Supplies

- Premium quality dog food and treats for the right breed and size (dogs are generally fed Royal Canin at PAWS)
- Food and water bowls – ceramic and metal bowls clean up better
- Safe toys – make sure there's no lead paint or breakable parts
- Dog brush and comb
- Dog shampoo
- Pooper scooper and biodegradable poop bags
- Martingale or buckle collar with license and ID tag
- Leash
- Dog nail clippers
- Carrier or crate
- Dog bed
- Dog toothbrush and dog toothpaste

What to feed your puppy or dog

- Adult dogs should eat premium-quality dry food. PAWS feeds Royal Canin unless a dog is on a special diet. If necessary to encourage eating, you can mix dry food with water, low-salt broth, fat free yogurt, or canned food
- Dogs can eat fruits and vegetables – but never more than 10% of their daily diet. See below for a list of foods that shouldn't be given to dogs.
- Puppies need a high-quality puppy food. PAWS feeds Royal Canin.
- Avoid "people food" for all dogs and puppies
- Dogs and puppies need clean, fresh water available at all times

When to feed

- Puppies 8 to 12 weeks old: 3 meals a day
- Puppies 3 to 6 months old: 2 meals a day
- Puppies 6 months to 1 year: 2 meals a day
- Dogs, 1 year or older: 2 meals a day
- Large dogs: may need 3 meals a day

Dangers! Don't allow your dog to have:

- Anything harder than your dog's teeth. This includes cow bones, nylon bones, and real bones. These can break a puppy's or elderly dog's teeth. Talk to your veterinarian about appropriate toys.
- House plants
- Alcohol
- Chocolate
- Coffee
- Grapes and raisins
- Moldy or spoiled food
- Onions, garlic or chives
- Poultry bones
- Salty foods or salt
- Tomato leaves or stems
- Unripe fruit
- Yeast dough
- Nuts

*Adapted from educational material provided by the American Animal Hospital Association (AAHA)

Exercise

- Different dogs need different amounts of exercise. Some dogs need a lot. Some dogs get hurt if they exercise too much. Ask your veterinarian what's best for your pet.
- When walking your pet, be careful of ice or snow, deicer salt, or hot pavement

Chores

Daily

- Gently brush your dog's fur
- Play with your dog
- Walk your dog, ask your veterinarian how long and how much
- Brush your dog's teeth, chew toys aren't enough
- Clean up poop
- Clean water and food bowls
- Feed and water your pet

Monthly

- Bathe your dog – if needed.
- Check your dog's nails to see if they need to be clipped. Your veterinarian can show you how.
- Provide heartworm preventative as recommended by your veterinarian.
- Apply a flea/tick prevention treatment if needed
- Ask your veterinarian to see if your dog needs his/her ear hair trimmed or if he/she needs his/her "anal glands expressed"

Yearly

- Take your dog to your veterinarian for a checkup and any vaccines. Even dogs who seem healthy should see a vet every single year.

Get a license and ID

- Follow your municipality's licensing laws
- Attach the license to your dog's collar
- Keep a collar and identification on your dog at all times.

Go to dog or puppy school

A trained dog is a happy dog! A complete list of local trainers is available through PAWS.

Medicines and poisons

Never give your dog medicine unless it's recommended by a veterinarian. Keep all poisons, like rat poison, away from your pet. If you think your pet has been poisoned, call your veterinarian immediately.

Finding the right Veterinarian

- Take your new dog to your veterinarian within 2 weeks of adoption.
- A complete list of local veterinarians is available through PAWS.
- Your dog should see a veterinarian once a year and when you think it might be sick
- Consider taking a Pet First Aid course for emergency preparedness.

How to tell if your dog is sick

You know your dog best. If your dog seems to be acting strangely, call your veterinarian right away! Behavioral problems are often actually a result of an underlying medical issue.