

NEW DOG AND PUPPY CARE GUIDE

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INTRODUCTION

Owning a dog is a big responsibility. You are responsible for it's health, quality of life, training, behavior and socialization. This takes time, patience and a financial commitment. When a dog joins your household, you should be aware you are undertaking a contract for the life of the dog. You are becoming the dog's family, part of his pack, for dogs by nature live in packs and need contact with other dogs. The human master will become the pack leader and its human family becomes the center of the dog's life. By making your dog more a part of the family, your dog will become happier and less prone to behavioral problems.

Dogs are social animals, which means they survive and live in packs or groups. These groups have a structured pecking order in which each position has certain duties and privileges. The struggle for dominance begins with puppies as they learn to dominate and fight. As they grow through adolescence the rivalry gets more serious and a pecking order is established and honored by all members. However, the pack harmony changes when the performance of any member in the pack changes significantly, especially the pack leader. As the leader loses his strength or superior instincts, he also loses his respect, credibility and dominance.

Your task as a new dog owner is to effectively become the leader of the dog's pack. It is essential to earn the dog's acceptance, respect, trust and loyalty so he recognizes you as the leader. This is what will bring about submission and obedience to you. The result of this submission is that the dog expects firm, fair and consistent leadership. If he does not get leadership from you, the dog will become confused by the lack of it, and he may attempt to become the pack leader himself. Most dogs will strive for dominance at one time or another, but are just as happy to be followers rather than leaders. If challenged, the leader must show the dog their place by responding intelligently and understandably with a firm, yet loving hand. As a dog trainer and owner, you must realize that the dog has rights, and to jeopardize this by being abusive or administering punishment out of sequence will only lead to mutiny by the dog, and rightfully so.

As soon as your dog comes home with you, he should be taught three things: 1) his name; 2) "good dog"; and 3) "No!" A puppy is particularly sensitive and impressionable at the age of eight to twelve weeks. Disciplinary training (housebreaking, manners, leash training) can begin at seven or eight weeks when he is most susceptible to mild corrections. Discipline should not be too harsh, as he may be easily made to be over-submissive, and the effects can be permanent. The period from eight to twelve weeks is commonly known as "the fear period," and that which frightens him at this period can remain imprinted in his mind for the rest of his life. It could be anything from a loud noise to meeting a new person or dog. It is important to be careful about exposing him to new situations during this time period. Encourage new experiences, but guard him from bad ones. Stop people or dogs if he is cowering and praise him a lot to help him accept new things. Once the puppy passes this fear period, he will see you as his protector and his devotion so great, he will be better able to cope with the challenges of preliminary training. Preliminary training means that play or reward through playing with a favorite object induces the proper response in the dog.

When your puppy is seven or eight weeks old, you should introduce leash training. Under your supervision, let him wear a soft collar and leash around the house. When your puppy is older, about three months old, you should be taking him on regular walks once or twice a day. Formal obedience training should begin when your dog is about six months old. It is important to remember that everything a dog does is governed by the abstract. The mature dog remains at an intellectual level similar to that of a small child who hasn't yet learned to speak. Since the dog does not have language, he is unable to use logic or reason. Dogs do not know the difference between right and wrong. Therefore, you must think for him. If there is a problem, ask yourself if you have sufficiently shown the dog what is expected of him.

When you begin training your dog, you must recognize his limitations as well as your own. Dogs learn to communicate with each other from their mothers and siblings in the puppy pack. They use specific signals to communicate certain things to each other. Dogs look at our body language for direction. We'd like to think they understand human language, but they look at our body language and listen to the tone of our voice more than having an actual understanding of our words. Never lose your temper or hit your dog during training sessions. He will not understand why you are angry, and it will have a negative effect and interfere with the training process. Dogs don't seem to handle anger well from their pack leader and instead he could fear you. If you find yourself getting angry and frustrated during a training session, stop the session and praise and reward your dog. For optimal learning, you must maintain an even disposition when training your dog.

Training is valuable only if it can be applied on a consistent basis to everyday situations. For puppies, training sessions should be kept short, only about 5 to 15 minutes, several times per day. This compliments the puppy's short attention span and keeps the sessions enjoyable for both of you. For older dogs, formal obedience seldom requires more than 30-45 minutes per day. Never let the dog decide when to stop; you are the one to determine when a training session is over.

LEADERSHIP

As stated previously, your dog is a pack animal and every pack must have a leader. If a dog understands that you are the undisputed pack leader, he can be content to be a follower. If there is any doubt in the dog's mind that there is a strong leader in charge, he will feel the need to assume the position himself. For most dogs it doesn't matter who the leader is, as long as someone is and they are doing a good job. Dogs who are leaders within their "human packs" are difficult to live with, to say the least. They bark over any disturbance and challenge visitors entering their territory. They may growl, nip or bite at anyone who attempts to discipline them or forces them to do something. They often growl or bite when anyone attempts to take things away from them and will often mark the inside of the home with urine or feces. They come to you only when it is to their advantage, they wander away from home and will usually challenge the individual who bathes or grooms them.

The normal healthy mature dog has an instinctive tendency to be pushy. This is because the dog is genetically programmed to move as high in the pack hierarchy as possible. This is because in the wild, in order to survive, the pack must have the strongest possible leader. Most pack members learn to control their “pushy” behavior because the pack has only two leaders, one male and one female. This is key to living amicably with your dog: establish yourself at the pack leader and maintain that position throughout the dog’s life. With some dogs your leadership position is easy to have and maintain. Other dogs must be reminded daily, if not more often. All human members of the household in which the dog lives should also establish a leadership role with the dog. Letting your dog know who is in charge will not make him dislike you. It will give him a secure feeling that someone is in charge and all is right with the world.

Many people try to win their dog’s affection by letting him have his own way. They shower him with love and affection without the benefit of discipline, believing this is the only way to get love and affection in return. However this only reinforces the dog’s dominant behavior and the dog will play with you and tolerate you, however he will not work for you unless he respects you. Raising your dog to be a subordinate member of the pack is the key to successful behavior training. It does not break his spirit or cause him to dislike you. By giving your dog a defined position in your family and guidelines to follow, you help him develop a sense of trust and respect for you.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

Knowing a few basic facts about canine behavior and how to care for your new dog will help you establish a good relationship. Take time to learn about caring for your new dog and his safety. This will make the homecoming easy on both of you.

1. Have a bed ready for the dog to use; a place to which it can retire and that is always reserved just for him. This can be an appropriately sized pillow, carpet remnant, thick pad, etc. A tie-down or crate is also suggested.
2. Equipment: leashes come in leather, nylon and cotton; collars come in nylon and leather (choose a collar with a buckle, not a quick-snap closure, as buckles are less likely to come undone); choke chain (for correct sizing, measure your dog’s neck and add 2 ½” to 3”); muzzle of good quality for emergencies.
3. One dish for food and one for water. They should be elevated so they are just under the dog’s chin. This helps with proper bone posture and helps prevent cartilage and muscle from bending in the wrong places.
4. Identification tag: An ID tag should be permanently attached to your dog’s collar. It should have the dog’s name, your name, address and phone number with area code. You can also get a second tag with your veterinarian’s name, address and phone number on it.
5. Grooming tools: The supplies you buy will depend on whether your dog has a short or long coat. For short-haired dogs, use a brush with natural bristles, a rubber curry

comb or hand mitt. For long-haired breeds, a normal hairbrush with a strong handle, wide-tooth metal comb and perhaps a mat splitter are needed. Be sure to include a flea comb regardless of the coat length.

6. Make sure your yard is dog secure. Check your fence for holes, loose boards or nails sticking out of the wood. Fix the fence and add wire or boards, if needed, to prevent digging, jumping or escaping. If you prefer, you can build a dog run.
7. Dog-proof your home, inside and out. Dogs have a lower vantage point than ours and may be attracted to things you cannot see while you are standing up. Get down on your hands and knees to look for possible hazards. Confine your dog to a safe area inside and keep doors and windows closed or screened securely. Do not allow the dog to be left unsupervised inside or outside. This will prevent him from getting into mischief or soiling in the house. Keep your dog off balconies, upper porches or high decks. If you have a swimming pool, make sure your puppy or dog can't fall in and accidentally drown. Secure cleaning supplies, detergents, paint and paint thinners, insect and rodent poisons, and anti-freeze. Remove hazardous household plants or place them out of your dog's reach. Keep toilet lids down; the dog could try to drink or play in the water and get hurt by the lid closing on them or harmed by toilet bowl cleansers if swallowed. Puppies love to chew, so pay attention to electric cords, phone lines and similar hazards. Keep ribbon, sewing or knitting supplies out of your dog's reach. They can easily choke on these items if swallowed. The same applies for nails, screws, paper clips, aluminum can tabs or other sharp objects.
8. Show your dog where you would like him to relieve himself in a pre-selected spot outside before taking him back in the house. This usually means taking the dog to the spot you want him to use. If he doesn't go, be sure to put him on a tie-down or in a crate when inside. When the dog asks to go out again, take him back to the pre-designated spot.
9. Introduce your dog to his area as soon as you bring him home. Show him his bed, his toys, and where his food and water bowls are. Your dog will soon know which corner of the house is his. Be sure to take the dog on leash to allow you to correct if the dog tries to urinate in his new area. Give him rest and allow him time to explore and adjust to his new home.
10. Keep the dog near you in order to make him comfortable in his new environment. This is a good time to use the crate or tie-down. Be sure the dog likes the place you pick for him to rest and be sure it will be a convenient and consistent spot. Try to put him where he can be seen, but is not in the main lane of traffic within the household.

One of the most important things you can do for your dog is establish a consistent routine that is easy and convenient for you to follow seven days a week. Dogs thrive on routine and adapt more easily to a new environment if there is an established schedule.

FEEDING

Since your dog is living under your care, it is your responsibility to feed him a proper diet. Every dog owner has to learn how to feed a dog properly, just as we have to learn about a healthy diet for ourselves. Family dogs today are exposed to the same health risks we are. Every third dog is overweight and is eating the wrong foods. Obesity in dogs is a serious medical problem. Obese dogs are more at risk in surgery, more prone to injury, and have more stress on their heart, lungs, liver, kidneys and joints. Do not overfeed or underfeed your dog. Loose stools can indicate overfeeding. Hard, light-colored stools indicate a diet that includes too much calcium from too many bones or calcium supplements. Large amounts of stool indicate the food had little nutritional value. A good indicator of your dog's weight is at his ribs. You should be able to see them or feel them, without being prominent, with the tips of your fingers when you run your hand along the dog's sides.

The choice between standard and premium varieties of dog food is largely a personal preference, but there are significant differences that you should take into consideration when choosing your dog's food. Quality control is one of them. Premium and super-premium foods tend to maintain more consistency in the type of nutrient content of the ingredients used than bargain foods. As a general rule, bargain foods are: designed to supply healthy dogs with essential nutritional requirements; manufactured with more fillers and preservatives to ensure a longer shelf life; the least expensive food alternative. Premium foods are: energy-rich with a higher protein and fat content, so dogs eat less to get the same nutritional requirements as the cheaper brands; enhanced with highly palatable food additives to be more enjoyable; low bulk and highly digestible, resulting in less stool; more expensive than bargain commercial dog food. Learn to read labels. Check that the label states the food is guaranteed to meet the particular life stage of your dog. The label should also tell you how those guarantees are tested and if the feeding trials used standards set forth by the Association of American Feed Control Officials, or by meeting AAFCO nutrient concentration recommendations. Do not feed canned food as a main food source, as it contains mostly water and does not supply the proper nutrients. Use only for taste as desired. For best results, buy only veterinarian-recommended food. Consult your veterinarian about special diets or special nutritional requirements that may be needed if your dog has specific medical conditions.

Establish table manners right away. Put your dog's food and water dishes away from foot traffic and noise. Do not change the location of the dishes unless it is absolutely necessary. Do not leave food out all day. Thirty minutes is sufficient time for your dog to eat. If he doesn't finish in that time, do not feed again until the next mealtime. This also helps in your housebreaking routine. Do not feed table scraps. This can create a finicky eater and the added calories can contribute to obesity. Do not feed your dog from the table or allow anyone else to do so. This can lead to begging or stealing food from the table. Do not vary your dog's diet unless instructed by your veterinarian. Do not give your dog between-meal snacks or treats. If you are using a lot of treats during obedience training, cut back a bit on your dog's normal portion of dog food to compensate for the treat calories. Do not feed bones as these can lodge in the throat or pierce the stomach walls and intestinal tract. Do not feed your dog outside. This can attract flies and fleas, both of which cause worms, and can also create a problem with ants and bees. In general,

puppies from the ages of six to eight weeks are fed three scheduled meals a day until three months of age. At three months they are fed twice daily, and at six months they go to a schedule of one meal daily. Puppies should be taken off puppy food by six months of age or at four months if the dog is becoming obese. Consult with your veterinarian about what is best for your dog.

Most dog owners put the food and water dishes on the floor. As the dog leans down to eat and drink, extra stress is placed on the bones, ligaments and tendons. This extra stress can lead to medical problems including injured and ruptured membranes in the elbows, calluses at the joints, breakdown of the wrists or splayed toes. One way to help guard against these problems is to use an elevated feeder. The food dish should be positioned just under the dog's jowls. Because the feeder is adjustable, it can be raised or lowered to the perfect height to accommodate a dog from four weeks of age through adulthood. Elevated feeders and dishes keep feeding areas cleaner. They may reduce intestinal gas in dogs since dogs that eat bent over their dish have a tendency to swallow more air and gulp their food; the higher the food dish, the less gulping. They make eating more comfortable for older pets, or those with arthritis, stiff muscles, sore joints and neck or back problems. Older pets often eat less anyway, and if eating or drinking is painful or uncomfortable, they are likely to eat or drink even less and may not get the nutrition they need. Raising food and water to their level encourages eating and drinking. Finally, elevated feeders offer an extra bonus. Because pet owners don't have to bend over as far to pick up or fill up water and food dishes, they are great for frail, physically handicapped or persons with arthritis or back problems.

WATER

Water is the most important of all the nutrients. An animal can lose all of its fat and half of its protein and survive, but only a 10% loss of body water causes serious illness. On a hot day, the average dog can become dehydrated in only a few hours if fresh water is not present. Considering the huge quantity and importance of water consumed in your pet's lifetime, it is important that the quality of water be the best possible. Household tap water is considered to be safe, although many pet owners give their pets bottled water if their water source is questionable. Water bowls should be washed daily and disinfected periodically. Stainless steel bowls are the easiest to keep clean and resist scratches that can harbor bacteria. Temperature is another consideration in the quality of your pet's water. Pets prefer cool water in the summer and room temperature water in the winter. Clean water should be made available all day. Make sure the bowl is large enough for the amount of water your dog will drink. For puppies and young dogs, no water should be given for two hours before bedtime. This allows for a final relieving of bowel and bladder before the dog retires to bed and makes housebreaking much easier.

TOYS

Safe toys are an important part of your pet's equipment list. They can help your puppy or dog exercise and provide a safe way to satisfy your dog's need to chew. They can also be a big help with your motivational training. Be sure to choose toys that cannot be torn

apart, splintered or swallowed. As a general rule, if your puppy or dog can fit the whole toy in his mouth, the toy is too small and could be unsafe. Large rawhide chips, nylon chews and hard rubber balls are fun and usually safe. Be careful of sponge toys or items with squeakers, whistles or other attached parts that can be torn off and swallowed. Also avoid anything with hard, sharp points that can break off.

Do not give your puppy or dog shoes or other articles of clothing to play with. Your dog will not be able to distinguish between the shoes and clothing that he is allowed to chew and those that are off limits. Also, clothing can be chewed and swallowed, leading to obstructions in the digestive tract.

Keep your puppy or dog away from children's toys made of soft rubber, fur, wool, sponge or polyurethane. If your dog swallows a small particle of any of these materials, it could cause problems with his digestive tract. Keep all plastic bags away from your puppy or dog. He could be trapped inside and suffocate or he might chew and swallow bits of plastic which could be very harmful.

RELIEVING

At regular intervals, take your puppy or dog outside, on leash, to a pre-selected area that is quiet and easily sanitized so he can relieve himself. Allow up to 20 minutes, if necessary. Most dogs need to eliminate after a meal, when they wake up in the morning and after naps, after they finish playing, after drinking water and before bedtime. Other signs that your puppy or dog is about to eliminate include sniffing the floor, turning in circles, or squatting. Take him outside immediately whenever he gives you these signals. Stay with your dog and encourage him by using words such as "go potty" or "hurry" so he will associate these words with relieving himself. Always reward him when he has finished with a hug and "good dog," then immediately take him back inside. Do not extend this period into an outdoor play session or your dog will become confused about the purpose of the visit outside.

During housebreaking, when the puppy or dog is out of the crate, he should not be allowed to have the run of the house unless you are there to supervise. If you are not able to watch him, put him back in his crate or confine him to one room that can be easily cleaned if he has an accident. If you find your puppy or dog has an accident in the house, do not rub his nose in it, yell at him, hit him or throw him outside by himself. If you don't catch your puppy or dog in the act of doing it, then don't punish for it. Delayed punishment will only confuse the dog. If you see your puppy or dog has left a mess on the floor, take him to the spot and say "No!" in a low-pitched, firm voice. Then clean up the mess with a paper towel and take the dog and the wet or soiled paper towel outside to the designated toilet area. Place the paper towel on the ground and let the dog sniff it. The scent will cause the dog to want to eliminate there next time. Immediately remove all traces of the accident with a disinfectant and/or odor remover. This will discourage the dog from going to the same spot and eliminating again.

BEDTIME

Be sure to take the dog out to relieve himself prior to his bedtime. Ideally, the puppy or dog's bed should be close to yours so that you can hear when the dog wakes up. Until the puppy is housebroken, you will have to get up and take him outside. The dog can sleep in either a crate or on a tie-down. Be sure the tie-down is not too long; this will prevent the dog from moving away from his sleeping spot, doing his business, and going back to sleep. If your dog whines or is otherwise disruptive during the night, he can be corrected by asking him to "settle." If the dog persists in being restless, he may need to relieve himself. If so, immediately take him directly to the pre-designated spot and give him a chance to relieve himself. Remember to praise him if he has done it correctly. Quickly take him back to his bed. This should not turn into playtime with the dog. Remember the dog will also need to go outside soon after they awake in the morning.

PHYSICAL CARE

One simple but very important way to care for your puppy or dog is to watch for changes in his appearance or behavior that may indicate that he is sick. To do this, you need to become familiar with the signs of what is normal health for your pet. You should also be familiar with your dog's usual behavior so you can easily detect signs of illness and injury. This will help you spot potential problems early so your veterinarian can begin treatment sooner.

Eyes – Eyes should be moist, clear and bright. The whites of the eyes should have no red or yellow discoloration. If there is any inflammation, discoloration, tearing, constant blinking, cloudiness, heavy discharge, or other abnormal conditions, take your puppy or dog to the veterinarian immediately. A slight buildup of mucus in the corners of the eyes is not abnormal. This discharge can easily be cleaned away with a cotton ball moistened with warm water. Do not let your dog hang its head out of the car window or ride in the back of trucks. The dirt particles can cause eye infections. Long hair in the dog's face can also cause eye problems.

Ears – Ears should be clean and free of discharge and odor. Check the ears at least once a week, or more often for dogs who are more prone to ear problems (such as long-haired dogs or those with long, droopy ears). Trim away excess hair, which might prevent air from getting into the ears. If your dog is scratching its ears or shaking its head a lot, it may be a sign of a yeast infection, bacterial infection, or ear mites. If the ear canal is red, inflamed, has a foul odor, or is sensitive to your touch, consult your veterinarian. Dogs with ear mites may have an ear discharge with increased wax and a dried blood or coffee ground appearance. Your vet will have to check the discharge under a microscope to identify an ear mite infection. Prevent ear problems by keeping ears clean and dry. Check with your vet and ask him/her to recommend a cleaning solution and have him/her show you how to clean your dog's ears properly.

Mouth – The dog should have pink, healthy gums with no redness or bleeding when you touch the gums. The lips should be free of sores or growths. Teeth should be free of yellow or brown tartar buildup along the gum line and the dog should not have bad

breath. Check for discolored, fractured or missing teeth. Any bumps or masses within the mouth should be checked by your veterinarian. Brush your dog's teeth several times a week, at least, with a soft-bristled nylon toothbrush and a plaque-retardant, tartar-control toothpaste. Feed hard kibble dog food or biscuits at least once a day. The friction from chewing the hard food helps clean the teeth. Hard nylon or rawhide bones help remove plaque. Give your puppy or dog a hard chew toy at least once a week. Good oral hygiene started early and continued on a regular basis will prevent bad breath, tooth loss and gum disease.

Nose – Normal dogs may have hot, cold, dry or wet noses. If your dog has chronic sneezing fits, bloody or pus-like discharge from one or both nostrils, check with your veterinarian. It could be allergies, a foreign object in the nose or a bacterial, viral or fungal infection. Unlike people, a dog with a bloody nose is always cause to see the veterinarian.

Body and Coat – The body should be free of tumors, lumps, fleas and ticks. Check by running your hands over the dog's coat. A normal coat is thick and shiny, without greasiness, dandruff or bare spots. Check for wounds, tumors, hair loss, dander, biting, scratching, bite marks, evidence of parasites, stickers and foreign objects.

Legs and Feet – Legs should be checked for swollen joints, lumps, or cuts. Inspect feet between the toes for excess hair or objects lodged there. Check for broken or cracked nails. Nails that are too long will grow full circle back into the toe and cause it to bend and be sore.

Anus – The anus should be free of swelling and intestinal parasites. For example, tapeworms are visible around the anus and appear as “rice-like” looking worms in the stool. Dogs will often scoot their behinds along the ground in an attempt to relieve swollen anal glands. If you notice any of these symptoms, see your veterinarian.

HEALTH

CHOOSING A VET

When choosing a vet, try to find someone who is sociable with both you and your dog. Make sure you feel you can trust his/her judgments and decisions about your dog's care. Ask questions. A good vet will be prepared and willing to answer your questions or refer you to someone else if he/she doesn't know. Be as choosy about your vet as you would be in choosing your own doctor. It is important to establish a relationship with a vet as soon as your bring your puppy or dog home so he/she will become a trusted partner in your dog's upbringing. Regular visits to your vet should begin soon after you bring your dog home.

WHEN TO CALL THE VET

Learn to recognize the signs of illness and what is normal and abnormal for your dog. Any persistent change in your dog's behavior such as listlessness, depression, loss of appetite, traces of blood in the stool, a dull coat, or a pot bellied look are all indications of

illness and warrant a trip to the vet. A dog's temperature will vary depending on the time of day, their emotional state, the amount of recent activity or the environment, such as riding in a hot car. The normal temperature of dog is 100.5° to 102.5°F. If your dog shows signs of fever (lusterless coat; a dry, hot nose; dull eyes; apathy; a noticeable rise in body heat) take his temperature. If it is over 103°F, you should consult the vet. To take your dog's temperature, use a rectal thermometer, which has a rounded tip. Shake down the thermometer and apply Vaseline or mineral oil to the bulb. If necessary, restrain your dog, lift it's tail, and gently slide the thermometer two-thirds of its length (about 1 to 1 ½ inches) into the rectum. Hold it in for two to three minutes. While you wait, it is advisable to hold the back end of your pet with one hand and the tail and thermometer with the other so that your pet cannot move and break the thermometer. Try to keep the dog calm by talking to him and reassuring with praise for staying still. Remove the thermometer and read it as you would normally do.

VACCINES

Newborn puppies are not naturally immune to diseases. Puppies have some antibody protection, which is derived from the mother's blood via the placenta. The next level of immunity is from antibodies from the first milk, which is called colostrum. This antibody rich milk is produced from the time of birth and continuing for 36-48 hours. However, after two days, regular milk is produced and puppies are no longer able to receive antibodies from their mothers. All antibodies received from the mother, whether through her blood or milk, are called maternal antibodies. Please note that the puppy will only receive antibodies against diseases for which the mother had been recently vaccinated against or exposed to. For example, a mother that had not been vaccinated against or exposed to parvovirus, would not have any antibodies against this disease to pass along to her puppies. The puppies would then be more susceptible to developing a parvovirus infection.

The age at which puppies can effectively be immunized is proportional to the amount of antibody protection the puppy received from its mother. High levels of maternal antibodies in the puppy's bloodstream will block the effectiveness of a vaccine. When the maternal antibodies drop to a low enough level in the puppy, immunization by a commercial vaccine will work. The maternal antibodies generally circulate in the puppy's blood for about 6 to 12 weeks after birth. There is a period of time from several days to several weeks in which the maternal antibodies are too low to provide adequate protection against disease, but too high to allow a vaccine to work. This period is called the window of susceptibility. This is the time, when despite being vaccinated, a puppy can still contract a disease. The length of the window of susceptibility is different in every litter, and even between littermates.

Diseases are easily transmitted between pets. Your veterinarian will recommend a timetable for the vaccinations your puppy or dog needs to prevent these diseases. Most vaccinations are given in a series over a period of time. Consult with your veterinarian as to which vaccines are appropriate for your pet. Recommendations vary depending on the age, breed, health, potential of exposure to an animal who has the disease, type of vaccine, and how common the disease is found in the area where the pet lives or may visit.

CANINE DISEASES

Disease	Symptoms	Prevention
<p>Canine Distemper is a highly contagious and often fatal virus that affects a dog's respiratory, gastrointestinal, and nervous systems. It can be spread via airborne transmission or through contact with an infected animal, its feces, or its urine. Since a puppy's natural immunity may wear off before he is vaccinated, reduce risk of exposure by limiting contact with unfamiliar dogs until the vaccination series is completed.</p>	<p>Symptoms include coughing, sneezing, pus-like discharge from the nose and eyes, fever, vomiting, diarrhea, lack of appetite, twitching and convulsions.</p>	<p>Vaccination is the only effective control. Initial vaccinations are given as a series beginning as early as 6 weeks, followed with an annual booster. Distemper vaccinations are usually given in combination with vaccines for other diseases. Adult dogs and puppies older than three months can be effectively protected from distemper by annual booster vaccinations.</p>
<p>Infectious Canine Hepatitis (also known as adenovirus) is a viral disease that primarily affects the liver, kidneys, and cells lining the blood vessels. It is spread by contact with infected animals, their feces, urine, or saliva. Some of the new hepatitis vaccines also offer protection against respiratory disease.</p>	<p>Symptoms include weakness, fever, lack of appetite, bloody vomit and diarrhea, abdominal pain, eyes seem irritated by light.</p>	<p>Vaccination will provide excellent immunity. Initial vaccinations are given as a series beginning as early as 6-8 weeks, followed with an annual booster. The vaccine for canine hepatitis is usually combined with the vaccine for distemper.</p>
<p>Leptospirosis is an extremely contagious bacterial disease that primarily affects the kidneys. It is spread through contact with nasal secretions, urine, or saliva of infected animals, drinking or swimming in contaminated water, or by contact with rats. Note that early signs of the disease may not be readily apparent, so infection can go undetected. Recovered animals can continue spreading the disease, which can also affect humans.</p>	<p>Symptoms are fever, lack of appetite, abdominal pain, vomiting, diarrhea, weight loss, increased water intake and urination. May produce inflamed kidneys and can cause liver damage.</p>	<p>Initial vaccinations are given as a series beginning as early as 6 weeks, followed with an annual booster. Leptospirosis vaccinations are usually combined with vaccinations for distemper and hepatitis.</p>
<p>Parvovirus (canine parvoviral gastroenteritis) is a common, deadly viral infection, usually in puppies, that primarily affects the gastrointestinal tract and the heart. Parvovirus is spread by contact with feces, blood, or vomit of an infected dog, or by direct contact with an infected animal.</p>	<p>Symptoms include fever, severe vomiting, bloody diarrhea, weakness, lack of appetite, rapid dehydration, labored breathing.</p>	<p>A series of vaccinations are given from 6 to 8 weeks, followed with an annual booster. Animals that often stay in kennels, travel to dog shows, or are exposed to other dogs should be vaccinated every 6 months. Check with your veterinarian.</p>

<p>Parainfluenza is a highly infectious virus that can contribute to “kennel cough.” It can cause a mild respiratory disease to severe debilitation in puppies. It spreads quickly among dogs kept in close quarters. If neglected, it may seriously damage the respiratory system and even death.</p>	<p>Symptoms include a harsh, dry, hacking cough, lack of appetite, depression, and runny nose and eyes.</p>	<p>Initial vaccinations are given beginning as early as 6 weeks, followed with an annual booster.</p>
<p>Rabies is a viral infection of the central nervous system that attacks the brain and results in paralysis and death. It is always fatal. It is usually transmitted through the bite of an infected animal. Rabies is a public health threat and a personal risk to all pet owners, so vaccination is essential. Most states have laws requiring vaccination.</p>	<p>Symptoms include change in behavior, extreme restlessness, dilated pupils, unprovoked biting, extreme shyness or aggressiveness, paralysis of the throat causing the inability to eat or drink, paralysis of the lower jaw, generalized paralysis, coma and death.</p>	<p>Initial inoculation should be given as early as 3 months of age, with a second inoculation later. (Check with your veterinarian.) After the second injection, the dog should receive a booster at one year and every one to three years thereafter, depending on the vaccine used and on local laws.</p>
<p>Coronavirus is a highly contagious viral infection that affects the gastrointestinal tract. It is spread by the feces, blood, or vomit of an infected dog or through direct contact with an infected animal.</p>	<p>Symptoms include vomiting, foul smelling diarrhea, high fever, and dehydration.</p>	<p>Check with your veterinarian about a possible vaccination, depending on your puppy or dog’s risk. Initial vaccination series begin as early as 6 weeks, followed with an annual booster.</p>
<p>Bordatella is a highly contagious bacterial infection involved in tracheobronchitis (kennel cough). It is spread by airborne transmission or contact with contaminated surfaces. A dog may catch this disease through contact with dogs in animal shelters, boarding facilities, grooming kennels, dog shows, field trials and pet stores.</p>	<p>Symptoms include a persistent dry, hacking cough, sneezing, nasal discharge and unproductive retching. Most dogs do not have fever and their appetites are usually normal. Symptoms generally appear five to seven days after exposure.</p>	<p>Check with your veterinarian about your puppy or dog’s need for the Bordatella vaccination. Many vets give this vaccine in the puppy series, followed by an annual booster. A booster is also recommended before high-exposure areas, such as dog shows or boarding kennels.</p>
<p>Lyme Disease is a tick-borne disease that affects both animals and humans.</p>	<p>Symptoms include fever, lameness that may shift from one leg to the other and may be sudden in onset, swelling in the joints, lethargy, and lack of appetite.</p>	<p>Check with your veterinarian about the vaccine for Lyme Disease. The vaccine may be recommended depending on the risk to the puppy or dog in your location. Using insecticides (tick dips or sprays) on the dog that repel ticks is another method of prevention.</p>

PARASITES

Parasites are organisms that derive nourishment by feeding on or within another animal. The most noted parasites in dogs are “worms,” because the majority of all puppies acquire intestinal worms either prior to or shortly after birth. All parasites can result in damage to your pet’s health. Similarly, some can be transferred from the dog to other household animals, including humans.

Internal parasites

Internal parasites usually live in a dog’s digestive tract and are detected by an examination of the stool. Treatment for worms and parasites can begin at the age of two weeks and be repeated every two or three weeks as determined by your veterinarian. Repeat treatments are necessary to kill any larvae that were migrating during the first treatment and have come back to the intestine. Most researchers believe puppies are infested with roundworms and hookworms from their mother, so many veterinarians administer worming medication to all puppies.

Roundworms (Ascarids) – These are the most common parasite of the digestive tract in dogs. Most puppies are infested with roundworms that are transmitted from the mother to her pups before birth or during nursing. Adult worms are white, round worms, coiled into disks that may grow two to five inches long. They may appear in the stool or vomit. Animals with mild infestations of roundworms may not show any signs of the disease. Animals with more severe infestations may be thin, have dull hair coats, and develop a pot-bellied appearance. Other symptoms include stunted growth, vomiting, diarrhea, dehydration, and sometimes a cough caused by the migration of the larvae through the respiratory system.

Hookworms – This is one of the most dangerous of all intestinal parasites. The hookworm can be transmitted from mothers to pups before birth and during nursing. The worm is too small to be seen with the naked eye. The worm fastens itself onto the walls of the dog’s small intestine. Symptoms include lethargy, anemia, weakness, poor appetite, and bloody diarrhea.

Whipworm – This parasite attaches itself into the lower end of a dog’s digestive tract and, when mature, begins to reproduce. They are very thin and threadlike, less than an inch long, and shaped like a whip. They are hard to detect with the naked eye. These worms are transmitted when a dog licks infected ground. Symptoms include severe, bloody diarrhea streaked with mucus, weakness, anemia and weight loss.

Tapeworm – The larvae of this parasite are introduced when the dog eats an infected insect (flea) or from eating raw fish, beef or pork. Tapeworms mature in the intestine, and when mature, the segments detach and pass out the anus. The segments are off-white and flat, and move in a back-and-forth motion. They may be seen attached to the hair around the anus, in the stool or on bedding. The dried-out segments look like rice granules. Symptoms include weight loss and occasional diarrhea. Mature tapeworms feed from the intestine, causing the dog to eat more than normal without any weight gain. To prevent re-infestation, the dog should be free of fleas when he is treated for tapeworm.

Coccidia – To avoid these organisms, which can live in a dog’s intestines, make sure your dog doesn’t eat raw or undercooked meat. Infected animals shed the parasite in their feces and are too small to be seen with the naked eye. Symptoms include bloody diarrhea, fever, weight loss and lack of appetite. Sometimes, the dog will show no symptoms.

Heartworm (Dirofilaria) – This parasite is transmitted by a carrier mosquito and lives in the right side of the dog’s heart and the large blood vessels connecting the heart to the lungs. After biting an infected animal, the mosquito hosts tiny larvae called microfilariae. In two to three weeks, microfilariae develop into larger larvae in the mosquito and migrate to the mosquito’s mouth. When the mosquito bites another animal, the larvae enter the animal’s skin where they live for three months and grow to a size of 3 inches. The larvae then migrate to the heart when they grow into adults. The worms are slender, white roundworms that are 5 to 12 inches long. Diagnosis is made with a blood test. Symptoms include weight loss despite a healthy appetite, anemia, coughing, heavy breathing, tires easily, swollen abdomen and legs, and severe heart, lung and liver damage leading to death. Heartworm is difficult to cure, but easy to prevent with medication from your veterinarian.

External Parasites

Internal parasites aren’t the only parasites your dog has to contend with. There are numerous insects that live on a dog’s body such as ticks, fleas, mites, lice, and flies. They can cause severe itching, skin infections, and internal problems, such as tapeworms and anemia. They are diagnosed by physical examination and skin tests. There are many types of products available to help combat and prevent external parasite infestations, including: once-a-month topical insecticides, sprays, powders, dips, shampoos, collars, and oral or injectable products. Never buy these products at random as certain combinations of insecticides can be harmful to your puppy or dog. Consult your veterinarian for a safe and effective plan for controlling external parasites on your dog.

Fleas – Fleas are the most common problem dog owners face. Worldwide, there are over 2,000 species of fleas. Fleas are important because of the direct effects they have on animals and people, and because of the diseases they can transmit. They prefer to live separately and do not interbreed, but their complex life cycle makes an infestation difficult to ward off.

There are four stages in the development of fleas: eggs, larvae, pupae and adults. Male and female fleas mate and two days later, the female flea starts laying eggs. The eggs are often laid on the animal host, but because they are not sticky, fall into the animal’s environment. Along with eggs, the female flea deposits a large amount of feces. The feces, or flea dirt, will dissolve into a red color when moistened because it is primarily digested blood. The flea can lay up to 50 eggs per day, generally in batches of 3 to 15. A flea can produce 400-1,000 eggs in her lifetime (several months to two years, depending on the species).

In two days or more (depending on the temperature) after the egg is laid, it hatches and the larvae, which looks like a small maggot, starts to feed on the feces left by its mother. During the next week, the larvae passes through several phases of development. At that time the larvae starts spinning a cocoon and is called a pupa. The cocoon is sticky and

will often become covered with dirt or sand, and can be found deep in carpet or cracks and crevices. In a week, the pupa develops into an adult and emerges from the cocoon when it senses vibration, pressure, heat, noise or carbon dioxide. The entire life cycle takes about 15 days, but the pupae can remain dormant under inhospitable conditions (such as cold) and extend the cycle to over a year. The pupae's hardiness makes re-infestation a common problem even after you've treated both your home and pet. Once the adult fleas emerge from the cocoon, they must find a warm-blooded host within a few days or they will die, and adults can't lay eggs without that nourishing blood meal.

Any dog older than six months of age can develop an allergy to flea saliva. Adult fleas are thin, wingless, brown insects that are extraordinary jumpers and move through the hair coat rapidly. The flea injects its saliva under the dog's skin as an aid in retrieving its meal (the dog's blood). The saliva acts as foreign material that can cause your pet to itch and bite itself profusely. Even people can be bitten by hungry fleas; their favorite human areas are ankles and waists, and the bites are very itchy.

Hair loss and skin infection are characteristic, especially on the lower back, neck, and inner thighs, favored flea-feeding sites. The hair loss usually has a pattern: a triangular patch on the lower back and patches at the tail base, on the neck, and on the inner thighs. You may even see fleas jumping or moving in these areas. Flea droppings are the black specks (digested blood) found primarily on the hairs of the lower back. To test, place the droppings on white paper and moisten them with water. If they turn red, they are flea droppings; if not, they are simply dirt.

Attempting to control flea infestation is a multi-step process. You must remove the fleas from the indoor and outdoor environment, remove the fleas from the animal and keep the fleas away to prevent future infestations. Adult fleas spend most of their time on an animal, but the eggs, larvae and pupae are found in the environment, such as carpeting, bedding and grass. Vacuum thoroughly on a weekly basis (especially where your pet sleeps): rugs, upholstery, under the beds and furniture, cracks and crevices, and closets, and so forth. Throw the vacuum bags away after vacuuming to prevent the fleas from hatching in your vacuum. Seal the bag and toss it in an outside garbage bin with a lid as soon as you're done vacuuming. Wash the dog's bedding in soap and hot water. If you cannot wash the bedding, throw it away. Finally, a commercial insecticide should be sprayed around your house periodically for a few months. You may think you have eliminated all the fleas when suddenly they are back. It may be that a number of pupae lying dormant have hatched. Don't forget to also clean and treat your automobile, pet carrier, garage, or any other place where your pet spends a lot of his time. For flea control in the outdoor environment, use a professional exterminator. Canister sprayers and over the counter flea control outdoor sprays can be purchased at home and garden stores. Follow the instructions carefully. And finally, if you have more than one pet, you must treat all the animals in the household or the fleas will jump from host to host.

Ticks – Ticks are arachnids, a relative to the spider, and are common external parasites. There are approximately 850 species of ticks worldwide. Ticks are classified into two families based on their structure. The family Argasidae contains the argasid ticks, which are soft-shelled. Their head is on the underside of their body and, when viewed from above, the head cannot be seen. The other tick family is Ixodidae. These ticks have a hard

outer covering and are more commonly found than the soft-shelled variety. All ticks have three pairs of legs during the immature stage and four pairs as an adult. Ticks can crawl, but are wingless, so they cannot fly. Ticks possess a sensory apparatus called Haller's organ. This allows them to sense odor, humidity, and you or your pet. They climb upon tall grass and when they sense an animal is close by, they crawl on. A tick's diet consists of blood and only blood. The tick imbeds its mouthparts into the animal's (or human's) skin and sucks the blood. Except for the eggs, ticks require a blood meal to progress to each stage in their life cycle.

Most ticks are referred to as three host ticks, that is, during their development, which takes two years, they feed on three different hosts. All ticks have four stages to their life cycle: egg, larvae, nymph, and adult. The female tick lays between 3,000 and 5,000 eggs. The eggs hatch one or two months later. The next phases in the development of the tick, larval and nymph, may last quite a long time because different ticks need different hosts to feed on. In the dormant stages, the tick can wait for months, or even hibernate during winter, under bushes, in the ground, or in your home until a suitable host comes along.

Ticks can be found almost anywhere and in almost any climate, but are mostly found in damp places, grassy or bushy areas, wooded areas, sandy beaches, and places where infested animals have been. Ticks are most active during spring, summer, and early fall, but can survive in temperatures below freezing. Since dogs frequent areas where ticks live, they are the most affected. Many serious diseases can be transmitted through ticks: Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever (dog tick), Lyme Disease (deer tick), Ehrlichiosis, Typhus, Tick Paralysis, and other illnesses. Humans can suffer from many of the same diseases animals contract from ticks. However, your pets cannot pass along the disease to you. You must come in direct contact with the tick in order to contract any disease.

Protect your pet from ticks with a prevention program and use products that are specifically designed to repel ticks (collars, sprays, dips, and powders). Make sure you have killed any ticks that may be hiding in your home and by treating your yard and nearby wooded areas. Remember that many wild animals, such as deer, field mice and even birds, carry ticks. If you live in an area known for ticks, check your pets regularly (especially those that spend time outdoors) and treat your yard and nearby wooded areas frequently to control any new tick infestation. By killing the ticks on the dog, in the house, and in the yard, you will be able to stop the tick cycle. Regular maintenance will help prevent reinfestation.

Ticks can be found anywhere on the skin, but they prefer areas such as the inside of the ears, between the toes and foot pads, head, neck and shoulders, so pay special attention to these areas. Carefully do a tick check on both you and your pet if you have spent time in a tick infested area. If you find any ticks, remove them immediately. If you have ticks in the house, you will need to remove anything that might offer a hiding place: old boxes, newspapers, stored firewood. Apply a product that gets under furniture and into cracks and crevices. Foggers can be used for an overall general treatment. If you have ticks in the yard, cut back any tall grass around your house. Ticks like to congregate several feet off the ground on vegetation along paths and roadsides. By trimming grass and weeds to below ankle height, ticks won't have a good vantage point and will have fewer opportunities to attach themselves to you or your pet. Ticks also like leaves and

vegetation. Check around doghouses, kennels and other areas where your pet likes to sleep. If possible, stack firewood away from the house. Ticks can crawl up vertical objects, so treat not only the ground, but surfaces up to three or four feet.

Tick Removal - Since humans can get diseases from ticks, it is best not to remove the tick with your bare fingers. Use tweezers or a tick removal instrument. To safely remove a tick:

- Try using an alcohol swab, which may irritate the tick and cause it to loosen its grip.
- Grab the tick with the tweezers where the mouth enters the skin; do not grab it by its body.
- With a slow, steady pull, remove the whole tick without twisting it as you pull.
- Deposit the tick in a jar filled with rubbing alcohol or insecticide to kill it.
- Clean the area with a disinfectant and apply an antibiotic.
- Wash your hands thoroughly.

Swelling and irritation may occur after the tick is removed. This is a reaction to the toxic saliva of the tick, not due to the head remaining in the wound (which rarely happens if you grasp the head of the tick during removal). Do not try to remove a tick by burning it off as this is ineffective and you could burn your dog. Do not use petroleum jelly as this does not cause the tick to back out, and may actually cause the tick to deposit more disease-carrying saliva into the wound. Flushing a tick down the toilet will not kill it. Do not squish the tick with your fingers as the contents of the tick can transmit disease.

Lice – Lice are very small white oval insects that are best seen with a magnifying glass. They feed on your pet's blood, are spread through direct contact and cause severe itching. They spend their whole life cycle on the pet. Fortunately, lice are not seen very often on dogs.

There are a variety of shampoos that contain chemicals that kill lice and fleas. Wash your pet with the medicated shampoo once a week for three weeks. To make sure the treatment is most effective, leave the shampoo on the coat for three to five minutes before rinsing. In addition to shampooing your pet, follow up by spraying him twice a week with an over-the-counter lice or flea spray. Sprays kill any new lice that happen to hatch between shampoos. There are also powders you can use, although they aren't as effective as sprays. Apply the powder generously from head to toe (and tail). When applying to your pet's face, however, rub gently with your fingers to avoid getting it in his eyes or nose. You must also treat the source of the lice. Treat your floors and carpets, and your pet's bedding to prevent reinfestation once your pet is lice free. Also, grooming tools and kennels or pet carriers should also be scrubbed clean with either a mild bleach solution or with soap and water.

Mange Mites – Mange is caused by microscopic insects living in the skin or hair follicles, and are not visible to the naked eye. The most common types of mange mites are demodectic and sarcoptic. Demodectic mites live in the hair follicles and are much more common in dogs than in cats. They cause skin lesions with bare spots or pustular areas. Sarcoptic mites, or scabies, lay their eggs in tunnel-like formations under the skin. The dog scratches and rubs; the skin becomes dry, thickened and wrinkled; the hair falls out;

and crusts form. The itching is severe. Sarcoptic mange is highly contagious to other animals and humans. Only a vet can tell which type of mange your pet has, so it is important to get a checkup at the first sign of mange.

Ear Mites – Ear mites are tiny, eight-legged pests that live in ear canals of dogs and cats, although they can spread to other parts of the body. They are extremely contagious and the mites are easily spread to other pets within the household including cats, dogs, rabbits, etc. Humans are not affected. Dogs or cats with ear mites will scratch around their ears and/or shake their heads. The amount of scratching and shaking depends on the severity of the infestation. With more advanced infestation, the ear canals will bleed and either fresh or dried blood will appear inside the canal. The dried blood resembles coffee grounds. If you look into your pet's ears and notice a buildup of material that looks like coffee grounds, your pet probably has ear mites. Left untreated, ear mites can severely damage the ear canals and eardrum and can cause permanent hearing loss. Your vet will have to check the discharge under a microscope to identify an ear mite infection.

Ringworm – Ringworm is a very contagious fungus that can infect dogs, cats and humans. It usually appears as a ring-shaped, hairless, scaly area surrounded by an outer area that is red. Lesions are most common on the head, but can also occur on the legs, feet or tail. The condition can often appear like, and be confused with, demodectic mange. The fungus is most commonly found either on or in the living quarters of infected animals. Spores from the infected animals can be shed into the environment and live for over 18 months. These spores can be found on an infected animal, grooming equipment or brushes, in a boarding facility or kennel, or in the environment where an infected animal has visited. Because of the spore's ability to survive for long periods of time, your dog can contract ringworm anywhere other dogs or cats have been. If you suspect your pet has ringworm, see your vet immediately to prevent the fungus from spreading.

OTHER SYMPTOMS OF ILLNESS

Always observe your dog with a watchful eye, looking for anything that deviates from what is normal for your dog. Even the best cared-for and supervised puppy or dog can become ill or injured. If your puppy or dog exhibits the following, or other unusual symptoms, call your veterinarian.

- Loss of appetite for more than one day.
- Diarrhea – Occasional diarrhea in dogs is common and can be a response to excitement, dietary change, travel, or change of environment. See your vet if the diarrhea is chronic or if the dog displays the following symptoms: blood in stool; black, tarry stool (indicates upper gastrointestinal bleeding); dehydration, abdominal pain (determined by pushing on abdomen); or high fever.
- Vomiting – Occasional vomiting is common in dogs and can be a response to excitement, diet, food poisoning, eating grass, and many other causes. It is valuable to know the contents of the vomit because some substances are toxic or can perforate or block the bowels. Examining the pile will often reveal the cause (pieces of tinfoil, bones, etc.). See your vet if vomiting continues for more than twelve hours, or if the dog displays the following symptoms: high fever (103° or

- higher); abdominal pain or bloat; blood in vomit; “coffee grounds” in vomit (indicates stomach bleeding); or dehydration (sticky gums; skin between the shoulder blades it stays in a ridge when it is lifted).
- Constipation – Can be caused by too much calcium, the lack of enough water, or by eating an item that not digestible, such as pantyhose, shoes, etc. If his stomach should swell, or if he becomes touch in the stomach area, call your veterinarian immediately.
 - Scooting or dragging the rear end along the ground – This is usually a sign of constipation or of impacted or irritated anal sacs. Scooting can also be caused by a foreign body, such as a stalk of grass in the anus, or by a developing abscess.
 - Difficulty with urination or blood in the urine.
 - Fever – Fever is indicated by: a dry, hot nose; dull eyes; coat that has lost its luster; apathy; a noticeable rise in body heat. Normal temperature is 100.2° to 102.8°F.
 - Pain – For severe or continuous pain, consult your veterinarian immediately.
 - Excessive panting or difficulty breathing – If there is noisy respiration, blue tongue or your dog is gasping for breath, seek veterinarian care immediately.
 - Coughing and sneezing – Dogs normally react to a foreign body or strong fumes in the throat or nasal cavities by coughing or sneezing. But they can also be the first signs of a cold or sore throat. If these symptoms are accompanied by a fever, there is a possibility that canine distemper may be the cause.
 - Head shaking – May indicate an accumulation of earwax, an infection, or foreign body in the ear.
 - Limping – Be suspicious of sudden lameness without apparent cause. Limping can indicate a sprain, fracture, injury, torn ligament or a deteriorating joint. Other causes include circulatory problems, old age, and hip dysplasia.
 - Constant scratching or biting – See your veterinarian if the puppy or dog is scratching or biting to the point of self-mutilation.
 - Not shaking after getting up – Dogs normally shake themselves to get their muscles realigned properly after lying down. This could be a bad sign concerning the overall health of the dog.
 - Bad mouth odor – Bad breath can be caused by tooth decay, inflammation of the gums, wrong diet, or it may be caused by gastritis.
 - Lump beneath the skin – A lump can be a harmless pimple or a malignant growth. Since lumps can grow quickly and become dangerous, it is best to have the dog checked by a veterinarian.
 - Biting, aggressive or other unusual behavior in a normally even-tempered puppy or dog.

GIVING MEDICATION

If your veterinarian prescribes pills or liquid medication, give it to your puppy or dog directly, rather than try to mix it in with his food (unless otherwise directed by the doctor). Most dogs can sense when something unwanted has been added to their food and will leave the medicine untouched. Stay calm, be patient, and speak reassuringly to your puppy or dog while giving medication. If you aren't sure how to administer the medication, ask your veterinarian to show you.

To give a pill: Place the palm of your hand over his muzzle. With the thumb on one side and your fingers on the other, press hard against and under the upper teeth. Tilt the head up slightly. Use the middle finger of your other hand to push the lower jaw open. With your thumb and index finger, place the pill in the center on the very back of his tongue. Close his mouth quickly and firmly stroke downward along his throat until he swallows.

To give liquid medication: Gently tilt his head back at a 45° angle. Make a pouch in the corner of the lip fold by pulling the cheek outward. Using a spoon or eyedropper, slowly pour the liquid into the pouch. Encourage him to swallow by stroking his throat. If your dog does not swallow the liquid automatically, jiggle the pouch slightly or tap him in the nose with your finger; this will cause him to swallow. Be sure to keep the head tilted back until the liquid is swallowed.

SPAYING AND NEUTERING

Unless you have a purebred for breeding purposes, spaying or neutering is recommended. Millions of puppies and dogs, many of which are purebred, are euthanized each year because there are not enough homes for all the unwanted pets.

Spaying (for females)

Spaying is the removal of the ovaries and uterus. It involves giving the dog a general anesthetic and abdominal surgery. The veterinarian may keep your puppy or dog in the hospital for a few days, depending on her age and condition. Female dogs mature sooner than males, and spaying should be done before the first heat cycle. The operation will eliminate heat cycles and possibly contribute to longer life by reducing or eliminating the chance of many health problems. If your female puppy or dog is not spayed, you will need to keep her confined to the indoors until her heat cycle is over. If you do not, male dogs will be attracted to her scent and may climb or dig their way into your yard, resulting in unwanted pregnancy and puppies. A heat cycle generally lasts three weeks.

Neutering (for males)

Castration is the removal of the testicles through surgery. Neutering is a relatively safe procedure and in most cases, produces mild soreness and requires only a brief hospital stay. Consult your veterinarian about the best age to neuter your puppy or dog, although it is usually best to neuter before the dog reaches puberty so he will not develop sexually related behaviors. These behaviors include an aggressive temperament, roaming, “marking territory” in the house, or mounting objects or people. Neutering may also help reduce his risk of developing prostate infections or prostate cancer.

FIRST AID

No matter how carefully you supervise your puppy or dog, accidents can happen. It is important to keep calm, act quickly, and safely transport your injured dog to the veterinarian as soon as possible. Always call the vet's office first to make sure someone is there and to alert the office about your emergency. If you are uncertain about what to do, the veterinarian can advise you.

Plan Ahead

Plan ahead so you will be prepared in case of an emergency. Make a list of the phone numbers and address of your veterinarian and an after hours clinic if there is one in your area, including directions on how to get to the office(s). Also note the phone number of the poison treatment hotline in your area. If you are unsure of this number, ask your veterinarian's office.

Prepare a first aid kit. Here are some essential items to include:

- a veterinary first aid manual
- medications prescribed by your veterinarian
- assorted sterile dressings, gauze rolls or pads, adhesive tape, absorbent cotton and swabs
- ace bandage
- muzzle
- rubbing alcohol
- hydrogen peroxide (3%) to clean and disinfect minor wounds and scratches (not to be used on deep puncture wounds)
- antibiotic ointment
- hydrocortisone ointment
- eyewash
- rectal thermometer (use only if you are confident you can use it properly without harming your dog)
- scissors, preferably with rounded tips
- tweezers
- eyedropper
- penlight or small flashlight
- heavy blanket

Muzzling

To prevent injury to yourself and others, it is recommended you muzzle an injured dog before attempting any first aid. Any injured animal, even normally gentle or well trained, can bite when injured, frightened or in pain. In an emergency, a muzzle can be made out of many materials (scarf, stocking, necktie, dish towel, cloth belt). Approach the injured animal cautiously, loop the fabric over his muzzle and tie a single knot under the chin. Finish by bringing the fabric ends behind his ears and tie the ends in a bow. Do not muzzle a dog that choking, vomiting or whose breathing is labored.

Moving an Injured Animal

If you suspect your puppy or dog has internal injuries, carefully slide him onto a board, blanket, jacket, or other makeshift stretcher. Be very careful and gentle when moving an injured animal, especially if you suspect a spinal injury. For a puppy or small dog with minor injuries, carry him by supporting his rear end in the crook of your arm, using the same arm to cradle his stomach and chest. Support his head and neck with your other arm. For a large dog, it would be best to carry the dog with two people; one supporting the chest, the other supporting the rear and abdomen. If you must carry a large dog alone, stoop and wrap one arm around his front legs and your other arm around his hind legs

and lift. If necessary, get a friend or neighbor to drive you and your injured dog to the veterinarian. This will allow you to hold your dog during the trip to prevent further injuries.

Emergency Treatments

The following first aid treatments should be used only until you can get professional help for your injured puppy or dog.

Allergic Reaction – Allergic reactions to various plants, insect bites, and other substances are common and generally do not represent an emergency. Symptoms include: red, runny eyes; runny nose; sneezing; reverse sneezing (breathing in nose and out mouth); swelling of head, lips, eyes; skin rashes (reaction to poison oak, etc.). Take your puppy or dog to the veterinarian immediately if his reaction seems severe.

Bleeding – Apply direct pressure with a compress (clean cloth or gauze pad) over the bleeding, absorbing the blood and allowing it to clot. Do not disturb blood clots after they have formed. If blood soaks through, do not remove the compress; add additional layers of cloth and continue the direct pressure. The compress can be bound in place using a bandage. In the absence of a compress, a bare hand or finger can be used. If there is a severely bleeding wound on the foot or leg, gently elevate the leg so that the wound is above the level of the heart. This will help slow the bleeding. Elevation of a limb combined with direct pressure is an effective way to stop bleeding. Take your puppy or dog to the veterinarian immediately if bleeding is excessive or does not stop after the wound is bandaged. In a life or death situation, you can apply a tourniquet. Tourniquets should only be used when all other methods of controlling bleeding have failed. There is a high risk of stopping circulation to the affected area which could result in the loss of a limb. Release the tourniquet every 10 minutes to allow circulation to the affected area. Never place a tourniquet over a fracture or joint.

Breathing problems – Breathing problems could be caused by asthma, lung infections, overheating, electrical shock or choking on a foreign object. If your puppy or dog gasps for breath, breathes noisily, or shows other signs of inadequate breathing, such as a blue tongue, seek medical help immediately.

Broken bone – Before treatment, take precautions to prevent injury to the first aid provider. Muzzle or cover the head of the dog. With gentle pressure, feel the limb or area that you suspect might be broken. Open fractures should be dressed with a wet dressing applied over the opening and bone. Never attempt to set or push a protruding bone back into position. If possible, the limb should be immobilized with a splint to prevent further injury. A splint should extend past at least one joint above and one joint below the fracture site. A splint can be made out of newspapers, magazines, or even sticks of wood. Fix the splint in place with tape or cloth. Restrict movement and control any serious bleeding while en route to the veterinarian. If the splint is difficult to apply or the animal objects, do not attempt splinting, but carefully transport the animal to a veterinarian.

Burns – For first degree burns (reddened skin and singed hair), apply cold water or ice. Veterinary care is usually not needed and healing is rapid. For second- or third-degree burns (skin may be swollen, loose or discolored), cover the burn with a cool, damp cloth

(but do not use cotton). Try to keep the puppy or dog lying down and restrained during transportation, and rush him to the veterinarian for treatment. Because the risk of infection is too high, do not apply any ointments to the burns. For dogs burned by chewing on electrical cords, there will be burns on the lips, tongue and gums. There is a threat that the heart may stop or that fluid may get into the lungs. Seek medical help immediately. For chemical burns, flush the skin with water for 10 to 15 minutes until all traces of the chemical are gone before taking puppy or dog to the veterinarian.

Choking – If your dog is pawing at its mouth, gagging, coughing, drooling or has collapsed, immediately open its mouth and look down its throat. If the object is visible, pull it out, using your fingers, tweezers or a pair of pliers. If you cannot see the object or cannot pull it out, hit the dog behind the neck or between the shoulders to try and dislodge it. If this fails, try a Heimlich maneuver adapted for dogs: grasp either side of the dog's ribcage and apply quick, firm pressure. If the dog can get some air around the obstruction, get to your veterinarian as soon as possible. If the dog cannot get air, work on getting the object out of its throat before moving the dog.

Drowning – Remove the animal from the water. If possible, hold the dog up by the hind legs to allow the water to drain from the trachea and lungs. Place him on his side with his head and neck extended. It is preferable to have the head slightly lower than the body. Pull the tongue forward and check that there is no foreign material obstructing the airway. Gently press and release the ribcage with a flat hand steadily at two-second intervals to expel any water from the lungs and stomach. Repeat until the dog is breathing and wrap him in a blanket to keep him warm. Get veterinary help immediately.

Electric shock – Never touch an animal that is touching an exposed electrical wire. Turn off the current and remove the wire or source of electricity (use something non-conductive, such as dry wood or rubber). Check for breathing and pulse. If necessary, administer CPR. Electric shock can produce burns on the lips, tongue and gums. The dog may salivate profusely and have problems breathing. Severe electric shock can result in unconsciousness or death. Get veterinary help immediately. Any animal that has suffered electric shock should be taken to the vet even if there are no apparent complications. Electrocutation is a life-threatening emergency and may cause abnormal electrical activity of the heart or a build up of fluid in the lungs that could be fatal hours after the shock.

Eye injury – Do not attempt to remove a foreign object from the eye. Eyelid lacerations can bleed profusely. Apply direct pressure with gauze or a clean cloth to the lid for five minutes to control the bleeding. Restrain the dog to prevent self-injury and take him to the veterinarian immediately. Even minor injuries to the eye, if not treated properly, can cause vision loss.

Frostbite – Your pet can suffer from frostbite on his ears, feet, and tail. Symptoms include pale, glossy skin that reddens and becomes painful, sluggishness, general weakness, and low body temperature (100.5°F or less). Move the pet to a warm environment. To warm the animal, wrap him in a blanket (put a hot water bottle in the blanket to add heat), turn on the car heater, or use your own body. Thaw out frostbitten areas by applying warm, moist towels that are changed frequently. Continue until the

affected areas become flushed. Severe frostbite can result in damaged feet and ears, so get veterinarian help immediately.

Heatstroke or overheating – Symptoms include rapid, noisy breathing; salivation; possible vomiting; dog is down and unable to get up; staggering; high body temperature (104° to 107°F). If possible, hose down or submerge the dog in cold water up to his neck for at least 10 minutes, place in front of a fan or air conditioner, and/or apply an ice pack to his head and stomach. Take him to the veterinarian when his temperature begins to decline.

Internal bleeding – Internal bleeding is a life threatening condition and the animal should be transported to a veterinarian immediately. Symptoms include: weakness, pale gums, abdominal pain, difficulty breathing, and a weak pulse. If the animal was injured by a car, assume that there is some internal bleeding. Internal bleeding of the stomach is usually indicated by a bright or dark red color to the dog's vomit. If its excrement is dark and tarry, or bright red, the intestines may be bleeding. If a red foamy material is coughed up, the lungs may be affected. Some poisons can cause internal bleeding, including anticoagulant rodent poisons. Lay the animal down and cover it lightly while en route to the veterinarian. If possible, call your veterinarian so that he or she can prepare for your arrival.

Poisoning – Symptoms will vary depending on the type of poison taken. In general, symptoms include lack of coordination, retching and vomiting, diarrhea, salivation, labored breathing, dilated pupils, delirium, collapse, and convulsions. Call the Animal Poison Hotline (1-800-548-2423) or your veterinarian for advice. They will need to know what the dog ingested and how much before prescribing treatment. Do not induce vomiting unless the veterinarian recommends it, as some poisons can be more hazardous when vomited. If possible, take the poison container with you to the veterinarian.

Shock – Shock is the body's reaction to any serious injury and can be life threatening in itself because it reduces the blood supply to the brain and other vital organs. The condition is life threatening and requires immediate attention and treatment. Symptoms include: pale mouth, lips and eyelid color; weak and rapid pulse; rapid breathing; weakness; collapse; unconsciousness; fixated stare; dilated pupils; a low body temperature (100°F) with skin and legs cool to the touch. If the animal is unconscious, elevate the dog's hindquarters. Wrap him in a blanket or coat to maintain body heat and take him to the veterinarian immediately, without taking time to treat minor injuries.

GROOMING

Regular grooming sessions do more than keep your puppy or dog clean and healthy. They strengthen your bond with him and allow you to check for any abnormalities. Grooming will vary according to breed, but you should regularly check the condition of his eyes, ears, teeth, skin, paws, and nails.

Brushing and Combing

Most puppies and dogs enjoy being brushed and combed, especially if you hold the skin tight with one hand and brush with the other, so it doesn't pull. Shorthaired breeds should be brushed two to three times a week, while longer-haired breeds require daily brushing. Using the right tools for your dog's coat will make grooming easy. Shorthaired dogs need a soft or medium bristle brush, rubber curry or grooming glove, and a fine-tooth comb. Medium length hair, woolly coats, or curly hair should be groomed with a wire pin brush and wide-tooth comb. For longhaired dogs, use a soft-natural bristle brush and a wide-tooth comb.

Nail Care

All dogs need proper nail and foot care. Nails that are not kept short will grow too long and become irritating and painful to the dog. It can also cause the feet to splay (spread) and nails can curl around and grow into a dog's pads. Most dogs, especially those kept inside, will need their nails clipped regularly. Dogs that walk a lot on a hard surface, such as a concrete run, usually keep their nails worn down to an acceptable length. For small dogs and puppies, use scissor-type clippers. For medium or large dogs, use either the guillotine-type nail clippers or large scissor-type nail clippers.

To clip the nails, hold your dog's foot and gently push down with your thumb at the base of each nail. This will cause the nail to extend slightly, making it easier for you to see the nail. Trim each nail at a 45-degree angle away from the dog so that the newly cut nail is flush with the floor when they walk. There is a blood vessel, called the quick, in each nail. Do not cut the nail so short that it cuts into the quick. It will bleed and could be painful to the dog. If this happens, apply a styptic pencil or direct pressure with gauze to stop the bleeding. The pinkish color of the quick is easy to see in dogs with light-colored nails, but almost impossible to see on dogs that have dark nails. Shine a bright penlight through the nail to locate the quick from the underside of each nail before you begin clipping. Cut each nail back just a little at a time until you get close, but not up to, the quick. For dogs with dewclaws (the fifth claw on the inside of the leg), trim just like any other nails.

Dental Care

It is important to care for your puppy or dog's teeth with routine examinations of his mouth and brushing his teeth. Plaque forms continuously on the teeth, and if not removed, it will mineralize and turn into tartar. As the tartar builds, the plaque will continue to accumulate and infect the gums and the roots of the teeth. Untreated, this infection causes the gums to recede and teeth to loosen and eventually fall out. It can also cause or worsen other conditions such as diseases of the heart, lungs, liver and kidneys. Provide your puppy or dog with something to chew on that will act like a scraper and help prevent tartar buildup. There are dental toys made specifically to aid in the removal of plaque. Feeding a nutritionally balanced dry kibble and dog treats will also help exercise the teeth and gums. However, these measures won't sufficiently clean the teeth enough to prevent dental disease. Your pet's teeth should be examined and cleaned by your veterinarian on a regular basis. Between professional cleanings, you should clean your pet's teeth at home. If you start when he's young, it will be easier to get him used to it. Your pet's teeth should be brushed as often as possible, ideally every day. There are various toothbrushes, sponges and pads available at most pet supply stores. The choice of

what to use depends on the health of your pet's gums, the size of his mouth, and your ability to clean the teeth. There are also toothpastes made specifically designed for pets that have ingredients that continue to work in the mouth even after brushing. Consult with your veterinarian on which product would be the best for you and your pet, and for instructions on how to use the product correctly and safely.

Eye and Ear Care

During your grooming sessions, check the condition of your puppy or dog's body, especially the eyes and ears. The eyes should be clear and bright, and free of any red spots, heavy discharge, or other abnormal conditions. A slight buildup of mucus in the corners of the eyes is not abnormal. This discharge can easily be cleaned away with a cotton ball moistened with warm water.

Check your puppy or dog's ears at least once a month, or more frequently for longhaired dogs since they are more prone to ear problems. Trim away any excess hair that might prevent air from getting into his ears. Check the ear canal. If it is sensitive to touch, has a foul odor, or is red or inflamed, see your veterinarian. Ears should be cleaned once a month, or more often if your dog has a history of ear problems. There are special cleaning solutions for this purpose, or you can use a cotton swab soaked in mineral oil or alcohol. Clean only the part of the ear canal that you can see; otherwise, you may damage the eardrum. Ask your veterinarian to recommend a cleaning solution and have him/her show you how to clean your dog's ears properly.

BATHING

In the past, it was suggested that frequent bathing of your pet would damage the coat. However, modern pet shampoos are designed for dogs of all ages and coat types, and enable the owner to bathe their pet as often as desired or needed. Hair coats differ in density, length and texture among breeds of dogs, and even among individuals of the same breed. Experts suggest that you choose products that clean the hair and skin without stripping them of their natural oils. If you are not sure about how often to bathe your dog, consult with your veterinarian. Here are the steps to bathing your dog:

Thoroughly brush or comb your puppy or dog to remove dead hair, dirt, mats and burrs.

Gather all your supplies and keep them within arm's reach. If you are bathing your pet indoors in a bathtub, place a rubber non-slip mat on the bottom of the tub to keep him from slipping and moving around on the slick surface. Pets can get nervous if they lose their footing and may try to jump out of the tub.

Protect your pet's ears by placing one or two cotton balls in each ear as a barrier should any water accidentally get in the ear canal. If the pet has floppy ears, press the ear leather (flap) against the ear to help keep the water from soaking the cotton. If the pet's ears stand up, cup your hand over the opening of the ear while wetting and rinsing.

Protect your pet's eyes by placing a small drop of sterile eye ointment or mineral oil in the corner of each eye to provide a protective film. This will keep soaps and chemicals from irritating the eyes.

1. If you need to lift your dog into a tub, make sure you lift him in properly to avoid injury to you or your dog. Place one arm under the chest in front of the dog's front legs, and place another arm behind the rear legs just under the tail. Keep your upper body upright and lift with your legs, not with your back.
2. Wet the hair coat thoroughly all the way to the skin. The temperature should be lukewarm; not too hot or too cold. Shampoo works best with lukewarm water and your pet will be more comfortable if the water is somewhat warm. Hold the spray nozzle as close to the skin as possible, about one inch from the coat. This will allow you to get the deepest penetration of water into the coat without frightening the dog. Start with the hindquarters and work to the front of the pet. The head should be the last thing you wet, and the flow of water should be gentle and not directly sprayed into the pet's face. Slightly lift the face so that the water runs down the back of the head instead of into the eyes or nose. Use your hand to help move the water around the eyes, nose, and mouth.
3. Once wet, apply the shampoo and lather as you would your own hair. Start with the hindquarters and work to the front of the pet, leaving the head for last. Make sure you work the shampoo through the hair to the skin; don't just wash the top of the coat. A rubber brush can be used on breeds with shorter hair to help work the shampoo down into the coat. For a pet with especially long hair, massage the coat in the direction of hair growth so the hair doesn't tangle. A tearless shampoo may be used on the face. Be sure to read the directions on the bottle of shampoo for the best results.
4. Wash areas that need special attention: between the pads, under the stomach, under the tail, under the neck, in facial wrinkles, and the ear leather. A rubber brush can help remove feces or other matter that may be clinging to the hair.
5. Rinsing is the most important step, as any leftover shampoo will dull the coat and cause skin irritation. Check the temperature of the water. Begin rinsing with the head and hand rinse the soap from the face. Continue to rinse the rest of the pet using your free hand to knead the soap out of the coat.
6. Apply a moisturizer, if needed. Moisturizers are designed to seal in the moisture from the pet's own skin. These can be used on a regular basis for pets that are prone to dry skin or dandruff. In most cases, the solution is massaged into the skin after bathing and left on the coat.
7. Once you are done bathing and rinsing, squeeze the excess water out of the coat with your hands. Then dry the pet with a towel to remove excess moisture. Do not vigorously rub the coat of a longhaired dog (to prevent tangles). Shorthaired dogs can have their coats dried in a circular motion. Remove the cotton from the ears and use the towel to absorb any moisture in the ear. If a hair dryer is used, make sure it is set on a cool (not warm or hot) temperature setting as dog hair is flammable. When working on the head, never direct the flow of air into the pet's face.

INFORMAL TRAINING

THE USE OF THE TIE-DOWN

The tie-down (a short length of plastic coated wire cable with a loop on one end and a snap on the other), a chain leash, short chain, etc., can be used as an alternative to a crate for some purposes. The length of the tie-down ranges from 12 to 24 inches. The length you use is determined by the size of your dog. The tie-down can be looped around the leg of a piece of furniture, tied to an eyebolt, attached to the rear seat belts in your car, etc. The tie-down is not used as a form of punishment, but rather as a way to develop habits. It is important that the tie-down be used as a positive training tool and not for a punishment.

The tie-down is used as a training tool in the following areas:

Housebreaking – The tie-down is used as a training tool, as well as a housebreaking method. Using a crate for housebreaking works, but it doesn't let you move the dog around as much as you might like. By using the tie-down, the dog can be laying right next to you or across the room. The crate makes a good den but can become a place to be defended when in trouble with the handler. The crate is also restrictive when the dog tries to get comfortable. When dogs sleep they like to lie on their sides and stretch out their legs. This can't be done if the crate isn't large enough, whereas a tie-down does not have this restriction.

Destructive behavior – Using the tie-down prevents the dog from destroying things when left unsupervised for short periods of time. Make the dog feel comfortable before leaving him. Give the dog lots of praise and tell him how wonderful he is for staying there.

Socialization – The tie-down allows the dog to be a part of the social activities in your home without being a pest or begging for attention. The tie-down is especially good for dogs that want to be at the table or that get on the kitchen counters. The dog may be kept in place and given lots of praise while staying there. By establishing his place, you should be able to send the dog to his designated spot after using the tie-down for a few weeks.

DISCIPLINE

When we speak of discipline, we mean teaching your dog the difference between acceptable and unacceptable behaviors. In order to do this, you must have a basic understanding of how your dog learns. Dogs do not learn in the same way people do. They do not understand concepts such as “right” and “wrong,” but they do make associations between events rather easily. They rely much more on body movement, basic instincts, hearing and scent abilities, and understanding. Most importantly, dogs learn through repetition. Your dog will learn his actions produce specific results. If a positive result occurs after a behavior (reward), that behavior is likely to occur again. If something bad or negative happens after a behavior (punishment), the chance of it occurring again will be less.

The term punishment in dog training is different than the way humans think of punishment. In dog training, we think of corrections as punishment; an unpleasant experience happens as a result of an undesirable behavior. This unpleasant experience should cause the dog to avoid that behavior. The correction must be forceful enough to make a lasting impression on the dog, but not enough to cause any physical or psychological damage to the dog. Punishment covers a large range including: withholding a reward, ignoring the dog, startling loud noises, a quick choke collar correction, a quick pinch collar correction, an electric shock from a remote shock trainer, restraining the dog's movements, isolating the dog, or confining the dog. The correction must always be tailored to the temperament of the dog and the situation. What matters is not punishing a dog, but making the activity you disapprove of unpleasant enough so that the dog gives it up.

The pleasant or unpleasant result of an action must be immediate for the training to be effective. If you do not catch the dog in the act of misbehaving, you cannot administer punishment without confusing the dog. Do not yell at him, hit him, or throw him outside in the yard; he won't understand why he is being punished. If he looks guilty and is cowering, it is because he knows you are angry with him (by your body language and tone of voice), not because he eliminated in the house, chewed on the furniture, dug up the garden, etc. When you do catch your dog misbehaving, say "No" in a stern voice and give a jerk or two on his collar, then redirect him to an acceptable behavior. For example, the dog is chewing on something you do not want him to chew on. Redirect him to one of his own chew toys and then praise him. The key is to make an impression on the dog so he won't want to make the same mistake again. Use only enough force to make him stop whatever he is doing and give him lots of praise when he stops.

If you need to correct him from a distance, for example he refuses to come when called, raise your voice and call him, stepping towards the dog. If he still refuses to come, use a throw chain. Throw it near him, but not at him (do not throw keys or any sharp objects at your dog). This will startle and distract him, but will not harm him. When training indoors, use a rolled up towel with rubber bands or string, so it resembles a folded newspaper instead of a throw chain.

Remember, most things we would punish our dogs for indicate a lack of training. Rather than punish them for doing something you don't want, train them to do something you would prefer. Set up rules of conduct and consistently enforce them. Inconsistency will only delay training and confuse the dog.

PROBLEM SOLVING

An important part of pet ownership is teaching your puppy or dog proper pet manners and how to be a good neighbor. It is your responsibility to have control over your dog and to correct bad behavior. Your pet should never be left outside unattended and you should always obey leash laws. Obedience training is an important factor in this process. Knowing a simple command, such as to come when called, could save your pet's life. Some corrections should begin when your dog is a puppy, even before he is leash trained, while other corrections require a leash and collar. Remember, your puppy or dog is like a small child. He might misbehave due to curiosity or boredom, not because he knows what

he's doing is unacceptable. Remember, with any unacceptable canine behavior, prevention is easier than treatment.

To correct common behavior problems, follow these basic steps:

- Get your puppy or dog's attention using a low-pitched, stern voice saying "No!" or "Ahh!" to stop the behavior.
- Provide an acceptable alternative behavior or distraction.
- Praise correct behavior in a happy voice ("Good dog!") and pet him or give treats.

CHEWING – Chewing is a normal, natural canine behavior. Puppies usually begin chewing due to teething, boredom or stress. Chewing on anything but designated chew toys should be discouraged immediately, or it can develop into a habit that will carry over into their adult lives. You must catch the dog in the act to prevent this problem. If you catch your puppy or dog chewing on something that is off limits, verbally say "No!" and redirect his attention to one of his toys. When he chews on his toy, praise him verbally and pet him. If you are unable to supervise your pet, put him in a crate, on a tie-down or in an area where he cannot get into mischief. Never give your puppy or dog any objects you don't want them to chew on. For example, don't give your dog a shoe, sock or household item as a toy because the dog will think of all of these items as toys. The dog will not be able to differentiate between your discarded items and the good stuff.

GROWLING and BITING – Most dogs that bite began as growling puppies that were never corrected. Then came snapping and when they got away with that, they started biting. Usually, once a dog has learned to bite a human, he can no longer be trusted. The solution is to prevent this behavior from starting. When a puppy first begins to growl, put him on leash and jerk the leash saying, "No." Then praise him calmly when he stops. A puppy may nip at you while playing. He doesn't understand that his biting is painful. When he bites, give his leash a corrective jerk and say "No." Then slowly resume play. If he continues to nip at you, stop playing and ignore him. Through repetition, he will learn that every time he bites, he loses his playmate and that ends the fun. Do not allow your puppy or dog to bite or chew on your hands, and avoid playing aggressive games such as tug of war. If your dog exhibits dangerous behavior toward any person, particularly children, seek professional help from a qualified trainer.

EXCESSIVE BARKING – Barking is a normal, natural behavior for dogs. It is the way dogs communicate, it relieves tension and boredom, and drives strangers away. It is a "self-reinforcing" activity for the dog, which means that the act of barking is its own reward in many instances. Because of this, barking is one of the most difficult canine behaviors to modify. Barking should stop when the dog is commanded to do so. For this reason, we need to control the behavior when possible and teach the dog when it is and is not acceptable to bark. In most cases, excessive barking can be corrected with a stern "No...Quiet!" Praise your puppy or dog when he is quiet. Be consistent every time your dog is barking inappropriately. Give the quiet command and only reward when the dog is still and quiet. If your dog is being quiet when he would normally bark, make sure you give lots of praise with a pat or treat to reward his good behavior. The younger the dog, the less time he has had to develop the barking habit, and the more quickly he will learn the quiet command.

DIGGING – Dogs dig. It is a very natural thing for them to do. They dig to escape, find a cool spot to rest in, because they are bored, or because they were bred to. To stop your puppy or dog from digging, there are many different procedures to try. First, you must supervise your dog in the yard either with you out there or while watching through a window. When the dog begins to dig, you interrupt the behavior with something the dog will want to avoid (a loud noise, your voice, a thrown choke chain). You can put pepper, citrus or diluted ammonia in the inappropriate area. There are also commercial products (such as Get Off My Garden) that create a scent in the area, which is repugnant to animals and interferes with the animal's sense of smell. You can fill the holes with the dog's feces and cover with about a half an inch of dirt. Most dogs do not like to step or dig in their own mess. You can fill the holes with debris (gravel, sticks, etc.) or chicken wire, hoping the dog will get discouraged and give up. If the dog is digging against the fence line, try running a piece of fencing about an inch under the ground along the fence line. It will not feel good on the paws and nails. You can also try putting an electric wire along the fence line.

JUMPING UP – Dogs jump up because they want to greet you at face level, to entice you to play or for attention. It is a common problem, especially with active dogs who are playful and like people. Jumping, barking and racing around the house turns into a great game they play every time someone comes through the door. Your puppy or dog needs to learn how to greet people calmly, and needs to learn the commands "off" and "sit." Keeping your puppy or dog on a leash when meeting people at home can help in teaching him proper greeting behavior. As your puppy or dog begins to jump up onto someone, pull the leash in a downward movement as you say "Off" in a firm tone and move toward him in a threatening manner (as his mother would). As your dog backs away, give him the "Sit" command, helping him into the position if he is still learning it. Once he is sitting, praise him calmly with petting and food treats. While you are in training, ask your guests to withhold petting or giving the dog attention until he is calm and holding the "Sit" position.

BEGGING – Begging at the table is a common problem and dogs beg because they receive reinforcement for doing so. Just feeding your dog from the table once or twice will teach the dog to expect it. Training should begin at an early age, or in the case of an older dog, as soon as you bring him/her into your home. If your dog appears at the table while you are eating and begs, scold him with a firm "No." You may need to confine him to his crate, or teach him to do a down/stay near the table or to stay in his bed while you are eating. When you're done, say "Okay" and release the dog.

STEALING FOOD – The key to stopping your dog from stealing food from the countertop or table is prevention. All dogs would rather eat human food. Therefore, if food is left lying around, the temptation is too great for them not to sample. Do not leave food out where the dog can reach it. Establish a regular feeding schedule and location for your dog's meals and do not allow the dog to eat anywhere else. If your dog has already learned how to steal snacks, set him up to get caught. Put your dog on leash when it is likely to steal food. As the dog takes the bait, use a corrective jerk and firmly say "No." Once the dog turns his attention to you, give him lots of praise.

RUMMAGING IN TRASH CANS – A dog’s natural urge and sense of smell will lead him to garbage cans and wastebaskets that contain food odors and interesting papers and packages, many of which could be harmful. The best way to avoid this problem is to keep these items out of your puppy or dog’s reach. If this is not possible, correct the dog with a firm “No” and redirect his attention away from the area with an alternate activity.

RUNNING OUT DOORWAYS – You must teach your dog that running out an open door or unlatched gate is not acceptable. Put the leash on your dog, give the “Sit” and then “Stay” commands. Open the door. If the dog gets up, give a leash correction, say “No” and take him back to the original position. Repeat the commands until the dog stays, and then give lots of praise and a treat. Once you have good reliability on leash, remove the leash and practice until the dog sits and stays every time the door is open. Eventually, the dog should sit and stay near the open door instead of bolting out as people come or go, or while you are getting ready to take him out for a walk.

ROAMING/ JUMPING FENCES – Male, intact dogs are more inclined to roam, especially if they catch the scent of a female dog in season. Dogs jump fences: to chase kids, joggers, other animals, etc.; if they are uneasy or nervous; to escape from loud noises (fireworks) that frightened them. Traditional fencing usually does a good job of containing dogs, but dogs may be able to climb over or dig under the fence. If you don’t have a fenced yard, you can have an “invisible” electronic fence installed. With this type of fencing, an electric wire is buried in the ground along the boundaries of your yard. The wire transmits a radio signal to a receiver, which is attached to your dog’s collar, which beeps as he nears the boundary. If your dog gets too close to the boundary, he receives a mild shock. Another alternative is to find an obedience trainer who can help you teach your dog his boundaries and where he is allowed to go and where he’s not. This can involve a lot of work, but once a dog knows his boundaries, he’ll usually stick to them. Make sure your dog is getting enough exercise to prevent boredom and restlessness; at least 20 to 30 minutes twice a day.

MOTIVATIONAL TRAINING

Play is a powerful motivator for a puppy or dog. However, constructive play is often ignored as a way to build an understanding between you and your dog. Games can develop an enjoyment of learning. Directed play can instill a happy working attitude while your dog is learning the fundamentals of basic obedience commands. At about twelve weeks of age, your dog is over the fear period and is ready to become actively involved in play training. At this time, he should be strongly attached to humans and highly motivated to participate in any activity involving them. However, play is not formal training, and pressure or force must be avoided during play under all circumstances.

COME – This command should be introduced as early as possible, and can be started as early as seven weeks. This should be the first spoken command your dog learns, and should always be followed with praise. Tell your dog to “Come” when you feed him (instant reward). Have him follow you around while using an animated tone, saying his name and “Come.” You can use toys to further motivate him to come to you. Be sure to

give him lots of praise when he comes to you, both verbally and with petting. Never call the dog to you to reprimand him. If the dog needs a correction, go to him. A dog should always feel that coming to you is a good thing.

Leash training: start with your dog sitting a few feet away from you with his leash on. Call him in a happy voice, using his name and the “Come” command. Tug him gently. Welcome him by bending down on one knee with your arms out. When he reaches you, he may be so excited that he jumps on you or rolls on the ground. Since he responded correctly to the command, do not correct for these other behaviors. Initially let him be overly enthusiastic, and then gradually encourage him to sit when he comes to you.

SIT – Hold a piece of kibble or dog treat just over your dog’s forehead as you say “Sit.” Move the food above your dog’s head toward his back as he falls into the sit position. Praise him and offer the food as an extra reward.

Leash training: With your dog standing on your left side, hold the leash in your right hand. Push his rump down with your left hand as you pull up on the leash. At the same time, say “Sit.” When your dog sits, praise him. Then give the command while pulling on the leash but without pushing his rump down. When this is successful, give just the command, so the dog responds to the command alone. A well-trained dog automatically sits beside his handler whenever the handler stops. Teaching your dog to sit at your left side will get him used to being in that position when he learns the heel command.

STAY – Leash training: With your dog sitting at your left side, hold the leash above his head and apply just enough tension to restrain him. Put your left hand, fingers together and palm facing the dog’s face, in front of his muzzle and say “Stay.” Step in front of him with your right foot so he can’t move. Repeat the process, backing away a step or two from the dog each time. If he comes toward you, put him back in the sit position and start over. Initially, only have him stay a few seconds and gradually increase the duration of the stay. When the dog stays in place, return to him (the dog at your left side) and praise him with a treat and pet him. Be calm and don’t move too far away too soon.

HEEL – Leash training: The leash should be in your right hand and should be loose (not taught and putting pressure on the dog’s neck). You can have a piece of food or a favorite toy in your left hand to motivate him and keep his attention. With the dog at your left side, step forward with your left foot. If he doesn’t move, give a gentle jerk on the leash and say his name. If he runs ahead, let him reach the end of the leash. When it restrains him, say his name and the word “Heel” as you make a sharp U-turn to the right and walk briskly in that direction. The dog will be behind you and will be forced to catch up. Praise him as he comes alongside you. Now you can teach your dog to walk at your side. Begin with the dog seated on your left, say his name and “Heel” and begin walking. If the dog moves ahead of your left thigh, give him a corrective jerk, say “No” and make an immediate U-turn. Every time you stop, have him sit at your left side.

DOWN – There are two methods for teaching the down command: 1) The standard method is to hold the leash in your right hand, kneel down on your left knee and give the “Down” command in a firm voice. At the same time, slightly lift the dog’s two front paws with your left hand and pull them forward to ease him to the ground. Repeat this

procedure until the dog is not resisting and praise him after each repetition. 2) The second method begins with the dog at your side in the Sit/Stay position. Kneel down on your left knee with the leash extended to the right of the dog about twelve inches and with no slack. Bring your left hand up above the dog's eye level and slightly to the right of his head. Keep it flattened, fingers close, palm down. Give the dog the command "Down" as you begin to lower your hand to the ground. As your hand goes down, it will press on the leash and push the dog down. As the dog begins to obey more reliably, you can move to the front of the dog and further and further away. Praise him each time he reaches the ground and use a corrective jerk if he tries to get up.

FINISH – In this exercise, the dog moves from a Sit position in front of your, to a Sit position in the heel position on your left side. Have a toy or a food treat in your left hand and hold it in front of your dog's muzzle. Give the "Heel" command and swing your arm out and back to your left hip, baiting the dog with the object in your hand. He should sit automatically when he is in the Heel position. If he doesn't, tell him to "Sit" to finish the exercise.

ATTENTION – Call the dog's name using a consistent tone of voice. When the dog makes eye contact with you, praise enthusiastically with "good dog" and give him a treat. Walk away, and then repeat again. If the dog ignores you, get up close and let him smell the treat, then proceed with calling his name and giving praise when he makes eye contact. When the dog has mastered this exercise, advance to the next level. Call the dog's name while holding a treat. When he makes eye contact, praise him verbally, and walk backward with your hands held forward and cupped to entice him to follow you. If he does not follow, entice him with kissing sounds and by opening and closing your hands so that he can see and smell the treat. This should get the dog to follow you. Allow his nose to touch your hands. Stop, give him the treat, praise verbally, and pet him.

The key to this kind of training is consistent praise for any positive response shown by the dog, whether it is in the form of a treat, verbally ("good dog") or physically (petting the dog). It will take puppies a few weeks to respond reliably to these commands. Their attention span is short, so your training sessions should be short (start with 5 minutes) to keep their interest and receptiveness. For older dogs, 10-15 minutes is usually adequate for training sessions. Always end your training sessions on a positive note and with the puppy or dog completing the command correctly. Ending a session on a bad note may continue into the training session. If you are having a day where things are not going as well as you'd like, choose a command that is easy and that you know the dog will do correctly. Praise the dog, release him and let him go play. Remember, you are encouraging playful learning, not demanding obedience. Conduct your training sessions at home first and gradually introduce distractions and strange surroundings.

SOCIALIZATION

Your pet should interact with a wide variety of family members, friends, and strangers while he is young so he learns to get along well with all kinds of people. Reassure your puppy or dog that these people are friendly and encourage him to greet them appropriately. Introduce your puppy or dog to different environments. Take him for

walks, rides in the car, on family outings and other outdoor activities. A good way to socialize your puppy or dog to other dogs is to take him to a dog park or to obedience classes. Training significantly enhances the relationship of the dog to his owner and to the rest of society. A successfully trained dog can be taken anywhere and behave well with anyone.

Dogs are highly social animals and need to be with their pack. Dogs get stressed when they are left alone outside all day. They feel isolated from their pack and exhibit stress by barking, digging, chewing, and general destructiveness. At the very least, bring your dog inside while you are home. By making your dog more a member of the family, the dog will be happier and less prone to these stress behaviors. A dog that is afraid of things will not try to protect against them, but rather will run away from it or from them.

When you are out with your dog, pay attention to how your dog interacts with other dogs, as well as his reaction to various sights, sounds and situations. Knowing your dog's personality and how he reacts in certain situations will help you understand his temperament and will help with your training. Canine language takes the form of facial expressions, ears, tail, body movement, and sound. If you know what your dog is saying, you can anticipate problems before they start. This is particularly important in social situations, such as group obedience class or if your dog is off leash at the park. Know your dog's individual body language when he is relaxed, defending his territory, when he is scared or unsure, when he is playing versus when he is about to bite, and his vocalization (barks and growls). If your dog is showing signs of uneasiness, do not pull him or force him into the situation, but coax him in a calm tone to reassure him. Your dog needs to investigate and experiment with new situations to gain experience and confidence. It is your job to make sure he is safe and doesn't get hurt in the process.

SOCIAL HANDLING

This exercise is one of the most important, and should start on the first day you bring your puppy or dog home and continue throughout the dog's life. You need to be able to touch every part of your dog's body so you can take care of him. It is a good bonding experience and teaches him to trust your hands. Sit on the floor and lay your puppy or dog in your lap, or at your side for larger dogs. By positioning yourself above the puppy or dog as it is lying still, you are putting yourself in the dominant position, which will help maintain (or establish) your dominant position in the family. Run your hands over its body, starting with his head, touching and examining the ears, and running your hands over the eyelids. Open the dog's mouth and examine the teeth and gums, rubbing your finger along the dog's gum line. Give him a massage as you run your hands down its neck to the shoulders, down the legs, touching the paws, toenails and the area between the pads. Continue in this manner until you have touched every inch of his body. If you prefer, the dog can be in the stand position while you examine him.

This should be a relaxing and enjoyable experience for the dog, but mostly you want the dog to become comfortable with being touched. If your dog is hurt or sick, it will make it easier for the veterinarian to examine him if he is accustomed to being touched. The same

thing applies if he needs to be groomed; it will be a lot easier on you or the groomer when you clip his nails or clean his ears if he is relaxed about it.

INTRODUCING YOUR DOG TO PEOPLE

Introducing your puppy or dog to visitors and people outside of the home is an important part of his socialization. It will lessen his fear of strangers and make him a friendlier dog. Do not let the dog jump up on people. Use the leash and collar to correct the dog, and tell him to “Sit.” Have him stay in this position while he is being greeted. This will help him to learn to accept greeting and praise in a calm manner. Also, request that others respect your dog’s rights, and ask that they talk to and treat him gently. By teaching your dog to be friendly and trusting with strangers, he will gain confidence and experience that will help develop a good temperament.

INTRODUCING YOUR DOG TO KIDS

Adult supervision is absolutely essential when children are playing with puppies or dogs. Never leave a child alone with any dog, no matter how harmless the dog seems.

Most children love dogs and vice versa. But it is important to teach your children about proper animal care. Introduce your puppy or dog to children gradually, for short periods of time. Children must understand that your puppy or dog is not a toy and they must be sensitive to his feelings. Teach the children how to properly hold and pick up the puppy or dog. Teach the children not to pull on his tail or ears, squeeze or poke at him, make loud or threatening noises, to move towards him too quickly or to run away from the dog (this can trigger an instinctive predatory-prey response). To a puppy, even a small child looks big and he might bite to protect himself if he is frightened. A good way for children to play with puppies and dogs is to get down on the floor at the dog’s level to make him feel more secure. Older children can assist in the dog’s training and be given certain responsibilities regarding the dog’s care, and the parents must follow up to make sure that those responsibilities are being met. Introducing a new puppy or dog to a baby in your home requires certain precautions. A baby has a different scent from the rest of the family members, and does not look, move or sound like an adult. On first meeting, the puppy or dog should be kept 10 to 15 feet apart, and brought closer very gradually, a foot at a time. Watch closely and use careful judgment in deciding when the dog is allowed to sniff the baby directly. Most dogs will adjust to babies easily, but some may not.

Socializing your dog to children can be as simple as walking the dog near a playground where children are making noise, running around, playing ball, or walking through the neighborhood while the kids wait for the school bus. The dog can be told to walk in the heel position through a crowd of children, to sit-stay and watch the play or allow the children to pet his head, or to down-stay until the end of the game. This type of constant exposure will accustom the dog to the presence of children.

INTRODUCING YOUR DOG TO OTHER DOGS

Dogs need exposure to other dogs while they are puppies to avoid having serious problems as they grow into adults. Puppies usually make friends with older dogs rather easily, as the older dogs have nothing to fear from a puppy. Some dogs, however, do not want to be bothered by a puppy, and some puppies are hesitant to approach an older dog. Do not force the dogs to accept each other, but let them become acquainted at their own pace. Don’t panic if your puppy appears to react aggressively towards another dog. He is

probably feeling insecure and fearful, but is displaying aggression to cover it up. Aggression of this kind is not hostile, but rather, a sign of insecurity and the dog's inability to handle the situation. In this situation, do not punish or praise the puppy or dog. By reassuring the puppy or dog in a calm voice, it will help him master such situations with confidence. Introduce your puppy or dog to other pets in the house with great care. When an older dog meets a younger dog, it is advisable to have both pets on leashes. Do not leave them alone together until you are sure they are friendly together. Whether your other pet is a dog or cat, remember to show her extra love and affection so that he or she will not be jealous of the puppy or new dog.

CAR SAFETY FOR DOGS

Conditioning your dog to ride comfortably in a car is a necessity, even if you will not be taking him for rides very often. He will have to ride in a car to go to the veterinarian, to training sessions, etc., so the dog must be prepared for it. Most dogs adapt fairly quickly, while others need more time. Most dogs like to ride in cars, especially if they were introduced to them early in life.

To make sure you're both traveling safely, your dog should be restrained during his car ride. An unrestrained pet is not only in danger, he's also dangerous. In a 30-mph crash, a 60 lb. dog can hit the windshield, backseat, or another passenger with a force of 1200 lbs. If he were to escape a crash uninjured, an unrestrained, frightened dog could hamper efforts of rescue works at the scene. Also, an unrestrained pet can directly interfere with the driver or cause a distraction to the driver. The Humane Society of the United States advises the safest place for a traveling pet is either properly restrained in the rear seat, cargo area or placed in an appropriate pet carrier. Restraints help a pet feel more secure while traveling and are essential for the safety of all the passengers, both human and animal. There are several pet restraints available at pet stores, including plastic crates, wire cages, pet seats, a wire or mesh barrier, or a pet harness that attaches to the seat belt.

Carsickness is quite common, especially in young dogs. Unlike carsickness in humans, which is due to inner ear problems, dogs usually experience carsickness due to fear. To help ease your dog's anxiety, take your dog to the car and just sit there without the engine on. Give him a treat if you like. Do this for seven to ten days. Then one day, start the car. Praise him and talk to him, giving him a treat before and after you start the engine. Do this for several minutes a day for the next few days. Once your dog is used to sitting in the car, back up to the end of the driveway and drive back up a few times. Give the dog praise and treats if he doesn't get frightened. You can now progress to taking short drives; start by going around the block and gradually work up to longer distances. His carsickness should gradually start to improve. Also try rolling down the windows. The fresh air may help alleviate some of his carsickness. It's a good idea to withhold food for six to eight hours before embarking on a long trip. Having an empty stomach will make him less likely to get carsick, and if he does, there won't be any food in his stomach so it will be easier to clean up. If you want to feed your dog, feed a smaller amount than normal at least two hours before you leave. Giving your pet water won't upset his stomach and may make him more comfortable.

Pack supplies for your dog, including his own bowls, food, water, leash, and favorite toys that will make him feel comfortable. Make frequent rest stops along your trip to allow the dog to relieve himself and get some exercise. Offer the dog water if he won't or can't drink while in the car. Make sure your dog's ID tags are up to date and consider keeping a packet with important information about your dog in the glove compartment, in case you're involved in an accident.

TRAVEL TIPS

When planning a trip, you must decide on your dog's care and whether to take him along or leave him. When making this decision, consider your dog's personality and the length and distance of the trip. Boarding your dog at a veterinarian's office, boarding kennel, or hiring a pet sitter are options if you decide to leave your pet behind. Costs will vary with each of these alternatives. Make sure you do your homework and choose a boarding facility or pet sitter as carefully as you would choose a daycare for your child. You want the person(s) taking care of your dog to be reliable and trustworthy.

Leaving Your Dog Behind

Boarding your dog or hiring a pet sitter are options if you decide to leave your pet behind. Ask your veterinarian or other pet owners to recommend a reputable boarding facility or pet sitter. Here are some general tips:

- If boarding, visit the facility to meet the people and to check for safety and cleanliness of the operation. If hiring a pet sitter, meet the sitter in your home and see how he or she interacts with your dog.
- Make reservations in advance of your trip. Many facilities fill up early, especially over the holidays.
- Be sure your dog is current on all required vaccinations.
- If your dog is on medication, be sure to leave an ample supply and clear and complete instructions.
- Leave feeding instructions and a supply of your dog's regular food. If leaving your dog with a pet sitter, discuss his exercise routine.
- Be sure your dog wears a collar with up to date identification tags.
- Leave information about your veterinarian including office and emergency numbers.
- Be sure to leave a number where you can be reached.

Taking Your Dog Along

- Call ahead to be sure your dog will be welcome at the hotel, motel, inn or campground where you will be staying.
- Be sure your dog is current on all required vaccinations. Take along his medical records.
- Take along your dog's regular food, special medications, a supply of water, and if space is available, his bedding and favorite toy(s).
- Be sure your dog wears a collar with up to date identification tags. The identification tag should have your name and phone number on it. Take a photo with you in case your dog gets lost. Never leave your dog loose in a hotel room when you are not there. Keep your dog confined in his crate and check on him frequently. When taking him out of the room, keep him on leash at all times.

- When traveling in a vehicle, it is safest for you and your pet to keep him confined to a carrier or use a pet restraint such as a pet harness that attaches to the seat belt. Never let him ride with his head out of the window or in the back of a truck.
- Pack a first aid kit for your dog. It's always a good idea to have one handy, just in case.
- Stop often on long trips to allow your dog to relieve himself and get some exercise.
- If your dog is prone to carsickness, withhold food for six to eight hours before embarking on a long trip. If you want to feed your dog, feed a smaller amount than normal at least two hours before you leave. Giving your dog water won't upset his stomach and may make him more comfortable.
- Never leave your dog in a hot car, even if you park in the shade. Just a few minutes in a hot car could cause irreversible damage or death.

GENERAL TRAINING CONSIDERATIONS

There are a few general considerations to follow when you begin training:

1. Consistency – There should be no exceptions if you want training to go as rapidly and as easily as possible. This relates to both your actions and words. From the beginning, decide exactly what you are trying to teach and how you are going to do it. If you always use a certain word or phrase as part of a command, always use the same word or phrase with the same tone of voice every time. This is important for all the members of a household that are participating in training. Everyone must use the same word and same voice expression. Every time you give a command, consistently carry it through to completion. Don't become distracted and allow the puppy or dog to perform the command halfway, or he will become confused and will only perform the command halfway or ignore it completely. Expect the same reaction of the puppy or dog every time. If you use any form of praise for a job well done, be consistent on how well the task is performed and completed before giving praise. Think of your training sessions as classroom time. When children are in school, there is time spent in the classroom for learning and recess for playtime. When you start a training session, work only on training issues and do them over and over. Stay in control until it is time to release your dog for playtime.

In the early states of training, don't ever give a command unless you can control the puppy or dog's actions. This is the part of consistency that many handlers overlook. For example, your dog is playing off leash at the park and starts running towards another dog in the opposite direction away from you. Your dog is learning the come command, but does not come when called on a consistent basis. Do not use the come command to call the dog to you, but rather call the dog by name or use another word, such as "Here" to get his attention, while moving towards the dog to bring him back to you. If you use the come command and the dog doesn't come, he will learn that you are not in control and sometimes it's okay to ignore what you say.

You may need to make modifications in your training, but be consistent after the change. You may find certain styles of training work better on your puppy or dog than others. That's okay, but do not switch back and forth. If training a command is going slow, don't change from method to method to speed the process up. Most dogs will have trouble with a certain command and not others. Be patient. Keep showing your dog what to do until he responds correctly and then praise him. Dogs learn by repetition, not by what is right or wrong.

2. Keep Training Sessions Short – Dogs, especially puppies, do not have long attention spans. Young pups won't spend more than a few minutes playing a game, as they simply lose interest and go on to the next thing. This is true when training; they burn out quickly and become bored. Once bored, nothing further will be learned. Most trainers will limit training sessions to no more than 10 or 15 minutes, regardless of the age of the animal. This seems to be a good duration for most dogs to tolerate and enjoy. If training is exceeded beyond this, the learning process actually starts to go backward. It is important that your puppy or dog enjoy his training sessions. If forced to continue training after they have lost interest, this behavior may spill over into future training sessions. Set a schedule and stick to it. It is better to train for 10 minutes every day than 60 minutes once a week. Plan your training sessions around your puppy or dog's schedule. Don't expect him to be full of energy and willing to learn if he would normally be napping or eating during that time. Plan your sessions when there will be a minimum of distractions, especially in the beginning.

There are other ways to get in additional training other than scheduled training sessions, and these extra ones can be very important. If your animal is doing something you are trying to train it to do all on his own, use this opportunity to reinforce the command. For example, you are getting ready to feed your dog and you've learned that as soon as you fill the bowl your dog will come running. As soon as he starts towards you, bend down with the bowl and say "Come." It's a no fail training session every time. Whenever you can control the animal or know what he is going to do, use the situation as a continuation of your training.

3. Stay calm and stay in control – In training sessions, you can never lose control or get excited because you may become impatient, lose your temper or do something to confuse your dog and regress your training. Training should be enjoyable for both you and your dog. If the dog isn't having a good time, he won't learn anything. Likewise, if you aren't in control of the situation or aren't enjoying yourself, you aren't able to teach anything. During training, keep distractions to the minimum. You should ask your dog to perform the command and only praise for completion of the task. If you are excited or angry with your dog, he will pick up on this and it will distract him from the task at hand. You must stay focused for the dog to be able to concentrate on training. You will learn that your attitude during training is directly proportional to the amount the dog will learn. If you are up and enjoying it, the dog will make solid progress during the training session. But if you are down, the learning that will occur during that session will also go down.

If you get angry and lash out at the dog harshly, your dog won't understand why you are angry, nor will he learn from such treatment. Instead, he may fear you. Most dogs can sense your frustration, and may try harder to do what you don't want them to do in an effort to please you. If you feel yourself getting impatient and starting to get angry or frustrated, go back to a command the dog always does correctly, give him praise and release him into play. You want the dog to finish a training session and because of the praise and his desire to please you, to look forward to the next session. It is better to try training later on or the next day when you are in a better frame of mind.

4. Professional Trainers – Not everybody can train his or her dog. Many people say they don't have the time, but if they cannot take 10 or 15 minutes a day for training, do they really have time to have a dog? Training is not for everybody. Some do not have the patience, some do not enjoy it, or some simply lack the knowledge and skill to train their dog. If any of these circumstances describe you, it would be better for you and your dog to use a professional trainer. The dog won't care who is doing the training. A good professional trainer will only help a dog, while an owner who loses control may impair the dog's learning and self-confidence. If you think you can't handle the job, use a professional trainer.

WHEN TO BEGIN FORMAL OBEDIENCE

When your puppy is seven or eight weeks old, let him wear a soft collar and leash around the house, under your supervision. He might not like it at first, but with patience, he will get used to wearing his collar. For collar size, measure his neck and add two inches. Check the collar frequently to see that it fits properly as he grows. Put the collar on for short periods of time. The best times are while he is playing or eating. Once he is used to the collar, you can start using the leash. Put it on for short periods at first. When your puppy gets older, at about three months of age, you should begin taking him on regular walks on a leash once or twice a day. Formal obedience can begin when your puppy is about six months old.

A FINAL WORD

This book cannot teach you all you need to know in order to train and care for your dog. Remember that training a puppy or dog is time consuming, and sometimes frustrating, so try to be patient. Keep in mind that some dogs are easier to train than others. It is essential to earn your dog's respect, trust and loyalty. This can be earned by having respect for your dog's individual personality traits and by understanding he has his own rights as a pack member. If you are having a tough time training your dog, consider enrolling him in an obedience class. An experienced, professional trainer will know how to handle your dog's particular needs. Keep up with the training and remember to smile!