



Congratulations on your new furrever friend!

It's so exciting to bring home a new family member! Let's talk about a few must-haves so you and your dog can get started off on the right foot (and paw):

Crate.

When used correctly, a crate can be great! A crate can be your dog's safe space in a scary world, a place to take a nap, or a place to have a great meal. Crates are very helpful for housetraining, and they can be a safe place for your dog to stay while you're out. Check out how to acclimate your dog to a crate here: <https://www.apsofdurham.org/pet-owner-resources/dog-care-tips/>

Toys.

Toys are one of the most fun things to shop for when getting a new pet. They are also very important! Get a variety of textures so your dog has a few different things to choose from. Also, some dogs may like one type of toy better than others, so it's good to have a variety. For example, you could get a stuffed toy, a ball-type toy, a rope toy, and a nylabone.

Leash and Collar.

Of course, these are essential! But not all leashes and collars are created equal. A flat adjustable collar is great because it lets you fit your dog's neck. Also, if your dog grows, you can expand the collar to fit them just right. The collar should be snug enough that it can't fit over the dog's ears (then they could slip out of it), but you should still be able to slide two fingers under the collar. Martingale collars are another good option: these collars tighten slightly when the dog pulls (but not so much that it will choke the dog). This makes it much harder for the dog to slip out of the collar.

Note: if your dog pulls on leash, check out a no-pull harness such as the Easy Walk or Freedom harness. You can check those out here: <https://www.petsafe.net/easywalk>, <https://freedomnopullharness.com/>. When walking with these, make sure to clip the leash to both the harness and the collar so the dog can't wiggle out of the harness!

As for leashes, a four or six foot standard leash with a loop on the end that you can put your hand through works great. This type of leash allows you to have your dog fairly close to you,

making it easier to get his or her attention if you need to. Also, putting your hand through the loop and then grabbing the leash gives you a good grip.

I.D. Tag

This is a biggie! Your dog should always have an I.D. tag on his or her collar. The tag should have your current phone number and/or address on it. That way, if they ever get lost (hey, it happens to the best of us) and someone finds them, your contact info is right there. APS has customizable I.D. tags for \$5 each. I.D. tags can also be purchased from many pet stores.

These are just a few of the important things to have when bringing your new pet home. We hope these tips help you and your new best friend get off to a great start together!