

# Forever Families



## Canine Services

*Bringing your dog out of the doghouse!*

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### CANINE ESSENTIALS

The following is a list of things you will need before bringing home the newest member of your family:

1. A crate – this should be just big enough for the dog to turn around or stretch out comfortably when full grown. **DO NOT BUY A CRATE LARGER THEN YOUR DOG WILL BECOME!!!!** Doing so can make housetraining a nightmare. Whether you choose a metal grate crate or plastic carrier is totally up to you!
2. A flat buckle collar and a 6' leash. Nylon collars and leashes are fine however, if your dog will weigh more than 50lbs when full grown, you may want to consider a leather leash. Leather is stronger and more importantly, easier on hands when a large dog is pulling! Do NOT buy a retractable (of "flexi"-) leash until AFTER your dog has mastered loose leash walking – as it can make it more difficult for them to learn not to pull.
3. Stainless steel food and water bowl. Plastic can harbour bacteria.
4. Two or three chew toys. Do not go over board. If the dog has too many toys they quickly loose interest in them and will seek out new toys – such as your kids' toys or your new shoes!! Do not buy stuffed toys until you assess the dog's chew and destroy level.
5. If you choose to buy a pet bed to put in the crate buy a cheap one to begin with as there is a good chance a puppy will eat it. Additionally, ensure it is washable in case there are any accidents. Wait until after the dog is housetrained and past the "teething" stage to buy a quality bed.
6. Grooming tools such as a brush and nail clippers. While I prefer the guillotine style of nail clippers as opposed to the scissor style, the preference is yours. As for a brush, ask a sales consultant at your local reputable pet store to recommend the best style and brand for your breed.

7. Do not buy any dog food until after you speak to the breeder/shelter/or foster home. To minimize stress and bowel disruptions, continue feeding your new dog the food it is currently receiving. If you would like to switch to another brand, do so slowly over the course of a month or so by gradually mixing the two together... slowly increasing the amount of new food and decreasing the amount of old food. If your dog experiences diarrhea, you are changing it too quickly.
8. Start looking for a vet in your area. Make introductory appointments to meet a few in your area. Your vet will be a crucial resource in the health and well being in your dog so you want to get a feel for them. Ask them about their qualifications, their level of familiarity with your specific breed and if they can provide references. Also consider factoring in things like hours, availability, emergency services etc... into your decision making process.
9. Buy yourself a decent pair of slip on shoes or boots, and some casual pyjamas or lounge wear that can be worn in public and maybe a raincoat or slicker.... In the beginning you will be taking your puppy out at all hours and in all kinds of weather, and often you will not have time to change!
10. And most importantly pick a trainer whose philosophies are conducive to your own who will work with you through the various stages of socialization, obedience and life long learning that will instil in both you and your dog a lifetime of love and respect.