

Getting to Know Your Border Collie

Are you ready to welcome a little bundle of dynamite into your home?

When your puppy first arrives home, it is only natural that you will be excited and will want to show your new-found companion to your friends. However, your puppy is making a big move in his short life, so the first two or three days are best spent quietly at home with you and your family. When your puppy has found his feet and taken stock of his new surroundings, you will be able to introduce him to lots of new people and places. If you have young children, or if they visit, always carefully supervise any time spent with your young puppy. Youngsters are often attracted by the colorful, fairly fluffy coat of a Border Collie, and childrens fingers can all too easily tug at the coat and hurt the puppy, even with the best of intentions. If your family has other pets, introductions should be made slowly and under close supervision. Most Border Collies get along well with other animals, but you should always exercise caution until you are certain that all concerned are going to be the best of friends. The socialization you give your puppy, meaning the people, animals, experiences, sounds, etc., to which you introduce him during his first weeks at home, has much bearing on how well-adjusted and stable he will be as an adult. Canine research has proven that unsocialized pups grow up to be spooky and insecure, fearful of people, children and strange places. Many turn into fear biters or become aggressive with other dogs, strangers, even family members, and that is not a safe situation. A canines primary socialization period occurs during the puppys first 20 weeks of life. Once he's had a few days to settle into your home, you can begin his interaction with children, new people and other dogs; all of these experiences are essential at this age. Visit new places (dog-friendly, of course) like parks or the pet-supply store where there are many people and usually other dogs. Set a goal of two new places a week for the next two months. Keep these new situations upbeat and positive, which will create a positive attitude toward future encounters. Positive is especially important when visiting your veterinarian. You don't want a pup that quakes with fear every time he sets a paw inside his doctors office. Make sure your vet is a true dog lover as well as a good dog doctor. You might want to take your Border Collie youngster to a puppy-training class. Some classes accept pups from 10 to 12 weeks of age, with one series of puppy shots as a health requirement. The younger the pup, the easier it is to shape good behavior patterns. A good puppy class teaches proper canine social etiquette rather than rigid obedience skills. Your puppy will meet and play with young dogs of other breeds and their owners, and you will learn about the positive teaching tools you'll need to train your pup. Puppy class is important for both novice and experienced puppy folks. Remember this: there is a direct correlation between the quality and amount of time you spend with your puppy during his first 20 weeks of life and the character of the adult dog he will become. You cannot recapture this valuable learning period, so make the most of it.

Next step: [Training Overview](#)

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