SMALL PAW GUIDE

New Puppy Checklist for Small Dogs (Australia)

Tick things off as you go: before they come home, the first week, the first month, and a simple daily routine.

1. Before you bring them home

Set up a safe, quiet base so the first day is calm.

- [ ] Ask what food they are on now and get a small supply of the same
- [ ] Food and water bowls that are stable and easy to clean
- [ ] A bed and a crate or pen sized for a small dog, in a quiet spot
- [ ] Collar or harness that fits, a lead and an ID tag
  Check the fit often as they grow
- [ ] A couple of puppy-sized chew toys
- [ ] Poo bags and pet-safe cleaning supplies
- [ ] A soft brush for gentle grooming practice
- [ ] Puppy-proof the home: cables, shoes, small objects, toxic items and plants out of reach
- [ ] Block off areas your puppy should not reach (baby gate or pen)
- [ ] Pick a toilet spot in the yard or an indoor option
- [ ] Agree house rules with everyone at home (furniture, feeding, who walks)
- [ ] Find a local vet and save their number, including an after-hours option

2. First-week essentials

Keep things quiet, predictable and simple. Extras can wait.

- [ ] Take them straight to their toilet spot when you arrive
- [ ] Show them their bed or crate and let them rest often
- [ ] Keep to the food they were already eating
- [ ] Keep visitors few and calm for the first few days
- [ ] Short, gentle introductions to new rooms, sounds and people
- [ ] Supervise play and chewing
- [ ] Take them out after meals, naps and play
- [ ] Praise and reward toilet success right away
- [ ] Book a first vet check
  Ask about anything on this list you are unsure of
- [ ] Take a few photos and note their feeding and toilet habits to show your vet

Tip: you do not need to buy everything on day one. Start with the basics, see what your puppy likes, then add extras.

My notes

Vet name and phone · microchip number · council registration number · vaccination dates, as advised by your vet

General information only, not veterinary advice.

3. First month: vet and admin

Rules differ by state, territory and council, so always check the official source for where you live.

- [ ] Book a vet check and ask about the vaccination schedule
  Follow the schedule as advised by your vet
- [ ] Ask your vet about worming, flea and tick prevention, and desexing timing
  Your vet can advise what suits your puppy
- [ ] Microchip your puppy and make sure the details are recorded and up to date
  Microchipping and registry rules vary by state and territory
- [ ] Register with your local council
  Check your council's website for how to register, the deadline and any rules for your area
- [ ] Check your state or territory rules (for example fencing, leash areas, how many pets you can keep, or renting)
- [ ] Check your lease or strata rules if you rent or live in a unit, and get any pet approval in writing
- [ ] Decide whether pet insurance suits you and read the policy wording closely
  Check what is covered, waiting periods and exclusions
- [ ] Keep vet records, microchip and registration numbers in one place
- [ ] Look into puppy school or early training classes in your area

4. Daily routine basics

Puppies like predictability. Adjust the times to suit your household.

WHEN	WHAT
Wake up	Straight outside for a toilet break, then praise
Breakfast	Measured meal, fresh water, toilet break afterwards
Morning	Short play and gentle training, then a nap in the crate or bed
Midday	Meal as advised for their age, toilet break, short walk or garden time
Afternoon	Chew toy, quiet time, another nap
Evening	Meal, play, a last short toilet break before bed
Bedtime	Calm wind-down and a toilet break, then to bed

Ask your vet how often and how much to feed for your puppy's age and size.

- [ ] Toilet breaks after every meal, nap and play
- [ ] Plenty of sleep through the day
- [ ] Short, gentle training bursts
- [ ] Fresh water always available
- [ ] Brief brushing and paw handling practice
- [ ] Calm time alone, built up gradually

General information only, not veterinary advice. Prepared by the Small Paw Guide editorial team.