

THE HAPPY DOODLE & YOU

Homemade recipes & full care guide

A complete guide for the feeding and basic care of your
Cavapoo, Toy Poodle & Doodle Puppy

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1: Welcoming Your Doodle Puppy Home

Hello, dear friends! I'm Sandra, and I'm thrilled to guide you on this exciting journey of welcoming a Doodle puppy into your life. Bringing one of these irresistibly fluffy, warm-hearted companions home is a moment filled with pure joy and anticipation. Doodles — whether Cavapoos, Toy Poodles, or other Poodle crosses — are known for their gentle temperaments, sharp intelligence, and ability to bond deeply with their families. Proper preparation ensures a smooth transition for both you and your new fluffy friend. Here are heartfelt tips based on my experiences as a breeder to create a welcoming environment for your Doodle.

Preparing Your Home

Designate a Safe Space

Doodles need a secure, cozy area where they can feel completely comfortable. Choose a quiet corner with a soft, plush bed or crate where they can retreat. Ensure this space is away from heavy foot traffic but still part of family life — Doodles are companion dogs at heart and thrive on being close to their people.

Gather Essential Supplies

- **Bed:** A soft, plush washable bed — Doodles love to curl up and snuggle
- **Food and Water Bowls:** Stainless steel or ceramic; a slow-feeder bowl can help small breeds
- **Leash and Harness:** A well-fitted, lightweight harness (recommended over a collar to protect delicate necks)
- **Grooming Tools:** Slicker brush, metal comb, nail clippers, and gentle dog shampoo — Doodle coats need regular attention
- **Toys:** Interactive puzzle toys, plush toys, and gentle chew toys — Doodles are intelligent and need mental stimulation
- **Training Supplies:** High-value treats, clicker, and a treat pouch for reward-based sessions

Puppy-Proof Your Home

Doodles are curious, clever, and surprisingly quick. Remove small objects they could swallow, secure electrical cords, and block access to dangerous areas. Their inquisitive nature means they will investigate every corner of their new home!

The First Few Days

Give Them Time to Adjust

Your Doodle may feel overwhelmed initially. Allow them to explore at their own pace in a calm environment. Their playful, loving personality will emerge naturally as they begin to feel safe and settled.

Establish a Routine

Consistency is everything for a Doodle puppy. Set regular feeding times, walks, and play sessions. Doodles thrive on predictable schedules — it helps them feel secure and makes training significantly easier.

Introduce Family Members Gradually

If you have other pets or young children, supervise all initial interactions closely. Doodles are gentle by nature, but early structured introductions set the tone for harmonious relationships going forward.

Start Basic Training Immediately

Begin with simple commands: "sit," "stay," and "come." Doodles are exceptionally trainable thanks to their Poodle intelligence and eagerness to please. Keep sessions short (5–10 minutes), positive, and rewarding.

Creating a Bond

Spend Quality Time Together

Doodles crave human connection. Engage in gentle play, cuddle time, and quiet moments together to build deep trust. Their affectionate, intuitive nature makes the bonding process incredibly rewarding for both of you.

Be Patient

Every Doodle has a unique personality — some are more outgoing, others a little shy at first. Be patient as they settle into their new home and show you who they truly are.

Monitor Their Health

Watch for signs of stress, digestive upset, or discomfort during the first week. Doodles are generally healthy but can be sensitive to environmental changes. Regular vet checkups from the start are essential for a long, happy life.

By preparing thoughtfully and understanding your Doodle's needs, you'll establish the foundation for a lifelong, loving companionship that enriches both your lives beyond measure.

2: Homemade Meal Recipes for Your Doodle Puppy

Feeding your Doodle a balanced, wholesome diet supports their silky coat, bright mind, and active lifestyle. Homemade meals let you control every ingredient while showing your love. Here are nutritious recipes perfectly suited to Doodles — including Cavapoos and Toy Poodles — along with tips for balanced nutrition.

****Important:**** Always consult your veterinarian before changing your dog's diet. Small and toy-breed Doodles have specific caloric and nutritional needs that differ from larger breeds.

1. Chicken and Sweet Potato Comfort Bowl

Ingredients:

- 1.5 cups cooked, shredded chicken breast (boneless, skinless)
- 1 cup cooked white or brown rice
- 1 small sweet potato, steamed and mashed
- ½ cup chopped green beans (steamed)
- 1 tsp fish oil (for omega-3s and coat health)

Instructions:

1. Cook and shred chicken thoroughly; ensure no bones
2. Steam sweet potato until completely soft, then mash
3. Mix all ingredients together, adding fish oil last
4. Cool completely before serving — never serve hot
5. Refrigerate leftovers for up to 3 days

2. Turkey and Pumpkin Digestive Blend

Ingredients:

- 1 cup ground turkey, cooked and drained
- ½ cup cooked oats (plain, no flavoring)
- ½ cup pure pumpkin puree (not pie filling)
- ¼ cup diced carrots, steamed
- ¼ cup peas
- 1 tsp olive oil

Instructions:

6. Cook turkey until no pink remains; drain thoroughly
7. Cook oats according to package directions

8. Combine all ingredients and mix well
9. Serve at room temperature; refrigerate leftovers for 3 days

3. Fish and Vegetable Coat Glow Recipe

Ingredients:

- ¾ lb white fish (cod or haddock), baked and flaked
- ¾ cup cooked brown rice
- ½ cup steamed broccoli florets, finely chopped
- ¼ cup diced cooked carrots
- 2 tsp fish oil (essential for Doodle coat shine)

Instructions:

10. Bake fish until fully cooked; flake carefully removing all bones
11. Mix with rice and vegetables
12. Add fish oil and combine thoroughly
13. Cool before serving; ideal for supporting a healthy, lustrous Doodle coat

4. Lamb and Rice Sensitive Stomach Dinner

Ingredients:

- ¾ lb ground lamb, browned and drained
- 1 cup cooked white rice
- ¼ cup diced apple (peeled, seeds removed)
- ¼ cup chopped parsley (freshens breath naturally)
- 1 tsp coconut oil

Instructions:

14. Brown lamb over medium heat; drain fat completely
15. Mix with rice, apple, and parsley
16. Add coconut oil while still warm and stir through
17. Cool fully before serving — excellent for Doodles with sensitive digestion

5. Egg and Vegetable Protein Boost

Ingredients:

- 2 eggs, scrambled (no butter or oil)
- ½ cup cooked quinoa
- ¼ cup steamed zucchini, diced
- ¼ cup spinach, lightly wilted
- 1 tsp flaxseed oil

Instructions:

18. Scramble eggs gently without seasoning
19. Combine with quinoa, zucchini, and spinach
20. Add flaxseed oil and mix well
21. Serve cool — a light, high-protein option great for smaller Doodle varieties

Protein Rotation Schedule

Doodles benefit from variety in their diet. Try this gentle weekly rotation:

- Monday: Chicken
- Wednesday: Turkey or egg
- Friday: Fish
- Sunday: Lamb

Supplement Guidelines

Discuss these with your vet before adding:

- **Omega-3s (fish oil):** Essential for coat health and reducing inflammation — especially important for Doodle breeds
- **Probiotics:** Supports healthy digestion, particularly during diet transitions
- **Glucosamine:** Beneficial for joint support, especially in Miniature and standard Doodle sizes
- **Dental supplements:** Small breeds including Toy Poodle crosses are prone to dental crowding

Portion Control

Doodles — especially Toy and Miniature varieties — can gain weight quickly. Feed approximately 2–2.5% of their ideal body weight daily, split into two meals. Adjust portions based on activity level and your vet's guidance.

3: Foods to Avoid and Cautions for Your Doodle

Doodles may have a gentle, fluffy exterior, but their digestive systems can be sensitive — especially smaller varieties like Toy Poodles and Cavapoos. Avoid these foods without exception:

Toxic Foods

22. **Chocolate** – Contains theobromine, toxic even in trace amounts
23. **Grapes and Raisins** – Can cause rapid kidney failure
24. **Onions and Garlic** – Damage red blood cells and cause anemia
25. **Xylitol** – Artificial sweetener found in sugar-free products; extremely dangerous
26. **Alcohol** – Even tiny amounts are life-threatening
27. **Macadamia Nuts** – Cause weakness, tremors, and hyperthermia
28. **Avocado** – Contains persin, toxic to dogs
29. **Caffeine** – Coffee, tea, energy drinks; can cause cardiac issues

High-Risk Items

- **Cooked bones** – Splinter and cause internal lacerations
- **Fat trimmings** – A leading cause of pancreatitis in small breeds
- **Rawhide** – Choking and intestinal blockage risk
- **Corn cobs** – A surprisingly common cause of intestinal blockage in dogs

Doodle-Specific Concerns

1. Skin and Food Sensitivities

Cavapoos and Poodle crosses can be prone to food sensitivities. Common triggers include:

- Wheat and soy — consider grain-sensitive formulas if reactions occur
- Artificial colors, preservatives, and flavor enhancers
- Dairy products — many dogs are lactose intolerant

2. Dental Health

Small Doodle breeds — particularly Toy Poodle crosses — are predisposed to dental crowding and tartar buildup. Avoid excessively sticky treats and schedule regular dental checkups.

3. Weight Management

Doodles can gain weight quickly if overfed. Avoid high-fat treats and table scraps. Monitor weight monthly and adjust portions with your vet's guidance.

Feeding Safety Tips

30. **Slow feeders:** Use a slow-feed bowl — many Doodles eat very quickly
31. **No vigorous exercise:** Wait at least 30–60 minutes after meals before active play
32. **Supervise chews:** Always monitor any chew treats given to your Doodle
33. **Fresh water always:** Ensure clean water is available at all times
34. **Guest education:** Let visitors know what not to feed your dog

Emergency Signs — Seek Immediate Veterinary Care

- Vomiting or persistent diarrhea
- Sudden lethargy or collapse
- Difficulty breathing
- Swollen or bloated abdomen
- Pale or white gums

4: Activities Your Doodle Will Love

Doodles are joyful, curious, and wonderfully energetic companions who need both physical exercise and mental enrichment to thrive. Here are activities perfectly suited to their playful, people-oriented nature:

1. Structured Exercise (Daily Requirement)

- **Morning:** 20–30 minute walk or gentle jog
- **Afternoon:** 15–20 minute positive reinforcement training session
- **Evening:** 20–30 minute play session or free time in a safe yard

2. Mental Enrichment Challenges

- **Puzzle toys:** Nina Ottosson puzzles, Kong Wobbler — Doodles love problem-solving
- **Scent work:** Hide treats around the home or garden for a "find it" game
- **New trick learning:** Doodles pick up tricks quickly; aim for one new skill per week
- **Interactive feeding:** Use snuffle mats or lick mats to slow meals and engage the brain

3. Social Activities

- **Puppy playdates:** Doodles are sociable and enjoy well-matched dog friendships
- **Therapy and visiting:** Cavapoos especially excel as calm, intuitive therapy dogs
- **Agility and canine sports:** Poodle intelligence makes Doodles naturals for agility courses
- **Swimming:** Gentle, low-impact exercise many Doodles enjoy — always supervise near water

4. Bonding Activities

- **Grooming sessions:** Regular brushing builds trust and reinforces calm handling
- **Cuddle and quiet time:** Doodles are devoted lap companions — embrace it
- **Car rides and new environments:** New smells and sights are wonderful enrichment

Weekly Activity Schedule

- Monday: Training session + neighborhood walk
- Wednesday: Puzzle toys + gentle play
- Friday: Playdate or dog park visit
- Weekend: Nature walk or new environment exploration

Warning Signs of Under-Stimulation

If your Doodle shows these behaviors, increase their daily activity and enrichment:

- Destructive chewing or scratching
- Excessive barking or whining
- Restlessness or inability to settle
- Attention-seeking behaviors that escalate

5: Training Your Doodle Effectively

Doodles are among the most trainable companion breeds in the world, combining Poodle intelligence with an earnest desire to please. Successful training requires consistency, patience, and a positive approach — and the results are truly remarkable.

Foundation Principles

35. **Positive reinforcement only:** Reward-based training is not just the kindest approach — it's by far the most effective for Doodles
36. **Short, frequent sessions:** 5–10 minutes, 2–3 times daily is ideal
37. **High-value rewards:** Small pieces of chicken, cheese, or their favorite treat
38. **Consistency:** Every family member uses the same commands and rules
39. **End on success:** Always finish a session with something your Doodle does well

Essential Commands for Doodles

40. **"Sit"** – The foundation of all obedience; master this first
41. **"Stay"** – Builds impulse control and calm behavior
42. **"Come"** – Critical recall command; practice in a safe, enclosed space
43. **"Leave it"** – Essential for curious Doodles who investigate everything
44. **"Gentle"** – Teaches soft mouth during play and interactions
45. **"Place"** – Teaches calm settling on a mat or bed; invaluable for managing excitement

Common Challenges & Solutions

Separation Anxiety

Doodles bond deeply and can struggle when left alone. Practice short departures and gradually increase duration. Puzzle toys and frozen Kongs help during alone time. Severe cases may benefit from professional guidance.

Leash Reactivity

Some Doodles become excited or reactive on leash. Use a front-clip harness, keep distance from triggers initially, and reward calm behavior consistently. Patience and repetition are key.

Jumping Up

Ignore jumping completely — no eye contact, no touch, no words. Turn away. Reward immediately when all four paws are on the floor. Teach "sit" as the greeting behavior instead.

Socialization Timeline

- **8-12 weeks:** Gentle, positive exposure to various people, sounds, surfaces, and environments
- **12-16 weeks:** Puppy classes, controlled meetings with calm, vaccinated dogs
- **4-6 months:** Continued exposure to different environments, people, and situations
- **Ongoing:** Regular social outings maintain a confident, well-adjusted adult Doodle

When to Seek Professional Help

- Persistent fear or anxiety responses
- Aggressive behavior toward people or other dogs
- Resource guarding behaviors
- Severe separation anxiety beyond typical adjustment

Always seek a force-free, reward-based trainer experienced with small companion breeds.

6: Health & Grooming Your Doodle

Common Health Concerns

1. Ear Infections

Doodles' floppy, often curly-coated ears trap moisture and debris, making regular ear cleaning essential. Check ears weekly and clean gently with a vet-approved ear cleaner.

2. Dental Disease

Small Doodle breeds are prone to dental crowding and tartar buildup. Brush teeth 3-5 times per week using dog-safe toothpaste, and schedule annual professional dental checks.

3. Skin Sensitivities

Some Doodles can develop skin sensitivities or allergies. Signs include itching, redness, or recurring hot spots. A high-quality diet, regular grooming, and omega-3 supplements support healthy skin.

4. Joint Health

Maintain a healthy weight to protect joints — especially important for Miniature and larger Doodle varieties. Avoid excessive jumping as puppies. Glucosamine supplements can be introduced with your vet's guidance.

5. Heart Health (Cavapoo-specific)

Cavapoos may inherit Mitral Valve Disease (MVD) from their Cavalier lineage. Annual cardiac screenings from 2-3 years of age are strongly recommended for this variety.

Grooming Routine

Daily

- Thorough brushing with a slicker brush — critical for curly and wavy coats
- Quick check of eyes and ears for discharge or debris
- Wipe facial folds gently if your Doodle has them

Weekly

- Deep comb-through to prevent matting, especially behind ears and under legs
- Ear cleaning with vet-approved solution
- Teeth brushing (aim for 3-5 times per week minimum)

Every 6-8 Weeks

- Professional grooming appointment — Doodle coats grow continuously
- Nail trimming
- Full bath with gentle, dog-safe shampoo

Preventive Care Schedule

- **Annual:** Full vet wellness exam, bloodwork, and core vaccinations
- **Every 6 months:** Dental check and parasite prevention review
- **Monthly:** Flea, tick, and heartworm prevention (as recommended by your vet)
- **Ongoing:** Weight monitoring and coat condition assessment

7: Conclusion - The Joy of Doodle Companionship

Dear Doodle lover,

As we conclude this guide, I want to celebrate the wonderful journey you've begun with your fluffy companion. Doodles aren't just dogs — they're confidants, entertainers, shadows, and heart-stealers wrapped in the softest, most huggable coats imaginable.

I remember my first Cavapoo, Rosie, who would tuck her tiny nose under my hand every time I stopped petting her — a gentle, insistent reminder that she was still there and still adored. Or Teddy, a Toy Poodle cross who learned to bring me his leash when he wanted a walk, then eventually started bringing it to every guest who walked through the door. These moments — the silly, the tender, the unexpectedly clever — are what make life with a Doodle so endlessly wonderful.

Your commitment to proper care, nutrition, and training shows your deep dedication to giving your Doodle the best life possible. Remember:

- **Patience is your greatest tool** – Trust builds with time, and Doodles give it back in abundance
- **Consistency builds confidence** – They thrive on knowing what to expect from you
- **Love is returned tenfold** – Doodles bond with extraordinary depth and loyalty

There may be chewed cushions and muddy paw prints across clean floors. But there will also be:

- That full-body wiggle greeting every single time you walk through the door
- The warm, heavy weight of a sleeping Doodle curled against your side
- The proud, bright eyes when they master something new
- A companionship so genuine it quietly becomes one of the most cherished parts of your daily life

As you continue this journey, trust your instincts, consult your veterinarian and breeder when needed, and above all — enjoy every moment with your unique, wonderful Doodle.

They may be small, but the love they bring is immeasurable.

With warmest wishes,

Sandra B.

Bonus: Sandra's Top 5 Doodle Truths

46. **They're emotionally intelligent** – Your Doodle will sense your mood before you do; they'll offer a paw or a cuddle exactly when needed
47. **The zoomies are non-negotiable** – Every Doodle has a daily burst of pure, joyful energy. Clear the coffee table and enjoy the show
48. **They're solar-powered** – Will find and claim the warmest, sunniest spot in any room, every single time
49. **Grooming is a lifestyle, not a task** – Embrace the brushing routine; it becomes one of your most peaceful bonding rituals
50. **Once you have a Doodle, no other breed will quite compare** – Their combination of intelligence, affection, and charm is simply unmatched

This guide is dedicated to all the Doodles who've taught me about patience, joy, and unconditional love. Special thanks to Rosie, Teddy, Coco, and every fluffy companion who has shared their life with me.

Need support? Connect with Doodle owner communities online, or reach out to Doodle Puppy Home for breeder guidance and support from people who truly understand these wonderful dogs inside and out.