

Dogfooddirect.com – First Time Pet Owners Guide

Congratulations! You have just added a precious four-legged pet member to your family. From the questions we have received about new puppies and new kittens, here are some tips to help you get started on care of your new pet.

Puppies – Select a place for food and water bowls. Keep clean water available at all times. You select the feeding times, usually 3 feedings per day for a young puppy, changing to 2 feedings per day at about 4 to 6 months of age.

The best food for your puppy is --- a high quality dry food.

Small and medium breeds do well on small breed formulas. These products are formulated to meet the fast growth requirements unique to small breed dogs that reach maturity in about 12 months.

Large and giant breeds reach maturity at 18 to 24 months. Large and giant breed puppy formula are specifically formulated to balance skeletal and muscle growth of large and giant breed dogs.

Does the label have to say “Puppy Food?” Check the bags of premium brands of adult food. If it states “For All Life Stages” the food is formulated to meet the needs of growing puppies. These formulas are excellent foods for growing puppies as well as for adult dogs.

How much to feed? Start with an amount from the feeding guidelines on the bag at each feeding (remember to divide the daily amount by 3 for 3 feedings per day). Give puppy 15 minutes and then take the bowl away. Don’t worry if puppy did not eat all the food. Offer the same amount at the next feeding. Switch to 2 feedings per day at 4 to 6 months. Reduce the amount offered at each feeding to maintain balance growth. Do not let your puppy become overweight!

Follow each feeding by a trip outside and then a quiet time. Another trip outside after the quiet time and you are on the way to house training by helping your puppy relieve himself outside when he is most likely to need the relief.

Treats – Treats are OK for puppies; they are best used as rewards for good behavior. Limit treats to dog treats, no human foods, please. Limit treats to no more than 5% of puppy’s total calories.

What about canned foods? Training puppy to eat the dry food you choose sets up your pet for healthy eating for life. Canned foods are fine, particularly as mixers with dry, but generally should not be the major source of food. All of the canned foods carried by *Dogfooddirect.com* are all life stages products that are excellent choices for adding to puppy’s menu.

Kittens – Select a place for food and water bowls, keep clean water available at all times. Kittens and cats are nibblers; keep dry food available at all times and kitty can eat or snack as appropriate. Limit the food available to 2 or 3 feedings per day after maturity if your cat seems to be gaining too much weight.

Does it have to say “Kitten Food” on the bag? No. Most cat foods are formulated as All Life Stages products and are equally good for growing kittens and adult cats. Any of the premium brands of cat food carried by *Dogfooddirect.com* are excellent choices for growing kittens and mature cats.

Kittens and cats like to nibble, but can be trained to expect 2 or 3 specific meal times. Leaving dry food out and available at all times can be supplemented with specific feeding times for canned food. Remember to clean up the uneaten canned food to keep the food fresh and wholesome.