

What to expect with your new puppy:

Your puppy has done a lot of growing and learning in the first 8 weeks of its life. Our job as your breeder is to give your puppy the best start possible. Now, the rest is up to you!! There will be a lot of changes for your puppy once it leaves the familiar routine of our home and joins your family. The following list is meant to give you an idea of what you can expect over the new few weeks/months as your puppy grows into a healthy, young dog.

Expect: the puppy to chew almost anything for the first 6 months to a year

What to do: be prepared to remove many things from your puppy's mouth...shoes, socks, underwear, table legs, your child's toy etc. Your puppy needs to be taught what is "chewable" and what is off limits. When it is found chewing on something that is off limits, say "no, leave it" and replace/distract with a safe chew toy. You should actively supervise your puppy when it is playing and put it in the crate or a pen when you are too busy to watch it.

Expect: your puppy to need to get up in the middle of the night to go to the bathroom

What to do: put your puppy's crate where you can hear it when it wakes up. When you hear fussing, go to the crate, talk softly until the puppy quiets and then take the puppy outside to the bathroom. No playing, cuddling or excessive talking...bathroom and then right back to bed. Puppies generally start sleeping through the night when they are 9-10 weeks of age. 6-7 hours a night is reasonable at first. This will gradually lengthen as the puppy gets older.

Expect: the puppy to sleep a lot. When puppies are 7-8 weeks old, playtime lasts for about 30-45 minutes followed by a two hour nap. As they get older, they will play more and sleep less however, even an adult dog will sleep 14-16 hours a day.

What to do: make sure the puppy gets an opportunity to sleep and is not over stimulated. Puppies are like kids and can get grumpy or irritable if they are tired. Let everyone in the family, especially children know that puppies need their sleep and should not be disturbed when they are in their crate.

Expect: the puppy to nip at toes, fingers, faces, ears, hair, clothes etc. Puppies play with their littermates and their mother by using their mouth. They will do the same thing with their people until they are taught otherwise. Some puppies learn very quickly to stop nipping...others take longer before the message sinks in

What to do: teach the puppy that nipping will not be tolerated. To do this you must be firm and lower your voice almost to a growl saying "no bite" and hold the puppy's face in your hands looking straight into its eyes. Hold the puppy's face until it does not move then put it down and do not play with it for a few minutes.

Expect: a clingy puppy when you first bring it home. It will likely follow your every move and not want to leave your feet. This is the first time it has been away from its littermates for an extended period of time and everything is very new and overwhelming.

What to do: get a small bell and attach it to your puppy's collar so that you will know exactly where the puppy is. This will help prevent you stepping on your pup or from tripping over it and falling. Given some time, the puppy will get comfortable in its surroundings and then it will venture further and further away from you.

Expect: the puppy to be sensitive to noise and strange people. It may startle or shake visibly when someone new is holding it.

What to do: introduce new sounds and people slowly. Don't comfort or soothe the puppy, just treat each situation as "normal" and after a few introductions, the puppy should be visibly more comfortable.

Expect: to take the puppy outside frequently during the day until the puppy is about 4 months old

What to do: take the puppy outside for bathroom breaks every 20-30 minutes when the puppy is awake. Increase the length of time between bathroom breaks as the puppy gets older. If the puppy is sleeping, wake him up every two hours to go outside so that he does not have to wake up and whine in his crate...or have an accident in his crate.

Expect: the puppy to fuss for short periods of time after he has been put in his crate.

What to do: If you know the puppy has gone to the bathroom and is not hungry or thirsty, do not take him out of his crate. The puppy must not learn that it can be let out of the crate by barking or whining. If you give in, you will end up with a very noisy dog who will expect you to meet his demands.

Expect: that the puppy will not always come to its name, even after it knows its name.

What to do: train your puppy to respond to his name and work on it several times throughout the day. Squat down, call the puppy to you in a playful happy voice and when it responds, reward it with a treat. Be sure to praise the puppy after each successful response and never call the puppy to you for a negative reason...ie to put it in the kennel or scold it for doing something wrong. This important part of training must be worked on throughout the first year for it to be reliable

Expect: the puppy to make many little messes in the yard. Your puppy can be trained to use one area of the yard for its bathroom by taking it there repeatedly and praising and rewarding successful trips.

What to do: watch where you walk and clean up after your dog...in your yard and when on walks!

Expect: the puppy will need lots of training. He will not know how to be a well-behaved member of your family until you teach him the rules and give him boundaries and limitations.

What to do: Be consistent and patient. The first year is the hardest but your puppy will learn what is expected once you spend the time and effort to train it.

Expect: from time to time your new puppy may refuse to eat it's food.

What to do: Some dogs are fussy eaters and may decide they no longer like the food they are being offered. **Don't** add incentives to the food (like meat juices, yogurt, gravy etc). The dog will learn to refuse the food until the "good" stuff is added. It is ok for a dog to refuse a meal but **do** make sure young puppies are eating three meals a day or they may suffer from hypoglycemia. Do add water to the food to soften it and make it more appealing or add the same brand of canned food mixed with water to the dry to add interest.