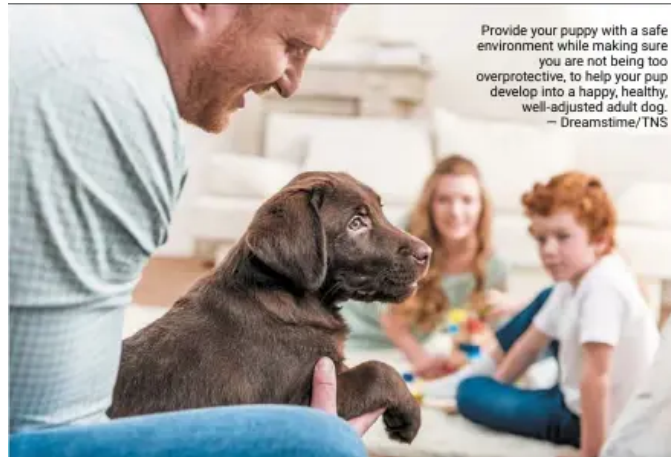


When you bring home a new puppy

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ADDING a new puppy to your family can be a life-changing decision. Even for experienced owners, raising your new pup can be a big challenge. The goal is to provide your puppy with a safe environment while making sure you are not being too overprotective.



Provide your puppy with a safe environment while making sure you are not being too overprotective, to help your pup develop into a happy, healthy, well-adjusted adult dog.
— Dreamstime/TNS

To help your pup develop into a happy, healthy, well-adjusted adult dog, The American Kennel Club offers a few ways to keep your new puppy on the right track.

Don't play too rough. Puppies naturally love to play, but they also need to learn the appropriate levels of rough play at a young age. It is important to train your puppy to know good manners when it comes to playing with people and other animals. Letting them play too rough when they are a puppy can develop into a bad habit in their adult years.

Don't overdo the treats.

Those puppy-dog eyes will make it hard to say no when your pup asks for treats. It is important to limit the amount of treats you give them as it can alter their appetite for better balanced, nutritious meals. You also do not want to spoil them. Puppies can quickly learn that begging, crying and acting out can get them what they want.

Provide plenty of exercise.

Both physical and mental exercises are important to keep your pup healthy. Help stimulate your pup's mind with puzzles, toys and appropriate playthings, and give them plenty of outdoor exercise. Bored dogs are more likely to engage in aggressive or inappropriate behaviours.

Consistency is key. Decide which parts of the house, pieces of furniture are off limits and stick to it! Being consistent in your enforcement is key. Do not reprimand your dog one day for being on the couch, then let them up there the next day.

Eliminate household dangers. Make sure your home is puppy-proofed and that there are not places where your puppy can easily fall or become trapped. Also remember to not keep substances lying around the house that can be dangerous to your pup, such as garbage, medications, pesticides and so on.

Don't let them go untrained. Make sure to teach your pup good manners when they are young so they can develop good behaviours as an adult.

Leash training. It is important for your pup to learn leash etiquette prior to jumping right into taking them on walks. First, familiarise your pup with the feeling of the collar/harness and leash as soon as you can. This will help ease them into their daily walks and make for a smooth learning experience. Don't forget to reward them during training.

For more information on responsible dog ownership, visit the AKC website at [akc.org](https://www.akc.org).