



6 Steps to Take After Adopting Your First Dog

The first days of dog ownership are the craziest. When adopting your dog, you imagined long walks and snuggles on the couch. In reality, your life is currently house-training accidents, a dog hiding under the bed, and chewed-up *everything*. However, don't panic just yet. Adopting your first dog is a huge transition for you and Fido alike, but with the right steps, you'll have your dog integrated into your family in no time. Here's where you should start.

Get Stocked Up On Supplies

Just like having a baby, adding a new pup to your pack means that you're going to be [buying things](#) you've never bought before. This includes a leash and collar, a crate or other way to keep them contained during the housetraining process, a dog bed, and lots of food and treats. You may also want to stock up on pet grooming supplies, such as nail clippers, dog shampoo, and a toothbrush – you can find ones made specifically for dogs anywhere pet products are sold. Your dog will already be microchipped, but also make a point to ensure that you have a tag with their name and telephone number attached to their collar.

Dog-Proof Your Home

Before you do anything — including bringing your new dog home — make sure your house is fully [puppy-proofed](#). Even adult dogs can be mischievous when placed in a new environment, so put away trash cans, electrical cords, poisonous houseplants, small items, and anything you don't want to be swallowed or chewed. You should also set up a safe space where your dog can get acclimated to its new home without the stress of constant visitors. At a minimum, set up a [crate](#) that's off-limits to kids, but a whole room is better if you can spare it.

Schedule Your First Veterinary Appointment

The first thing to do after adopting a dog is to schedule a vet appointment. Your new dog should see a veterinarian within the first week at its new home for a wellness check, vaccinations, and to schedule a [spay or neuter](#) appointment. Even if your dog seems healthy, it's important to have a relationship with a veterinarian in case of an emergency.

Buy Pet Insurance

After paying for your dog's initial veterinary care, your wallet may be feeling the pinch. If you'd rather spread the costs of pet ownership out over time, look into pet insurance. Pet insurance covers illness and injuries in exchange for an affordable premium so you're never surprised by a huge veterinary bill. Some pet insurance companies, like Embrace and PetFirst, also [offer coverage](#) for routine veterinary care. Pet insurance policies vary widely in the services covered, deductible, and payout method, so consider how you plan to use the policy before buying.

Hire a Pet Sitter

A veterinarian isn't the only pet professional that dog owners should have on call. It's also important to have a relationship with a pet sitter for times you need to travel out of town without your dog or have a long day [at the office](#). There are lots of options for hiring a pet sitter online; rather than letting that overwhelm you, read up on the [best ways](#) to narrow the field.

Enroll in Obedience Training

The internet is full of conflicting advice on the best way to train a dog. For first-time dog owners, it's hard to know what to listen to. Rather than taking a DIY approach to dog training and risking mixed results, turn to professionals who have years of dog training experience under their belts. In Florida, that means calling Canine Control. With 35 years of experience and a unique training methodology that draws on positive reinforcement and [communication](#) techniques, Canine Control teaches owners how to control their pets by using their dog's eagerness to please. Not only is Canine Control a great resource for dog owners looking to get a jumpstart on training, but it will teach you handling techniques that benefit your [relationship](#) with your dog.

In a few years, you'll look back on the early days of dog ownership and laugh. But when you've just brought a dog home and everything is going wrong, life with dogs can feel utterly overwhelming. Rather than trying to figure it all out yourself, turn to trusted veterinarians, dog trainers, and other pros who can help you take the challenges of dog ownership in stride.

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