

Puppy Toolbox

Chewable Toys:

Nyla bones: Nyla Bones come in many non-edible and edible selections.

Benefits: Great way to help keep you puppy interested and chewing on something fun and legal.

Drawbacks: Non-edibles must be thrown away as soon as end of the bones are worn off. The chewed ends tend to pick up loose hair (pups do not mind, but you might). Edible versions, you need to make sure your pup's system can handle them, if questions call your Veterinarian as some pups have sensitive stomachs.

Containment/Management:

Crates (come in wire and plastic versions):

Benefits: Inhibit your puppy to assist in house training. Puppy's very own den and safe area (goes with their natural instinct). Great for home and for traveling (pup always has an area that is his and safe, even when his environment may change; example if you travel with your pup). Limits your pup's access to the house, aides in proper management (does not allow your pup to have access to items he should not have, helps with chewing, destructions, and house training). Wire versions allow for nice air flow, pups can see out easily, and are easy to move as they fold up and can be moved (can cover partially with a blanket or sheet if puppy needs warmth or privacy/just make sure pup does not pull into crate and chew/swallow!). Plastic versions allow for feeling of security, however in warmer times of the year not as open for air flow and pup can not see out as much. Must be used properly and balanced out with pup getting plenty of exercise (time to play and stretch their legs and muscles to promote good growth and mental well being).

Drawbacks: When used properly none, unless puppy or dog is severely claustrophobic. Must be used properly and balanced out with pup getting plenty of exercise (time to play and stretch their legs and muscles to promote good growth and mental well being). Be aware it is extremely rare, but not unheard of for a pup or dog to become claustrophobic and panic inside. If you are concerned, stop crate training process until you speak and/or meet with a qualified trainer or behaviorist. Safety always comes first.

Exercise Pens (come in metal and plastic versions):

Exercise Pens come in many brands and styles (from **plastic to metal**), example would be Midwest Exercise Pens. You want to choose a size and height based on your pups ultimate size (you do not want a growing pup to learn how to climb over the top, one for obvious safety reasons as well as once he figures it out you won't be able to keep him in!). If you have a pup that likes to climb, some brands offer an attachable top (can get an idea by doing an internet search).

Benefits: Assists you and your pup in proper management techniques. Protects you furniture, cabinets, base boards, carpet, and other items from your puppy's teeth or bladder while you area away. Keeps your puppy safe.

Drawbacks: May seem like an expensive investment, but keep in mind it is a much cheaper investment than future home repairs, replaced carpet and furniture (as well as saving on Vet Bills if your pup swallows something it should not have had access to). For climbers may have added expense of purchasing a matching and attachable top. On surfaces that will scratch (like hardwood floors) may need to put a piece of scrap linoleum underneath to protect your floors.

[Baby Gates \(many versions from wood, to plastic, to metal\):](#)

Benefits: Limits your pup's access to the house. Protects areas and items you do not want your pup to have access to.

Drawbacks: Pups still have access to areas inside the baby gated area (counters, furniture, baseboards, carpet, cupboards, etc.~items the pup may find fun to chew and you may find expensive to have repaired or replaced). Some pups can climb over.

[Short Tethers \(non chewable versus leash\):](#)

Benefits: Use when you want to teach your puppy some self restraint and patience when you **are present**. Example: Tether (give pup a comfy place to lie, may have a toy), while you are cooking, doing dishes, having dinner, family relaxing in the evening. Tether short and at pups height, so they cannot hurt themselves by getting up too much speed/running around. Idea is to inhibit their movement, yet they have a feeling of some freedom as they can get up, lie down, and move around a little.

Drawbacks: "**ONLY**" can be used when you are present 100% of the time, paying attention to the puppy, period/no exceptions! Pups **must** be really comfortable with their collars and leashes first or could panic and hurt themselves.

[Leashes attached to your body \(arm or waist\):](#)

Benefits: Where you go, your puppy goes; makes it nearly impossible to forget your puppy (aides in house training). Limits your pup's access to things you do not want it to have access to while allowing it time to spend with you. Puppy gets really comfortable with the leash and learns to follow their owner (good beginning for leash manners).

Drawbacks: Some owners may not have the patience to have the pup go everywhere they go. Some pups that are not yet leash comfortable may fight the idea at first and be fussy.

[Outside Kennels:](#)

Visit your local Home Depot and Lowes for example to shop prices (Look for panels that easily go together and can be taken apart with clamps, versus the type you have to put together yourself/set up/wrap and tie that cannot be easily moved or taken apart. Get size (length, height, and width) that will grow with your pup. For example for a small size dog 4 feet in height may be fine (unless your pup is a climber!) for larger breeds go high like 6 feet. For climbers see if you can purchase a top that attaches. Remember to get a shade cloth top for your kennel (normally find in the same section as the kennels). Pre-plan what surface you are going to place it on (Dirt or Grass: does your pup dig? worried may dig out? Cement? Etc.) Have a nice comfy crate or dog house inside. Can ad misters to make cooler area. You will want to set it up in an area that will preferably shaded and protected. Think about adding a tarp in the rainy season to keep the area dry for your pup.

Benefits: Gives your pup a safe area outside in which they can play, romp, nap, and enjoy the fresh air. Promotes good outside management techniques for when you are not present.

Drawbacks: Needs to be presented in a positive manner, always a happy place. Some pups get upset and thus bark at being left alone outside. Sacramento area can be **very** hot, pups cannot be left when too hot. Make sure safe so that pup cannot hurt themselves trying to go over, under, or through.

Energy Burner Toys & Ideas:

Soccer Balls, Horse Whip with a Tennis Ball tied on to the end of the whip (drill a hole through the tennis ball, pull end of the whip through and tie knot on the end), **Tennis Ball Launcher, Swimming Pool.**

Benefits: Gives the pups a chance to burn off puppy beans, run, play, stalk, and chase. A well exercised pup makes for a much nicer pup to live with (take naps, aren't as fussy/cranky, not as pushy because they are bored, less mouthy, and less destructive.). Swimming is good exercise for pups that like water (must introduce slowly and positively).

Drawbacks: Can only be used when you are present. Children must be supervised when using with puppies. If used improperly can promote pups to jump and potentially cause long term physical issues. Easy to get high energy pups over heated, must give them time to cool out, get drinks of water, before continuing play. Tennis balls can wear down teeth over the long term. Keep it safe! Give pups access to swimming pools **only** when you are present (or they could drown!). Be aware that pups that love water, once introduced to pools, will have hard or impossible time keeping them out, becomes addictive (also, some owners do not like dog hair in their pools).

Life Vests & Retractable (Flexi-) Leashes:

For lake and river swimming from the shore, invest in a Flex-Leash. It will allow your pup to play in the water and swim without getting out to far or running off and escaping you. It is NOT safe to allow pups access to roam off leash in open areas (rattle snakes, foxtails, other dogs who may be dog aggressive, go out to far and be caught in the river flow and drown).

For boat trips with your pup invest in a "Doggy Life Vest": if your pup falls out of your boat it could save their life (could give you time to rescue your pup, versus pup getting panicked, tired, or pulled under and/or drown from being tired and not able to get to shore)!

Benefits: Gives your pup another form of exercise and allows them to be with you.

Drawbacks: Must be supervised! Drinking water that may carry germs. Carry and offer fresh water from home or bottles. Watch pup does not overheat.

Food Delivery Systems:

Kong Toys: They come in many different shapes and levels of difficulty. Sizes range from petite to extra large (Pick size to appropriately match the current size of your pup. If your puppy outgrows

make sure to upsize, so do not change a large pup or dog swallowing a too small sized Kong Toy.). They also come in different colors to go with different type of chewers (blue/white is the Puppy Kongs for baby teeth, red is for normal chewers, black is for destructive chewers).

Benefits: Keeps your puppy busy. Feed meals inside the toy versus in a bowl, have your pup have fun working for his food. The better a problem solver your puppy, the more difficult you can stuff them. Give you pup something to do when you are not able to be there, keep them busy versus bored in your absence. Toys are soft, so they are quiet. See the Kong Website Kong Toy and Stuffing Ideas: <http://www.kongcompany.com/>

Drawbacks: None that I am aware of to date when using properly sized Kong Toy and color for your breed (unless you have an extreme chewer who will eat and swallow the Kong).

Trick Treat Balls: Use to feed your pup his meals when you are available to supervise. Come in small and large sizes.

Benefits: Keeps your puppy busy. Feed meals inside the toy versus in a bowl, have your pup have fun working for his food. Toys are soft so do not make noise.

Drawbacks: Can only have down when you are present, toys are not safe to be left down unattended (as pups may dissect them and swallow piece that could be harmful and even cause huge Vet bills!). Must supervise.

Buster Cube & Talking Treat Balls: Come in small and large sizes. Keeps your puppy busy. Feed meals inside the toy versus in a bowl, have your pup have fun working for his food. Hard Plastic.

Benefits: Can dial level of difficulty on the Buster Cubes. Keeps your puppy busy. Feed meals inside the toy versus in a bowl, have your pup have fun working for his food.

Drawbacks: Owners may find toy annoying as hard plastic toy can be **very** noisy when pup plays with (pounces, his with their nose, paws, etc.) it on tile or hard wood floors.

Interactive/Noisy Toys:

Giggly Wiggly balls (& other Giggly Wiggly Toys), Talking food balls (you can record your voice), & Zap Balls.

Benefits: Gives your pup something to pounce and chase and have fun with, good for burning off those puppy beans. Toys make sounds to grab your pup's attention; however to keep it a novelty item you want to keep it as a "special" toy, use occasionally and then put away until the next time.

Drawbacks: Humans may find annoying as are noisy, also when pups get excited with the noises they may become bark (normal behavior, as they pounce, attack, and chase the toys). Can only have down when you are present, toys are not safe to be left down unattended (as pups may dissect them and swallow piece that could be harmful and even cause huge Vet bills!). Must supervise interaction.

Pet Insurance: Shop carefully as they are all different. Read the fine print (what they do not cover). I have Trupanion Pet Insurance for my Pets and have been very happy to date and impressed with what they truly cover, promptness covering claims, and customer service overall.

Miscellaneous:

Suggested Additional Items:

Apple Bitter Spray: Discourage chewing on items or self.

Brush, nail clippers, and puppy shampoo

Back Pack: For walks to carry pooper bags, water, extra leashes, etc.

Collapsible Water Dish & Bottled Water: For walks

Doggy First Aide Kit

Doggy Seat Belt, Crate, or Vehicle Divider for the inside of your Autos for safe transport of your pet (I do **not** promote dogs riding in the open back of a pick up truck <If you do this CA Law states dogs must be safely tethered in the back>. Concern is dogs in the back of an open truck could be hurt or killed easily in an auto accident.). Pups should not ride in your lap or front seat with air bags (Air bags can kill them, just like small children. Also, loose dogs can cause accidents (that is why they are called "accidents". Dogs with heads hang out open windows can fall out, or be hurt by outside objects. "**Think safety.**"

Emergency Veterinarian Contact: An after hour Veterinarian options referred by your regular Veterinarian.

Extra leashes: In case one breaks or is chewed through.

Kiddy Pool (fun for summer time, supervise playtime in the pool)

New collars and harnesses: To allow for growth as puppies outgrow the old ones. Check weekly as can grow quickly and become too tight. Also, make sure to fit securely, as if too loose puppy can get their jaw or feet caught under/in them or catch on other dogs jaws/feet in them, or catch on objects while playing (can be very dangerous).

Non Chewable Food and Water Dishes: Wash daily after each use, keep clean and sanitary.

Muzzle: In case puppy hurts itself and become aggressive when moved, safety for yourself, to allow you to get pup to Veterinarian. Better if have gotten a puppy acclimated to wearing one in a positive manner, so if ever have to use, is no big deal.

Old towels

Pooper Bags & Their Holder: For Walks

Pooper System for your Back Yard: Clean poop up daily at a minimum. Example a pooper scooper and a sealed bucket with a trash bag inside (I use a 40 pound cat litter bucket and lid as it seals, with a trash bag inside) that can dump once a week with your trash pick up.

Potty/Wee Pads &/or Newspaper

Puppy accident cleaners

Quality Food: See the article on '**Nutrition**' on our 'Helpful Puppy Tips and Articles Page'. Using a quality food promotes good health, longevity, less waste to pick up, health skin and hair coats, good weight, to name a few.

Qualified Pet Sitter &/or Boarding Facility: Plan ahead, before you have to leave town.

Too Hot: Spring and Summer (& even Fall in a hot year) in our Sacramento Area can quickly become deadly for dogs left in Hot Garages, Kennels with no shade, Hot Cars/Vehicles, walking on too hot pavement (can burn their feet), to name a few.

Training: Take the time to train (& bond) your puppy. Review our website, or e-mail or call us, for what "The Right Steps" can offer you and your puppy or dog for Training (from Basic Training, Advanced Training, Specialty Fun Classes, Private lessons, and much more). Keep your puppy and dog well socialized with people, animals, and different environments. Your goal should be to have a confident dog and well trained dog you can enjoy spending time with whether kicking back at home or taking out in public for a fun outing.

Training Treats: Think Small/tiny pieces, healthy, and easy to break up for pup to eat quickly!

Veterinarian: Create a good relationship with your Veterinarian and Staff. Take your pup for regular physicals, vaccines, spay/neuter, heartworm medicine, flea/tick control, etc. Work with your Veterinarian to make decisions of what type of exercise is appropriate or not appropriate based on your pup's breed and age.

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