

# Before & When Puppy Arrives:

A quick & helpful guide for before and when your puppy comes home.

Provided by:

**THE GOLD  
COAST DOG**

Positive Reinforcement Dog Training



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# Before & When Puppy Arrives:

I have created this brief guide to assist you before your puppy arrives and during the initial adjustment period. This guide provides you with:

- A shopping list of recommended basic supplies
- A puppy proofing checklist for your home
- A list of topics and questions to discuss with your household
- Day 1- Puppy has arrived!!! Now what...
- Tips on what to do and what to expect during the first 3 weeks with puppy

## TRAINING:

**Training a puppy should start immediately! Training is important because:**

- **It helps forge a relationship between the owner and puppy**
- **It sets you and your puppy up for success**
- **It sets rules and boundaries for the puppy**
- **Uses a hands-on approach to teach puppy skills**
- **Teaches owners how to effectively communicate with their puppy**
- **Educates owners on understanding what puppy is communicating through body language & behavior**
- **Your puppy is always learning, so start teaching her what you want from the start**

**REMEMBER: Problem behaviors are much easier to prevent than to modify later.**

**PRE-PUPPY CONSULTATIONS:** I offer in-home pre-puppy consultations (prior to you getting your puppy) to help you get prepared and to answer all your questions. Here is my contact information:

Phone: 516-582-7877

Email: [info@thegoldcoastdog.com](mailto:info@thegoldcoastdog.com)

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**PRIVATE TRAINING SESSIONS:** If you have already gotten your puppy that's great! Let's get to work! Here is my contact information:

Phone: 516-582-7877

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## BEFORE THE PUPPY ARRIVES

Having the right tools and supplies before your puppy comes home is important. It will help everything go smoother to have what you need at hand. Here is a helpful shopping list of basic supplies you should have.



### Shopping List:

- Crate
- Exercise pen
- Dog bowls
- Baby Gates (optional depending on house set-up)
- Collar, name tag, leash and harness
- Soft training treats
- Treat Pouch
- Wee wee pads (optional)
- Dog bed & blanket for the crate (Easy to clean, machine washable beds are best since puppies have accidents!)
- Towels & rags: It is a good idea to have a few towels and rags around in case you need to wipe puppy down if she gets dirty or you need to dry her off on a rainy day.
- Waterproof gym mat, waterproof blanket or a tarp to place under the pen so that if puppy has an accident it does not go in between the wood floors or tile grout.
- Chew Toys: Braided Bully Sticks, Pigs Ears, Trachea's, Flavored Nyla Bones etc.
- Interactive Food Toys: Classic Kong's, Dog Slow Feeder Bowl, Kong Wobbler Toy, Kong Tiltz Bowl, Kong Quest Wishbone and West Paw Toppl
  - **Pro Tip:** Classic Kongs are great because you can stuff them with high value foods such as: Canned dog food, peanut butter (without xylitol), cream cheese, 100% Natural Canned Pumpkin, mashed sweet potato and plain Greek yogurt.
- Toys: Long rope toys, squeaky balls, plush toys, rubber toys
- Natures Miracle Enzyme Cleaner
- Waste Bags

**Specific recommendations can be made during the initial consultation and/or the pre-puppy consultation.**

## Puppy Proofing Checklist:

Your puppy is a baby. Puppies naturally explore with their mouths. It is important to puppy proof your house for your puppy's safety (and for the safety of your expensive shoes ☺!!).

No amount of puppy proofing can replace supervision and management until your puppy starts to earn more freedom around the house.

Things to consider when puppy proofing:

- Loose electrical wires, especially ones under and/or behind furniture
- Medications- Place all family members medications in a secure location out of reach.
- Paper products such as paper towels, toilet paper, and tissues.
- Shoes- Place them in a closet where puppy cannot chew on the laces.
- Remotes- Keep them up high and out of reach.
- Your Glasses- Need I say more...
- Cell phones- Sometimes puppy might want to call up one of her buddies, so keep it out of reach so that next month's cell phone bill doesn't increase.
- Garbage and Trash Cans- Make sure your puppy DOES NOT have access to garbage as this can become a very bad habit to break. Your puppy could also get a hold of potential dangers items/foods.
- Close off all doors to areas in the house where puppy should not be.
- Keep puppy away from stairs so that she does not get hurt.
- Baby Gates- Baby gates can be helpful if you need an area blocked off so puppy doesn't start running around your house.

## Topics to Consider:



Here are some topics and issues for you to consider before puppy comes home. If your household has other family members it would be wise to discuss these with all family members in order to come to some agreement.

**Where will your puppy sleep?** My suggestion would be in a crate in someone's bed room next to the family members bed. If you prefer your puppy in a different area of the house, make sure to crate train your puppy to comfortably sleep and relax in that area.

**Will she be allowed on the furniture?** It is your puppy, so this is your personal choice! Just remember that if you allow your puppy on the couch when she is small and cute, it will be harder to stop once she is double the size and is used to cuddling up with her people on the couch. All family members should be consistent with the decision so as not to confuse the puppy.

**Where will she be during the day?** Your puppy should be allowed to be out of her crate and/or pen when actively being supervised . Do not keep your puppy confined to her crate or exercise pen all day. Allow your puppy to stretch her legs and roam around (after eliminating of course). When you need to shower, work, or leave the house for a short errand, confine your puppy.

**Where should the crate and exercise pen be placed?** Puppies like to be with their people. Their crate and exercise pen should be in the main part of the home where everyone hangs out. (Typically, the kitchen and/or den.) If possible, have one crate in someone's bedroom for overnight, and one crate in the main part of the home, attached to the exercise pen so that your puppy can go in and out of the crate as she pleases while still being confined to the exercise pen. Putting the bed in the crate helps make the crate a nice cozy place for puppy to rest.

**How often should I take my puppy to eliminate?** Puppies are babies! Just like human babies, puppies need to eliminate often as well. (Only, you do not need to change their diapers! ☺) Take your puppy out every 30 minutes to 1 hour to ensure housetraining success for the first few weeks. You can slowly increase the time as your puppy gets older and housetraining becomes a success. I personally recommend that when your puppy is awake, she should be taken out every 30 minutes. If everyone pitches in it will be much easier.

**When should I start training my puppy?** The answer...ASAP! Your puppy is always learning from the minute your puppy comes home. Training should include: Basic manners and appropriate socialization to adults and children, other puppies, sounds, the outside world and your home environments. Teach your puppy what you want them to do from the start and prevent unwanted behaviors. Training and socialization are extremely important, but should be done with the help of a professional positive reinforcement trainer.



## WHEN PUPPY ARRIVES:

- Keep the first few days calm
- Follow your breeder and/or Veterinarians feeding recommendations

## Day 1: The Puppy Has Arrived!!!

- **First & foremost**, it is normal for a puppy who has left its litter, mom and original living environment to be nervous, quiet and tired. Make sure to keep the household environment calm and relaxed the first few days to allow your puppy to adjust.
- After you get out of the car, place your puppy on the grass in your yard and see if your puppy has to eliminate before going in the house. This could take a little bit if she is nervous. Allow her to sniff around until she finds the right spot. (Keep in mind your puppy might be nervous and may not eliminate.)
- Once you bring your puppy in you can place her inside her exercise pen area with a few chew toy options and other toys to stay occupied with. (**Caution: DO NOT** immediately overwhelm your puppy. If your household has children, make sure the kids are calm and speak softly around the puppy. Make sure they are not excessively touching and handling the puppy as this can be scary and stressful to her. Have the kids instead sit outside the exercise pen, talk to her softly, pet through the wires and feed a few soft small treats. This way the puppy and kids are together, but the puppy is not overwhelmed.)
- Your other option once bringing puppy in the house is to allow her to explore the part of the house that she will be living in so she can start learning about her new home environment. Again, if you have kids make sure they are not overwhelming her by screaming, touching or chasing puppy.
- If the puppy wants to rest or nap, allow her too. If she is not napping, and a half hour has passed, take your puppy outside to eliminate.
- As soon as puppy wakes up from a nap, make sure to clip her to the leash and take her outside to eliminate. Most puppies need to eliminate as soon as they wake up. (Follow housetraining instructions below.)
- Allow your puppy to start exploring and learning about her new home only after she has eliminated. Doing so will decrease the likelihood of an accident.
- Take her out every half hour to eliminate (Puppies are babies! They need to constantly go to the bathroom.). This will not be forever, but preventing accidents will make housetraining go much smoother and faster. Everyone wants their puppy reliably housetrained as soon as possible. Put the work in now for a lifetime of success.
- Allow your puppy to have full access to water throughout the entire day. There should be a water bowl in her exercise pen. You can also provide one for her in her crate as well.
- **Do NOT** give your puppy too much freedom where she will chew the furniture, steal shoes and socks and eliminate all over the house. Whenever your puppy is loose in the home and not confined, she should be under your direct supervision. You may choose to have your puppy confined behind a baby gate or attached to a leash during free time so that she can be managed and redirected when needed

## What else should I be doing on Day 1?

There are some other important pieces of advice I would suggest on Day 1. They include:

- House Training (instructions provided below)
- Crate & Pen Training (Instructions & Tips provided)

### Housetraining Instructions

For outdoor potty training here are 3 simple steps to follow.

**Step 1:** Let your dog sniff around outside until she finds the right spot.

**Step 2:** As your dog squats down to go to the bathroom, softly say your cue “Go Potty”, “Get Busy”, or my personal favorite, “Magic Time” etc. Say it one time.

**Step 3:** As soon as your dog is done, praise your dog with the word “Yes” or “Good Dog” or use your clicker and reward your dog with 3 treats (one at a time) for doing a good job! **\*Make sure to reward your dog with a treat within 3 seconds after going to the bathroom. This helps your dog learn quicker.**

**Pro Tip:** DO NOT punish your puppy for house training mistakes. She has not yet learned where it is appropriate to eliminate and she really does not have much control right now. Punishment for any reason will only scare her and set back your overall training program including housetraining. Some puppies that are reprimanded or punished might become afraid to eliminate in front of their owners. This can become a problem as the puppy might choose to go to the bathroom when the owner isn't looking. Some may even hide behind the couch or behind a piece of furniture.

### Housetraining Log

Keeping track of your puppy's bathroom schedule is very important to help learn about their habits and the frequency of how often she goes to the bathroom. I typically recommend to do this for the first of couple months. Keep a notebook in the area near the door or puppies living space. Here is a sample of what it should look like:

## Sample Housetraining Log:

Date	Time	The Business	Name of responsible individual
9/12/18	6:05am	Peed & Pooped	Anthony
9/12/18	6:55am	Accident-peed in kitchen	Everyone screwed up 😊 lol
9/12/18	8:00am	Peed	Jennifer

## Crate & Pen Training

This should be the first thing you start to teach your puppy so that she is acclimated and comfortable with her new living space. Introducing a crate is important for the housetraining process, boundary setting and a safe confinement space.

### Here are a couple of quick tips:

- I suggest training your puppy to use the crate 2 to 3 times a day for five minutes each time.
- Always place a Kong toy in the crate to keep your puppy occupied
- Do not take her out of the crate or pen if she starts crying. If you are going to take her out. Wait for a moment of silence.
- Young puppies should not be crated more than 2 hours at a time during the day. As puppies get older than can be crated for longer periods of time. Young puppies need to eliminate frequently, so crating them for long periods of time is not wise. We never want the puppy to be forced to eliminate in her crate. Very young puppies do not have the ability to hold their urine and feces very long.
- Using the Exercise Pen: When you cannot directly supervise your puppy she should be in her exercise pen or crate. If your puppy will be alone more than two hours she should not be crated. Instead leave her confined in her exercise pen this way she has access to eliminate on a wee wee pad. The exercise pen should include her bed, water bowl, and wee wee pad(s).
- Here are two videos to view on how to crate and housetrain your puppy:

**Housetraining with a crate:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I5EAd1hLn38>

**Go to crate:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WyN18KZOSSE>

## **Good Night (& thank god!! 😊)**

As you get towards evening the puppy will be tired. Before your bedtime take puppy out for her last potty break. Then put her in her crate for the night with a good night treat. The bedroom should be quite and dark to signal that it is time to go to sleep. This is her first night in a new environment so she may cry. Leave her in the crate. (If puppy cries for more than 10 or 15 minutes, try placing your hand inside the crate as this may help puppy fall asleep.) All her needs have been met and it is important that she learns to go to sleep quietly in her crate. Puppies under 12 weeks of age may have to eliminate during the night. Usually they will only need one bathroom break per night. If you hear your puppy being restless after 2 to 4 hours of sleep she may need to eliminate. Quietly take her out of the crate and directly to her potty area. As soon as she eliminates place her back in her crate. Keep all interactions quiet and low key. We want her to go back to sleep.

\*Following the crate training videos above can help teach your puppy to enjoy being in the crate, which can help her fall asleep faster.

## **THE FIRST 3 WEEKS:**

Below is some helpful information of what to expect during the first 3 weeks with your puppy. This is a list of what the first 3 weeks may include. Keep in mind that every puppy is different so things can vary. For help in setting up your puppy for success, contact me!

- **Don't Stress:** First and foremost, DON'T STRESS!!!! (I know easier said than done!) Go with the flow and keep your puppy on a consistent schedule.
- **Training:** Start puppy off right! Training is super important for your puppy as well as you. It helps teach skills and structure so that you can start properly teaching puppy how to live in your home. I typically start training puppies as soon as they get into their home at 8 weeks of age. Contact me to set up an initial consultation session to get started today!
- **Set Puppy Up for Success (AKA Management):** Management means "Changing your puppies environment to make it impossible or unlikely that he'll do the unwanted behavior(s) you do not want him to do." (Behavior Adjustment Training 2.0, Grisha Stewart) For example, if your puppy constantly tries to chew on your shoes then manage the environment by putting your shoes away inside a closet or another room. Dogs do what works for them and ultimately what's fun and enjoyable. If your puppy keeps chewing your shoes over and over and over, then he is learning and rehearsing

the “fun” behavior. We would need to implement management strategies in order to minimize and stop unwanted behaviors from occurring.

- **Exercising Puppy’s Mind:** Exercise that puppy brain! This is called mental enrichment. It is a way of providing exercise for your puppy’s mind. This includes: Training and teaching skills (basic and more advanced training), using puzzle toys where your dog can eat her meals by working to find the food, chewing on a bone, teaching your puppy to find it/search for food or items, and even going on a walk or hike. Mental enrichment is extremely important for your puppy, both for her mind and as an additional outlet to burn off energy. Mental enrichment sessions need to be provided daily (At least twice a day if possible.). They can last a few minutes or even a half hour. Young puppies typically get tired during a fun half hour mental enrichment session. **Pro Tip:** After mental enrichment, place puppy in her confinement space with a safe chew toy such as a stuffed Kong toy so that she can settle down and possibly even fall asleep.
  
- **Exercise:** Providing exercise for your puppy is important as they tend to have a lot of energy. Exercise does not mean going for a jog around the block. (By the way, I discourage this in young dogs as their bodies are growing and developing.) Exercise includes things like: going on a walk or a hike, puppy playdates, playing fetch on the lawn, hide & seek, puppy ping pong and playing a game of tug. (Yes, tug is safe to play with your puppy. Just don’t yank or whip her as this can hurt her. Allow her to do most of the tugging.) By not providing appropriate ways to burn off her energy she can create her own fun by becoming destructive! (Trust me, no one wants to have to buy a new couch!) Exercise sessions need to be provided daily. Fetch, playdates and tug activities can last between 10 to 20 minutes for young puppies. (You don’t want to overdo physical enrichment as puppies can get frustrated or have a “puppy fit” where they get over mouthy, jumpy and/or throw a tantrum.) Walks & hikes can go for longer periods between 20 and 30 minutes for young puppies. But make sure not to push your puppy’s limits. When she is tired call it quits! **Pro Tip:** After physical enrichment, place puppy in her confinement space with a safe chew toy such as a stuffed Kong toy so that she can settle down and possibly even fall asleep.
  
- **Chewing Time:** Your puppy needs to exercise her mouth daily so that she is less mouthy on you and your household items. Providing multiple times during the day for your puppy to chew on bones and Kong toys will be important. Puppy should be placed in her safe confinement space with a chew toy. When puppy has a chew toy, you should be nearby to provide supervision as many chews can become a choking hazard. When you are ready to end chew time, DO NOT just take the chew item away. Instead, trade it out with a great treat.
  
- **House Training:** (Potty training) This is important and needs to start on Day 1. Instructions have been provided above under the Day 1 information. Make sure to continue taking your puppy out every 30 minutes to 1 hour.

- **Your Daily Training Session:** You should be training puppy daily. Sessions should be fun, short and consistent. Think of every interaction with your puppy as a training session. Set aside some time to provide some structured sessions. A session can last 3 to 5 minutes, then take a break for a couple minutes by allowing puppy to chew on a toy, play fetch or take puppy out to sniff and eliminate. Then go back to training for another 3 to 5 minutes. Your training sessions should be short and consistent.
- **Using Food:** Using food to help teach a puppy can be helpful. So that you do not over feed your puppy, you can use her meals as training treats. You can use some of it or all of it to train her rather than feeding her out of a food bowl. I even recommend ditching the food bowl all together and feeding puppy while training or with interactive food puzzles.
- **Provide Free Time Out of Confinement:** Your puppy should not be confined all day long in her crate and exercise pen. She should be able to stretch her legs and have free time in safe parts of the house. During this free time, she must always be supervised so she doesn't get into trouble or have an accident. Free time should only be given after puppy has eliminated.
- **Importance of Walking, Sniffing & Exploring:** Allowing a puppy to go on a walk, sniff and explore is important. It helps puppy learn about where she lives and the outside world. Allowing her to sniff and explore can help keep her relaxed. Sniffing is how a puppy learns, so allowing it is perfectly fine! I actually encourage it!
- **Socialization:** Socialization is the process of introducing a puppy to the world. The most critical socialization window is before 12 weeks of age, but can last as long as 16 weeks in some puppies. This is the most impressionable time in a dog's life, where she can learn to love, hate and/or be afraid of anything. Memories, associations, social bonds and relationships are forged during this time in a dog's life, which can affect the way she interacts with the world. Early experiences have the power to influence a dog's life. Puppies should be encouraged to explore and investigate their environment and the things in their environment. During this time puppies should be exposed to as many new people, puppies, dogs, animals, environments, objects, textures, sights and sounds. To learn more about socialization, check out my blog post called "To Socialize or Not To Socialize" located on my website under the puppy blog section.
- **Mouthing:** Mouthing is common with puppies as they are teething. Having chew toys readily available can be super helpful so that puppy can properly exercise her mouth on her own things and not ours. To help address mouthing, feel free to contact me to set up a session.

- **“My puppy is picking up twigs, leaves and everything else outside!”** Puppies explore and learn with their mouths. It is a normal reaction for people to rush over to puppy and grab whatever she has in her mouth. My advice is DO NOT grab things from your puppy! Instead start trading everything out. It is super important that we do not start grabbing things out of our puppy’s mouth, especially forcefully. All this will do is cause your puppy to either be afraid and/or try to run away from you when she has something. In some cases puppy may learn to protect the item she has in her possession. Instead, teach her to trade out items with a really good treat or other high value item. Here is a helpful video from our friends at Cold Nose College in NC teaching and explaining a trade: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZINKM68Gw-l>
- **Do Not Force Your Puppy:** Your puppy is a baby. Do not force your puppy to do things she is uncomfortable or afraid of doing. Doing so can potentially cause issues later in life. Instead you must teach her and give her time to learn. You must be patient and go at her own pace!

## ABOUT ANTHONY DE MARINIS:

Anthony De Marinis is a graduate of distinction from the Victoria Stilwell Academy for Dog Training & Behavior. He is also a Certified Victoria Stilwell Licensed Positively Dog Trainer, Certified Behavior Adjustment Trainer, The Third Way Certified Trainer and a Fear Free Certified Animal Trainer. Anthony runs his dog training practice, The Gold Coast Dog, full time and provides private training and behavior modification solutions using positive reinforcement methods. His website is: [www.thegoldcoastdog.com](http://www.thegoldcoastdog.com)

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