge strikes them. They aren't trying to upset you or ruin your carpet; they are just trying to relieve the need to go.

Potty training a puppy takes work, repetition and patience. It takes understanding that they won't just "get it" overnight, and that they need your guidance if they are ever going to "get it" at all.

There are a lot of great books on the market about potty training, and a lot of amazing theories about the best ways to accomplish this as well. Some will suggest crate training, explaining that most dogs aren't likely to pee or poop where they sleep. Using the crate requires taking your pup outside to go to the bathroom each and every time they are removed from the crate, creating a system that your dog will begin to rely on as much as you do.

Which really is the crux of every potty training philosophy. The best way to get your pup trained is to make it so routine that she can't imagine going anywhere *but* the same spot in the backyard that you always take her.

With time, she will eventually reach a point where she alerts you precisely when she realizes she needs to go. She may wander over to the door and begin whining, or grab hold of your pant leg and pull you towards the outside. If you install a doggy door, she won't even

need to bug you in order to relieve herself – she will simply know exactly where to go to get the deed taken of.

But it still takes time. And work. You have to be committed to helping her if you want her to eventually understand where it is she is meant to go.

You also have to understand that even perfectly trained dogs have accidents every now and again. Sometimes they are sick, sometimes they are afraid of going out in the rain, and sometimes... they are simply testing the limits. Again, just like kids, dogs need to be reminded of what is and is not acceptable every once in a while. And you will need to be understanding of that fact. As frustrating as it can be.

## **Finding the Right Vet Matters**

Nobody brings home a new puppy thinking about the day that puppy may get sick, but it happens – and preventing or preparing for illness is an important part of being a good puppy parent.

You need to find a vet you trust now, so that you have someone to call upon when and if your puppy does need help. It's not just about planning for emergencies, though. Your puppy will also need a series of shots and you will want to talk to a vet about options for getting her spayed as well. Then there is preventing worms and fleas to consider. And, of course, you also need someone to consult about things like food and training options.

So start interviewing vets today in order to find one you feel like you click with. Pay attention to facilities and the interactions between staff members. Watch how long other pet owners are waiting in the lobby, and how staff interacts with the animals when they are called back. Look for things like cleanliness and organization, especially. Ask questions about after-hours availability and treatment philosophies. Look for a clinic that is near your home, so that you can be there in a flash if needed. And make sure you find someone you feel like you can talk to and trust.

After all, this person is going to be in charge of your puppy's care. That makes them a pretty important figure in your life. You want them to be someone you are comfortable asking questions of and that you can rely on to be available, when and if something goes wrong.

The vast majority of your life with this puppy is going to be blissful and carefree. But she is a living being that requires specific care and attention. Your vet can help you to learn and understand the best ways to raise a healthy pup. They are an invaluable resource that you and your pup will both come to rely on over time. So put the appropriate effort into ensuring you have found the vet that is right for you.

You don't want to be in the middle of an emergency when you realize you don't have a vet you can trust.

## Healthy Dogs Require Exercise

Like most people, you probably lead a busy life. You work full time, care for a family, have events to attend with friends and are always planning the next great vacation. Or something like that. Our lives all vary somewhat, but the truth is... most of us are *busy*. So busy, that it would make sense if you struggled to find time to exercise your dog.

But this is something you have to make a priority. Dogs need attention and exercise in order to be happy and healthy. You can't leave most breeds inside all day while you are at work, and then expect them to remain content on the couch by your side when you return home.

It's true that some breeds require more exercise than others, and this is another area to devote some research to as well as questions for your vet. In fact, there are some breeds that you have to be careful of when it comes to exercise – particularly breeds with short or flat noses that may have a harder time breathing through vigorous activity. But you can count on the fact that most breeds are going to benefit from at least a walk every day – and some will need much more than that.

Dogs who don't get enough exercise are more prone to:

- Destroying your house with their digging, chewing and scratching habits.
- Hyperactivity and a lack of sleep at night.
- Easily excitable behavior like jumping and barking.
- Aggressiveness and biting.
- Becoming overweight, and all the health issues that accompany that.

You got a puppy because you wanted the companionship and felt prepared for the responsibility of giving her everything she needed. Well, she needs exercise. So, again, spend a little time researching her specific breed and exercise needs, and then plan on getting

outside and giving your pup the level of activity she craves and her body requires.

## **Everything Else You Need to Know**

Ultimately, you have some research to do. These are the main points you are going to want to prepare yourself for, but raising a puppy is forever a learning process. You might want to consider picking up a book dedicated to your breed, or spending some time familiarizing yourself with the websites that are devoted to pups just like yours. I've provided you with the building blocks, but now you need to take it a step further and become a student of your puppy's needs.

Don't worry, you don't have to become an expert overnight. You've got time to learn some of the intricacies of puppy ownership, and finding a good vet will help to ensure you stay on the right track. So for now, put this book down and cuddle up to your girl.

You've learned a lot already, and you've earned a bit of relaxation with those sweet puppy kisses.

But the next step is to train your puppy well. If you want to see some expert step-by-step videos I would recommend you go to <http://thedogtrainingplanet.com/info> .

Life will be SO MUCH easier if you train her correctly right from the start.