

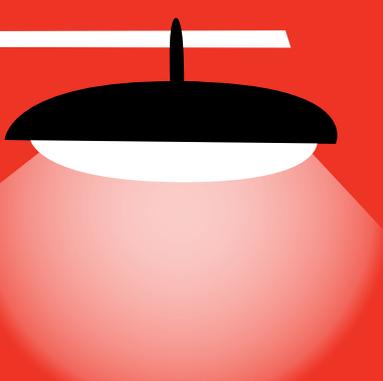
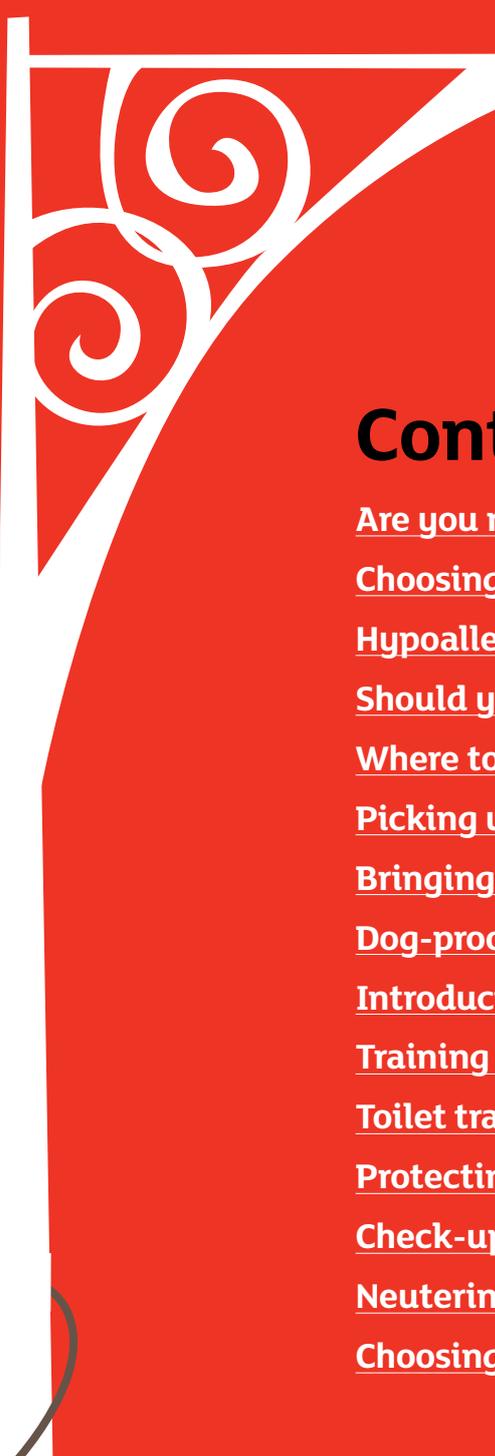


Preparing For a New Dog



Sainsbury's Bank





Contents

<u>Are you ready to get a dog?</u>	<u>3</u>
<u>Choosing a breed</u>	<u>4</u>
<u>Hypoallergenic breeds</u>	<u>4</u>
<u>Should you get a puppy or an adult dog?</u>	<u>5</u>
<u>Where to find your dog</u>	<u>5</u>
<u>Picking up your dog</u>	<u>6</u>
<u>Bringing your new dog home</u>	<u>7</u>
<u>Dog-proof your home</u>	<u>8</u>
<u>Introductions</u>	<u>9</u>
<u>Training your new dog</u>	<u>10</u>
<u>Toilet training</u>	<u>10</u>
<u>Protecting and looking after your dog</u>	<u>11</u>
<u>Check-ups and vaccinations</u>	<u>12</u>
<u>Neutering</u>	<u>12</u>
<u>Choosing the right insurance</u>	<u>12</u>



Are you ready to get a dog?

Owning a dog can be very rewarding, offer a healthier lifestyle and a sense of companionship. However, it's important to ensure you are ready for the responsibility that comes with it.

Before you get a new dog, consider the following questions:

- Can you afford a dog? Everyday expenses such as food, veterinary fees and pet insurance can cost around £25 a week
- Can you make a long-term commitment? The average dog lives around 12 years
- Is your home big enough?
- Do you have time for walks every day?
- Will someone be home to keep a dog company? Dogs are sociable creatures and can get lonely
- Do you have time to train, groom and care for your new pet?



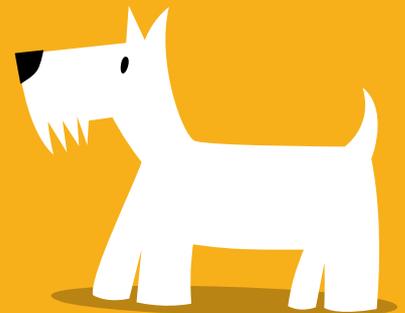
Choosing a breed

Each breed has its own characteristics. It's a good idea to find a breed that is a suitable match for your personality, lifestyle and family circumstances.

Temperaments can vary greatly. For example, some breeds have a reputation for being family-friendly, but if a dog isn't trained and socialised properly, it could end up being afraid or difficult around people and other dogs.

Hypoallergenic breeds

Hypoallergenic breeds can cause less reaction due to a number of factors, including their small size, lack of shedding and ease of bathing. Hypoallergenic breeds include Bichon Frise, Poodles and Portuguese Water Dogs.





Should you get a puppy or an adult dog?



Before you decide, ask yourself these questions:



- Do you have any experience of raising a puppy?
- Do you have the time, patience, and flexibility to deal with an untrained puppy?
- Would an older, more emotionally developed dog be a better fit?
- Costs vary hugely between puppies and adult dogs (Pedigree pups can be very expensive)



Where to find your new dog

Responsible breeders

Dog buyers have a responsibility to buy from a reputable breeder. [The Kennel Club](#) runs assurance schemes for registered breeders, who follow strict guidelines when it comes to how they breed their dogs and keep them healthy.



Animal shelters

Rehoming a dog can mean a big change to your lifestyle, so it's not a decision to be taken lightly. Our guide offers in-depth information on [best practices for rehoming](#).



Dogs from shelters are likely to have been vaccinated, spayed or snipped and sometimes microchipped.



Picking up your dog

When collecting your dog, check what diet they're used to and when they get fed. In order to avoid stomach problems, try sticking to that schedule for the first few days. If you're switching to a different brand of food, it's best to do this over a period of about a week by adding one part new food to three parts of the old food.

Some dogs find car trips stressful, so having them safely secured in a crate could make the journey home easier. When bringing home a puppy, take them to the toileting area of the house straight away, and spend some time there with them so they can get accustomed to the area and relieve themselves.





Bringing your new dog home

The first few days in your home are very important for a new puppy or dog, since they may be confused about where they are and what to expect from you. Setting up a clear structure for your pet is important to ensure this transition is as smooth as possible.

Essential items to have ready:

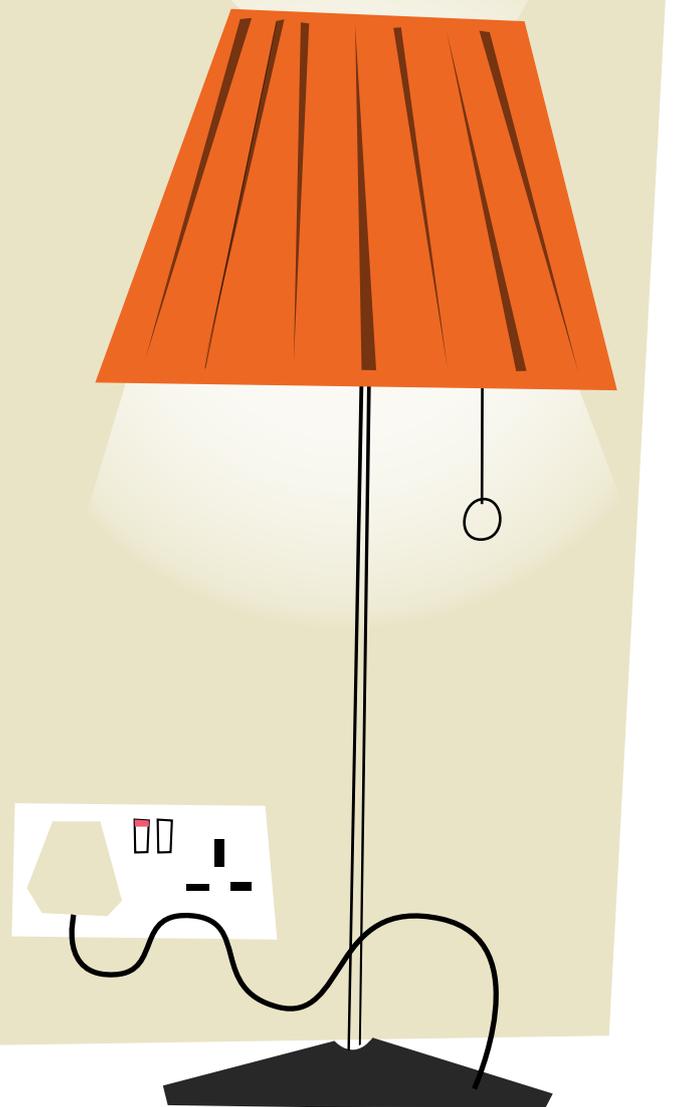
- Lead, collar and/or harness
- Puppy crate
- Bedding
- Dog food and treats
- Food and water bowls
- Grooming equipment
- Identity disc
- Dog waste bags
- Toys



Dog-proof your home

Dog-proofing your home might not only protect your possessions, it can also keep your dog safe from danger.

- Hide electrical cables behind furniture/ tape to baseboards
- Remove all breakable objects that your dog might reach
- Place any household chemicals out of reach
- Remove poisonous/toxic houseplants
- Hide shoes in cupboards



Introductions

Supervision is necessary when your new puppy or dog meets your household members and other pets for the first time. Carefully handled introductions are likely to set the scene for future interactions as well as helping the dog settle into family life.

Children

It's important to include children in a puppy's upbringing, regardless of whether there are any kids in your home or not. This will get the puppy used to being around children and prevent them from feeling overwhelmed. Always insist that the dog approaches a child, rather than the other way round.

As for grown dogs, even if they are used to children, they will need time to get to know children in their new home.

Other dogs

Dogs are social animals by nature. The hierarchy between dogs will be established during the first few weeks, so disagreements are likely to occur during this time.

- It is best to introduce dogs on neutral territory, such as out on a walk
- Separate them if they start to fight
- At first, feed the dogs apart
- Do not leave them alone together until they're friendly

Cats

It's important that you introduce a new dog to any cats in your home carefully, whether it's a puppy or an adult.

- Choose a room where the cat has an upward escape route
- After five minutes or so, take the dog away and let your cat go to wherever they feel most comfortable



Training your new dog

It's a good idea to make training a high priority. No dog is too old to learn and training classes are available for every age and ability.

Top training tips:

Training should start on the first day.

Create a vocabulary to use when giving them directions. Basic commands include: **"Come", "Go", "Sit", "Stay", "Wait", "No", "Down", "Off", and "Leave it"**.

Planning on [crate training](#) your pet? If you train your new puppy or dog to use a crate, they will see the crate as their 'den' and will be happy to spend time there when they want to sleep or be alone. Be sure to have a crate set up and ready to go when you bring your new pet home.



STAY!



FETCH!



SIT!

Toilet training

Toilet training your puppy should be a reasonably simple process, as long as you take the time to establish a good routine. First of all, puppies should be able to relieve themselves at least every two hours, so try to take your new puppy out as regularly as possible. It's also important to remember to praise puppies when they go outside.

As an alternative, young puppies can be trained on newspapers or in crates.



Protecting and looking after your dog

There is no one 'perfect' way to care for all dogs, because every dog and situation is unique. However, you should try your best to take the necessary steps to ensure that you meet all of your dog's needs.

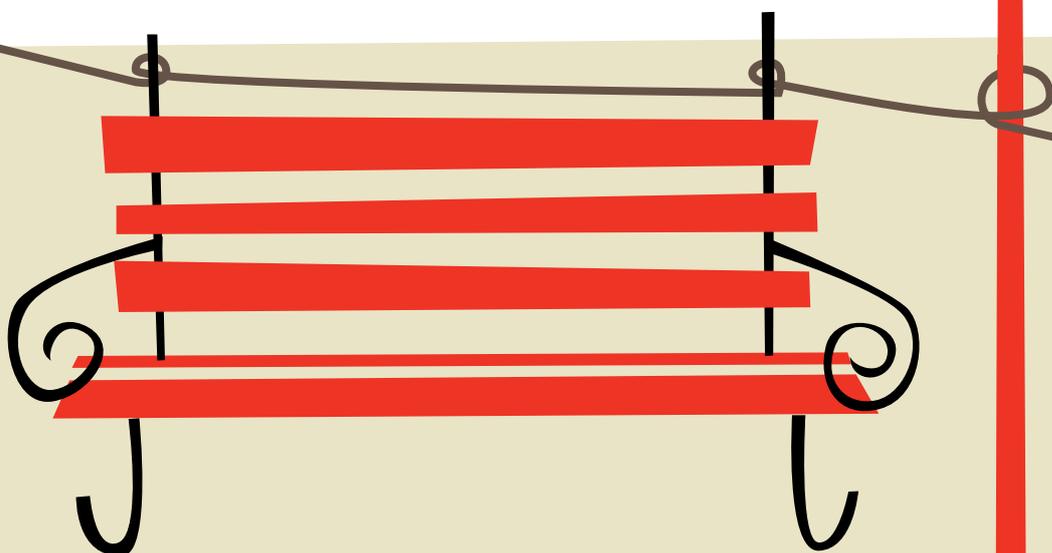
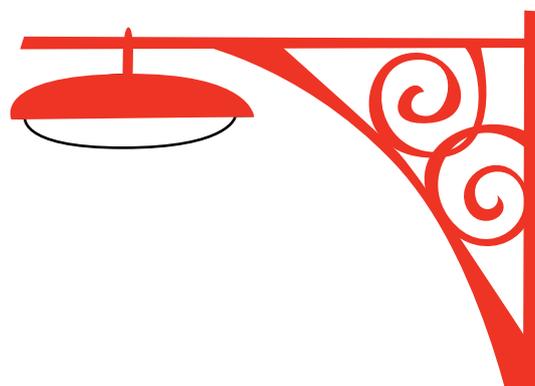
Microchipping

The law says that all dogs must wear a collar and tag in public places, with their owner's name, address and telephone number on it. However, as dog tags and collars can fall off or be removed, you should also microchip your dog.

Microchipping gives you the assurance that your dog is more likely to be returned to you if lost or stolen.

It will be compulsory from April 2016 in **England, Wales** and **Scotland** as part of legislation relating to animal welfare.

Make sure you register the chip to your address and update it if you move.



Check-ups and vaccinations

Numerous veterinary clinics provide health care packages that work alongside your pet insurance, helping to manage the costs of both check-ups and preventative treatments. Remember to ask your vet if they offer a health care scheme when you first register with them.

Take your new dog for a check-up as soon as you can. Regular visits to the vet will give you the chance to keep vaccinations up-to-date, accurately weigh your dog and to find out more about any issues that may be worrying you. Other things to ask your new vet about include worming, flea treatments and nail clipping.

Neutering

If you have a puppy or an un-neutered adult dog, your new vet can offer advice on the health benefits of [neutering](#), as well as aftercare - including diet.

Choosing the right insurance

There are a number of things to consider when taking out pet insurance, including what type of cover you need and the age of your pet. Policies vary when it comes to the level of cover they offer. In addition, each company will apply their own conditions and exclusions to their policies.

- Research pet insurance policies before you buy
- For dogs, consider third party liability
- Check for policy limitations





Sources

<http://www.thekennelclub.org.uk/getting-a-dog-or-puppy/finding-the-right-breeder/>
<http://www.sainsburysbank.co.uk/library/default/resources/guide-to-dog-rehoming.pdf>
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