

Whelping supply checklist

37 things to have in the room before she whelps. Box up by day 45, kit packed by day 55. Bold items are essential.

The room and the box in place by day 45, so she settles in it

☐ Whelping box with pig rails	1	Day 45
The rails are the crushing guard. A box without them is a box she can lie a puppy against the wall in.		
☐ Guarded heat source	1	Day 45
Newborns cannot shiver and cannot regulate their own temperature for the first two weeks.		
☐ Room thermometer	1	Day 45
The nest area sits at 85 to 90 °F for the first week. Guessing is how puppies chill.		
☐ A cool zone in the box		Day 45
Heat over the whole floor means nowhere to move away from it. Overheating is as dangerous as chilling.		
☐ Fleece pad or washable bedding	3 changes	Day 45
Wicks the wet away from the puppies. Newspaper does not, and the ink transfers.		
☐ Disposable absorbent pads	100+	Day 50
The most under-bought item on every list. You will go through 10 to 15 a day in whelping week.		
☐ Towels, hand and bath size	20+	Day 50
One dry towel per puppy for rubbing, plus more for the mess. Warm them on a pad.		
☐ A holding box with its own heat	1	Day 50
Somewhere warm to put a dry puppy while she delivers the next one.		
☐ Good light you can aim	1	Day 50
You cannot assess a puppy or a discharge in a dim corner at 3am.		

The delivery kit packed by day 55, because puppies come early

☐ Digital rectal thermometer	1	Day 55
Her temperature dropping about a degree below her own baseline usually means the first puppy is within a day.		
☐ Water-based lubricant	1 tube	Day 55
For an internal check. Never petroleum jelly or mineral oil.		
☐ Bulb syringe or DeLee aspirator	2	Day 55
Clears the airway of a puppy that comes out full of fluid. The single most useful thing in the kit.		
☐ Hemostats, one curved one straight	2	Day 55
To clamp a cord that bleeds. Size them to the puppy: 3.5 in for tiny pups, 5.5 in for a large breed.		
☐ Unwaxed dental floss	1	Day 55
Ties a cord. Cheaper and better than the clamps sold for the job, and you already need the hemostats.		
☐ Blunt scissors	1	Day 55
Cord only, and only after it is clamped. Sharp points near a wet newborn are a bad idea.		
☐ Iodine or chlorhexidine for the navel	1 bottle	Day 55
The cord stump is an open door to the abdomen. Dip it, do not just dab it.		
☐ Exam gloves	1 box	Day 55
Clean hands for an internal check, and one less route for infection into her.		
☐ Gram scale	1	Day 55
Ounces are too coarse to catch a puppy losing ground. Buy this one properly.		



Whelping supply checklist

continued

☐ Whelping log, pen and a clock Time between puppies, sex, weight, whether a placenta passed. You will not remember it afterwards.	1	Day 55
☐ Puppy ID collars or colored yarn Two black puppies are one puppy weighed twice unless you can tell them apart.	1 set	Day 55
☐ Bin bags and a bucket Placentas, soiled pads and wet towels, dealt with as you go rather than in a pile.	1 roll	Day 55
☐ Vet's number and the out-of-hours number, written down On the wall by the box, not in a phone that is on charge in another room.	1	Day 55
☐ Carrier and a warm box, ready by the door A cesarean decision is made in minutes. Loading the car should not add any.	1	Day 55

The first 48 hours the window where losses happen

☐ Colostrum supplement Antibodies only cross the gut wall for roughly the first 24 hours. After that the window is shut.	1 per puppy	
☐ Milk replacer, in the house On the shelf before she whelps, not on order. A fading puppy is measured in hours.	1 tin minimum	Day 55
☐ Feeding bottle and preemie teats Teats tear, and each one needs boiling between puppies. One per puppy, not one per litter.	1 per puppy	Day 55
☐ Feeding tube and syringes For a puppy too weak to suck. Only use one after your vet has shown you how.	2	Day 55
☐ Glucose or an energy gel A chilled, flat puppy is usually hypoglycaemic too. Warm first, then feed.	1	Day 55
☐ Daily weight chart Weigh every puppy twice a day for the first week. No gain in 24 hours is a phone call, not a wait-and-see.	1	
☐ Something to warm a cold puppy slowly Never feed a puppy below normal temperature — the gut stops working and the milk sits there.	1	
☐ Her food and water at the box She will not leave the litter. Food and water go to her.		
☐ Eyes on her discharge and her temperature Lochia is dark red to black and odourless. A smell, a fever or a green discharge after the last puppy is a vet call.		
☐ Nothing containing calcium, unless your vet directs it Calcium during pregnancy raises the risk of eclampsia after whelping. At whelping and in lactation it is a vet decision.		

The bit for you you are awake for all of it

☐ Food and drink within reach A whelping can run 12 hours. Leaving the room to make a sandwich is when the trouble starts.		Day 55
☐ A chair you can sit in for hours Kneeling on a hard floor all night is how people stop watching.	1	Day 55
☐ A second pair of hands, arranged in advance Someone to hold a puppy or drive while you sit in the back with the box.	1	Day 50
☐ Old clothes and a hand towel It is messier than the videos.		Day 55



Call your vet now: strong contractions for 30 minutes with no puppy, more than two hours between puppies when more are coming, green or black discharge before the first puppy, or trembling, stiffness or panting in the days after whelping.

