

Preparing Home for Puppy

Your Rhodesian Ridgeback puppy is a large, smart, energetic breed that will grow quickly and needs structure, stimulation, and safety. Let's prepare for puppy's arrival!

What to Buy:

1. One or more indoor-outdoor rugs from Costco or similar for the puppy to have a clean surface regularly. Cut them into the size you like (the crate, an area rug, a soft spot, a place to potty...etc. They are very easy to hose in the yard, sun dry and disinfect and keep clean
2. Crate sized appropriately for a puppy, with a soft blanket, towel or the cut-to-size outdoor rug
3. ID tags, Collar & Leash
 - Soft, adjustable collar (8-12 inch range).
 - Lightweight leash (4-6 feet).
4. Puppy Pads or Towels for accidents in the car or at rest stops.
5. Water & Food Bowl
6. Bag of Treats for bonding, positive reinforcement, or redirecting nervous energy.
7. Chew Toys or Comfort Item (blankets, old cut-up t-shirt, etc)
8. Kibble and food.
9. If spending time outdoors in the yard, our dogs loved an igloo with an outdoor rug in it
10. Larger kennel to spend safe longer periods of time outdoors, or fencing when supervised
11. Gloves, pooper scooper and poop bags to pick up after him. We keep the waste in a metal trash container and bury it (if you have land)
12. Stain/odor remover and soap (I like super green)
13. Puppy grooming brush (I like the rubber gloves), Nail trimmer
14. Baby gates
15. A training package to train the puppy from the beginning.

Puppy-proof your Home:

1. Puppy-Proofing Indoors
 - Remove all hazards at puppy level: electrical cords, cleaning products, small objects, shoes, bags, sharp edges.
 - Block off unsafe areas with baby gates: stairs, home offices, storage rooms.
 - Secure furniture & décor that could be knocked over.
 - Use cabinet locks on lower kitchen and bathroom cabinets.
2. Create a Puppy Zone
 - Set up a safe, quiet area (laundry room, kitchen corner, etc.) with:
 - Crate (for sleep and training)
 - Water bowl
 - Chew toys and comfort items
 - Pee pads or outdoor rug (initially, if needed)

3. Choose Durable Surfaces

- Expect accidents. Have easy-to-clean rugs or washable flooring.
- Avoid letting the puppy on furniture early on unless that's part of your training plan.

4. Sound & Smell Socialization

- Expose them gradually to vacuum cleaners, dishwashers, music, etc.
- Familiarize them with household smells and daily life gently.

Puppy-proof your Yard:

1. Secure All Fencing

- Ridgeback puppies are athletic and curious—ensure fencing is secure with no gaps.
- Minimum height: 5 feet (they'll grow!)
- Check for dig-out points along fence edges.
- Avoid wire fencing with sharp edges.

2. Remove Toxic Plants

- Common toxic plants: azalea, oleander, sago palm, foxglove, rhododendron, etc.
- Research a complete list and clear any toxic plants from the puppy's access area.

3. Clean the Ground

- Remove small rocks, trash, nails, or old toys that could be swallowed.
- No compost piles, fertilizer, or treated lawn chemicals in the puppy area.

4. Provide Shade & Water

- Puppies overheat quickly -set up a shaded area and a sturdy water bowl outdoors.

5. Supervise Time Outdoors

- At 8 weeks, never leave your Ridgeback puppy alone in the yard.
- Start potty training outside right away, using praise and routine.

Puppy Pickup Day

What to Bring:

1. Crate or Carrier (well-ventilated & secure) with a soft blanket or towel
2. Collar & Leash
 - Soft, adjustable collar (8-12 inch range).
 - Lightweight leash (4-6 feet).
3. Gloves, Waste Bags, Puppy Pads or Towels for accidents in the car or at rest stops.
4. Water & Travel Bowl
5. Small Bag of Treats
 - For bonding, positive reinforcement, or redirecting nervous energy.
6. Soft Chew Toy or Comfort Item

What to Do:

1. Remember to go over and take your Documentation Folder:
 - Deworming and Vaccination schedule
 - Microchip info
 - Registration papers (AKC), Pedigree certificate
 - Health certificate
 - Feeding & care instructions
2. Arrive Calmly & Quietly to not overwhelm the puppy with lots of people, loud voices, or high energy.
3. Ask all Questions:
 - Feeding schedule & brand
 - Current training
 - Parent health history
4. Have Puppy Go Potty Before Driving Off where the pup usually relieves itself.
5. Carry the Puppy to the Car and avoid public areas before vaccinations are complete.
5. Secure the Crate in the Car or carry the puppy safely on your or Children's lap is ok when supervised.
 - Never let a loose puppy roam inside a moving vehicle.
6. Drive Calmly & Avoid Stops
7. First 72 Hours at Home:
 - Keep things low-stress and quiet.
 - Establish routine feeding and potty times.
 - Limit visitors and new environments.
 - Let the pup sleep a lot -adjusting takes energy!