

FOREVER HOUNDS TRUST

Matching greyhounds and lurchers to happy homes

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Your new puppy

Advice and guidance to help your
puppy settle into their new home

Inside your guide...

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A new puppy

Occasionally, Forever Hounds Trust has sighthound puppies available for adoption. Most of our puppies are looked after in foster homes by experienced puppy fosterers. If you see a puppy on our website, please do read this booklet and contact us through the [dog enquiry form](#).

Choosing a puppy

It can be easy to let your heart rule your head when it comes to choosing a puppy. After all, who doesn't love a happy and playful puppy? However, it is worth remembering that a puppy is a life-time commitment and will be with you for many years to come. Most sighthounds can live happily into their teenage years.

Are you ready for a puppy?

Before deciding to bring a puppy home, you will need to consider your lifestyle and whether a puppy is the right fit.

You may wish to consider:

- Will someone be at home full time for the first 2-4 weeks of the puppy coming home?
- If you work full-time, have you considered doggy day care and/or a dog-walker to help look after your puppy while you are at work?
- How much exercise your puppy will need (particularly when they're full grown)?
- Training your puppy – have you looked for local training classes that use reward-based training techniques?
- Have you got the time and patience to deal with normal puppy needs such as chewing, toilet training, and practising being home alone?
- Do you want a puppy as a family pet or for participating in activities like agility, cani-cross etc?
- Can you afford vet bills? Puppies will need ongoing veterinary visits during their lives, including vaccinations and any other health requirements.
- Can you afford pet insurance?

Bringing your puppy home

Welcoming a puppy into your home is an exciting time! When it comes to bringing your puppy home, there are lots of things you can do to help your puppy settle into their new home and the routine of family life.

Before you bring your puppy home, do you have:

- Suitable bedding?
- A crate (if you are going to use one)?
Please make sure that you introduce your puppy to their crate gradually, rather than simply putting them in the crate and expecting them to “get used to it.”
By taking the time to help your puppy to gradually become accustomed to the crate, you will be rewarded with a puppy that has learned to relax and enjoy time in their crate.
- Collar/lead/harness?
- An ID tag (with your surname, address & mobile telephone number)?
- Suitable feeding and water bowls?
- Puppy food?
- Suitable chew toys (such as a Kong classic)?
- Puppy-appropriate chews (Cows’ ears, pizzle sticks)?
- Some suitable toys – squeaky toys, soft toys, balls etc?
- Poop sacks?
- Food treats?
- An ADAPTIL collar, plug-in, or spray?

Preparing for the car journey



Your puppy may not be used to car travel when you pick them up, so it is important to consider how you're going to transport them safely home.

You may choose to:

- Use a harness which can be attached to a seat belt, and sit with your puppy on the back seat
- Use a puppy crate, which is securely fastened to the back or front seat
- Use a secure, purpose-built crate in the boot of your car

Whatever option you choose, your puppy will need to feel secure and not be 'thrown about' during the drive home. Some puppies may become a little car-sick too. If this is the case, remain calm and don't make a fuss. If it is safe to stop the car, do so, and clean up before continuing with your journey.

Remember: By law, all dogs must be securely restrained during transport. Do not let your puppy roam about the car or have access to the driver at any time.

Rule 57 of the Highway Code

When you arrive home

Set your home up for your puppy before you bring your puppy home. This way, everything will be ready when you get home, and you won't need to try to do it with your new puppy present.

Remember to take things slowly and have a plan of how you're going to introduce your puppy to family life. It will take a while for your puppy to settle into life as a companion animal and the routine that goes with being in a family home.

It is impossible to put a time span on how long it will take for your puppy to settle in, but you can help the transition period by taking things very slowly and not overwhelming them with new sights, sounds, smells and experiences in the first few weeks.

What you need to know about...

This section is packed full of advice on some of the most common puppy behaviour questions.



First night in your home...

It is not unusual for puppies to be unsettled for the first few nights when in a new home. Dogs are social animals and sleeping all alone in a strange place is very tough, especially for puppies. Your puppy has undergone a huge change; they have left the 'safety' of the world they have known since birth and arrived in a new home, with new smells, and none of their littermates for company at night. Some puppies will never have experienced the security of being in a loving home and, therefore, another change is bound to be unsettling.



To help your puppy settle at night, we recommend - for the first few weeks - that your puppy sleeps in your bedroom. When your puppy gets used to settling in their bed and sleeping through the night, you can gradually start moving their bed further away from yours and transition it to the landing. You can get your puppy used to sleeping in their crate for this. In our experience, this works very well, and it also means that you get a better night's sleep!

However, if this is not practical, we recommend that you check the location of your puppy's bed. If it is against an outside wall, they may be hearing noises or sensing vibrations from passing traffic and these may be waking them up; moving it to another location may help.

You may find that using an ADAPTIL plugin near their bed and providing an item that smells of you, such as an old t-shirt, may also help them settle. Finally, you could also provide a suitable chew for them to chew on at bedtime. Chewing is pacifying for puppies and providing a chew could become part of your night-time routine.

Please don't leave your puppy to 'cry it out' at night. Contrary to popular belief, this is not effective and can lead to significant distress and long-term behaviour issues such as separation anxiety.

Toilet training...

3 steps to success

There are three key steps to successful toilet training:

- Set your puppy up for success - never let them toilet in the wrong place
- Praise and reward your puppy **every time** they toilet in the correct place
- Be patient if they get it wrong and **do not** scold or punish them

Puppy pads

The key to teaching your puppy to toilet outside is consistency and patience. We recommend that you **do not** use puppy pads or newspaper when house training. Although puppy pads/newspaper can seem convenient, they simply teach your puppy that it is OK to toilet in the house as they become the equivalent of an 'indoor loo.' If you use this method, it is likely that you will need to undertake toilet training twice – once for the pads and again for outdoors!

Teaching your puppy to toilet outside

Firstly, you will need to decide upon the verbal cue you're going to use to let your puppy know that it's time to toilet. Phrases such as 'be quick', 'get busy', 'wee-time,' 'time to get busy' etc can be useful cues. You will also need to ensure that everyone in the family is consistent in using the same cue.

How to toilet train your puppy

You will need to accompany your puppy into the garden, each time you let them out to toilet:

- Each time you let your puppy out to toilet - give your cue (just as you open the door) eg "time to get busy" (choose a phrase that works for you)
- Accompany them into the garden, and as soon as they start to toilet say your cue again
- Watch to make sure that they finish peeing/pooping
- The moment they have finished toileting, praise them verbally and reward immediately with high value food reward, such as cheese, chicken, hotdog etc
- The food reward must be high value, so not just dry kibble or biscuits
- It is important that you reward your puppy 'in-situ' (so to speak), so that the connection can be made between the action of toileting outside = reward

Toilet training...

Predicting when your puppy needs to toilet

If you learn how to predict when your puppy needs to be taken out to toilet, you will find house training much easier. Generally, puppies will start sniffing and circling just before they toilet. Don't wait for them to start toileting in the house! Quickly encourage them to follow you outside and as soon as they start toileting in the right place, say your verbal cue, praise them and give them a food reward.

As a rule of thumb, take your puppy out to toilet immediately after:

- Sleeping
- Eating
- Playing
- Becoming excited

What to do if your puppy toilets in the house?

Sometimes mistakes will happen. If your puppy has an accident in the house clean it up calmly and make sure you use a proprietary urine/faeces cleaner and odour eliminator, or a solution of biological washing detergent, to eliminate the smell.

It is imperative that you do not scold or punish your puppy as they will not know what they have done wrong. Punishment will only serve to undermine your relationship with your puppy and delay toilet training.

Puppy biting & mouthing

Puppy biting and mouthing behaviours are a natural part of a puppy's development. However, this type of behaviour is not much fun for us, as puppy teeth are needle sharp (there are 28 of them before their 42 adult teeth appear) and hurt if they bite us.

Why do puppies bite?

Puppies tend to explore the world with their mouths, by biting and mouthing they learn about the power of their jaws and how hard they can bite other living beings – including humans! It is believed that puppy biting and mouthing help puppies to learn what is known as 'bite inhibition' – the ability to moderate how hard their bite is.

One of the main reasons that puppies continue to mouth/bite is that they have learned that biting and mouthing work, as they receive attention! Humans become like one big toy - we may yelp, say 'no!' or try to move away from the puppy and, whilst we know that this means stop, the puppy learns that it works in gaining attention; this then gives them a reason to continue doing it.

So, rather than trying to suppress this behaviour, you need to teach your puppy an acceptable and alternative behaviour to mouthing and biting you. If you try to stop or suppress an unwanted behaviour, it is more than likely that another unwanted behaviour will take its place.

Teaching your puppy not to bite you

To prevent your puppy from biting you, you need to channel your puppy's behaviour into playing with toys instead. To do this, you will need to ensure that your puppy enjoys playing with toys and, actively encourage them to play and interact with you when you have a large soft toy to hand. Teaching games such as 'tug' and 'fetch' with toys can all help.

Once your puppy has learned to enjoy playing with toys, you will need to adopt a **'zero tolerance'** approach for any occasion where they try to bite/mouth you or when their teeth make contact with your skin or clothing. In practise, this means:

- Remaining calm and still whenever your puppy's teeth or mouth make contact with you
- Turn away from your puppy and stop all interaction; immediately
- **Do not** yelp or shout, simply stop playing and withdraw attention for a few seconds.
(Yelping can excite your puppy further and encourage them to continue biting/mouthing)
- If your puppy continues to try to get your attention, keep turning your back to them
- The moment that they are calm, offer them the toy and resume the game.

Dogs learn by association and consequence, and by adopting this approach your puppy will soon learn that the biting you (association) leads to zero attention (consequence). By redirecting them to play nicely with a toy (association) they will learn that this leads to positive attention and interactions with you (consequence).

Jumping up

Why do puppies jump up?

For young, or rescue dogs, sometimes the habit of jumping up can be quite strong – particularly if the dog has previously learned that jumping up results in attention. However, with careful, consistent and reward-based training you can teach your dog not to jump up.

Some dogs will also jump up if they are worried or unsure – punishing this can make them more worried – which can lead to more jumping up! So, it's important to always make sure you reward your dog for the behaviours you want to see, so that they learn it is great to keep four paws on the floor too!

Whilst it may be fine for your puppy to jump up while they are small, this means that when they are an adult dog they will think it is ok to jump up at people. Not everyone will appreciate this, and so your dog needs to learn never to jump at people from a young age.

Preventing jumping up

To help teach your puppy that jumping up will not result in attention, you will need to:

1. Only greet your puppy whilst all four paws are on the ground.
2. If your puppy jumps up at you, do not pay any attention to them and turn away until they stop jumping, and all four paws are on the ground.
3. Once your puppy has all four paws on the ground, turn round to greet your puppy and reward with them with a food treat and calm praise and attention.

If you cannot greet your puppy straight away - for example, if you have just come home and are carrying shopping bags – ignore the jumping up (making sure you do not step on your puppy) until you are ready to greet them.

Teaching an alternative behaviour

Once your dog understands that jumping up will result in no attention, it is good to teach your dog an alternative behaviour to the jumping when greeting people. One of the best examples of this is teaching your dog to sit whenever he/she greets someone, as sitting is incompatible with the act of jumping.

Jumping up continued...

Practising the 'no jumping up' rule

You may find that once you start following the 'no jumping up' exercise that your puppy's jumping up suddenly becomes worse. Do not worry – this is a natural behaviour that is called an **extinction burst**.

As jumping up has always worked in the past, it is likely that the first few times you practise ignoring your puppy, their jumping up will become worse until they realise that jumping up no longer results in getting attention.

Some puppies may be more persistent and continue to jump up to gain attention. However, if you have taught your puppy to sit, this is a useful way to help prevent the jumping; ask your puppy to sit for **all** attention (just before they would normally jump up) and be very quick to reward them for sitting.

Training tip:

Timing is everything, when teaching your puppy to keep all four paws on the floor. The split second that your puppy stops jumping and has all four paws on the floor, you need to turn back and reward them very quickly. If they jump as you are doing this, you need to turn away again and turn back when their four paws are on the floor.

Adopting a 'zero tolerance' policy

It is very important that all people, including children and visitors, follow the no jumping up rule before giving attention to your puppy. You will need to adopt a 'zero tolerance' policy to ensure that your puppy learns that jumping up does not lead to attention.

If someone does give your puppy attention for jumping up, it gives them another reason to start jumping up again, as the action has resulted in your puppy getting attention. If this happens do not worry, simply go back to following the steps in 'preventing jumping up'.

Zoomies and Socialisation

Puppy zoomies - 'mad half hour'

Many puppies experience regular 'puppy zoomies' (or a mad half hour), where they zoom around your living room performing a 'wall of death' whilst treating your furniture like an agility course! This is quite common and generally happens in the evening, after eating.

Some puppies can become over excited during this mad half hour and may run and bark at you, or even snap. It is important to remain calm while this is happening; if you laugh at your puppy, you are likely to encourage the behaviour as your laughter will excite your puppy further and act as a reward for the behaviour. Grabbing, shouting, squealing or joining in 'the fun' will also make the situation worse.

Socialisation and habituation

Socialisation is the term for introducing puppies to other species and teaching them how to interact appropriately. **Habituation** is the process of getting your puppy used to new experiences, sights, and sounds. Both processes are a vital part of a puppy's development and help to prepare the puppy for what their life is going to contain.

Up to the first 16 weeks of age, your puppy is also learning who is in their social group. This means they are learning who the people and animals are that form their family, who they should be social and friendly to, who they play with, and who they are building a bond with. It is important that puppies are brought up to be social and friendly with everyone - not just immediate family and friends.

Your puppy's vaccination status doesn't stop you taking them out and about. Just make sure that you carry your puppy and they only meet dogs whose vaccination status you are 100% sure about. It also doesn't stop you inviting people to come and meet your puppy at home and in the garden, taking your puppy out in the car, or carrying your puppy around the town.

Many, if not most, behaviour problems can be prevented through careful socialisation habituation – these include aggression, noise phobias, separation related issues, reactivity, poor learning, fearfulness and much more.

Training classes

Whilst a puppy is often likened to a blank canvas and thought of as being easy to train, it's important to remember that a mistake with a puppy's training can be like an indelible ink blot on the blank canvas - it leaves its mark. Puppy training classes should provide you with the tools to bond with your puppy and help teach them to grow into a well-mannered and sociable adult dog (without leaving an indelible blot on the canvas).

Do your research

When looking for a suitable puppy class, you need to do your research. Ask your vet if they can recommend any classes, and ask any friends or colleagues who have had puppies which classes they attended. Don't just take their word for it though, if you've found some classes you like the sound of, ring and ask if you can go along and watch a class (without your puppy).

You will also need to consider:

- **How many puppies are there per class?**

The Association of Pet Dog Trainers, UK, recommend no more than 8 puppies per instructor. A small class means more attention from the instructor and more space for puppies to work in.

- **Does the trainer use reward-based training techniques?**

If the trainer talks about showing the puppy who is 'boss' and uses aversive training techniques, such as harsh lead jerks, pushing bottoms down to achieve a 'sit' or using anything like a rattle can, water spray, training discs or pet corrector – walk away! The use of these methods can cause untold and permanent damage to puppies.

- **Do the families and their puppies look happy?**

If the families and their puppies are relaxed and having fun, this is a good indication of how you will enjoy classes.

Finding a training class

To find a suitable training class in your area, we recommend that you look for a member of the following dog training and behaviour organisations:

- The Association of Pet Dog Trainers - www.apdt.co.uk
- Centre of Applied Pet Ethology - www.coape.org
- Puppy School UK - www.puppyschool.co.uk
- The Professional Association for Canine Trainers - www.pact-dogs.com

Recommended reading and resources

Further reading

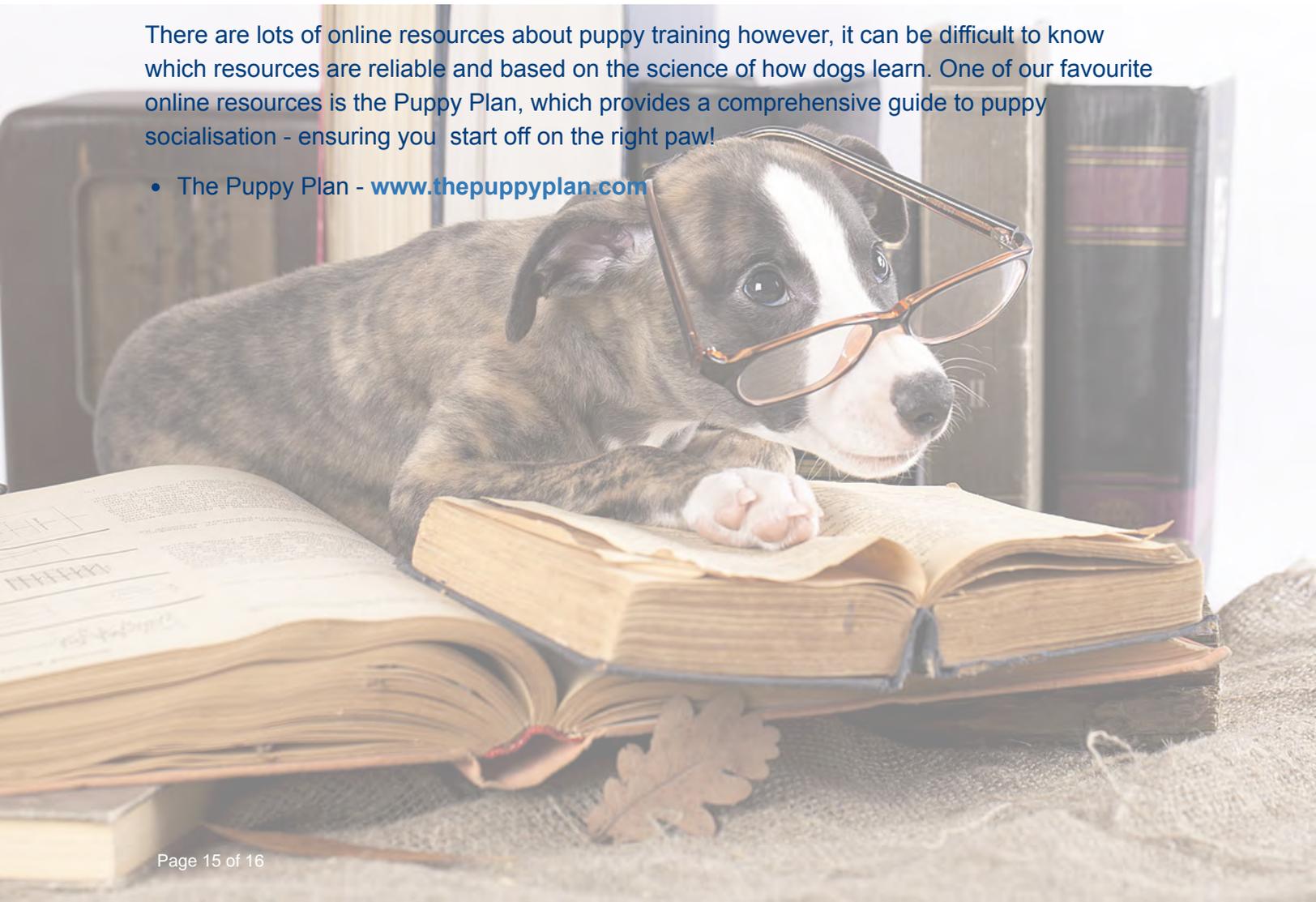
If you'd like more information about puppy training and behaviour, we recommend the following books:

- Life Skills for Puppies: 'Laying the foundation for a loving, lasting relationship' by Helen Zulch & Daniel Mills. Published by Hubble & Hattie
- How to Train a Super Pup: 'Unleash your puppy's potential' by Gwen Bailey. Published by Dorling Kindersley
- The Happy Puppy Handbook: 'Your Definitive Guide to Puppy Care and Early Training' by Pippa Mattinson. Published by Ebury Press
- The Puppy Survival Guide by Sarah Whitehead. Published by Dogwise Solutions

Online resources

There are lots of online resources about puppy training however, it can be difficult to know which resources are reliable and based on the science of how dogs learn. One of our favourite online resources is the Puppy Plan, which provides a comprehensive guide to puppy socialisation - ensuring you start off on the right paw!

- The Puppy Plan - www.thepuppyplan.com



Further help and advice

If you experience any issues with your Forever Hounds Trust puppy, please do contact our Post Homing Support team for help and advice. You can reach the team by emailing:

behaviour@foreverhoundstrust.org

Call us on: **03000 111 100**

Email us at: behaviour@foreverhoundstrust.org

Visit our website at: www.foreverhoundstrust.org

Write to us at:

Forever Hounds Trust, PO Box 1601, Oxford OX4 9JZ



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