Oodles of Doodle info for your Dogwood Doodlebug…

Feeding…

We free-feed our dogs and puppies. Our dogs and puppies have done well with this. If your puppy/dog becomes overweight, you will need to start utilizing a structured feeding schedule. But, unless contraindications exist, free-feeding is convenient and has proven successful for us.

We are currently feeding TLC Puppy Food to our puppies. We will send a gallon of this food home with your puppy. If you choose to use a different food, you should mix our food that we send with the new food as a 50/50 mixture to allow for a smooth transition for your puppy. Puppies have sensitive stomachs. If you choose to feed another type of food, please be sure to make sure it hasn’t been involved in any recent recalls. Dogfood recalls occur often.

We recommend switching from puppy food to dog food at 1 year old for dogs that will mature to 55 lbs or less. We recommend switching from puppy food to dog food at 8 months old for dogs that will mature to more than 55 lbs.

Treats are great tools for training. We use mini treats that are soft and chewy. A brand we use is Pet Botanics. We also like the TLC biscuits. We break those into smaller pieces.

Bathing and Grooming…

We use baby shampoo to bathe the puppies while they’re with us. Be sure to avoid getting excess water in their ears. This can cause an ear infection. Dry their ears well after their bath. If you notice redness or odor in their ear, contact your veterinarian. You can purchase ear wipes/rinses at most pet stores. These are great to use after bathing your puppy.

If your puppy is white, you may want to mix baking soda with the shampoo you are using. Baking soda is a mild additive that helps to remove stains from white coats.

We also recommend performing a sanitary trim on your puppy when needed. We use clippers to trim the genital area and area of the rectum. This promotes cleanliness and helps prevent UTI’s.

While the puppies are young and their coats aren’t long and don’t tangle easily, we use simple soft brushes. Any type will do. We do recommend they be soft/rubber/flexible. This will get your puppy used to the brushing process. We recommend that you brush them even though they may not need it. When your puppy acquire a real doodle coat, he/she will require more maintenance. We recommend brushing daily to avoid matting. A very popular brush is the Chris Christiansen slicker brush. Most slicker brushes will do the job. We recommend removing hair from your doodle’s ears to avoid ear infections. This can easily be done and isn’t painful for your doodle.

Nail trimming can be difficult. If done incorrectly it can be painful for your doodle. We recommend using a demel tool to sand and shape your doodle’s nails. We purchase ours at our local hardware store. They can also be purchased at pet stores.

Housetraining…

Puppies should NEVER be left unsupervised. If you are unable to supervise the puppy, he or she should be in their crate. Crating is not cruel. It’s a good part of a structured day and actually provides a sense of security for puppies. Your puppy will grow to love his or her crate. An 8 week old puppy should start with a crate that is 18” wide x 30” in depth. If the crate is too large, the puppy will likely have accidents in his/her crate.

We don’t recommend giving the puppy free roam of your house. We recommend using baby gates to only allow the puppy to play in a restricted area until your puppy is completely housebroken. If they feel that they have a large area to roam, they are more likely to have potty accidents. Also, puppies LOVE to potty on rugs and carpet. Be mindful of this.

The best thing we can recommend is that you take your puppy out to potty as often as possible. Crucial times to take them out are first thing in the morning, after meals, after 15-20 minutes of active play, and right before bed. The more you take them out, the less accidents they have, and the more likely they are to housetrain quickly. It’s helpful to pick a “potty phrase” such as “hurry up” or “go potty”. Keep in mind you may be using this phrase in public…it’s a good plan to pick one that you won’t be embarrassed to use 😉

While the puppies are with us, we introduce them to a doggie door. We also teach them to use puppy pads while they are inside. We don’t have a preferred brand of puppy pad, but we do recommend purchasing them to use in the early stages of potty training. Groupon often has great deals on puppy pads. It’s a good idea to keep a puppy pad in the small area that you choose to confine your new puppy to while he/she isn’t in their crate.

Toys and beds…

We recommend Kong toys-or similar types that aren’t easily destroyed. Puppies like to chew because they are teething just as babies do. Don’t leave your puppy unattended with toys that have stuffing or other parts that may come off/out and be ingested. An intestinal blockage is very dangerous and possibly life threatening for your puppies and grown dogs. For this same reason, we don’t recommend leaving a bed or toys in your puppy’s crate.

Crate training…

Your puppy is making a huge transition from our home to yours. There’s a good chance your puppy will cry in their crate. We have found it to be helpful to put a blanket over your puppy’s crate at night. This has proven to help them calm down and stop crying. If they continue to cry, use a firm voice and tell them no. They will soon calm down and accept the crate. This just takes time and patience. If the puppy cries in his/her crate, do not take the puppy out of the crate until the crying has ceased. You don’t want the puppy to associate crying with reward.

Veterinarian visits...

If your puppy has strained or repetitive vomiting or diarrhea, call your veterinarian immediately. Puppies are susceptible to terrible viruses that can become very serious. Your puppy has been vaccinated at our home, but the complete series of vaccinations must be completed for your puppy to be immune. You should avoid taking your puppy into public places(especially pet stores, doggie daycare, and rest areas) until the full series of puppy vaccines has been completed. You should also call your veterinarian if you notice blood in the stool or if your puppy is acting lethargic.

We deworm your puppy several times before they leave our home. Often, their last deworming is right before they go home with you. Don’t be alarmed if you see a worm(s) within the first week they are with you. This is completely normal after the puppy receiving deworming medication.

We do not remove dew claws. There has been much controversy over the removal of dew claws, therefore, we have chosen to leave that decision to the forever family. Speak to your vet about their recommendations.

We only recommend that you treat for ticks/fleas if you see them. Check with your veterinarian for brand recommendations. Some advise against treatment/prevention that must be ingested(chewable/pill). Recommendations change at all times. Your veterinarian will be able to advise on this matter.

We actually ask our pest control company to spray for fleas/ticks. Be sure your pest control company is using pet-safe products.