How to Puppy-Proof Your Home Before Your Puppy Arrives

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Prepare a safer home for a curious puppy before collection day. These 27 steps cover floor-level hazards, food and chemical storage, crates and gates, room-by-room checks, outdoor boundaries, arrival plans, and ongoing supervision as your puppy grows.

Things you will need

- Stable puppy gates or an appropriately sized exercise pen
- Cable protectors and secure cupboard latches
- A securely lidded household rubbish bin
- A comfortable crate or quiet bed and washable non-slip mat
- Size-appropriate chew toys and stable food and water bowls
- A secured travel crate or restraint, lead, identification, and emergency contact list

Inspecting the Home From a Puppy's Perspective

1. **Start with one safe room**
   Limit the puppy's initial territory to a manageable safe area.
2. **Hunt hazards at mouth level**
   Inspect every accessible room at floor and mouth level.
3. **Tame cables and blind cords**
   Secure electrical cables, blind cords, and dangling fabrics.
4. **Lock away every toxic product**
   Lock away medicines, cleaning products, and other hazardous substances.
5. **Bin and store food out of reach**
   Make rubbish and human food impossible to raid.
6. **Move or remove toxic plants**
   Identify and relocate every potentially toxic plant.

Setting Up a Comfortable and Secure Indoor Base

7. **Fit gates that cannot tip or trap**
   Install stable gates or an exercise pen around the chosen base.
8. **Make the crate a positive refuge**
   Prepare a crate or rest area as a positive refuge.
9. **Add traction and safe bedding**
   Provide traction and a washable sleeping surface.
10. **Set up a calm feeding station**
    Set up a calm feeding and water station.
11. **Offer a few suitable chews**
    Select a small set of size-appropriate chew and activity toys.

Checking Individual Rooms and Hidden Hazards

12. Block the kitchen danger zone

Restrict access to kitchen appliances, hot surfaces, and counters.

13. Clear bathrooms and laundry

Clear bathrooms and laundry areas of small and toxic items.

14. Put small temptations away

Remove temptations from living rooms and bedrooms.

15. Anchor furniture and protect stairs

Secure furniture, screens, stairs, and elevated openings.

16. Lock up the garage and workshop

Close off utility rooms, workshops, and garages wherever possible.

Preparing Outdoor Boundaries and Arrival Day

17. Check the fence line on foot

Walk the entire fence and gate line before arrival.

18. Fence off pools and fall risks

Install a real barrier around pools, ponds, and other fall risks.

19. Audit the garden after treatments

Inspect garden plants, treatments, and ground cover.

20. Pick a practical toilet spot

Choose an easy-to-supervise outdoor toilet location.

21. Arrange travel, identity, and emergency contacts

Prepare safe transport, identification, and emergency contacts.

22. Agree house rules before arrival

Agree on household rules and a calm arrival schedule.

Maintaining Safety as Confidence and Mobility Grow

23. Redirect chewing toward safe chews

Supervise exploration and redirect chewing toward appropriate items.

24. Reset the floor several times daily

Perform a quick floor and barrier reset several times a day.

25. Teach short, calm separations

Build comfortable rest and short separations without using isolation as punishment.

26. Open new rooms one at a time

Expand access gradually after the current area remains safe.

27. Repeat the audit as the puppy grows

Repeat the full audit as the puppy grows and household routines change.

Sources

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