

# *Preparing for your New Labradoodle Puppy*

*Darby Park Doodles*

## **Your #1 priority is to maintain good health in your puppy**

- 1. Start by scheduling an appointment with your veterinarian.** Your appointment will need to be within 72 hours from the time you receive your puppy as stated in our Sales Contract. Be sure to bring in a fresh stool sample the day of your appointment. Any health concerns must be reported back to the breeder within the 72 hours. \*Your puppy will have already been checked by our veterinarian but this appointment is very important for you and your puppy to establish a relationship with your Veterinarian. Your Veterinarian will assist you with scheduling all follow-up vaccinations, de-wormings, and provide preventative treatments for flea control and heartworm.
- 2. We highly recommend Veterinary Pet Insurance. Your pet's coverage begins just 14 days after enrollment so signup ASAP so your first visit will be covered!** Under \$20 a month can provide great coverage for assisting in the expenses of routine care as well as covering the high cost of emergency room visits due to unexpected accidents. Even the most careful and responsible pet owner can not prevent all accidents. **Call 800-USA- PETS or visit [petinsurance.com](http://petinsurance.com).**
- 3. Do not bring your puppy to public places until ALL puppy vaccinations are completed.** If you stay on schedule, your puppy's vaccines should be completed at 4 months of age. Limit your puppy to your own home and backyard. Although they are welcome at pet stores PLEASE do not bring them there. Many puppy viruses can simply be contracted by walking on the ground where an infected pet has been. The most serious and life threatening viruses such as Parvo and Distemper can live in an environment for many months and still be highly contagious. Also, do not put your puppy on the floor at your vets office or walk your puppy on a leash through your neighborhood.
- 4. Continue feeding the same brand of puppy food we are feeding your puppy at least for the 1<sup>st</sup> week. Science Diet Dry Puppy Food only (Found in most pet stores).** We feed our labradoodles only premium quality dry puppy foods to ensure proper nutrition. We will provide you with a small bag of food to start in case you decide on a different premium quality food you would like to transition to. It is very important to change the food gradually over at least a one week period to avoid an upset tummy and diarrhea. Canned food should never be an option in a regular diet or for moistening food. It causes softer, smellier stools and promotes early tooth decay.  
Do not over feed your puppy or free feed if he eats a lot. It is recommended to set a feeding time for morning and evening. Each brand of food calls for different feeding portions. Refer to the feeding chart on your bag of puppy food. You may switch from puppy food to adult food between 6-10 months of age to slow growth and eliminate some stress on joints.
- 5. Ear maintenance is needed.** It is important to keep your puppy's ears Clean and Dry to prevent ear infections. There are cleaning and drying products available at pet stores or at your veterinarian's office. Often labradoodles (just like poodles) can have a lot of hair in the ear canal which may need to be plucked by your veterinarian or groomer. Weekly or bi-weekly cleaning is needed to help prevent ear infection.
- 6. Do not run with your puppy until he is about 18 months old.** Repetitive movement on a leash can cause stress on joints. You could cause or contribute to joint problems that could affect your dog for the rest of his life. Free play and exercise off leash will be ok. Short walks and training to walk on a leash is ok too.

## **Your second priority is to train and properly socialize your puppy**

- 1. Take your puppy to a training or obedience class.** At 4 months of age is a great time to start. Earlier classes are available for younger pups but remember your puppy will not be fully vaccinated yet. So be aware of the risks should you start before all vaccines are given. The earlier classes do provide basic training and tips to prevent behavior problems before they start so there is a definite benefit to these early classes especially if you have children in your home. I also recommend a book called "Raising Puppies with Kids"- A Parents Guide. Your first year with your puppy requires a lot of time and energy. It is up to you to help your puppy become a well behaved member of your family, one that you will all enjoy spending time with.  
\*Give treats only when you are ready to start consistently training. Never give treats "Just Because". Also never feed table scraps unless you want your dog begging or getting on the tables and counters all the time. Some treats can often upset a young pup's tummy too. It is best to save treats for training and when your dog is an adult and already trained.

2. **Socializing your puppy is important to maintain a well rounded temperament.** Be sure to let your puppy play with other pups and dogs. Puppy socializing and play groups are offered through pet stores and can be a great way for you and your puppy to experience other dogs and people .Expose your puppy to as many people of all ages on a regular basis. Early in the puppy months start going to your groomer or vet for basic nail clips or ear cleaning. And frequent short car rides are important to prevent stress when traveling in the future to the vet, groomer, parks, etc.
3. **Protect your puppy from young children.** This is a very important step in successfully raising your new puppy with your children or grandchildren. A puppy must have his own space where he is safe and can retreat to when feeling overwhelmed by a young child. All too often temperaments of puppy's change for the worse due to being left unattended with a young child. Check your book stores and pet stores for the great books that are available regarding raising a puppy and child together.

## What to buy to be prepared

- **Science Diet Dry Puppy Food. (We also recommend Nutro's and Eukanuba)**
- **Feeding Bowls-** Stainless steel, separate dishes that have a wider bottom than top so it can not be tipped or over turned, avoid double dishes.
- **Collar-** Puppy training classes require a collar with a buckle, not plastic clasps.
- **Leash-** It is not necessary to leash train before 10-12 weeks old. Training classes will require a 6 foot leash rather than the 4-foot. Leather is durable and easy on the hands when training.
- **Crate-** Either a wire or plastic crate. A wire crate is great because the puppy can see what's going on around him, you will probably want to cover it with a blanket at night to avoid drafts and encourage sleeping. Most wire crates come with a divider to make it smaller for easier potty training. A plastic crate works great too and is easy to wash down. You can purchase a crate that is a suitable size for your puppy once he is full grown. While potty training your pup in the full size crate it will be beneficial to block part of the crate off.
- **Exercise Pen-** This can be used both for training and/or playtime. Buy one that is no taller than 24-30". This pen should be used when you are unable to pay attention to the pup. This will provide a safe place for your pup to sleep and play when you are not available to keep a close eye on him. This can also be an alternative if your pup will not tolerate a crate. It is also highly recommended to be used outdoors in the yard. The back yard can be such large and overwhelming place for the pup to get lost in and it will also help protect him from chewing on poisonous plants and flowers. It folds up flat for easy storage and travel.
- **Bedding-** Washable bedding is best for the crate (be prepared for potty accidents). Also a separate bed that can be used around the house. It will be great for training your puppy to lay on it so he won't be under your feet all the time. Washable and chew proof! Foam beds covered in thin materials are often disasters.
- **Carpet Cleaner-** It's inevitable to have potty accidents in the house. Be prepared with a product that will take care of the stains and eliminate odors that can cause the pup to return to the same spot. I recommend Nature's Miracle or Simple Solution stain and odor remover.
- **Bitter Apple-** This product will help train your pup on what NOT to chew on. It is safe for plants, carpeting, furniture, shoes. Have this one on hand before something you love gets chewed on.
- **Chew Toys-** A good variety of chew toys will help keep your pup occupied and not bored. Bully Stix, Nylabones, Cow hooves, and stuffed Kongs are great. Avoid rawhide, it is not completely digestible and colored rawhide can stain your carpet.
- **Play toys-** Ropes and stuffed toys with squeakers are favored.
- **Treats-** Treats should be very limited until about 4 months old or until training begins. Training can be more effective if your puppy is not used to always getting them and they can cause diarrhea in the more sensitive puppy tummy. Trainers highly recommend **Natural Balance Dog Food Rolls** for training. Other great treats are Old Mother Hubbard products and Dried Liver treats. Avoid junk food for dogs, for example, Snausages, Puproni, and other unnatural products.
- **For Grooming-**
  - **Shampoo-** Choose a tearless puppy shampoo. Mane and Tail works great. Only wash your puppy about once a month. Over bathing can cause skin problems or irritation.
  - **Cowboy Magic-** This grooming product is great for maintaining a good coat and to help eliminate matts. (This product is not needed for our 1<sup>st</sup> generation Labradoodles)
  - **Brushes-** A slicker brush and a comb.
  - **Ear Cleaner-** Clean the ears once a week. Buy a cleaning solution and if needed a drying powder.
  - **Nail Clippers and Kwik Stop** – Trim the nails once a week. Keep Kwik Stop on hand in case you cut the nail back too far. Bleeding will be difficult to stop without it.
  - **Blunt Trimming Scissors-** For trimming between eyes, feet, etc.

You will need to do some extra brushing during the time your puppy's coat transitions into an adult coat. This will remove the dead puppy coat so the adult coat will not matt into it. This transition usually occurs before one year of age and can take several months before the adult coat is fully in.

**Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have questions about caring for your pup. My support is always available to you.**

**[Darbypark@sbcglobal.net](mailto:Darbypark@sbcglobal.net)**

**Thanks! Malinda DeVincenzi**