

**DEL PICCOLO DIAVOLO**  
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# The First Months with Your Staffy Puppy

A practical guide for new owners



*The Staffy is not just a dog: it's a family member.*

**Staffordshire Bull Terrier Kennel since 2013** - Ostellato (FE) Italy  
L2HGA and HC genetic testing clear - ENCI Pedigree - Italian Champions

## MONTH 1 - Arriving Home

### Preparing the house

Before the puppy arrives, prepare: **crate/bed** (safe place), **bowls** (fresh water and food), **pee pads** (for needs), **toys** (Kong, ropes, balls), **baby gates** (to limit areas). Remove electrical cables, toxic plants, small objects and chemicals.

### The first nights

It's normal for the puppy to cry: they just left mom and siblings. Put the bed near yours, add a shirt with your scent and a warm water bottle. Don't bring them to your bed (creates habit). Gradually move the bed.

### Initial feeding

Continue with the same food from the kennel for 2 weeks. **8-12 weeks:** 4 meals/day - **3-4 months:** 3 meals/day - **From 6 months:** 2 meals/day. To change food, do it gradually over 7-10 days.

### Potty training

Take outside: when they wake up, after meals, after play, every 2-3 hours. When they go in the right spot, reward immediately! Never punish for accidents.

## MONTH 2 - Vaccinations and Socialization

### Vaccination schedule

**6-8 weeks:** first vaccination - **10-12 weeks:** booster + leptospirosis - **14-16 weeks:** final booster + rabies. Until vaccinations are complete, avoid unknown dogs and frequented areas.

### Home socialization (3-16 weeks = critical period)

Expose to: different people (men, women, children, elderly), noises (vacuum, hairdryer, doorbell), surfaces (tiles, grass, gravel), objects (umbrellas, bikes, strollers). Every experience must be positive!

### First commands

Short sessions (5 min), lots of rewards: **Name** (reward when they look), **Sit** (treat above head), **Come** (call enthusiastically), **No** (firm voice, then redirect).

### Managing alone time

The Staffy is very attached to family. Start with 30-second absences, increase gradually. Don't make a big deal of leaving/returning. Leave a stuffed Kong. Never alone more than 4 hours.

## MONTHS 3-4 - First Outings

### The first walk

After complete vaccinations. Short walks (10-15 min), let them sniff, avoid busy roads, if they freeze don't pull. Always bring treats.

### External socialization

Find balanced adult dogs, consider puppy classes. Expose to traffic, markets, cafes. **Note:** Staffies can be dominant with same-sex dogs, always supervise.

### Leash and harness

Use H-harness (no collar for puppies). If they pull, stop: resume only with loose leash. Reward walking beside you. Never use jerks or choke collars.

### Mental games

**Stuffed Kong, search games** (hide treats), **snuffle mat, boxes/bottles** with rewards. 10 min of mental games = 30 min of running!

## MONTHS 5-6 - Adolescence

### Behavioral changes

May seem to forget all commands, test limits, be more distracted. **Don't panic!** It's normal. Stay consistent and patient.

### Growth nutrition

Must stay lean: feel ribs (not see them), waist from above. 2 meals/day. Switch to adult food around 12 months.

### Safe exercise

**5-minute rule:** 5 min walk per month of age, twice daily. Avoid jumps and repeated stairs. Swimming is great. Too much exercise = joint problems as adult.

### Common mistakes to avoid

Physical punishment (ruins relationship) - Inconsistency in rules - Garden isolation - Too much exercise - Skipping vet checks

*Get ready to receive more love than you can imagine.*

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**NEED HELP? CALL US FOR A NO-OBLIGATION CHAT!**

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Since 2013 - Genetic testing clear - ENCI Pedigree - Italian Champions - Lifetime support

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