

# **Love, laughter & licks**

***A comprehensive Dog Care Book***

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# Foreword

If you pick up a starving dog and make him prosperous, he will not bite you; that is the principal difference between a dog and a man. So said Mark Twain. Edith Wharton said, “My little dog—a heartbeat at my feet.”

Ever since the two, man and dog, got to know each other, they have been friends. It has been a friendship that has defied time. No matter what, dogs have stood by their masters. Prompting one wag to say that a dog is the only creature, which loves someone else more than himself.

So what is it that makes people love this animal? Warm melting looks, a fierce loyalty and love that is possibly of the highest order. Not to forget the security of companionship for a lifetime.

Welcome to a unique relationship. If you are looking for a dog to buy and don't know where to start, you could start here. The world of dogs is huge; you have a plethora of bewildering choices and you could get lost in the decision- making process.

The most important decision, of all, however, has to be the one you make before you see even one puppy: the decision to be a good owner; the decision to really make a dog a part of your life forever; the decision to look after your pet. After all, a dog is a living, breathing creature. This may seem very obvious but most owners forget this fact the minute the puppy arrives home.

They treat the puppy like an impulse buys, a pet toy. They pamper him silly. Then when the puppy starts showing signs of disobedience or when he hurts a kid in the house, they either gift him away or sell him off.

An act, that could destroy the puppy's life. Which is why, a lot of thinking beforehand will save you trouble and give the puppy a good, loving home for life. If you make up your mind , that home could be yours.

This book gives you a peek into the fascinating world of dogs. From choosing the right breeder, bringing your puppy home, different breeds, feeding your dog, training and insurance and health to taking care of him in his old age. We've laid bare every aspect of bringing up a puppy.

Apart from this, we hope the book will make you think deeply. About a canine friend and how to understand his needs and moods. Because that, really, is what separates a true dog lover from the rest.

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### Chapter 1

### A Good Owner .A Happy Puppy

Few things tug at your heartstrings the way a lovable puppy does. Cute, awkward and comical, they work their way into the very core of your existence. This is true for almost any pup. And now, you're all set to buy the cutest, sweetest pup in the world. Now that you've already taken this big decision, you think it's just a matter of going to the nearest pet store, pointing to one cute pup and saying, "I'll take that one." Right?

You couldn't be more wrong.

Buying a high involvement product like a car is a piece of cake compared to buying a pup. At worst, you will need to check some factors; size, style, speed, comfort, consumer reports. With a car, in most cases, what you see is what you buy. With a dog, the process seems easier at first. It 's cute, so go ahead. But a car, no matter how cheated you are, won't chew up your cushions, dirty your bathroom, bite your cousin, or bark all night. And you won't break its heart if you trade it in for another model.

Besides, it may surprise you but the buying decision involves more factors than just the pup's health or pedigree. It's not about how good a dog you can get.

It's also about how good an owner you can be.

Before you take this big step though, there are a few facts that should influence your decision. After all, you are thinking about someone who will be close to you for the rest of his life. It is a commitment, to say the very least.

#### **Lord and Master**

The first thing to think about is this: you will be the pup's sole authoritative voice. You will be responsible for his health and happiness. He will look to you for every need, little or big in his life. In short, you will be responsible for his life.

Next, consider where you live, what kind of lifestyle you have and so on. Do you live in an apartment, suburban home or country estate? How do you live? Do you watch television most nights, or party every weekend? Are you very finicky as a housekeeper? Do you jog or stroll, have kids or live alone? Are you looking for a companion or just a pet to pat on the head once in a way?

If you have a sprawling ranch house outside the city, you can own most breeds of dogs. An apartment requires some thought. A small dog would do well in an apartment. Even the most active one-pound Chihuahua will cause less commotion than an energetic Irish Wolfhound. However, the Wolfhound just doesn't get active that often (in fact, rarely), whereas the little

dog can keep moving all day and night. As long as there's room for the animal to turn around (and not too many things to break when he does), a large inactive breed (for example, a St. Bernard, Akita, English Bulldog, or Standard Poodle) will do as well and sometimes even better in an apartment than a Miniature Pinscher, Pomeranian, or Bichon Frise.

### **Your Lifestyle**

This is of great importance. If you're athletic and want a companion to keep pace with you, you need a very active breed. One of the sporting dogs would be a good choice. A Welsh Terrier, Weimaraner, Old English Sheepdog, or a Boxer. If you exercise in moderation, a Cocker Spaniel, Golden Retriever, or a French Bulldog would fit in. (Energy levels can vary from dog to dog. Take a little walk with the animal before you make your choice.) If you have children (depending on their ages) or elderly relatives, you'll need a gentle, nurturing beast that won't knock them down or hurt them otherwise. Certain breeds, such as Rottweilers, Dalmatians, and Irish Setters, are so vigorous that even the most well-meaning dog can send a toddler or a granny flying. Clumber spaniels, Golden Retrievers, Shetland Sheepdogs, even something as large as a Mastiff, move gently and slowly.

If you're a people person and entertain frequently, forget the Rhodesian Ridgeback, the Yorkshire Terrier, or the Chow. Instead, consider a St. Bernard, a Bichon Frise or a Greyhound. English Bulldogs, Great Danes, Border Terriers, and Sealyham Terriers are also very sociable dogs. If it's a watchdog you need, most breeds will be fairly attentive to noises in the night. A couple of exceptions are the English Bulldogs, the Clumber Spaniel and, believe it or not, the Irish Wolfhound. Among the best watchdogs are Akitas, German Shepherds, Bull Terriers, and Tibetan Terriers.

### **Hair everywhere**

Do you positively loathe the sight of hair on your favorite suit? A shorthaired breed may seem desirable but some, such as the Dalmation, can be heavy shedders. As a rule, of course, the longer-haired breeds are the ones that required lots of grooming. Chows, Keeshonds, Samoyed, Collies. Some aren't necessarily heavy shedders; they just need lengthy, regular sessions with a groomer to stay pretty, like the Bichon Frise, poodles, and Old English Sheepdogs.

### **Size up**

Another issue you have to consider is the size of the dog. If you live in a small place with no yard, and you work full-time, then don't buy a large dog that enjoys ample exercise. Once you have an idea about the size of the dog, you will also have to consider how much time you can give the dog when it comes to exercise and grooming. A Standard Poodle is a great pet that suits a family or a single person, but it requires daily combing of its thick coat. A Jack Russell is a small dog with short hair, but it is very energetic and is known to run away at the slightest opportunity, so your yard will have to be fenced securely.

### **Dog or Bitch**

The sex of your pet is another important issue you have to consider. A bitch is easy to train and is preferred because she is quieter, while the dog has a more boisterous attitude. If you wish to breed your dog at a later date, a bitch may be what you are after. Some people, however, avoid bitches, as they can get pregnant by the dog in the next block. This can mean a lot of time and money trying to find homes for the puppies. If you plan to have your pet de-sexed, the cost is a lot higher for a bitch. Some people do prefer a bitch as they often have a more placid nature than the male dog.

### **Find a good vet**

When you are conducting research on the breed of dog you want, it is wise to ask a veterinarian about any problems that particular breed may carry. Some dogs may have problems in their joints or have a tendency to have eye problems. It is always good to be prepared. Talk to your veterinarian about hereditary problems or tendencies towards certain conditions in your favorite breeds.

Breeders, especially backyard breeder and pet shops highlight the good points of any particular breed. They will not want to bring up the problems; high occurrence of epilepsy in Belgium Tuverreens, deafness in Dalmatians, skin allergies in West Highland White Terriers, hip dysplasia in almost all the large breeds, progressive retinal atrophy in poodles, the high numbers of Boxers who develop cancer or the collie eye anomalies in Collies. Many small breeds such as Yorkies, Dachshunds, Schnauzers, Poodles and such will require regular dental hygiene as well as actual dental scaling and polishing by a veterinarian. The dental procedures for cleaning the teeth can run between \$100 to \$150 dollars.

### **Do you have the time for a cute thing?**

So far, we've talked about dogs as companions and how you can fit them into your life. But long before that stage, you have a bigger task. Looking after your puppy. Believe us, that is no easy task. Puppies are undeniably adorable and appealing, but they need lots of exercise, training, and supervision. They demand attention all the time. Depending on your work schedule and the ages of your children, do you really have time to handle a boisterous pup?

Many dogs given up to animal shelters are less than a year old, brought in by people who underestimated the job and the time required to help him grow up properly. Many people mistakenly assume they can mold a puppy to be exactly what they're looking for in a dog.

Pups are born with innate traits, which manifest themselves as the dog grows up. If you start with a slightly older dog, you will have some idea in advance of your dog's personality and preferences. If your main concern is to have a family dog that will be safe with your children, for example, you can search for a dog whose personality already shows those traits. Most animal shelters and rescue groups evaluate their dogs for key temperament issues and can readily assist you in finding a dog that will suit your lifestyle.

### **Is this breed for you?**

Another factor to consider in choosing a dog is breed. Dog breeds are well defined and easily recognized, and indeed many people associate a working dog with a smart Golden Retriever or German Shepherd.

Have you had experience with that particular breed? Have you done any research to find out what the characteristics of that breed are? Sometimes, just looking at a dog or even being around them for a very short time can be deceiving.

Some can look like they have a sweet nature; also you need time to figure out whether they are active and energetic. Such dogs may not be the right ones for your kids. Do some checking before you decide which one you will get. Some ways to do this could be to talk to a vet, or talk to the staff at your local Humane Society. They have a great deal of experience with most breeds of dogs. You might try your local library for books on specific breeds of dogs.

If you have friends who own or have owned a certain breed, ask them what they have observed about that breed. All breeds of dogs have exceptions to the rules, but there are certain characteristics that are generally consistent with each breed. This would be especially helpful if you are planning on getting a puppy. That little puppy won't always be that size, and will have a grown-up disposition someday.

Mixed-breed dogs can be every bit as loyal, loving, and playful as purebreds, with one distinct advantage over them: they tend to live longer, healthier lives. Many breeds have been so closely bred to produce champion bloodlines that certain health and temperament problems are becoming more and more common.

For example, the incidence of hip dysplasia in Golden Retrievers and German Shepherds is above 75%! Health problems associated with genetic inbreeding are practically unheard of in mixed breed dogs. Generally, by choosing a mixed breed, you will avoid most hereditary health problems and gain a hardy, robust companion.

### **Just like another kid in the family**

Bringing a puppy home is almost like adopting a kid. It requires the same kind of commitment. You just can't give a pup away if you suddenly decide he is too much for you. Or if your lifestyle has changed and he doesn't fit into your new pace of life, you can't just give him away. It will be too traumatic for him.

No puppy is perfect; they will all spill ink on your carpet and chew on your favorite shoes if left unattended. It is your responsibility to watch the puppy and to properly train him or her. No dog is dumb; it's just that they have inexperienced pet owners that fail their puppy by not properly training them. The puppy should not be penalized for your lacking skills.

If you are not an experienced pet owner, you should take your puppy to classes so your puppy can learn what is needed, and you can learn how to teach. Puppies cannot be taught everything in one day. Training is a constant process, and it is your responsibility..

Puppies need a lot of attention and must be constantly supervised. A puppy or a dog is a responsibility. 365 days a year. A dog is a long-term commitment (10 to 15 years on the average). A puppy should be a permanent integral part of your family. A puppy is not a toy; it is a living, breathing being. It is not something to be put in the back garden to be played with only when you feel like it.

### **Puppies and children**

First, you need to answer a few questions about your child: How old is he or she? Is your child mature enough to handle the responsibilities of a dog? Will they be willing to help feed and water the animal every day? What sort of dog is your child hoping for? What type of personality does your child have? Is she shy and timid, or rowdy and boisterous? Does your child understand that an animal should never be teased? If you have determined that your child is ready for a dog, decide what type of animal would work well within your family and start gathering information about the breeds that interest you.

Bringing a dog into a family that has children should be done only after a lot of thought and planning. Never leave small children unsupervised with a dog or puppy. Children are rough on animals and even the best children can be abusive by hitting, pulling or teasing it. In turn, the pup, hurt and bewildered, may harm your child. Do not buy a pet for a child until the child is old enough to understand how to care for the animal and be gentle with it. It is not fair to put an animal in a situation and then punish it for defending itself when it is being hurt.

If you feel that your child is not yet ready for a pet, you should be willing to make sure this animal receives proper care.

### **Pets for kids**

Avoid such dogs as Chows, Pit Bulls and other sometimes-aggressive breeds. You may need liability insurance if you own these so-called vicious breeds. Parents acquiring a new dog need to make sure the younger child and the pet are monitored whenever they are together. A few years ago a newborn baby was brought home from a hospital and the established family dog seemed to accept it without any hesitation. Two days later the dog had mauled the baby while it was sleeping and the infant died as a result of the bite wounds.

Like people, dogs have very different temperaments. Some of the smaller breeds, though extremely popular, can be very nervous and don't make suitable companions for younger children. With their nippy personalities and penchant for barking, little dogs usually make better pets for older children. Three of the smaller breeds that are readily available are Chihuahuas, miniature poodles and Pomeranians. If your child has his heart set on one of the toy breeds, find someone who has this type of dog and let the child see the dog. Do the dog and your child get along? If so, and if this is the dog your child has set his heart on, check your newspaper for breeder listings, or ask at pet stores and veterinarian offices about the availability of puppies. Be aware that sometimes there is a waiting list for these pups.

### **Big dogs for kids**

If your child is looking for a rough, very active dog, check out some of the larger breeds. A few of the large breed dogs that make excellent companions for children are Labradors, collies and setters. There are many other large breed dogs that love children. Ask around to see what friends and vets recommend.

With their intelligence and even, outgoing personalities, these big dogs are always ready for fun. Since they are such active animals, you'll need to plan on having a regular place for them to romp and play. Larger dogs aren't well suited to apartment living. It's always a good idea to find someone who owns one of these dogs so your child can get acquainted and see if this is really the animal for them.

### **Inside or Outside?**

Apart from considering the size of your home, you should also think about where to keep the dog. Different breeds have different needs. There are dogs that love to be outdoors. And there are dogs that love to be indoors. Will this dog be mostly kept inside, or will this be an outside dog? Is my yard large enough for a larger dog to get exercise? Is my yard fenced, if I choose to keep my dog outside? Even if my yard is fenced, will my neighbors be compatible with this dog? Will my fence keep my dog out of their yard? Do any of my neighbors have children that would tease or harass my dog (a good reason for choosing to keep your dog inside)? All these are questions that are important.

### **Love comes at a price**

A puppy is an expensive proposition. Like anything else, don't buy one if you can't afford the money and time to properly care for it (spaying /neutering bills, vet bills, quality food bills, training and so on). Keep your budget in mind. A 200-pound dog will wolf down \$600 to \$1000 annually. You might want something a bit smaller.

### **Say 'no'**

There are some very definite reasons why you should buy a puppy. Please do not buy one as a surprise gift for your kid. Do not buy one because your neighbor has one, or you saw one on T.V or at the park and you fell in love with a lovable face. Don't if you have a busy work or social life or if you travel away from home regularly. Don't buy on an impulse. Finally, if you think that you could breed from it and make money, don't buy a pup. Breeding is a labor of love.

### **A companion for an elderly person**

Is the dog for an elderly person? If so, a small dog can be a blessing. It will give the person a small pet that can be held and caressed while often making for an excellent little alarm system. Unfortunately, the small breeds can also prove to be a hazard. Many dogs like to run around or through their owner's feet. These can often cause falls resulting in broken bones. At the same time, a large dog can provide a great feeling of security but a large puppy can cause the same problems as a small dog. Once again you will want to check out the normal temperament of the breeds you are considering.

There are many breeds that are known to have calm dispositions once they mature past the puppy stage. These include Golden Retrievers, Collies, American Eskimos and Shetland Sheepdogs as well as many more. When choosing a dog, keep in mind the maintenance. Is the elderly person capable of maintaining a pet? Does the elderly person suffer from arthritis or some other condition that would make regular grooming a painful chore? If so, you will want to go with a shorthaired breed that requires minimal care.

### **One more addition to the brat pack**

If you already have a dog, then make sure you buy a breed that takes to your dog at home. Some breeds get along with anything while others will fight almost any new dog that comes in. Female Welsh Corgis are terrible about accepting other female dogs. Other breeds were originally bred to fight other dogs, bulls or large game. Check the history of possible breeds before purchasing one and bringing it in with your established pet. You may also want to investigate your present pet's origins for the same reasons. It must be remembered that whenever a new dog is introduced into the household, a hierarchy will be set up. Usually the older, established dog will be Alpha, the leader, and the newer dog will allow him or herself to be ruled. These may change as the new puppy gets older and hormones kick in.

### **Your lifestyle and the right breed: A checklist**

\*Do you like peace and quiet? If so, a shrieking, hyper Pomeranian or Boston terrier, would not fit in.

\*Do you live in an apartment? If so, it would be difficult for a Great Dane, St. Bernard, or Mastiff to live there.

\*Do you enjoy long walks, jogging or hiking up mountain trails? If so, a Labrador or some other active breed would be just right.

\*Do you want a lap dog or one to play around the house? Dachshunds, toy and miniature Poodles, Bichons, Maltese, Chihuahuas and certain small breeds of terriers are all too happy to lie on a lap or on your feet all day. For an exuberant playmate, Labradors, Golden Retrievers, Collies, Dobermans, Fox and Rat Terriers and Boxers are all excellent choices.

\*Do you suffer from allergies or asthma? If so, avoid long-haired, double coated breeds such as St. Bernards and Collies that shed a large portion of the year. If you have asthma, there is a long-standing belief by many people that Chihuahuas don't cause as many flare-ups. Poodles are also credited with a lower incidence of asthma related complications because of their low shedding rate.

\*Do you have children in the household? If so, it would be advisable to avoid such dogs as Chows, Pit Bulls and other, sometimes aggressive breeds. Many areas require liability insurance for owners of so-called vicious breeds.

\* Do you have it in you to care a lot? Will you have the time needed to devote to heavy coated breeds such as a Collie? Could spending \$30 or more every six to eight weeks to have a professional groomer clip a poodle cause financial hardship? What about veterinary care? A typical annual exam and vaccinations in the Houston area can cost up to \$100. This cost does not include such necessities as heartworm prevention, shampoos and food.

### **Show dog or Pet?**

If you have your heart set on a show dog, go ahead by all means. But, bear one thing in mind: dogs should always be, first and foremost, your companion, deserving a lifetime of love and good care. If you intend to show your dog, you will want to obtain a pup that displays the qualities that are necessary for the show ring. Keep in mind that until a puppy is fully grown, no one, not even the breeder, can be sure that the puppy will indeed grow up to be a good show dog. You will be buying a puppy that has "show potential". This means that the pup shows promise and if he continues to develop along these lines, he should become a good show dog. Unfortunately, it is common for conformation to change as the puppy grows, and some promising pups don't quite develop according to their potential.

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Although these dogs may not excel in the show ring, there are many other options such as obedience, tracking that you may decide to pursue. It is important to keep in mind that the true value of your dog will be in the loving companionship that he provides, and the bond that you develop. Showing should always be secondary to these goals.

Check out the dog shows first, talk to breeders, contact the AKC for the national breed club for your chosen breed and buy the best quality dog you can find. Every owner wants to believe their dogs' puppies are show quality but the really good quality puppies come from well-established breeders who have a record of breeding champions. Pet puppies can be found starting in the \$150 to \$200 price range. Show puppies will often begin their prices at \$400.

If you are looking for a pet puppy, your pup need not meet the exact specifications of bone structure and movement set forth in the breed standard. If his shoulder is a little too straight, or his neck too short, it will not matter. Good temperament, however, is one attribute that should never be sacrificed in the pet puppy. It is important that a family pet have a happy, stable personality.

Besides, remember to get it spayed or neutered as soon as possible. Spaying before the first heat cycle reduces the chances of breast cancer later on. Spaying and neutering both reduce the chances of runaways, hit by cars and other roaming injuries.

### **I'll take two**

Resist the temptation to buy two puppies just because they look cute. You need to be cautious here. There are many negatives about raising two puppies at the same time. For one, they will get close to each other. They'll be closer with each other than either will be with you. That's because, they are both dogs and are drawn to their kind.

This means, training will be difficult. The bonding between them makes it difficult for them to obey you. When you are trying to set a rule and letting the dogs know what is good and what is bad, they may not listen to you. Or if one does listen to you and the other doesn't, then the one who does listen to you may quickly disobey you like its friend. You get lost.

With one puppy, you will be able to more effectively bridge that gap between dog and human much better than you would be able to do if there are two dogs in the house. With one puppy, you can most easily train your dog to be the kind of dog you want it to be. You can teach it in whatever manner you want. But if you have two or more puppies to train at once, you're more or less teaching them on their terms. You lose a bit of control.

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The positive point is that it does provide your pets with a playmate. These dogs can grow together and learn about life together. They'll explore each other and your home. They'll learn from each other. If one puppy is learning how to be house trained more quickly than the other, the other can get up to speed perhaps more quickly by watching its friend and how it does it. If your two dogs aren't the same age, the older one typically takes a big sister role. The younger one will rely on the older one when learning to do basic things.

The other important thing to remember is that you will not be as close to either dog as they will be to each other. If you're looking for a friend to cuddle up with, you may not get as affectionate as a dog, if you have two dogs in the house.

Finally, two dogs in the house could make the environment very noisy. Remember, they won't always get along. There will be many times when your dogs will argue and fight and will bark at each other. You need to have the patience to let them work things out on their own, but still have the authority to step in if things get incredibly out of hand.

### Chapter 2

### Good bloodlines: Healthy Puppy

All puppies should be bought from a responsible breeder. Such a person is not easy to locate. Besides, many people claim to be good breeders and will, if you go to them, make a terrific sales pitch for their puppies. First of all, avoid owners who try to catch you in a parking lot or who sell on the side of the road. You need to see the puppies, their parents and the conditions in which the puppy was raised.

When you enter the kennel or pet store to find which puppy you want to take home, you may be tempted on many occasions to take more than one puppy home with you. You'll see all their adorable faces and may not be able to resist the temptation to go home with more than one of them.

#### **So how do you recognize a good breeder?**

##### **Observe and Judge**

You can learn a lot about a breeder by visiting their home or kennel. A dedicated Shar- Pei breeder will be passionate about the breed. He will have Shar-Pei objects/ornaments/pictures on view and will happily talk about his pets from dawn to dusk and beyond.

##### **Kennel Conditions**

The kennel may consist of outside runs and exercise areas or it may simply be their home, but it should be clean, warm and comfortable. Puppies should be clean and their area should be free of excrement.

##### **Puppies**

Sometimes, a good breeder may not allow you to choose from his litter. However, if you are allowed to choose from a litter, avoid any puppy that seems ill. Actually if only one puppy seems ill, avoid any pup from such a litter. There should be no discharge from eyes, nostrils or ears. They should be active, happy and outgoing. There should be no sign of fear. It's all right if, in the beginning, they approach you warily. They should be able to relax and play later. Pups that cringe in the corner with fear are either going to develop into fear biters or are going to need a very special home which can deal with their fearful temperament. On the other hand, the pup that rushes excitedly up to you, shoving his littermates aside in his eagerness to be the first one to greet you, who bites at your hands and jumps at your chin, occasionally giving you a few little nips, is going to be a true handful, needing strong discipline. Puppies with this type of temperament can become child biters, as they seem to view a child who is smaller than adults as one of their kind rather than a person to be obeyed.

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In general, these are some of the signs you should watch out for:

1. An active pup. However, puppies sleep a lot and it takes them a while to wake up.
2. A pup that greets people and does not appear shy.
3. He should have no sign of discharge from the eyes, nose, or ears. He should have pink and firm gums.
4. He should not have a distended belly (not to be confused with a normally fat puppy)
5. He should move around easily, with no signs of lameness. Look for a puppy that naturally stands square with all four feet facing forward and sits squarely. This should be done over a period of time, as puppies lack coordination and muscle tone and will not sit or stand the same way consistently.
6. Look for a puppy that naturally follows you.
7. Watch the puppies' reactions to sounds. You want a dog that recovers easily and does not become hysterical over sudden sounds.
8. Look for puppies that have the confidence to explore new areas without fear.

### **The Parents**

Puppies should be examined by a veterinarian as soon as possible after purchase for a general health appraisal. Ask to see the parents. How is the mother? Is she friendly and attractive? By the time the pups are 6 weeks old, the mother should not be aggressive or protective. If the father is present, is he willing to make friends with visitors? Do not buy a pup whose parents do not have good temperaments. It is hereditary.

Are the puppies kept in the house near people and everyday activities or a kennel? Human contact is very important in the first few weeks of life in order for the dog to bond to humans. You want puppies that have been raised in constant contact with people, household events and sounds.

Observe the other dogs on the premises. Are their coats clean and brushed? Do they have fresh water and warm, clean, comfortable living conditions? Do they move around easily, and appear bright, happy and healthy? Are they friendly and outgoing toward people? Pay particular attention to older dogs, especially the ages of the puppies parents/grandparents.

### **A Good Breeder**

You can always tell a good breeder by his willingness to show you around and answer questions. Find out about his background and his activities. Is the breeder actively involved in dog clubs and/or shows? A responsible breeder is always learning and being involved in dog clubs and shows keeps them informed about what is happening in their breed.

A good breeder will not knowingly breed from unhealthy dogs and never from dogs that show any signs of FSF or Swollen Hock. Have the pups been checked for worms and will they receive at least one injection before you take yours home?

## Love, laughter & licks

Are the pups old enough to leave the litter? Pups should never ever be taken from the litter before six weeks of age. They need to interact with their littermates for at least that long. Seven weeks would be even better. On the other hand, a pup who is kept with its litter mates past the age of 10 weeks may have become dependent on his mates. . Be sure the breeder has given individual attention and training to the pups.

Is the paperwork in order? You should receive a contract (signed by both buyer and seller), and a Pedigree. Most responsible breeders sell their pet pups on spay/neuter contracts, which means you will receive the registration application AFTER your dog has been spayed or neutered. That should be explained in the contract. You should not have to pay extra for the pedigree.

Does the breeder have a number of litters at the same time? Are the litters separated and the individuals identified? How many of the past puppy buyers is the breeder still in contact with after 1 year? 2 years? 5 years? Have the pups been hearing tested? Deafness is not uncommon in Dalmatians for example. It can be detected at an early age, and affected pups should be humanely destroyed.

Have the parents been X-rayed for hip dysplasia? Is the breeder aware of the genetic problems in the breed and is he breeding for sound healthy dogs with stable temperaments?

Will you receive a supply of food, instructions about the care and feeding, a list of necessary supplies and health record? Does the breeder supply dog care books, as well as information about vets and training schools?

Is the breeder experienced? Will he be able to answer your questions or help with any problems that arise? That's one of the biggest disadvantages in buying a pet shop or commercially raised pup. No one cares whether or not you're having trouble. They only want your money.

Did the breeder insist that you take the dog through obedience training? Responsible breeders make that a requirement for sale. All dogs should have at least one basic obedience class.

Did he tell you about the good and bad features of the breed? All breeds have their drawbacks, and they should have been explained to you. Did the breeder talk to you about dog crates, explain how to use them and stress how helpful they are?

Is the breeder curious about you? A responsible breeder is concerned about the welfare of their puppies and will insist on certain criteria before placing a puppy. Be prepared to be grilled by him.

He may check with you on the following issues:

Fenced garden  
Doghouse.  
Proper veterinary care  
Proper care and nutrition  
Socialization, training, obedience classes  
Spaying, neutering (if applicable)

A good breeder should be able to answer almost any breed specific question that you ask. And be prepared, he may insist on visiting the puppy in your home.

Common questions asked by reputable breeders are:

Are you aware of the problems (health, temperament, conformation or whatever) in this breed? If you answer in the negative, expect to be educated at great length if this is an applicable subject. Will your dog be a housedog? Many breeders will not sell to anyone who does not want the dog in the house.

One very common question is whether you have children. Most good breeders will insist on seeing your family, especially if you say that the children want a dog. This is done to observe how well mannered the children are. If they're obnoxious brats who never listen to their parents then chances are, they won't be nice to a puppy.

Are you aware of the size of the adult dog? You may be surprised but some owners get rid of their dog because it got too big. Some people don't properly research a breed before they make a decision to buy and the adult size or coat may be more than they want to cope with.

Are you aware of the temperament traits of this breed? He may ask if everybody in the house wants this pet. (A home where the wife loves dogs and the husband or kids don't like dogs may end up being a bad home.)

### **How to find a responsible breeder**

#### **Classified ads**

Occasionally, responsible breeders will advertise in the classifieds when there is less demand in their area. Or they may like to use the opportunity to educate potential puppy buyers.

#### **Breed Club or Local Canine Society**

Contact someone in the breed club or a local canine society. This may not be easy to find, but many of the clubs run ads in the classifieds offering breeder referral services. Also check with vets in the area to see if they can refer you to a member of a local canine society. It doesn't have to be a person with the breed that you want; a club member should be able to refer you to a person for your particular breed.

## Your Vet

Ask your vet if he knows of any breeders of the breed that you are looking for. Your vet will know the type of care that owners give their dogs and the tests that they run (if any) on their breeding stock. Don't ask the receptionists. They will just pull a name from a list of breeders. If your vet does not know of a breeder, ask him for the name of someone in a local dog club.

## Local Dog Trainer

Attend some obedience classes in your area. Observe the dogs in the classes. If you like somebody's dog, talk to them and find out whom they got him from and ask questions about their breeder. Dog owners love to talk about their dogs. Talk to the instructor. Tell them what you are looking for and ask them for information.

## Dog Shows/Obedience Trials

This is a good way to observe many dogs in the same breed and to note the differences within the breed. Buy a catalogue. Most of them list the names of the owners and breeders, along with their addresses. Make notes about which dogs you like and why. Breeders often are very busy and sometimes stressed at the shows. Talk to them if you can but if not, introduce yourself and get a phone number so you can set up a time to talk to them later. Be considerate and do not attempt to approach them when they are at the ringside getting ready to show.

A list of what the breeder should provide:

1. Written information
2. Pedigree
3. Registration documents (some breeders withhold registration certificates on pet puppies pending proof of spay/neuter)
4. A contract, which sets out clearly, the conditions of sale and ensures the puppies well-being and safety
5. Information on puppy care, feeding instructions, vaccinations, worming and so on.
6. General advice. The breeder should give you good advice on grooming, training and general information on health and care. Besides, he should always be available if you want any information about your pet. Be sure to obtain a health guarantee from the breeder. This guarantee should give you some time, usually 72 hours, to take the pup to your vet. If your vet finds a serious problem that the pup had upon delivery from the breeder, you should be entitled to a full refund of your purchase price upon return of the pup. Make sure you receive this guarantee in writing. If you do not understand anything about the contract, do not sign it until you completely understand every stipulation.

### **The Breed Standard**

This is literally the blueprint for the breeds. In particular, the purebreds. Anybody who wishes to breed should keep these specifications in mind. Every kennel club has Standards drawn up for the breeds that they recognize. A breed's standard is a description of its ideal physical appearance. Serious breeders and exhibitors need to know the standard for their breed intimately. The AKC publishes all the Standards for AKC recognized breeds.

### **The American Kennel Club**

The American Kennel Club is the country's largest breed registry. It issues the standards that define breeds. The AKC's list of pure breeds contains information on everything from appearance to attitude, offering a biography and detailed growth plan for your pet. With the recent addition of several breeds to the miscellaneous class, the AKC recognizes over 150 individual breeds and 162 varieties in all (a variety is a class within a breed; for example, the dachshund breed has three varieties: smooth, longhaired and wirehaired).

### **Pure Breed**

A pure breed is defined as a group of dogs which, when bred with their own kind, will produce their own kind. Purebred dogs allow owners a large degree of long-term predictability that does not exist with mixed breeds or mutts. Even if you are very sure of what two dogs created the mix, you don't know what may have been behind them.

The AKC method of classifying a breed is based more upon the purpose for which he was bred than a dog's physical characteristics. Which is why, it lists seven distinct categories into which all breeds fit: sporting, non-sporting, working, hound, terrier, toy and herding. There is also a miscellaneous class, which is treated as a temporary category. Eventually, miscellaneous breeds are placed into one of the seven distinct categories. Miscellaneous dogs can enter AKC competitions but cannot receive championship points.

Herding dogs are used to move herds of livestock and need lots of exercise. Hounds are used for hunting by sight or smell and should not be allowed off leash. Sporting dogs are bred to hunt birds and require an active lifestyle. Terriers are bred to hunt small vermin. These dogs have a tendency to dig and love to chase.

Toy breeds are bred for their small size and have a variety of exercise requirements. Non-sporting dogs are a diverse group with various functions. The one thing they have in common is that they are not usually used to hunt game. Working dogs are well, working dogs; these dogs are used to pull carts, guard people and property and search and rescue.

### **What exactly is a mixed breed?**

Most mixed breed and crossbred puppies are produced because dogs wander and roam on the streets. Female dogs are more likely to escape when they are ready to breed, and male dogs can find a female miles away, so unless owners take great pains to protect their dogs, breeding will continue. Thus, although these dogs can be wonderful pets, the lack of genetic history, the inability of most owners to carefully select potential mates for their beloved pets make it beneficial to spay females and neuter males to prevent random breeding.

These dogs are also known as crossbreeds, usually a mixture of two different purebred dogs. You can own one. They are every bit as lovable as a purebred. However, you need to check for health issues because the seller may not be able to tell you much. Talk to your vet.

### **The Breeder's Contract**

This is a meaningful document and traces generations in your dog's family line.

The contract that you sign when you buy your dog from a breeder is much more than a simple bill of sale. It guarantees your rights and the seller's rights in the transaction, sometimes for the life of your pet.

A written breeder's contract can take many forms; its stipulations can be negotiated between you and the breeder. Many factors come into play. Whether you intend to show your dog, for example. Or your past experiences in owning a purebred dog.

A responsible breeder is more than happy to discuss every aspect of your dog's future with you, to ensure that he's putting the dog into a good home. But even if the two parties are best of friends, a comprehensive contract helps guarantee they will remain so.

### **Bill of Sale**

The bill of sale, or proof that you have paid the breeder or his agent for your dog, may contain some clauses required by law. Certain states, for example, require that a breeder or pet store take a pet back and refund your money if the pet becomes ill within 48 hours from the time of purchase. Before you pay anyone for a dog, review your state or municipality's laws concerning pet sales.

### **AKC Registration Application**

Make sure that the breeder's contract guarantees that your dog qualifies for registration. In the United States, registration with the American Kennel Club is the most common proof of pure breed. The AKC, however, recognizes over 150 dog breeds, while the Continental Kennel Club recognizes 444 plus some crossbreeds. A few other organizations, such as Dog Registry of America, also track purebred lineage. Reputable breeders won't hesitate to answer any questions you have about registering your dog. Still, before reaching a final agreement, it's best to check rules and regulations on the web site of their organization.

The American Kennel Club requires breeders to keep complete records and do a fair amount of timely paperwork. A breeder must register each litter with the AKC, listing the registration numbers of each parent, as well as clearly distinguishing each member of the new litter.

Once the litter is registered and the puppies are old enough to part from their mother, the seller must give you a properly completed AKC registration application. This application must contain the breeder's signature as well as the dog's full breeding information, which includes: Breed, sex and color of the dog, date of birth, registered names (and numbers) of the dog's sire and dam and the breeder's name. It's up to you to complete the application and send it in with a fee.

The AKC also issues a warning: as the buyer, you are responsible for submitting your dog's registration. They caution you to think twice before buying a purebred dog without an accompanying AKC application. Although it takes a few weeks for a breeder to obtain one after the pups are born, the process allows plenty of time for the application to arrive if the breeder is prompt and efficient. If your breeder cannot produce a promised AKC application at the time of sale, you must at least get a signed statement containing all the information listed above to submit to the AKC.

Remember that just because the AKC or other breed organization certifies your dog's breed, it cannot guarantee your dog's health or how closely it meets the highest standards for the breed's physical conformation. It's still important for you to do your homework in picking a reputable breeder in the first place.

### **Added Clauses**

Once the basic provisions of a minimal health guarantee and lineage are included, either party can add provisions to the breeder's contract.

### **Health**

Many breeders will want to follow your dog's health and agility throughout his life so they can trace any problems or strengths in his lineage, such as hip dysplasia, personality problems or other hereditary defects. You may find that your breeder is willing to guarantee good natural health in your dog for one or two years. In return, he may ask you to seek prompt veterinary care any time your dog exhibits an unusual health problem. Occasionally, a breeder will even require you to give him a necropsy report if your dog dies without a veterinary diagnosis.

### **Reproduction**

Unless you buy your dog to compete in shows, your breeder could require that you spay or neuter your pet. Or, a clause in the contract could specify that you will neuter your pet at some point in the future, if the breeder determines that your adult dog does not exhibit the best standard characteristics of the breed. The contract also might specify that you will not breed your dog until she is 2 years old, after many genetic flaws have had a chance to manifest themselves.

Title or Show Dogs have an entire set of rules that govern their breeding and purchase. You may require a guarantee from the breeder that your dog will be fertile and free from hereditary defects. Your breeder could require that you show the dog for a specified amount of time before breeding her.

### **Finding a new home**

Your breeder's contract could require that you notify him if you have to give up your dog. Besides having wide contacts with trustworthy people who might be interested in adopting your dog, the breeder wants to be sure he can follow your dog through life. Breeders often remain so involved in the lives of their dogs that they themselves will care for your pet if you can no longer keep her, or if you must be away from home for a long time.

### **Some terms breeders use**

#### **Breeder Champion Lines**

This means that there is a least one champion somewhere in the pedigree. Virtually all-purebred dogs (and a lot of mixed breeds) have champions somewhere in their pedigree. Though you may have to go back 20 generations to find one.

### **Champion Sired**

This means that the father is a breed conformation champion. The title of Champion does not guarantee health and is not an alternative to genetic testing. Remember also that the sire is only half the pedigree. The same rules apply to the Champion dam.

### **Obedience- titled Parents**

This means that the parents have completed the requirements for an obedience title. Although it indicates that the parents are probably well socialized, it is no indication of quality and genetic soundness. Advanced titles such as Companion Dog Excellent (CDX), Utility Dog (UD), and Obedience Trial Champion (O.T.Ch.) can be good indicators of stable temperaments and stamina. It also indicates a breeder who spends a lot of time with his dogs.

### **Experienced Breeder**

This only means the breeder has done a lot of breeding. But it is not clear what kind of breeding has been done.

### **Reputable Breeder**

Again, this doesn't mean much unless you know them well.

### **Everything You Wanted To Know**

#### **Once I decide on a puppy, what should I do?**

See a written contract. It should completely identify the puppy, including any tattoo. It should contain all AKC requirements as well as the guarantee and stipulations of the sale.

See copies of all represented documentation. Require a set to take home with you at the time of purchase.

#### **Why can't I buy any cute, healthy puppy?**

It's so easy to love a cute puppy face? But you'll live with a puppy only for a few months. And for many years with an adult. As a puppy grows up, he will change and this is the friend you're going to live with.

Started in 1989, CGC or, The Canine Good Citizen Program is a certification program that is designed to reward dogs, which have good manners at home and in the community. The Canine Good Citizen Program is a two-part program that stresses responsible pet ownership for owners and basic good manners for dogs. All dogs that pass the 10-step CGC test may receive a certificate from the American Kennel Club.

### **Who is a Hobby Horse Breeder?**

This breeder is a responsible breeder. He is only interested in his breed and devotes all his time to the betterment of his breed. He is always actively involved in showing in conformation, and often participates in obedience, and/or agility. He is also actively involved in dog clubs.

### **Is a commercial breeder a good breeder?**

No. Such a breeder does not care for the breed. He usually houses many males and females of several breeds. The bitches are usually bred every time they are in season, until they can produce no more. The animals are all in badly kept kennels. Breeding is for volume and dollars. The puppies are usually sold to brokers at 5 to 6 weeks old.

### **How about backyard breeders?**

This kind of breeder usually breeds on an impulse. He is not a professional breeder. He may do so because he has a bitch or he wants the kids to have one more dog. Or it is an opportunity to make a few dollars. The Sire is chosen very easily. Usually it is someone who owns a male. They do not understand the genetic health issues or the need to health test the sire and dam before breeding. No consideration is given to the quality of the breeding partners, because they simply don't know what constitutes a good breed.

### **How good are puppy mills and pet stores?**

Avoid both. Dogs are locked in cages in puppy mills. There is absolutely no concern for hygiene or sanitation. Dogs are bred constantly with no concern for their health or welfare. All that matters is that they are producing puppies for money. These dogs are killed if they can no longer produce puppies.

A pet store sells to whoever has the money with no concern as to where that puppy lives or what kind of life it will have. The puppies at pet stores are often in ill health. Most of them have had little or no socialization since they are taken from their mothers at an early age. Many of these puppies die on the journey to the pet stores crammed in cages with other sickly puppies in the backs of poorly ventilated, large trucks establishments.

### **Are there dogs that do not shed hair?**

Single-coated dog breeds shed the least amount of any dog breed out there, and hairless dog breeds do not shed at all. Short hair does not mean less shedding! Shorthaired dogs shed just as much, sometimes more than longhaired breeds. It's the coat type, not the coat length that makes the difference. Poodles, Terrier breeds, and Schnauzers are some single-coated types of dogs.

### **Is it possible to find a dog that is allergen-free?**

Unfortunately, there are no truly allergen-free dog breeds. All dogs will cause some degree of allergies in certain people prone to allergies and asthma. However, there is hope. Single-coated dog breeds have been known to be hypoallergenic for years now, and although they do still have dander, the amount is significantly less than dog with a double coat.

### **Is it ok to buy a dog to guard your home?**

Many people see the dog as the ultimate in home protection devices. Wrong thing to think. A dog is not a security device, and that is often a fatal mistake to make.

### **What is the difference between a pet quality and a show quality puppy?**

A show quality puppy is one that conforms closely to the American Kennel Club's (AKC) standard for its breed. Depending on the deviations, the breeder will decide if a puppy is pet quality or otherwise.

### **What is Responsible Dog Ownership?**

Responsible Dog Ownership means being the best owner. It does not mean providing your dog with just the basic necessities like food, water and shelter. Responsible Dog Ownership is the obligation dog owners have to incorporate their dogs into the community, being a good neighbor, and providing for the needs of their dogs.

### **What breeds are apartment breeds?**

Bolognese, Basset Hound, Bull Dog, Corgi, Dashchund, Chihuahua, Bichon Frise are some.

### **Who is a good breeder?**

Good breeders ask questions. They are very concerned about the new home of their pup. Be prepared to answer questions about the people who live with you, what hours you work, what kind of visitors you get, what your yard layout is like, what you are willing to spend and so on. A good breeder who cares (and this is the best type) will want to ensure that his or her puppy is going to the best home

### **What are breed clubs?**

Breed clubs are organizations made up of people who love their breed of dog, and want to preserve it as it should be, and in most cases, for its original function. The people who form a breed club are generally dedicated to the dog, and work hard at making sure that any breeding that happens, happens only to benefit the breed, not the breeder.

### **I am Asthmatic. How can I choose the right one?**

Select a breeder. Make an appointment and go directly to the breeder's house without visiting any other dogs. Stay at least 20 to 30 minutes unless you have an attack. If no attack, go directly home or whatever, but do not visit any other dogs for several hours to eliminate the possibility of a delayed reaction. The breeder should only have one breed of dog living in that house, otherwise if you are allergic, the test is inconclusive, - it might have been the other breed.

### **Can I have a list of dogs that don't cause an attack?**

These dogs go well with asthma sufferers because they shed very little dander. Poodles, Standard and Miniature are excellent with kids, great as family pets and shed very little hair. Chihuahua, Portuguese Water Dogs, Bichon Frise are also good.

### **Does the breeder give vaccines?**

A few vaccines are given before the pup is 8 weeks old. You and your breeder can discuss this. Also talk to your vet about which vaccinations should be given, how many times the vaccine should be administered to insure good protection, and when booster shots should be done. A booster shot is a shot of vaccine given more than one time. The follow-up vaccinations will boost the immune level up higher and the patient will be even better protected from the disease. Most puppies will get a combination vaccine, called a multivalent vaccine, which protects against more than one disease. This combination vaccine allows the puppy to be vaccinated via a single injection rather than having to receive four or five separate inoculations.

A typical multivalent vaccine is the DHLPPCv vaccine for dogs. Instead of giving six different injections, all these antigens can be given in a single small volume injection. :

D: Canine Distemper Virus. This is a dangerous viral infection.

H: Hepatitis. This is a viral infection caused by two related viruses that mainly affects the liver.

L: Leptospirosis. A bacterial infection affecting the kidneys.

P: Parainfluenza. This, along with the Hepatitis virus, can cause upper respiratory infections.

P: Parvovirus. A severe and often fatal virus affecting the lining of the intestinal tract.

Cv: Coronavirus. Very similar to the Parvovirus, this can be very severe, but has a somewhat different effect on the intestinal tract and generally is not fatal

### Chapter 3

### Bringing your puppy Home

While this moment, the moment of bringing your puppy home is an unforgettable and exhilarating one, it is a traumatic one for your puppy. It is, in fact, a rather frightening time of adjustment for your new puppy. He will be leaving the security of his dam and littermates, and other familiar sights for the first time, and experiencing a host of new sights, sounds, and smells. It is best to pick up your puppy on a quiet weekend. You will have plenty of time to help him adjust to his new surroundings and he can be the center of your attention.

Take him home first. Do not drop by at your friend's place or visit any relative on the way. Do not allow visitors to the house for several days. Do not introduce him to other household pets, particularly adult dogs. Keep the confusion and distraction to a minimum.

#### Getting your home ready

There are some important things you should have on hand before bringing a new pup into your home. The two most important are the crate and lead. The crate is his place, secure and comfortable. An enclosure when home alone or at those times when you cannot provide supervision, a den in which to eat and sleep, and the safest place for him to ride when traveling. Take him home in it so he can get used to it.

Slip style leads are wonderful for younger puppies, but you will also soon need a collar (complete with ID tag) and a snap lead.

The following is a list of some things you will need for your puppy. :

Several stuffed toys (substitutes for lost littermates)

Puppy gate (if confinement is necessary)

Lots of newspapers (no colored print)

Wire or plastic dog crate

Easily washable, hard-to-destroy bedding material

Food and water dishes

Buckle puppy collar & lead

ID Tag with your phone number to wear on the collar

High quality, safe chew toys

Puppy Nylabones, Cressite rubber balls or bones and sturdy stuffed squeak toys

Grooming supplies (your breeder can advise)

Dry puppy food.

A safe spray-on product, to discourage chewing on inappropriate objects.

### **The first days at home**

Take one or two empty jugs when you pick up the puppy. Fill them with water from the breeder's place. This is the water to which the puppy has grown accustomed. Put the water in the puppy's dish upon arrival at your home. Immediately refill the water jug with water from your own tap. After several days, the puppy will be entirely weaned onto your own local tap water. Do not assume that your tap water is the same. Puppy's systems are very sensitive at this time and will throw up all too easily.

### **His own space**

Give him a place of his own. A crate, some soft bedding and some chewable toys. Observe and interact with your puppy while he's acclimating to his new den. This will help forge a bond with you and will establish you as the pack leader. This is important to a puppy's emotional stability and can have a strong bearing on how it behaves in your family. If possible, get a piece of cloth with the mother's scent still on it. This should help comfort the puppy in its new home. Do not place your puppy up on a sofa, bed, or chair. Dislocated or broken bones may result from even very low falls to the floor

Let him roam and explore its new surroundings. Show him his food and water dishes, allowing him to drink as much as it wants. Kids will want to play and lavish attention on the puppy. Do not allow them during the initial hours. There will be plenty of time ahead for that. Explain how frightened the puppy is and the need to maintain a quiet and peaceful environment at first. Continually reassure the puppy but do not overdo the caring.

The puppy may or may not go to the bathroom soon after its arrival. Turn on the radio to help the puppy feel comforted when it is left alone. If your puppy cries when left alone, do not respond to him unless it is an obvious emergency. Cries for attention should be ignored. It will only encourage him to cry when he wants attention and this is an awfully hard habit to break.

### **My name is Roff**

You may have a name for your new puppy. Here are some tips: Names should be short. A two syllable name is preferable because it's brief and won't be confused with one-syllable commands such as "No" or "Sit." Be consistent. All family members should use the same name. Please do not use confusing nicknames or variations. Every time your puppy responds to his name, praise him.

### **Eliminate all danger zones**

What would you do if your baby has just started crawling? You would look everywhere to see that nothing hazardous is around him. This is good advice for a puppy owner too. Get down and look from his view at anything that might be a hazard if chewed on or swallowed.

Nobody is as curious as a puppy. To him, the world is a brand new toy and must be thoroughly investigated. Here's the downside: puppies do most of their investigating with their mouths. Like everywhere else, Murphy's Law operates here and if anything can go wrong, it will. So do make the place safe for him.

### **What objects can be dangerous for my dog at home?**

You need to check your home for any unsafe/potentially unsafe item. In your kitchen/ bathroom, use childproof latches to keep curious muzzles from prying open cabinets. Keep medicine, cleaners, chemicals, and laundry supplies on high shelves. Keep foods out of reach (even if the food isn't harmful, the wrapper could be. And some foods, like chocolate, can be toxic).

Keep trash cans covered or inside a latched cabinet

Keep toilet lids closed to prevent drowning or drinking harmful cleaning chemicals.

In the living room, keep dangling wires from lamps, VCRs, stereos, TVs, and phones out of chewing reach. Put your kids' toys away. Move plants out of reach (some houseplants are poisonous to animals). Keep coins and pens, sewing items like needles and thread out of reach. Make sure all heating/air vents have a cover. In the garage, keep all chemicals in high shelves or behind secure doors. Clean up all antifreeze from the floor and driveway: one lick of most antifreeze can be lethal to any animal. Keep all sharp objects and tools out of reach.

In the bedroom, keep laundry and shoes behind closed doors (drawstrings and buttons can cause problems if swallowed). Keep any medications, lotions, or cosmetics off accessible surfaces (like the bedside table).

### **Prevention is better**

Preventing destructive and dangerous chewing is easier than trying to correct the puppy every second. Look around your home. What objects could be put up out of the way of a curious puppy? Apply some spray to furniture legs, woodwork and other immovable items. Are there rooms your puppy should be restricted from entering until he's better trained and more reliable? Install a baby gate or keep the doors to those rooms closed.

Check if electrical cords are lying around. Puppies love to chew, and a cord can burn, shock, and even kill. Use outlet covers in all open outlets. Plastic bags can suffocate your puppy. Beware. Toilets and buckets of water are tempting to puppies, but can be both a drowning hazard and a chemical hazard if you use cleaners in your toilet tank.

Basement doors, windows, doors to balconies and so on should be kept closed and locked. Puppies can dislocate bones, break bones and die from falls. Do not assume that a railing will keep your puppy safe.

Take a walk around your yard looking for potential hazards. When playing in your yard, make sure your puppy does not try to swallow rocks. Even small sticks are unsafe. Adult dogs can chew on one and get poked through the mouth. This will not only give you a fat veterinarian bill, but weeks of pain for him. If your yard is fenced, check the boundaries and gates for openings that could be potential escape routes. Puppies can get through smaller places than an adult dog. If your yard's not fenced, make a resolution right now that your puppy will never be allowed to run off lead without close supervision. He won't ever know enough to look both ways before crossing the street to chase a squirrel. Keep him safe by keeping him on leash.

Be careful when closing doors. Sometimes, your puppy could get in the way. Ashtrays with cigarette butts can be dangerous. Puppies seem to get into some unimaginable areas. As with toddlers, keep all cleaners and other household poisons up high in a locked cabinet to avoid an accident of this nature.

Medicine should be kept in a locked medicine cabinet. Never leave a bottle on a coffee table, or a bedside table. A puppy can chew through a bottle in seconds and ingest the medicine inside very quickly.

Cords on window blinds can tangle and choke. Never leash a puppy in the house when you leave. They could become excited and tangle up in it, or jump over something and hang themselves.

Ribbons can be cute on a puppy, but again, can be a choking or hanging hazard. They can tighten up unexpectedly, and even if you are right there, can often be hard to remove once this has happened.

Some toys sold specifically for puppies pose their own hazards. Avoid toys with squeakers that can be chewed out. Only use these under your close supervision.

Take care when disposing of discarded oils and antifreeze, and never allow a puppy to roam to a neighbors yard for this reason alone. Spilled or leaking antifreeze kills family pets every year. Newer pet safe products are available and should be used if possible.

### **What accessories should I buy for my dog?**

For starters, your dog will need a pet bowl, a soft-sided dog crate, a dog pillow, pet bedding, a pet mat, a plush cuddler, a dog tie-out, and a pick-up bag. You may also want to get some baby gates. If you are going to expect your dog to stay put in one place when you're not at home, you'll need to get baby gates to keep him in. You will also need a leash and collar. You

need to make sure he has something to wear around his neck, which will contain his identification charm and have a place to latch his leash onto when you're ready to take him for a walk.

You'll probably want to get your pet some toys, too. Toys are important as this gives pets something to chew on that's actually acceptable by you to chew on.

### **Visit your vet**

As soon as you get home, make an appointment with your veterinarian to give the puppy a complete checkup within 72 hours of your purchase. If you don't have a vet yet, ask the breeder or local kennel club for a recommendation. Although the puppy has been health-checked by the breeder, an exam is good. It might show up problems that weren't apparent the first time. If your vet offers microchip ID implants, this an excellent time to get one.

This is also the time to use your puppy's breeder as a valuable resource for advice and information. Don't be afraid to ask questions. The breeder wants your relationship with your puppy to be successful and can offer many tips based on years of experience.

### **Make a time-table**

Work out a schedule for you and the puppy. Houstraining is much easier when the puppy's meals, exercise and playtimes are on a regular schedule throughout the day.

You must take time to decide where to put the dog crate. It should be kept in a convenient place; for you as well as the puppy. Many puppies don't like to be isolated in one part of the house while their family is in another but some puppies dislike too much noise and might be agitated if there's too much activity going on around them. You might have to experiment with different locations until you learn what works best for both you and the puppy.

### **Health Problems**

#### Diarrhea

This is generally caused by the change in the environment (normally water or food supplies). Make sure he is given home food and water. High levels of stress also may induce an upset stomach. If it persists past two days, see your veterinarian immediately.

#### Coughs

Again, this is because of changes in its environment. The changes cause stress, which in turn, lowers your puppy's resistance to colds.

### Worms

Your puppy should have been de wormed several times already. Your puppy should be free from worms but repeat de wormings are a must, in order to kill any remaining or newly introduced live worms. Remember, you cannot kill the eggs, only the hatched live worm. This is why you must continue the de wormings. The puppy should be de wormed at nine weeks and at twelve weeks. Thereafter, fecal exams to check for worm infestation should be done by your veterinarian.

Your puppy would have been started on heartworm preventative. Its first dose would've been at six weeks of age. Its next dose should be given at ten weeks and further doses every month for the puppy's entire lifetime.

### Do's and Don'ts

Do not expose your puppy to new animals until its immunity is fully up. (At about 16 weeks). Don't bathe him until he is four or five months old unless he is entirely filthy. Your puppy's skin is very sensitive and dries out quite easily.

Do not pick the puppy up by the scruff of the neck.

Do not allow children to be rough with him or maul him in anyway. You wouldn't let the neighborhood kids do so with your ten-week old baby. Puppies aren't any different.

Do continue his vaccinations and heartworm medicine.

Don't forget to get rabies shots as required by law.

Don't let the puppy near your stairs until he has entirely mastered them under strict supervision.

Do keep the puppy well confined during the first several weeks home. A puppy that gets loose may wander away and forget, or not know, where home is.

Do housebreak and train your dog with kindness and attention to detail.

Do give your puppy all the love and attention you can possibly spare. Nobody needs it more.

Don't treat him like an adult dog. Treat him like an infant: with patience, constant supervision and a gentle touch. The way you interact with your puppy at this age is critical to his socialization. Supervise your puppy at all times and interact with him regularly. Be alert for signs (sniffing and circling) that he has to go to the bathroom, then take him outside immediately.

A young puppy has no bladder control and will need to urinate immediately after eating, drinking, sleeping or playing.

At night, he will need to relieve himself at least every three hours.

Don't punish an accident. Never push his nose in the waste or scold him. He won't understand, and may learn to go to the bathroom when you're out of sight.

Praise your puppy every time he goes to the bathroom outside.

Feed your puppy a formula designed for puppies. Like a baby, he needs nutritious, highly digestible food.

### Children and pets

Don't let your kids play with him constantly. Puppies, in particular, need a lot of rest just like a growing child. Limit puppy-children play sessions to 15-30 minute periods 2-3 times a day.

Young children may be tempted to shout at a puppy if they think he's doing something wrong. Be sure they understand that puppies are just like babies. They can be easily upset and startled by loud noises. Make sure your children don't tease the puppy.

Ask your children not to play with him by keeping a toy just out of reach. This will reinforce bad habits such as jumping up and excessive barking. Wagging tails and play biting can be too rough for some young children. Supervise interaction and separate them if the play is too rough. Teach them how to care for a dog by showing them how to feed and groom him.

### Resident pets

Resident pets should not be allowed near your puppy for a few days. After your new puppy is used to his new area, put an expandable pet gate in the doorway or put your puppy in his crate. Give your resident pet access to the area. Let pets smell and touch each other through the crate or pet gate. Do this several times over the next few days.

After that, let them meet. Supervise their meeting and go back to through-the-gate or crate meetings if trouble arises.

### Diet

Bring him up on the right kind of food and ensure good eating practices early. The first few days will be stressful for you. What, how and when to feed your puppy becomes a big issue. How will he cope without his mother's milk? Your breeder is the right person to give you instructions. He will tell you what your pup has been eating and what you should feed him. . It is a good idea to continue feeding the same type and brand of food for at least a few days. Most people are soon surprised how well puppies make it through this transition because they don't understand how far along dogs are in their development at 7 weeks of age.

Most breeders start feeding their puppies commercial food at 21 days of age. Some of the toy breeds will start 3 to 4 days later. Even though their eyes don't open until 11 to 13 days old, just ten days later puppies are ready to start on something in addition to mom's milk. Most breeders take dry puppy food, soak it in warm water for thirty minutes and then give it to the litter when they are 21 days old. The first day they may only stick their noses in it and try to lick some of the liquid. But after that, they eat and they eat very well.

After a week or so they get these feeds twice a day. This takes a huge burden off the mother especially when she has a large litter. Puppies fed on this sort of a schedule grow rapidly and with fewer problems.

Gradually, the amount of water mixed in the food is decreased and then finally eliminated. This depends on how fast the teeth are developing. The breeder will always tell all new puppy owners to use a dry food formulated for puppies. A few, especially members of the toy breeds, may need it moistened for one to two additional weeks but that is all.

### **Puppies and growing up**

There are four key growth periods in a puppy's life in terms of their nutritional requirements:

The newborn puppy: the critical first few hours of life

The nursing puppy: from birth to week 4

The weaning puppy: from week 4 to week 8

The growing puppy: from week 8 to adult

### **The newborn**

Immediately after birth, the mother produces a special type of milk called colostrum. Colostrum contains antibodies and other immune substances that help protect the newborn puppy from disease. These protective substances can only be absorbed through the intestine during the first 24 hours of life, so it is vitally important that the puppy begins to nurse from his mother as soon as possible after birth.

### **The Nursing Puppy**

The mother's milk slowly changes from colostrum to mature milk within the first 24 to 72 hours. During the first 3 to 4 weeks of life, puppies should be nursed a minimum of four to six times daily. In healthy puppies, the mother's milk is adequate for normal growth until about 4 weeks of age. After this time, milk alone cannot meet the high demands for the calories or nutrients needed to ensure continued normal development; so supplemental feeding should be introduced.

### **The Weaning Puppy**

To help supplement the nutrition of mother's milk and to prepare puppies for weaning, puppies should be introduced to semi-solid food at around 3 to 4 weeks of age. Soak puppy food in warm water for at least 20 minutes and then mix to form a thick gruel. Give the soaked food at least three times daily. Dry puppy food can be introduced from 6 weeks of age. Most puppies are fully weaned off their mother's milk by 8 weeks of age.

### **The Growing Puppy: Energy and Protein**

The energy needs of growing puppies can be nearly three times that of an adult dog (per kg metabolic body size). During growth, rapid tissue development takes place, reflected primarily in increased needs for energy and essential nutrients, including the optimal essential amino acid profile. Similarly, their protein requirement also exceeds that of adult dogs. Puppies need more protein to build new tissue.

Puppies are renowned for eating everything they come across and as a result many puppies suffer from occasional bouts of diarrhoea. Beet pulp supplies energy to the cells of the intestine, promoting a healthy gut and small firm stools.

### **Different breeds**

All puppies are not the same. Although every puppy grows rapidly during the first 6 months of his life, there are significant differences in weight and growth development between breeds. These differences are already apparent in birth weight and litter size. A poodle bitch, for instance, will give birth to 1-3 puppies, each one weighing approximately 5% of their mother's body weight. A German Shepherd will carry a litter with 8-12 puppies, with each puppy weighing 1% of their mother's body weight.

The duration of growth and growth rates also vary significantly. After one year, the poodle will have multiplied his birth weight by 20, a Beagle by 50, a German Shepherd by 70 and a Great Dane by 100. And by 8 months, the poodle will have almost reached his adult weight, whereas the Great Dane matures at approximately 2 years. These differences in growth development lead to very specific nutritional needs. Feeding mistakes during growth can have severe consequences.

Smaller breed puppies, for example, have a higher rate of metabolism. It is important to provide these puppies with enough energy and nutrients according to their limited stomach capacity. The growth of large breed puppies must be very carefully controlled. These puppies grow very fast during the first 12 months of life. If their growth rate is too rapid or if dietary calcium levels are excessive, they can develop bone diseases. Food for large breed puppies must therefore contain less fat to prevent over-consumption of calories and reduced calcium levels, balanced to the energy content of the nutrition.

### **Transition to adult foods**

Some breeds reach the adult stage before others. Small breed puppies need to switch to an adult food between 8-12 months of age, medium breeds at 12-15 months of age, and large breeds at 15-18 months of age. Because different breeds have very different nutritional needs. This ensures that every puppy can start with the correct nutritional basis. The best guarantee for healthy growth.

### A quick overview

1. Food is given to pups at 3 weeks of age. Over the weeks, their diet changes slowly.
2. Choose high-quality puppy food that has 25 to 30 percent protein content.
3. Purchase dog food that mentions both AAFCO (Association of American Feeding Control Officials) and Animal Feeding Trials (or Animal Feeding Tests) on its label.
4. Make it into gruel with warm water or a commercially prepared milk replacer.
5. Feed your puppy three to four times a day until they're 5 to 6 months of age.
6. Check with your veterinarian to find out the correct amount of food to give your puppy at each feeding. Or check the package of puppy food, which may provide guidelines based on size. Avoid overfeeding.
7. Use puppy food specifically made for large breeds to encourage growth. Use puppy food specifically made for large breeds to encourage slow growth for large-breed puppies. Feed him puppy food for up to 12 to 18 months, depending on the breed.
8. Observe your puppy weekly for appearance of weight gain. Puppies should gain 2 to 4 g per day per kg of anticipated adult weight for the first 5 months of life. Be sure to choose a reputable brand of dog food. Check with your veterinarian for recommendations.

### A healthy diet for dogs

\*Select a high-quality dog food appropriate for your dog's age, weight, activity level or size. Make sure to feed your dog dry food as well as moist canned food to help keep his teeth clean.

\*Be sure that protein ratios are correct for his breed and age. Typically, dog food with 20 to 30 percent protein content provides a healthy balance.

\*Avoid overfeeding, since obesity can lead to a variety of medical problems, including musculoskeletal problems, and can aggravate hip dysplasia (abnormal growth or development of the hip joint).

\*Avoid feeding your dog table scraps; it encourages begging and may not be good for his digestive system. If you must give her people food, put the scraps in her dog bowl after the family has finished the meal. Be careful to avoid giving her onions or chocolate.

\*Feed your dog a measured amount twice daily, but keep in mind that some dogs prefer to eat one meal a day.

\*When switching dog foods, do it gradually over a week by increasing the ratio of new food to old food. This will help avoid digestive upsets.

\*Do not over supplement your dog's diet with vitamins and minerals. Excess dietary supplements cause nutritional imbalance and medical disorders. Some vitamins and minerals are toxic in high dosages. Never feed your dog chocolate. Chocolate is toxic.

### How to choose brands

1. Choose food that mentions both the AAFCO (Association of American Feeding Control Officials) and Animal Feeding Trials on its label.
2. Pick food that provides all nutrients for your pet, including water, energy, protein (essential amino acids and nitrogen), essential fatty acids, minerals and vitamins.
3. Select pet food that's balanced. Nutrients must be present in the proper proportions.
4. Choose food that's digestible. Nutrients must be easily broken down and made available to the animal.
4. Recognize that feeding directions on labels can only be estimated and must be modified to fit individual pet needs. Check with your veterinarian.
5. Consider the manufacturer's reputation when selecting brands. Generally, you should purchase brands that are priced higher.

### Water

Don't give your pup too much to drink upon picking up your new puppy, as he is used to having constant drinking available from his mom. He will drink as much as you provide. Limit a cup of water at a time in the beginning, and eventually up his intake of water, dependant upon what his stools look like. If its too soft, cut back the water, if too hard, increase water intake. When he is about three months of age, you can leave water out and not worry about him drinking too much water at one time. Until then, watch all water intakes, and only give limited supplies of water.

Put a small dish attached to the door of his crate, if crate training or if you are going to be away at work for most of the day. You can still provide them with water to drink if they get thirsty. Feed and water your pup immediately upon waking in the morning before you do anything else. That way they will have gone potty before you have left for work. And will hopefully not have any accidents while you're gone.

Border Collies are notoriously finicky eaters. Their caloric output is usually quite high and yet they do not like eating large quantities at a time. Some people simply leave their food out all day and allow them to eat as they wish, rather like a cat. Others prefer to feed at regimented times and remove the food after a sufficient time span. Getting them to eat is an uphill task and is simply a quirk of their breed

### **Housetraining**

Apart from food and nutrition, this is one of the biggest areas of training and development. It requires time, vigilance, patience and commitment. The more consistent you are in following the basic housetraining procedures, the faster your puppy will learn acceptable behavior. It may take several weeks to housetrain your puppy, and with some of the smaller breeds, it might take longer. The quickest and easiest way to house train your puppy is to rely on your puppy's natural instincts and behavior.

Unless you can monitor your puppy 24 hours a day, don't expect the house training process to be completed until your puppy is at least 6 months old. Since puppies are growing and developing rapidly at this stage, they eat more food, burn up more energy and seem to need to eliminate constantly. They also have very little bladder control.

At first there will be no rhyme or reason to where your pup eliminates. He will go everywhere and anywhere. He will also probably play with the papers you've put, chew on them and drag them around his little den. Most puppies do this and you should have tremendous patience. Don't get upset; just accept it as life with a young puppy. The important thing is that when you get home, clean up the mess and lay down fresh papers.

### **Establish A Routine**

Make a proper timetable for your puppy. Take your puppy outside frequently. Every two hours, immediately after, he wakes up from a nap, after playing and after eating. Praise him every time he eliminates outdoors. You can even give him a treat. This must be done immediately after he's finished eliminating, not after he comes back inside the house. This is important otherwise he will not know why you praised him.

Make sure the spot is not too far away from the door. Always take your puppy, on a leash, directly to the bathroom spot. Take him for a walk or play with him only after he has eliminated. After you clean up an accident in the house, take the soiled rags or paper towels and leave them in the bathroom spot. The smell will help your puppy recognize the area. He will know it as the place he is supposed to eliminate in. While your puppy is eliminating, use a word or phrase, like “go ” or “potty” before he eliminates to remind him of what he’s supposed to be doing.

Your puppy’s regular feeding schedule, three or four times a day will help him stick to a routine as far as eliminating goes. Feeding your puppy at the same times each day will make it more likely that he’ll eliminate at consistent times as well. This makes houstraining easier for both of you.

### **Supervision is a must**

Try not to give your puppy an opportunity to soil in the house. Watch him at all times when he is indoors. Tether him to you with a six-foot leash, or use baby gates, to keep him in the room where you are. Watch for signs that say he needs to eliminate, like sniffing around or circling. When you see these signs, immediately take him outside, on a leash, to his bathroom spot. If he eliminates, praise him lavishly and reward him with a treat.

### **Confinement**

If you’re unable to watch your puppy at all times, confine him to an area small enough so he won’t want to eliminate there. It should be just big enough for him to comfortably stand, lie down and turn around in. This area could be a portion of a bathroom or laundry room, blocked off with boxes or baby gates. Or you may want to crate train your puppy and use the crate to confine him. If your puppy has spent several hours in confinement, when you let him out, take him directly to his bathroom spot and praise him when he eliminates. You should expect your puppy to have an accident in the house. It’s a part of houstraining a puppy.

### **Catching him in the act**

When you catch him eliminating in the house, do something to stop him. Make a startling noise but don’t scare him. Immediately take him to his bathroom spot, praise him and give him a treat if he finishes eliminating there.

Remember one important rule: don’t punish your puppy for eliminating in the house. If you find a soiled area, do not yell or scream at him. Do nothing but clean it up. Taking him to the spot and scolding him, or any other punishment or discipline, will only make him afraid of you or afraid to eliminate in your presence. Animals don’t understand punishment after the event, even if it’s only seconds later. Besides, punishment will do more harm than good.

You have to clean the area for another important reason (apart from the obvious one) .if you don't clean the area, your puppy will be highly motivated to continue soiling in areas that smell like urine or feces.

### **Paper Training**

While your puppy is confined, he is developing a habit of eliminating on paper because no matter where he goes, it will be on paper. As time goes on, he will start to show a preferred place to do his business. When this place is well established and the rest of the papers remain clean all day, gradually reduce the area that is papered. Start removing the paper that is furthest away from his chosen location. Eventually you will only need to leave a few sheets down in that area only. If he ever misses the paper, then you've reduced the area too soon. Go back to papering a larger area or even the entire room.

Once your puppy is reliably going only on the papers you've left, then you can slowly and gradually move his papers to a location of your choice. Move the papers only an inch a day. If puppy misses the paper again, then you're moving too fast. Go back a few steps and start over. Don't be discouraged if your puppy seems to be making remarkable progress and then suddenly you have to return to papering the entire room. This is normal. There will always be minor setbacks. If you stick with this procedure, your puppy will be paper-trained

### **While you're away**

If you have to be away from home for more than four or five hours a day, this may not be the best time for you to get a puppy. If you're already committed to having a puppy and have to be away from home for long periods of time, you'll need to train your puppy to eliminate in a specific place indoors. This, however, will only prolong the process of teaching him to eliminate outdoors. Teaching your puppy to eliminate on newspaper may create a life-long surface preference, meaning that he may, even in adulthood, eliminate on any newspaper he finds lying around the house.

Confine him to an area with enough room for a sleeping space, a playing space and a separate place to eliminate. In the area designated as the elimination place, you can either use newspapers or a sod box. To make a sod box, place sod in a container, like a child's small, plastic swimming pool. You can also find dog litter products at a pet supply store. If you clean up an accident in the house, take the soiled rags or paper towels, and put them in the designated elimination place. The smell will help your puppy recognize the area as the place where he is supposed to eliminate.

### **Soiling your house: other reasons**

If you've consistently followed the houstraining procedures and your puppy continues to eliminate in the house, there may be another reason for his behavior.

**Medical Problems:** House soiling can often be caused by physical problems such as a urinary tract infection or a parasite infection. Check with your veterinarian. **Submissive/Excitement Urination:** Some dogs, especially young ones, temporarily lose control of their bladders when they become excited or feel threatened. This usually occurs during greetings, intense play or when they're about to be punished. **Territorial Urine-Marking:** Dogs sometimes deposit urine or feces, usually in small amounts, to scent-mark their territory. Both male and female dogs do this, and it most often occurs when they believe their territory has been invaded. **Separation Anxiety.** Dogs that become anxious when they're left alone may house soil as a result. Usually, there are other symptoms, such as destructive behavior or vocalization **Fears Or Phobias.** When animals become frightened, they may lose control of their bladder and/or bowels. If your puppy is afraid of loud noises, such as thunderstorms or fireworks, he may house soil when he's exposed to these sounds.

### **Catch Him Young**

The most important thing you can do to make house training happen as quickly as possible is to reward and praise your puppy every time he goes in the right place. The more times he is rewarded, the quicker he will learn. Therefore it's important that you spend as much time as possible with your pup and give him regular and frequent access to his toilet area.

**Consistency and Patience.** Never scold or punish your puppy for mistakes and accidents. The older your pup gets, the more he will be able to control his bladder and bowels. Eventually your pup will have enough control that he will be able to "hold it" for longer and longer periods of time. Let your puppy do this on his own time. When training is rushed, problems usually develop. Don't forget, most puppies are not reliably house trained until they are at least 6 months old.

The right training begins now. Establishing good habits early on in housetraining your puppy is critical. If you allow your puppy to eliminate anywhere he wants in your home, you will end up with an adult dog that will always have a tendency to want to eliminate in your home. You will have to live with it forever, or go through some time-consuming, tedious retraining later on. A dog is either housetrained or not. There is no such thing as weekly accidents. A truly housetrained dog will never eliminate in your house unless forced to do so or because of illness or excessively long confinement. Don't expect your puppy to be reliably housetrained until it is at least 6 months old.

### **Some tips**

You should provide constant access to the toilet area. If you are home, take your puppy there every 45 minutes or less.

If you are not home or for some reason cannot take care, then you must make sure he cannot make a mistake.

Confine your puppy to an area and line the entire floor with papers. If the weather is nice, the area safe, you can confine the pup to a small pen outside. But never leave your pup out in the sun, wind, heat or cold. Be sure to provide shelter and water in the confinement area. The idea is that no matter where the puppy eliminates while confined, it is on something that resembles his toilet area. Your goal is to never allow your puppy to eliminate on carpet, tile, hardwood, or anything that resembles the flooring in your home. Once a habit is established, it is difficult to break, therefore, do not let your pup form bad habits in the first place.

Praise and reward your puppy each and every time possible for eliminating in his toilet area. Feed your puppy at regular times. If his feeding is scheduled, then elimination will also be the same. Use a crate to help your puppy develop self-control. Be patient. It can take until the dog is 6 months old for him to be housetrained. Do not reprimand your puppy for mistakes. This will have a negative effect on your training.

Do not leave food and water out all day and night for your puppy to eat and drink at whim. Use some common sense here. Obviously if the weather is hot, it is appropriate to give the pup access to water, but if this is the case, then you need to be more alert to the possibility of the pup needing to urinate more frequently.

Do not give your puppy free unattended run of your house.

Your puppy's state of health will affect his ability to be successfully housetrained (housebroken). Which is why, it is important for him to be seen by a vet within 48 hours of his coming home from the breeder or animal shelter. If your puppy does not receive a "clean bill of health", it is important that any physical conditions that can impede successful housetraining (such as cystitis, bladder infection) be properly treated. A fecal check will determine whether worms or internal parasites are present. (There are several types of worms that are not visible except under a microscope. Also, fleas can cause tapeworm.)

Puppies need to urinate shortly after they eat, drink water, play, chew, or sleep. For most puppies over 10 weeks of age, that means somewhere between 5 and 10 times a day! Adolescent dogs (from 6 to 11 months. old) will need 4 to 6 walks a day. Adult dogs need 3 to 4 walks a day, and elderly dogs need at least 3 to 4 walks daily (incontinent dogs will need more).

### **Do Not Return From A Walk Until Your Puppy Eliminates**

If your puppy has been confined overnight to a crate, take him outside first thing in the morning (before he's had a chance to soil indoors.) Be prepared to stay outdoors with him until he eliminates. (This could take from a few minutes to as much as several hours) As soon as your puppy eliminates outdoors, offer him lavish praise and a treat. If you take your puppy back inside the house before he's fully eliminated, he will surely have a house soiling accident indoors.

### Chapter 4

### Well-groomed is well cared for

Another important factor that contributes a lot to your dog's health is good grooming. Don't be fooled into thinking grooming is just a matter of brushing his hair. Grooming your dog accomplishes much more than just making your pet's coat look nice and shiny. Grooming also helps you bond with your puppy. It helps you spend time with him. Combing, brushing, and bathing are all activities he should get used to and gradually he will associate these functions with the pleasant times both of you had.

You will be able to check your dog closely for any problems while grooming. Move the hair aside and examine the skin closely for signs of flea, ticks or skin irritations. Look for any unusual problems with the coat such as mats, tangles or dandruff. Mats and tangles can be carefully removed while grooming. Learn where he likes to be combed and brushed and where he doesn't.

All dogs have sensitive areas that need to be groomed a little more gently and carefully than others. By paying special attention to these areas, you will help make your dog more comfortable while being groomed, and he will not resist future grooming sessions. You will also become familiar with areas that he enjoys having groomed. This is helpful if you need to calm him during stressful times such as veterinary visits. Grooming requirements vary from breed to breed, some requiring daily brushing and combing, others less often. Some dogs may also need professional grooming; this can be as often as every six weeks, or as little as twice a year.

#### Start early

Puppies have short attention spans. Besides, they are very energetic all the time. Select a time when the puppy is less energetic. Start with short grooming sessions: five minutes or so. Talk to your puppy in a gentle, reassuring tone while grooming to make him feel comfortable. Check his ears, paws, teeth, and underside during the grooming process. This will, in time, make him accustomed to being handled and examined. Eventually, he will be quite comfortable being groomed, and will look forward to these sessions with you.

What's more, you need to get your puppy accustomed to being groomed from a very early age. If you make it a fun thing at first, a bit of a game, it will be easier for you to train him. Gradually build up the amount of time you spend grooming your puppy. He will be quite happy to stand for you to brush his coat. Eventually the puppy will enjoy being groomed and may even get quite excited when you produce his brush and comb from the cupboard.

Never approach grooming, as a chore. Maintaining long hair is one of the most difficult tasks but extremely rewarding. The puppy must be taught to allow you to pull on his hair, and brush him. Until the dog is four months old, comb him gently everyday, while he sits in your lap eating treats. This forms a positive association with the comb and the grooming process

Grooming time is also an ideal time to check him over for any lumps and bumps. You can also check the skin, by parting the hair, to see if your dog has any ticks, fleas or any red, sore or inflamed areas that may require treatment. Also remember to check the dog's eyes, ears, mouth, nose, feet and nails.

There are many small breeds, which have long hair. Remember: fur is not hair. Hair does not shed, does not smell, and requires frequent grooming. A few examples of such breeds are: Maltese, and the Yorkshire Terrier. There are three main options you have when maintaining such a dog, you can shave it, give it a puppy cut, or allow the hair to grow. With the shaving, you must remove all hair from all parts of the dog except the ears and muzzle, which you cut down with scissors. The puppy cut simply necessitates leaving approximately one inch of fur all over, which can be done with special clippers.

A dog's coat can be one of five types; long, non-shedding, silky, wiry or smooth. There are also a few that don't fit into any of the above, these are the hairless breeds and the breeds which have coats that are twisted into cords.

### **Long coats**

These need a lot of attention, grooming on a daily basis. Dogs with this type of coat are German Shepherds, Old English Sheepdogs, Newfoundlands and Golden Retrievers.

Non-shedding coats mean that dogs with these types of coats do not molt. They do however; need to be clipped on a regular basis, as much as every two months. These types of dogs also need to have excess hair removed around their ears. Some examples of non-shedding dogs are Poodles, Bichons Frises and Bedlington Terriers.

Silky coats need a lot of care. Remove dead hair or the dog will become very matted and uncomfortable. Some trimming is also required especially for a spaniel. Other examples of silky haired dogs are Afghans, Yorkshire Terriers, Spaniels, Setters and Pekes.

Dogs with wiry coats, like the Wirehaired Dachshund, the Schnauzers and most of the terrier breeds, need to be hand stripped, usually twice a year, or clipped regularly. Professional help will be needed for both these methods. Many breeders, of these dogs, will happily give advice on hand stripping your dog. It can be very time consuming, as much as five hours, so your dog will really have to be trained from an early age. These dogs should have their coats combed regularly to prevent matting.

The smooth coated dogs have the easiest coats to groom. A grooming mitt is all you really need, maybe a comb for the Labradors. Boxers, Dobermans, Greyhounds and Whippets are all smooth coated dogs.

### **The process**

Before you actually start using a brush or comb on your dog, use your hands. This loosens the dead hairs, by going through the coat in the opposite way to the hair growth. Just like a massage. Your pup will love this and it will stimulate the natural oils in the skin that help to give a nice, healthy shine to the coat. After doing this, you can use the grooming equipment best suited for his coat type. If the coat is matted, you may need to use scissors. Always make sure to keep the point of the scissors away from the dog. If the dog jumps you will not stab him.

Always comb in the direction of hair growth. Comb small sections at a time, until the coat is tangle free. If the coat has a particularly stubborn knot or tangle, you may have to trim it off with scissors. A de-matting comb, slicker or rake can be used to remove mats. When using a combination comb, begin with the widely spaced teeth, and follow with the finer teeth.

Start your brushing at the head, move towards the tail and down the legs. Always brush in the direction of hair growth. Pay particular attention to the legs and flanks, and areas that easily mat. A pin brush can be used to fluff the coat by brushing against the direction of hair growth. Regular brushing will help distribute the natural oils from the skin, producing a healthy, shiny coat. Brushing several times a week is recommended for most dogs.

### **Trimming**

You may need to trim a bit depending on the type of coat. There are dogs, which have hair growing over their eyes. You could tie the hair up in a topknot or trim it. Do not use a rubber band. Dogs that have a lot of hair around the muzzle may get matted with food. These breeds should have their muzzles combed daily.

Check the lip folds, small pockets of skin along the lip, for food debris. These folds can become infected if left with decaying food in them. Not all dogs have these lip folds; the spaniel is one breed that seems to have problems in this area. You must also check your dog's feet. The hair between the toes and pads can become matted and collect all sorts of debris, for example, small stones, chewing gum and twigs. Obviously these must be removed, as your dog will be very uncomfortable and reluctant to go for daily walks.

A dog should be groomed before you bathe it. Grooming first removes any unwanted hair and matts which stop the shampoo from getting through the coat. Also if knotted hair gets wet, it can cause sores and be quite painful. Knotted hair twists and becomes more knotted, pinching the skin as it does so.

### **A good bath**

Do not bathe him too often as this removes the natural oils from the skin. If you use shampoos not suitable for dogs then you may damage the coat and skin. The oils that are in the coat are there for a reason: waterproofing and insulation. If you take your dog to a groomer, he will give your dog a bath. So there will be no need for you to give him another one. Check the shampoo that they use, or even take your own along. If you are bathing your dog in your own bath make sure you put a non-slip mat on the bottom. Not only does this stop your dog from slipping and sliding, it also protects your bath from being scratched.

If your dog is wearing a leather collar remove it before bathing, replace it with a nylon type one if you can. Remember to use shampoo that is suitable for your dog's skin. Do not use household soaps and cleaning liquids, use a special dog shampoo. These dog shampoos also lather less and make it easier to rinse from the coat. The water for bathing your dog in should be lukewarm. Make sure you wet the coat thoroughly before adding the shampoo. Some dogs are quite hard to soak because of the type of hair they have

If the dog wants to shake itself while it is being bathed, place your hand on the back of its neck, the scruff, if necessary and gently lift the scruff. This action should be enough to stop the shake from occurring. Once you are sure that you have washed the dog all over, it is time to rinse. Again, top to bottom. Start with the head, tilt it up slightly, and work backwards. Repeat the rinsing process until you are sure that all the shampoo has been washed from the coat. Use your hands to gently squeeze the coat to get rid of the excess water. If you do not do this, the dog will come out of the bath and shake, soaking everything in its path.

The next step is to dry the dog. Some dogs will tolerate a hairdryer; others will have to be towel dried. If you decide to try using a hair dryer, let the dog see what you are doing. Switch it on and let it become used to the noise before you try to dry the dog. Remember the hairdryer should be set at a low heat and move it around. If you concentrate on one place for too long at a time, it may hurt your dog. After drying, one last groom will finish off the whole process of grooming and bathing your dog. Don't worry. If this seems like a lot of hard work there are professional groomers.

### **Ears**

You should clean your dog's ears to prevent them being dirtied with earwax. Use medicated ear powder to dust its ears weekly. Some dogs have excess hairs growing at the opening of the ear canal. These can be trimmed or plucked out gently. Apply medicated ear powder to prevent infections.

### Eyes

Whenever you notice eye mucus on your pet's eyes, clean it away with a damp wad of cotton wool.

### Teeth

Dogs have 44 teeth: 22 on the top and 22 on the bottom. These teeth are divided into 8 upper and 6 lower incisors, 4 canines, 16 premolars, and 4 upper and 6 lower molars. Canine teeth are suited for a carnivorous diet.

You should brush your dog's teeth at least twice a week. It is easier than brushing your own. Their narrow teeth are spaced more widely than human teeth, eliminating the need for flossing. Their teeth only touch in one or two places. A toothbrush can reach 90% of the areas that need to be brushed.

Always use specially formulated dog toothpaste. Dogs can't rinse and spit after a brushing so the paste must be safe for him to swallow. Our toothpastes contain detergents, which can irritate his stomach, and, in addition, large quantities of ingested fluoride can harm pets. Typical dog toothpaste is chicken or beef-flavored and contains water, sorbitol, silica, cellulose gum, Trisodium EDTA, Methylparaben, propylparaben, and titanium dioxide.

Watch out for gingivitis. Dogs do not normally get cavities, but are prone to developing a brown substance called calculus around their gums. Calculus, laden with bacteria, can eventually cause canine gums to recede, exposing the root. Teeth can loosen in their sockets, opening up the possibility of infection. Although antibiotics can suppress gum infection, only tartar removal can prevent infection from reoccurring. Infection can travel throughout the mouth, causing pharyngitis, and, in advanced cases, can enter the blood stream, even causing kidney and heart disease.

Tartar control biscuits, bones, and chew-eez can help reduce tartar buildup above the gum line, but only regular brushing can reach the hard- to- reach areas below the gum line.

Most dog dental kits contain a toothbrush and toothpaste, sold together. If using a human toothbrush, pick a soft, nylon bristle, and, for a smaller dog, child-sized brush. Finger brushes can be purchased as well. These fit on a fingertip and allow owners easier access to their dogs' mouths. Electric toothbrushes can be used if dogs can tolerate the mechanical noise.

Let the dog taste the toothpaste before attempting to brush his teeth. Allow him to lick the toothpaste off your brush. When he has tasted the toothpaste, reapply paste to the brush and start brushing in a circular motion. It is important to keep your dog calm and relaxed by praising him and stroking his neck area. When your dog is relaxed, pull back his lips and cheeks to gain access to the premolars and molars. Veterinarians recommend that a dog's teeth be brushed at least twice a week, perhaps more frequently for dogs with stubborn dental problems.

Professional tooth cleaning is recommended every one to three years. This cleaning, which takes place under general anesthesia, consists of scaling to remove tartar above and below the gum line; polishing to smooth the surface of the teeth; and flushing, to dislodge tartar and bacteria.

The act of brushing a dog's teeth twice weekly, while initially daunting, becomes easier with practice and routine. Caring for your dog's dental hygiene will assure good dental health and prevent many more serious dental and medical problems as he ages.

### **Bad Breath**

One of the chief reasons for bad breath is dental health. There may be other problems relating to bad breath but this is the most common. It is important to make sure his teeth are in good condition. Otherwise, your dog will experience pain and thus end up eating less. Dental disease occurs in different stages. The first stage is caused by plaque build up on the teeth. This plaque nourishes the mouth bacteria, which causes bad breath. Next, plaque becomes calculus with mineral salts stuck on it. This is seen as brownish deposits on the gum margin. Calculus causes gum inflammation. This is seen when the tooth-gum margin is red and bleeds whenever you touch it.

The calculus stage is your dog's final chance at having its tooth saved. Calculus will cause the ligaments and tissue holding the teeth to weaken. The tooth becomes loose and eventually falls out. Your pet will be suffering pain and be incapable of eating. You can check the condition of its gums. They will be red in color. Most dogs don't like to open their mouths if you want to check their teeth so you may not be alerted to dental disease until it is very prominent. That's why you must brush its teeth regularly at least twice a week.

To prevent the formation of plaque, feed your pet dry commercial pet food. This requires chewing to exercise the jaws and teeth. There are fewer tendencies for dry food to stick onto the gums.

You can buy chewing toys for your pet to chew. If not, use toothpaste and toothbrush to remove plaque. Pet shops sell these, as well as many chlorhexidine sprays and mouth washes.

It is better to brush twice a week to eliminate plaque.

### **Nails**

Trimming their nails isn't an activity enjoyed by dogs. They think it's a dreadful activity. And unless you can convince them otherwise, it always will be an awful experience for both owner and dog. There is a trick to it, believe it or not. There's a way you can actually make your dog not mind getting his toenails trimmed.

Use pet clippers. They are the best kind of clippers to use. There is a special kind of clipper on the market that makes a clean swipe on their claws. If you use the same clippers that you use for your fingers and toes, the clippers will pinch the nails of your pet. When you cut the nail of your dog's toe, be sure not to take too much. You want only to clip off a tiny bit at the tip. Clip only up to where the nail starts curving upward.

If you clip too much of your dog's toenail, you might clip the pink vein you likely can see inside his nail. If you hit that area, he'll bleed profusely. Use some dry powder to stop the bleeding.

When you're trying to teach your dog to get used to getting his toenails clipped, first let him get used to the sound of the clippers. As you tempt your dog with a treat or with his favorite human food, just snap the clippers a few times. Let him get used to the sound. Also let him get used to you grabbing his paws in positive times. When you're praising your dog, be sure to grab his paws and be happy about it. Then, when you're praising your dog, clip two of his nails. Just two. . Don't rush it, especially if your dog doesn't like it. Eventually, you'll be able to clip all your dog's nails, and he won't mind at all.

### **Ears**

If you have a dog that doesn't shed much (Schnauzers, Shih Tzus, Malteses Westies, ) or you see a lot of unnecessary hair blocking the dog's ear canal, you need to pull it out. Most pet supply stores carry a special powder that you put in the dog's ear before plucking. The powder helps make it easier to pull out the hair. So take your powder, pour a little bit in the dog's ear, and rub it around. Then use quick, swift motions and pluck as much of the hair out as you can. There is no need to go very far down the canal, just far enough so you can see in the ear better. This may be a bit painful for the dog, so it may squirm a little. Just hold on to it tight and finish as quickly as possible. The sooner you're done, the sooner your dog will be comfortable.

If your dog doesn't need ear plucking, or you've already finished pulling out the hair, the next step is to clean out the ear. Take the cleaning solution or alcohol and thoroughly wet the gauze. After that, take your free hand and gently swab out the residue in the dog's ear with the gauze. Keep doing this as necessary until all dirt and build-up is freed from the dog's ear. Be careful.

Dogs have very sensitive ears, just as, or even more than, humans. Do the same with the other ear.

Clean your dog's ears about once a week, or whenever you notice them getting dirty. But if it has floppy ears, check on them about three times a week. Also, make sure to notice if your dog is scratching its ears or shaking its head a lot. If it does, it may have ear mites, so consult a vet. And, when cleaning the ears, you notice an odor or some discharge, see your vet.

To reduce the risk of ear infection, keep your dog's ears as dry as possible. Dry them off whenever they get wet externally, and, when bathing your dog, use large cotton balls to prevent bath water from getting into the ear canals.

### **Nose**

The simple way to find out if your dog has a healthy nose is to see what color it is. If is the usual or normal color, then all is well. If the color is different, it could mean your dog has a more serious health problem of some sort. If your dog's nose is normally black, it's not going to change to a greenish color the next day. If your dogs nose changes colors even slightly, you should take it to your vet to make sure its okay.

Many people believe that if a dog's nose is dry, then the pet is sick. They thought that the main sign of a healthy dog is a good wet, sloppy nose. This is not true. A wet nose simply means that the air is plenty humid. Just like anything else, when its humid outside, your dog's nose gets wet. If the weather is overly dry, so will be your dog's nose.

Another misconception is that you can tell how your dog is feeling by touching its nose. If your dog's nose is hot, then it might have a fever. But if it's cool, it's feeling just fine. But this is not accurate. Again, a dog's nose temperature changes based on the environment. If it's warm where your dog is, your dog's nose will be warm. If it's cold, your dog's nose will be colder.

### **Dandruff**

All dogs get dandruff. Dandruff is, however, more visible in the short-coated breeds. Dandruff is merely an accumulation of dried, dead skin cells. This skin scaling is a common condition in dogs and people as well.

The aging skin that is stripped away is generally discarded in small, dry flakes. In most cases it is not a health problem, just a question of how the dog looks. You may not prevent it entirely but there are ways to control the problem and make it a little less obvious.

First, wash it away. Frequent bathing, even twice a week when it is bad will wash away the dandruff before it builds. If the dandruff is a bad case, you may even want to wash the dog daily during these bad times. Bathing a dog daily for a week or so will not be enough to dry a dog's skin. Use a specially formulated dog shampoo with moisturizers to avoid drying the dog's skin. It is best to bathe your dog in cooler water, as this will soothe the ravaged skin. It may take a month or so of vigorous bathing to bring the problem under control and afterwards a monthly bath will keep the coat looking and feeling good.

### **The Socialization Process**

Socializing is probably the most important thing for your puppy at this stage. The process should already have started at the breeder's place. It is imperative that you continue the teaching. Puppies, like babies, are like sponges, ready to absorb all kinds of information about their world. In the first months of their lives, they learn where to sleep, eat, sounds that mean fun, danger and dinnertime. You should teach him how to bond. With other members of your family, friends and distant relatives. He should learn to be with people and with other dogs and to be comfortable in unfamiliar situations. This is one of the most important things you can do for your fuzzy family member. The less afraid your puppy is of strange people and animals, the less likely she is to act defensively and attack another dog or even a child.

The socialization of puppies begins between three and four weeks of age, before most people bring their new pets home. This means that some of the work is out of your control. If your puppy has been raised by a careless owner or breeder, you may have a tough fight when you get him home. However, he needs to continue the socialization process until he is about 12 weeks old, so you have plenty of time to give him good experiences. First of all, make sure he bonds with you and your family. Pet him, groom him, play with him, talk to him, and just generally give him lots of love. Show him that he can depend on you for affection, food, and gentle leadership.

Gradually he will start feeling safe with you. You can then take him out (make sure he's had all his vaccinations) and introduce him to the big, wide world. Take him to lots of new and exciting places. The park, a friend's house, or dog-friendly stores. Make sure he has plenty of chances to meet nice people and play with well-socialized dogs. Try to make trips to the vet a lot of fun, with plenty of petting from you and the friendly veterinarian. Introduce him to children, too, in a well-supervised environment. Show the kids how to speak calmly to him and pet him gently.

Sometimes your puppy may act nervous in a new situation or bristle at a strange dog. Do not scold him. Raising your voice will only make him tenser. Trying to comfort him will backfire too. But don't overdo the petting, cooing, and attention either. Every time he's scared or aggressive, he'll learn that reacting this way is a good thing. Instead, distract him as best you can. Toss a ball or a chew toy to him, or start playing his favorite game. When he gets

absorbed in the game and starts ignoring the people or the dog that scared him, praise him. Soon he'll associate the scary situation with fun and playtime, and react well.

Do not yell or scold your puppy if you don't want him to do certain things: piddling on your carpet, chewing the furniture or jumping on guests. They want their puppy not to chew the furniture, not to piddle on the carpet, and not to jump up on guests. This can get a little confusing from the puppy's point of view, however. Imagine you were a puppy home alone, and you spent most of your day chewing on some loafers and spreading garbage around the kitchen. Then you nap for an hour and meet your family at the door when they come home. Suddenly they greet you with lots of yelling and shouts of "No!" What did you do wrong? Was it the chewing or meeting the family at the door? What were you supposed to do instead?

Give your puppy an alternative. If you catch your puppy chewing on something you don't want her to chew on, distract her with one of her "good" chew toys. Whenever you catch her chewing on one of her toys, reward her. That's the key to effective training: try to catch your puppy doing something good, like sitting still instead of jumping up or sleeping on the floor instead of the bed. Make a point of noticing these behaviors and rewarding them with attention, praise, or treats.

### **Everything you wanted to know**

#### **Can I leave my puppy alone for some time?**

You need to spend some quality time with your puppy throughout the day. A good lunchtime play period can be followed by confinement. Just remember how terrible neglected children turn out. If you must leave your puppy, make sure the area is safe. Use baby gates to section off a kitchen area.

#### **What kind of crate should I use?**

Get a crate that is large enough - a 400-airline size. If you use the crate as a "den" where he/she goes to sleep, make sure the door is open and can't accidentally close. You can close the door at night but expect the puppy to have "accidents" in the crate. If you plan on closing the door...have a blanket in one part and paper in the other. Don't put a pan of water in the crate, as it will get knocked over quickly. Use a cup that attaches to the door of the crate for the water.

#### **How long will it take for the puppy to adjust to my home?**

Usually two days is the adjustment time. Some are only frightened for a few hours, but most are a little cautious about the new surroundings. The total time for the transition is usually two weeks

### **My dog is 8 months old and still urinates in the house. What should I do?**

Check with the vet. Your dog may have a behavioral or medical reason for this problem. A fresh first of the morning mid-stream urine sample should be provided for proper testing.

### **What is the difference between grooming and clipping?**

Clipping is done to poodles, spaniels, terriers, as well as to mixed breed dogs. It is a part of the grooming process. Grooming is a series of tasks and includes combing and brushing, clipping nails, plucking hair from ears, and parasite control. Although the most obvious result of these procedures is an improved appearance, the major benefits to your pet are increased comfort and social acceptability, and perhaps even improved health.

### **Do all dogs need grooming?**

Yes. An occasional bath is necessary but keep your dog combed and brushed regularly, especially if he has long hair. Matted hair can easily cause skin problems and unnecessary discomfort for your pet. If neglected for too long, it might eventually necessitate a lengthy grooming session, which could be uncomfortable for your pet, and expensive for you. Regular brushing, on the other hand, improves his skin tone and his circulation, and makes his coat healthier and more attractive.

### **My dog has a very strong odor. Why?**

Check with a vet. It's possible that his teeth, his ears, or his anal sacs are responsible for the problem. Your groomer will be able to help you to determine the nature of the problem, and refer you to your veterinarian, if necessary.

### **What kind of brush should I use?**

That depends on the type of coat. Please talk to your groomer.

### Chapter 5

### Well mannered and well brought up

Dogs have never, ever, walked alone. They have, history tells us, always lived in social groups called packs. Each pack member has his own position or rank in the pack. So is it with your puppy. Once he is able to walk and interact, he will immediately try to determine his position in the litter. A puppy soon learns that if he is submissive, the other puppies will push him away from the food. If he is larger and stronger than the other puppies he will most likely be the one doing the pushing.

After you pick him up, he has to re-establish his position. If he was the bully of the litter, he may try to bully his new pack members. If he was submissive with his littermates, he will probably start out being submissive. As he grows older and larger he will try to determine where he fits into this new human pack. His ultimate rank will depend on how his human pack members, your family and you, respond to his actions in various situations.

When first introduced to his new family, a puppy will usually act somewhat submissive. When greeted, your new puppy may roll over on his back and urinate or he may squat and urinate. This is his way of asking you to treat him well. If he submits in this manner, do not scold him or you will make the problem worse. As a puppy grows older he will take his cues on how he should respond to his new owners by the way they react to his actions.

Sometimes children may create a problem. They are not able to interpret a puppy's body language and they do not back off when warned. After a couple of times, the puppy feels he has had enough and bites the child. Other members of the family may not know about the earlier incidents so when the child finally gets bitten, the mom or dad will often say the puppy bit the child for no reason or with no previous warning. Naturally, they may want to get rid of the puppy.

If a puppy gets away with threatening a younger member of the family whenever he wants his way, he will usually try the same thing with the other family members. If the family member corrects him and lets him know he should never growl at humans, the puppy has just learned that his position in the new family is lower than the family member who corrected him but still higher than the person he threatened.

#### **Growing up in a social atmosphere**

Once he determines his family ranking and he submits to higher-ranking family members, there may not be any more problems until he reaches his social maturity. The best way to

describe social maturity is when the puppy becomes a teenager. Social maturity usually occurs between 12-36 months of age, with 18-24 months of age being the norm. He is now older, stronger, and more confident and his attitude toward family members may change. This mild-mannered, young, adult dog may now begin to challenge higher-ranking members of his human pack that he had previously submitted to.

The best way to assure your puppy knows his proper position in his human pack is to begin making him earn everything he receives, as soon as he joins your family. Prior to receiving anything such as food, petting, or play, you must make him sit to earn these. Nothing in life is free. He must work to get what he wants.

### **Obedience Training**

This starts in the whelping box. You have to depend upon your breeder for the basics. Up to three weeks of age, studies have shown that puppies are able to absorb very little in the way of education. They are unaware of much except mom, food and sleep. Elimination is done by reflex at this point. This changes between 21 and 28 days of life. Puppies begin to leave the blankets and look for a corner in which to eliminate. They become acutely aware of their environment, and are extremely sensitive to stimuli. In fact, any experiences at this stage, (negative or positive) will more profoundly affect the puppy than at any other point in its life. This is where you and the breeder can help shape your puppy's mind and life.

### **Is obedience training necessary?**

Definitely. Obedience training prevents a whole host of improper behavior and actions. Actions that are difficult to correct later on and may even prove to be dangerous for the family members. Many people think that obedience training is something that is done to a dog to make it perform some artificial activity on command. But, in reality, it simply means training dogs to be obedient, to obey anything and everything they're told to do. Dogs are social animals and without proper training, they will behave like animals. They will soil your house, destroy your belongings, bark excessively, dig holes in your yard, fight other dogs and even bite you.

Nearly all behavior problems are perfectly normal canine activities that occur at the wrong time or place or are directed at the wrong thing. For example, the dog will eliminate on the carpet instead of outside; the dog will bark all night long instead of just when a stranger is prowling around outside; or the dog will chew furniture instead of his own toys. The key to preventing or treating behavior problems is learning to teach the dog to redirect his natural behavior to outlets that are acceptable in the domestic setting.

Obedience training is also an easy way to establish the social hierarchy. When your dog obeys a simple request of ‘come here, sit,’ she is showing compliance and respect for you. It is not necessary to establish yourself as top dog or leader of the pack by using extreme measures such as the so-called alpha rollover. You can teach your dog her subordinate role by teaching her to show submission to you in a paw raise (shake hands), roll over or hand lick (give a kiss). Most dogs love performing these tricks (obedience commands) for you, which also pleasantly acknowledge that you are in charge.

Obedience training should be fun and rewarding for you and your dog. It can enrich your relationship and make living together more enjoyable. A well-trained dog is more confident and can more safely be allowed a greater amount of freedom than an untrained one. A trained dog will come when called.

It covers a wide range of lessons a dog can learn, including tricks, family manners, show ring exercises, and skills demonstrations. Sniffing dogs, service dogs for handicapped owners, search and rescue dogs, sled and carting dogs, hunting dogs: all carry their obedience training to the highest degree. They have been trained to obey an unusual set of commands that increase their value as helpers to man.

There are some basic inviolable rules in training.

### **No Punishment**

Never punish your pup. Punishment as a training aid does not work and neither does it motivate your puppy to please you. You should train with positive reinforcement and treats. Any negative stimuli should be limited to using the word “no” and blocking (using the hands) the puppy’s negative actions. Hitting and physical abuse of any sort are unnecessary for a young pup and should not be used unless there is a major problem.

### **Be consistent and make sure the timing is right**

You need to be consistent. If you praise him for a particular action, do so every time. Next, remember, timing is everything. Coordination of your movements and corrections should be directly related to the puppy’s action. It is important to make him understand that the corrections given are a direct result of his behavior. For example, if a puppy is given the command “come” while in another room chewing on a toy, he is unlikely to respond. If he is not brought to the trainer on the command immediately, he will learn the word “come” is synonymous with “ignore.”

### **Rewards and Praise**

Directly related to timing is praise. If when given the command “come”, a puppy responds with the correct action and is not praised, he quickly loses enthusiasm and interest. Conversely, when given plenty of praise and caresses immediately upon correct completion of a given command, he quickly learns that the exercises are fun and profitable. He also learns to duplicate the correct action quickly in order to reap his rewards faster. In this way, praise and treats strengthen the understanding and will help him learn faster.

### **Let him think first**

Before you start correcting, give him a chance. He may act on his own. Guiding a pup is more confidence building than using force. When a puppy realizes that the trainer will do the work for him, he has no motivation to perform a given task on his own. Given the choice between being led on the end of a leash and getting a treat at the end and having to pay attention and work for a few minutes, then getting praised, a puppy almost always chooses the lazy way. Let him work for the rewards and he accepts it as a job he must do.

### **Make it Short**

This is pretty self-explanatory. Puppies have very short attention spans. Keeping sessions short (10 minutes) and doing them frequently ensures that the trainer will have the full attention of the pup, and that the dog will not grow bored. Again, working for short periods will be rewarding, too.

### **Repetition**

This works hand in hand with working for short periods of time. Repeat a command or an exercise for as many times as it takes to get it right, or close to right. Once you get it right, stop. A puppy will learn that doing an exercise correctly and quickly will be a reward in and of itself, because it will not have to keep doing the exercise over.

### **Patience and Confidence**

Training a pup requires patience and confidence. Puppies know when the trainer is sure of himself and what he is doing. Lack of confidence can be overcome by the trainer practicing and working on his own, but will deter the pup from learning if not dealt with. Patience is not as easily learned, but if not used consistently, impatience will cause fear and lack of confidence in the puppy.

### **Keep it Simple**

Keep your commands simple. The sit-stay for example, is not taught all at once, but broken down into its component parts. First, a pup must learn to sit reliably, on its own, and then the trainer can add movement away from the pup. Once that part is learned, the trainer can make the distance between himself and the pup greater and greater. Then he can add time away from the pup as a factor. Eventually, the pup learns that no matter how far and how long the trainer is gone, he must stay in the position originally placed, until he is released.

### **A one-sided conversation**

Keep chatting to the pup. This will insure that the puppy is paying attention. Praise words along with corrections can be given, and the pup will learn to watch the trainer and listen for changes of command given with tone of voice. In this way the pup also learns to watch the trainers face, a great beginning for attention training.

### **Back Off**

Do not touch him while working. This does not apply to the first 12 weeks of life. At this time in his life a pup needs reassurance and cuddles, these are necessary to build trust and love. Once a pup has started to learn commands, withholding some touching will help the training process. If the trainer corrects a puppy by using his hands to encircle the body, the pup will interpret touching as a positive sign. Instead, use the leash to replace the puppy into a sit with minimal use of the hands.

During training, use the hands only to praise and pat at the end of the exercise. In the same way when a dog comes to the trainer and nudges for pats and attention while relaxing, take this opportunity to train briefly. The trainer must ask the pup to “sit”, or “down” or any other command to reinforce his training, then be generous with hugs and pats once the desired exercise is completed. This serves to build the rapport between trainer and pup and further strengthen discipline.

### **Basic Commands**

Let's start with 'sit.' Use small pieces of dog biscuits or any other treat for this training. Hold a small piece of treat at the level of the puppy's nose. Your puppy will smell the treat and move his head toward it. When he sniffs the food, slowly move the hand holding the food back and slightly over the top of his head. As he stretches his neck to reach for the food, continue moving the treat over the top of his back toward his rump and repeat the command 'sit' several times.

Your puppy should drop into a 'sit' position in order to reach the food. If you raise the treat too high over the puppy's head, he is most likely to rise on his back legs to reach the treat without sitting. As soon as the puppy sits, give him the treat, act very excited and lavish him with praise saying "good." Continue short training sessions until your puppy sits automatically when given the "sit" command. You will be surprised how quickly most puppies will learn this technique, often in just a few minutes.

Once you are sure that he has mastered this exercise, every member of the family, including all children, must be taught how to make him sit. The puppy must now sit before he receives anything. If he wants to play, he must sit. If he is being fed, he must sit before receiving his food. If he wants you to pet him, make him sit first. If he runs to the door to be let out to eliminate, praise him for going to the door, but make him sit before opening the door. You are rewarding him for signaling you to let him go out, but he must earn the privilege of having the door opened for him. When you open the door, make your puppy remain sitting until you and other family members go out the door first. This will show him that higher-ranking members of the pack go out the door first and hopefully this will keep him from bolting out the door whenever it is opened.

### **Stand**

Stand can be a little difficult command. The dog often doesn't understand what it did that is right. It's just standing there and you praise it. Repetition is the name of this game. Give the command 'stand' and immediately praise it in this position. The dog needn't be beside you; it can stand anywhere at first. Be more concerned with teaching the action than the best position for it at this stage. Gradually extend the length of time that you expect the dog to stand, and praise it when this time has expired.

### **Stay**

Let the dog can stay at any distance, in any direction from the handler, not necessarily in front or beside. The easiest way to do this is to have the dog sit and gradually increase the amount of time it has to sit before you praise and release it from the exercise. Introduce the word 'stay' when the dog seems to get the idea that it should not move until you tell it. The 'stay' command should be said quietly: too much enthusiasm will cause the dog to get up. Use a gentle command to receive a steady response.

### **Feeding Time**

Any mealtime is a very special time for most puppies. The person feeding him is a special member of his family and is often considered a higher-ranking member. Get your children to measure out the puppy's food and have them place a few pieces of food into the dish. After the puppy eats them, have the children add a few more pieces until all the food is gone. This

lesson teaches the puppy that a child's hand reaching toward the food bowl means the child is giving him something and not taking anything away. This exercise will help desensitize your puppy to children around his food bowl while he is eating. It will also elevate their rank because the puppy must depend on them for his food.

Another good idea is to have all family members pet him, rub him and gently pull on his tail and legs. This will serve to desensitize him to human contact while eating and make him less likely to be protective during these times.

Do the same thing when he is chewing on his favorite chew objects or playing with his favorite toys. Take these objects away from your puppy, praise him and then give him a food treat as a reward for giving up his prized possession. Eventually, you will not have to use food as a reward. Praise him and give back his chew object as a reward. Once your puppy will allow you to do this without any incidents, supervise and allow your children to do the same thing. Eventually every family member should be able to take things away from your puppy and reward him for giving them up.

### **Retraining**

If you own a dog that is threatening family members you may be able to use some of these same techniques to retrain him. Making this dog understand that he has to earn everything he receives is the key to retraining. If this is an adult dog that has already reached his social maturity, you will have to proceed cautiously to avoid the risk of someone being injured. If children are involved, extreme care must be taken. You do not want to risk having children approach a dog's food dish or favorite treat if he is protective of these items.

### **Clicker Training**

This kind of training uses the power of timing and rewards versus the power of punishment. This innovative training method, which is supported by the American Kennel Club, is a gentle method that has been used to train dogs, puppies, horses, turtles, lobsters, birds, virtually anything-even goldfish.

With this technique, a puppy can be trained to come when called, chew only its toys (and not your shoes and socks), sit to be petted, not jump on people, and to 'go where it's supposed to go, as well as how to chase its tail, retrieve a toy, and other games.

Here's how clicker training works:

- The puppy/dog begins to do something you want it to. You instantly signal your approval (a clicker works well for this). Click while the behavior is happening. Reward with a treat (one small taste of something special).
- The puppy misbehaves. No click. No reward. You wait for a behavior you like.

Clicker training focuses on building behavior, not stopping behavior. The clicker is an event marker; it tells the dog exactly what behavior is 'good'. You then reinforce the message with a treat. This is the beginning of shaping the behavior of the dog. Using this method, a dog can be trained to do virtually anything that it is physically capable of doing

### **Adult Dogs**

Some people debate whether or not it is possible to train puppies, and others ask whether it is possible to teach an old dog new tricks. The answer to both questions is an unequivocal yes. Whatever the age of your dog, the right time to begin training is right now! The most important time in your dog's life is right now. Your dog's behavior is constantly changing. A dog that is well behaved today will not necessarily remain that way forever. New problems can always develop. Existing problems can always get worse.

### **Jumping**

Jumping should be taken care of at a very young age. As a matter of fact, the best way to handle jumping up is never to allow the puppy to even start doing it. We humans encourage dogs to jump on us by petting them when they stand on their hind legs to get closer to our loving face and hands. They don't mean anything bad by jumping on people, but very few people like being jumped on by a dog.

Your best bet is to take him to an obedience class (obedience clubs usually have affordable classes) and teach him to sit on your command. You may need to stay in class with your dog for several months, depending on his size and the breed, but it is time very well spent. Don't fall into the trap of trying quick-fix methods for jumping up, such as stepping on the dog's toes or whacking him in the chest with your knee. You could injure him.

Make sure everyone, including guests, stops petting him when he jumps up: let the person bend down and pet him when he settles down and stops jumping. He needs that encouragement when he is doing it right.

Also try giving him a ball or toy to hold when people come in. Some dogs will manage to control themselves much better when they have something to hold.

### **Loose-Leash Training**

Teaching dogs to walk on a loose leash at all times has almost been a dog-trainer's secret, because it's somewhat difficult to teach this in an obedience class situation. But it's really not so hard, and your slip collar should give plenty of control after you've done this program for just one to two weeks.

Here's how it is done. Start for a walk with your dog, but forget about getting anywhere this time, and for the next week or so. Instead, keep your attention on whether or not the leash is tight. Do not wait for the dog to pull on the leash, because then both you and the dog will be confused when lead tension turns into pulling: the distinction is just too hard to consistently recognize. Instead, make your criterion a loose leash.

Check the position of your arm that is holding the leash. Good control means your arm is bent, your elbow is in toward your body. A handler with the arm holding the leash stretched out as he walks along has far less control. With your arm bent, you also have the ability to briefly stretch out your arm as you make the next maneuver, giving you a moment of slack in the leash.

Step out of the door and the leash goes tight. Our natural reactions are to pull or jerk back on the dog, to hold on uncomfortably as we go toward our destination, or even to go faster, letting the dog set the pace. Do not allow yourself to do of these things. Instead, choose one of three things to do. You can stop, abruptly change direction, or back up.

For puppies and soft dogs, stopping may be enough. For a large dog with an established habit of pulling, changing direction will probably work best. Backing up is a nice touch later on, when you and the dog have a lot of training, just to keep it interesting. All of these maneuvers tell the dog that if he pulls he gets there slower, not faster.

Remember, your arm's normal position when holding the leash is bent. The leash has now gone tight. Quick (surprise your dog), straighten your arm to create an instant's slack in the leash, as you turn and take off in another direction, usually either to your right or back in the direction you came. The dog may feel a quick pop on the leash, but at the same time will realize that "Hey, I missed a turn, I better catch up!"

Within one to two weeks, your dog will expect the leash to remain loose, because you will have reacted every time it goes tight. Remember to teach the dog to walk on a tight leash and to pull you. Pulling back on the leash creates a natural response in the dog to pull forward. Just letting the leash remain tight as you walk along is constantly telling the dog you want a tight leash. Jerking back on the leash may work to stop some dogs from pulling, but it is not a clear message to the dog, and will be perceived by some dogs as unfair and upsetting, to the extent that those dogs will become terribly confused.

So, just do the unexpected thing. This will help your dog keep an eye on you to keep pace. The loose leash also causes your dog to pay more attention to you at all times. It keeps you and the dog from becoming dependent on messages through the leash, which are definitely second best to messages coming from your body and voice. A loose leash makes all training more effective and more humane. The slip collar will give plenty of control with a dog and handler

trained to a loose leash. Some dogs will do fine on a buckle collar, but a slip collar can be a good precaution against a buckle collar sliding over the dog's head in an emergency such as another dog attacking it. When kept loose, a slip collar is not obstructing the dog's breathing or causing other problems.

### **Biting**

The first lesson to understand here is that puppies bite. The second is that this is not a form of aggression, but a form of play and communication. It's important to train a puppy not to bite in play or to communicate, as this behavior can become unacceptable and even dangerous in an adult dog. This is a very important lesson for a puppy to learn.

For many puppies, all it takes is the owner giving a shout when puppy teeth touch human skin for them to stop this behavior. Loudly object and stop the game for about 15 minutes after you've had to 'yipe' to get pup to take teeth off you. That's what another puppy would do, and it helps the puppy understand. This sound says to the puppy "Ouch! That hurts! Stop it right now!"

You do have to be consistent and stay with this over a period of time to get really solid results. Dogs not taught about teeth on people do not automatically outgrow it, so this is time very well spent training your dog. This method works on adult dogs as well as puppies, and is much safer for both you and the dog than harsh corrections.

Teaching a dog never to put teeth on humans is for family dogs. For some types of work dogs might do, the trainer may not want to create this strong inhibition against putting teeth on human skin. In those cases, the trainer may manage the puppy mouthing behavior by simply putting a toy in the dog's mouth. We can definitely take a cue from these trainers by redirecting our dogs' mouthing behavior into their toys, after we have carefully shown the dog not to mouth us.

Biting and mouthing is common in young puppies and dogs especially in play and while teething. It's up to you to teach your puppy or dog what is acceptable and what is not.

Biting dogs are generally loving, sweet, adorable, affectionate and wonderful 99% of the time. Only 1% of the time does something specific happen that makes the dog bite.

### **Inhibit Biting**

First of all, dogs must learn to inhibit their bite before they are 4 months old. Normally, they would learn this from their mother, their littermates and other members of the pack. But, because we take them away from this environment before this learning is completed, we must take over the training.

### **Socialization Prevents Biting**

A major cause of biting is lack of socialization. Lack of socialization often results in fearful or aggressive behavior. The two major reactions a dog has to something it is afraid of are to avoid it or to act aggressive in an attempt to make it go away. This is the most common cause of children being bitten. Dogs that are not socialized with children often end up biting them. The optimum time to socialize is before the dog reaches 4 months. With large breed dogs, 4 months may be too late, simply because at this age the puppy may already be too large for most mothers of young children to feel comfortable around. For most owners, the larger the dog is, the more difficult it is to control, especially around children. If there is anything you do not want your dog to be afraid of or aggressive towards, you must begin to socialize your puppy with them before it is 4 months old.

By allowing your puppy to socialize with other puppies and socialized dogs they can pick up where they left off. Puppies need to roll, tumble and play with each other. When they play, they bite each other everywhere and anywhere. This is where they learn to inhibit their biting. This is where they learn to control themselves. If they are too rough or rambunctious, they will find out because of how the other dogs and puppies react and interact with them. This is something that happens naturally and it is something we cannot accomplish. It can only be learned from trial and error. There is nothing you can say or do to educate them in this realm. They must learn from their own experience.

Another major advantage of dog to dog socialization besides the fact that it will help your dog to grow up not being fearful of other dogs is that they can vent their energy in an acceptable manner. Puppies that have other puppies to play with do not need to treat you like littermates. So the amount of play biting on you and your family should dramatically decrease. Puppies that do not play with other puppies are generally much more hyperactive and destructive in the home as well.

### **Trust and Respect Inhibits Biting**

If your dog doesn't trust you, there is no reason why he should respect you. If your dog does not respect you, your relationship will be like two 5 year olds bossing each other around.

### **Use of Reprimands and Biting**

Never hit, kick or slap your dog. This is the quickest way to erode the dog's trust in you. Yes, he will still love you. Even abused dogs love their owners. A unique characteristic of dogs is their unconditional love. You don't have to do anything to acquire your dog's love. But you must do a lot to gain your dog's trust and respect.

### **Barking**

Barking is a perfectly natural canine behavior. Birds sing; frogs croak; and a dog barks, whines and howls. If you have a dog, you better expect some barking, whining or howling. It is unrealistic and unfair to think you can train your dog to stop barking altogether. However, you, your neighbors and your dog will all be much happier if the barking is under control.

Dogs who are socially isolated or confined for long periods without supervised exercise need some outlet for their suppressed energy. A dog that is left alone all day is likely to take up barking as a hobby because no one is there to control him. In no time at all, barking becomes an enjoyable habit. Your dog has learned to get attention through barking. That is an easy trick because the very nature of barking gets your attention. For the same reason, when the dog is silent, it is easy to forget to praise and reward your dog.

The first step in obtaining peace and quiet is to realize that lots of barking, is caused by the dog being lonely, bored, frustrated or frightened. These are all situations that you can help to alleviate. A well-exercised, happy dog is more likely to sleep all day while you are not home. Spend time playing with, training and exercising your dog.

### **Aggression**

Dominance aggression usually occurs when a dog perceives that his place in the pack hierarchy is being threatened. This position can either be in the family or in just the dog pack if there are two or more dogs in the household. This is more common when there is a change such as getting a new puppy, moving, someone moving out of or into the house, or a change in working schedules.

A superiority complex stems from an inferiority complex. If a dog feels insecure, he will put on a show. He may try to be aggressive or dominant. When dogs are insecure in their place in the pack, they will exaggerate his position.

Some breeds of dogs, and some individual dogs, however, tend to be more dominant than others by nature. These dogs tend to be very intelligent as well, and if you're not careful they can train you before you realize what has happened. This type of dog, if in the wild, would be the leader of a pack of dogs. They have a strong drive to dominate. They like to be very assertive. They are leaders. Because they are natural leaders, it is your responsibility to establish yourself as the leader. All dogs want to serve. You should make this trait more dominant and suppress the other trait. This means that the sooner you begin teaching your dog proper behavior, and the more time you spend teaching your dog, the greater will be his need to serve you. If you feel he is challenging you, enroll him in a basic obedience class as soon as possible.

Once your dog understands and can regularly demonstrate ‘sit,’ ‘down,’ ‘stay,’ and ‘settle’ you can begin incorporating these commands in your daily activities. When you command him to ‘down’ while you prepare his meal, ‘sit’ before you give him a treat, ‘wait’ before he goes out the door, you are taking control of these situations by becoming the “leader” and commanding your dog to ‘serve’ you. This reassures the dog about his proper place in the pack hierarchy.

Some owners give in to their dog’s demands and can trigger such behavioral patterns in dogs. He deserves respect; however, sometimes people confuse respect with giving in to their dogs’ every whim and desire. Do you move over if your dog wants to lie where you are? Does your dog ‘demand’ when you should play with him or give him a treat? These are simple examples that show you are being submissive to your dog. You should be dictating, setting the rules. Not your dog. You are the leader of the pack. Do not be Submissive to your dog. Many other instances, sometimes complex in nature, can signify your submissive position to your dog. When a dog does not sense that there is a leader of the pack he will many times instinctively assume the leader role

Naturally, once the dog assumes leadership, he may become very dominant and aggressive. Your dog needs to know where he stands in the hierarchy. He needs to know he is at the bottom, below all humans. This does not mean you should be mean or harsh with your dog. Unfortunately, harsh methods are used to correct a dog in many obedience classes. Sometimes very dominant dogs will not respond to force, punishment, or other means of a negative nature. Over time, (and sometimes quite quickly) these types of actions can be severely detrimental to your dog. If you use harsh techniques and coercion on your dominant dog, instead of making him feel submissive, it can trigger his ‘survival instinct.’ When dominant animals are cornered, they do not submit. They fight back. The more the punishment, or threats of punishment given, the stronger their inborn survival instinct becomes. Therefore, it is very important that you teach with positive ways and praise.

### **How do I teach my dog not to dig?**

Dogs usually dig out of boredom. They will dig holes to escape when they feel frustrated or bursting with energy and need an outlet. They will also dig when they are lonely since dogs are very social animals.

Dogs also dig to eat the soil if they aren’t getting the proper nutrients in their diet. If this is the case, make sure you give your pet a multi-supplement. You can tell if he is eating the dirt (called pica) if his nose is covered with dirt. It could be anemia, but make sure you have him checked by a veterinarian to make sure. A dog can also get serious bacterial infections from dirt. And the digging and constant abrasions to the nose can cause cancer over a period of time, if left to continue digging holes. One of the best ways to prevent digging is by keeping him cool. When he is cool, he won’t need to bother with the earth as their next choice. Check with your vet. There are mood-altering drugs for the extreme cases to stabilize his emotions. Spend more time together. This will keep his boredom at bay.

### Fear

Fear is not understood and is usually diagnosed wrongly. When an animal is scared, he tends to get aggressive. Naturally, the family cannot see the problem. Fear aggression does not display itself as fear. The dog usually does not look or act fearful, so the dog's family does not realize the behavioral patterns taking place.

The chief cause is bad socialization. Many dogs that are fear aggressive were not properly socialized when they were young. Others may have been socialized but may have experienced a traumatic situation. Many people purposely do not socialize their dog in the hope of making him a watchdog. This is a grave error. They usually produce a dog that displays many of the characteristics they were hoping for, with one catch: their dog is unpredictable. An unsocialized dog will react aggressively to a new person or situation, but his aggression is based on fear, not confidence.

A lot of this kind of fear aggression is exhibited with other dogs. These dogs will growl, snap, and pounce on other strange dogs when they meet. Fear-aggressive dogs usually behave more aggressively when they are on a lead, but can show aggression off lead as well. A traumatic event to a dog is not necessarily traumatic to a person; therefore it can be easily overlooked or may even be completely unknown to the dog's family.

The trick to being successful at this exercise is to take your dog out of the situation before he shows any sign of aggression. If he growls or snaps then pull him away, and say, "no" in a non-emotional tone and do not give him a food treat. Then immediately let him say hello to a dog that he likes. Again, praise him with a food treat. Some dogs don't begin meeting strange dogs by sniffing. They may need to say 'hello' at a distance. But if no aggression is displayed, they are successful and should be rewarded. In order to shape this difficult, new behavior, your dog needs to succeed as many times as possible.

Because you are the leader and your dog needs to trust you, you need to become very aware of the other dogs around and what they're doing at your dog's level. Don't allow other dogs to put their face in your dog's face. Even on a 'hello' command, don't hold the lead so tight that the two dogs can only sniff noses. Proper doggie etiquette is to sniff backsides, so that they are side-by-side when greeting. An intentional face-to-face greeting among dogs usually is a ploy for dominance and at worst will result in a fight. Unfortunately, many people get their dogs to meet face to face and this can sometimes begin the dominance game.

Tell people that your dog is friendly but needs his space. They should ask permission (as everyone should for every dog) before they allow their dog to say hello to yours. Remember, even if the other dog seems fine to you, if your dog perceives a threat, he will react instinctively with aggression. He needs to learn to trust that you, on the other end of the lead, won't let him get attacked with nowhere to run, or even make him stand close to a dog she detests. Your behavior is very important and you need to make sure that you are not unintentionally making

matters worse. For instance, if you get tense and tighten your grip on the lead when you see another dog, your dog will also be tense and will probably take your tightened grip as a sign for aggression.

### **Roaming**

As a responsible owner, do not let your dog roam. Roaming endangers your dog's life, safety and health. A roaming dog is potentially dangerous and can threaten children and be a public nuisance. It is your responsibility to assure that your dog cannot escape from your property. No dog is perfect so do not expect your dog to always be able to resist the temptation of following children, visiting other dogs or chasing cats. Dogs that are isolated or confined for long periods of time become bored and restless. They may try to escape to find entertainment elsewhere. The escape act itself may be a form of entertainment. Many dogs escape just for the fun and challenge of it. Schedule daily exercise, play and training sessions with your dog. A good, hardy play session especially with other dogs will tire your dog and give him the exercise he needs. A happy, well-exercised dog will contentedly sleep the day away while you are not home.

Make your property impossible to escape from. Provide your dog with an out-door run or fenced-in area. Be sure the fence is tall enough to prevent jumping or climbing. If your dog is digging under the fence, continue the fence underground by hammering metal stakes into the ground every couple of feet. If you don't want to build a fence, buy a dog run.

Dogs cannot resist the call of nature. If an unneutered male dog smells a female dog in heat, he will do whatever possible to get to her, no matter what the cost. Do not torment your dog, get him neutered, or get her spayed.

If you expect your dog to stay on his own property, be sure he enjoys it there and does not regard it as a prison. Spend time playing with your dog here. Make this a fun place to be; give him special treats and chew toys here. Provide a digging pit. Get him a playmate. If you don't want another dog, invite his favorite buddy over to spend the day with him.

Some dogs try to escape because they are frightened. Observe your dog while he is confined. Is there something that is scaring him? Sometimes loud construction noises or teasing passersby can make your dog nervous. Again, the solution is in making your dog feel secure, content and relaxed in this area. Spend time with him there and help him build his confidence about being alone. Provide him a secure hiding place in his area in the form of a doghouse or crate.

### **Wow! Some trick!**

To teach a dog tricks, they need to be motivated. They learn awfully fast if they are motivated. In order to teach your dog some tricks, choose a trick that you at least think your dog might enjoy doing. This often means that if your dog has never carried anything in his mouth, you

should not start by trying to teach him to retrieve or carry things. It will be possible to teach almost any dog to retrieve, but maybe you should start with something easier or completely different, like play hide and seek or just shaking your hand.

You need to teach him well. If you toss a tennis ball and say 'fetch', many dogs run after the ball as desired, but don't expect the dog to know that you want the ball to be brought back to you. In order to 'tell' him when he is doing right, you should praise him the exact moment when he is starting to do the right thing. For example, when the dog grabs the tennis ball into his mouth and takes a step towards you, you say 'good'. If he drops the ball or runs away from you, you give the command again. And again, when he takes even one step towards you, you praise him. This way the dog gradually realizes what you want him to do, and when he has realized that, you can also demand more.

Find out what kind of reward your dog likes and give him that. Some prefer toys :others like food. However, always use your voice as a reward: use your happiest voice to tell your dog how smart and good he is when he is doing the right thing. This way you will not have to use treats/toys every time you train your dog .He will soon understand that the vocal praise (pats and hugs) mean that he has done what was expected of him.

In the beginning it's unnecessary to tell your dog that he has not done what you expected of him, if you are consistent in praising him when he does the right thing. Besides, teaching tricks should be fun for both of you. Try not to scream 'no' unless he has lost all interest in the lesson and suddenly starts chasing a car.

If the trick is relatively complicated (like teaching your dog to bring his own toys into a box) you have to break the trick into several steps. First teach your dog to carry his toy, then to put it into a box, then to find the toy and bring it into the box, and then to do this with all of his toys. It is very important that you realize when a trick is too complicated to learn in only one step. It's better to proceed too slowly than too fast.

Don't practice too much at any one time; practice often (you can practice as often as 1-3 times a day if you wish) but only for short times. The dog learns best when you quit each session when he still would like to go on. That will be motivation for him. If your dog seems to be bored by the trick, take a break from training, or teach him something else that he might enjoy more.

Decide what you would like to teach. Start with simpler tricks and proceed to more difficult ones if your dog learns fast. It's a good idea to start with only one trick at a time, but later you can work on a few different new tricks simultaneously.

When you have decided what you want your dog to learn, think of a command to use for that particular trick. The command can be anything you wish, as long as you do not use the command for something else, thereby confusing the dog. It's usually a good idea to choose relatively short words.

### **Some Tricks**

Here are some examples of tricks to teach to your dog. Once your dog has learnt some/all of these, you probably have an idea how to proceed with other tricks.

### **Sit and shake hands**

This is one of the easiest tricks to teach to a dog. First, teach your dog to sit on command. Probably the easiest way to teach a dog to sit on command is to have a treat (dog biscuit, piece of cheese,) on your hand, lift it up above the dog's nose and say 'sit!' If the dog is standing and tries to grab the treat, don't let him get it, but repeat the same maneuver again. When he sits, immediately give him the treat and praise him. Repeat the trick a few times.

Some people suggest you to teach a dog to sit on command by pressing his butt on the ground while giving the command. But try the other two methods though, just to see how easy it is to teach a dog even without using force. Later, once he has clearly understood the meaning of the command, you can use this method if he doesn't obey you. Try to be gentle though, there's no point in causing the dog pain when teaching him tricks.

Once your dog has learned to sit on command, you can proceed to 'shaking hands'. Give him the command (hello), and gently hold his paw with your hand and give him a treat with another hand. Repeat this a couple of times. Most dogs learn this very fast, if your timing (the command, the praise and treat) is right.

### **Dance**

Teach this one if your dog jumps on people. When a dog dances on command, he doesn't put as much weight (maybe none at all) on people as when jumping against them. It is a good substitute for a dog who jumps too easily.

When the dog is excited and jumping around you, tell him to 'dance' and gently hold his front legs and lift them up so that he stands on his hind legs. Then praise him and give him a treat and gently put him back on the ground.

Once he knows how to do this, you can see if he can do it without your help. Small dogs seem to be able to balance themselves better than large dogs. A Belgian Sheepdog, for instance, needs to have his front paws held and he can dance with you. That is because; he doesn't seem to be able to stand up on his hind legs very well without help.

### Find/retrieve something

Teach this one if your dog already enjoys carrying things in his mouth. However, you can also try to teach a dog to bring his toys to you even if he doesn't like to retrieve a ball/stick thrown by you. It would be easiest to teach this trick if your dog already can sit on command and stays that way until you give him the permission to go: this will give you time to hide a toy while he sits and waits.

Bring your dog's toy a few steps away from where he is sitting, so that he can see it, and ask him to find it. You can use the command 'find', or the name of the toy, or just 'toy' for any object that you hide and want him to bring to you. Once he goes to the toy, praise him immediately, even if he doesn't touch it. Repeat this each time he is close to the toy and thus try to encourage him to take it into his mouth. The first time he takes the toy into his mouth, praise him and give him a treat, and give him back the toy and play with him for a while. (Don't forget this part: this is important, otherwise he will think that you always take the toy away from him and won't want to bring it to you).

When he has learned to take the desired object into his mouth, try to make your dog bring it all the way to you. First, praise him when he comes running with his toy in his mouth, and then praise him only when he brings it to your hand (you can trade the toy for a treat). When he has learnt all this, you can start hiding the toy to more difficult places (in another room, or behind a tree on a walk).

### Training Large Dogs

St. Bernard? Newfoundland? Or one with less hair, like a Great Dane? Or an ancient breed like the Irish Wolfhound? How about a Malamute or an Akita? Or a rare Tibetan Mastiff or Leonberger? Or one of those slobbery Neapolitan Mastiffs?

How different are the large breeds from the smaller ones? What about attitude with children, coat care, trainability, need for exercise, guarding ability?

Take a look at some of the breeds and their characteristics.

**Great Dane:** 28-30 inches tall; 120-150 pound; developed as a guard dog and boar hunter in Germany; mild and easy-going; good with children but awkward with toddlers; easy to groom and train; sociable with strangers; needs daily exercise; can be domineering if not trained as a puppy; susceptible to hip dysplasia, bone cancer, heart disease, and bloat.

**St. Bernard:** 25.5-27.5 inches tall, can be taller; 150-170 pounds; developed as a rescue dog in the Alps; good with children but may be scary to toddlers; calm, sensible, gentle, and patient; needs daily exercise and weekly grooming; although he has a thick coat and sheds heavily, he is definitely an indoor dog; drools and wheezes; easy to train; susceptible to hip dysplasia, eye abnormalities, heart disease, and bloat.

**Newfoundland:** 26-28 inches tall; 110-150 pounds; developed as a rescue and carting dog in fishing communities in Newfoundland; calm, patient, and reliable; enjoys the outdoors but should live in the house; good with children; needs daily exercise and weekly grooming; males can be aggressive to other dogs; easy to train; not a guard breed but some will protect their owners; drools and slobbers; susceptible to hip dysplasia, eye abnormalities, and heart disease.

**Alaskan Malamute:** 23-25 inches tall; 75-110 pounds; developed as a sled dog in Alaska; good with older children; needs daily exercise; can be boisterous, independent, and domineering; can be aggressive to other dogs and to small animals; may be difficult to train; howls; digs; susceptible to hip dysplasia, thyroid problems; and dwarfism.

**Borzoi:** 26-28 inches tall; 55-105 pounds; developed in Russia to hunt wolves; quiet, independent, and undemonstrative; good with older, calm children; can be aggressive with other dogs and small animals; fast; needs daily exercise; sheds little, but requires weekly grooming; and susceptible to bloat and sensitive to anesthetics and some flea treatments.

45 30-32 inches tall; 105-120 pounds; used in Ireland to hunt wolves and elk; good with children; easygoing and reliable; needs daily exercise; good with other animals; matures slowly; can be clumsy; needs little coat care; is susceptible to hip dysplasia, bloat, and bone tumors.

**Scottish Deerhound:** 28-30 inches tall; 75-110 pounds; brought up to hunt stags in Scotland; quiet, gentle, and dignified; somewhat stubborn; good with children; needs vigorous daily exercise; easy to groom; and susceptible to bloat.

**Bullmastiff:** 24-27 inches tall; 100-130 pounds; developed in England to guard large estates; meek and mild-mannered, but difficult when aroused; needs daily exercise; good with children if raised with children; little grooming; stubborn and very strong; can be difficult to train; drools; and is susceptible to hip dysplasia, tumors, eye abnormalities, and bloat.

**Great Pyrenees:** 25-32 inches tall; 90-125 pounds; developed in Pyrenees Mountains in Europe to guard sheep against predators; good with children; needs daily exercise; independent; can be difficult to obedience train; can be aggressive to other dogs; and is susceptible to hip dysplasia, eye abnormalities, and bloat.

**Mastiff:** 27.5-30 inches; 170-200 pounds; developed by the Romans as a war dog and used as a village guardian in England; calm, easygoing, and dignified; good with children, but may be too big for toddlers; can be difficult to train because of his size and tendency to be stubborn; drools and wheezes; and susceptible to hip dysplasia and eyelid abnormalities.

**Rottweiler:** 22-27 inches tall; 85-115 pounds; developed in Germany to drive cattle to market and protect the drover's purse; good with children if raised with children; calm, steady, and serious; protective; must be socialized to people and other animals at an early age; can be aggressive to other dogs; needs daily exercise; easy to train but needs consistency; and is susceptible to bloat, hip dysplasia, and retinal problems.

**Akita:** 24-28 inches tall; 75-110 pounds; developed in Japan to hunt bear and other large game; good with children if raised with children; sheds profusely twice a year but doesn't need much grooming; aggressive to other dogs and small animals; independent; needs daily exercise; strong-willed and domineering; can be difficult to train; and susceptible to hip dysplasia, knee injuries; thyroid problems, and progressive retinal atrophy, a genetic eye disease.

**German Shepherd Dog:** 22-26 inches tall; 65-100 pounds; developed in Germany to herd and guard sheep; steady, confident, versatile; protective; can be aggressive with strange dogs; can be dominating; good with children; sheds, but doesn't need much grooming; and susceptible to hip dysplasia, bloat, gastric disorders, and skin conditions.

**Greater Swiss Mountain Dog:** 26-28 inches tall; 130 pounds; developed in Switzerland as a farmer's cart and pack dog and home guardian; good with children; short coat, little grooming; easygoing, patient, calm, and dependable; needs space and plenty of outdoor exercise; easy to obedience train; and susceptible to hip dysplasia and bloat.

**Bernese Mountain Dog:** 24.5-27.5 inches tall; 65-110 pounds; a cousin of the Greater Swiss Mountain Dog used as a farm guard and cart dog; good with children; thick coat that sheds and needs weekly grooming; gentle and easygoing; good with other animals; easy to obedience train; and susceptible to hip and elbow dysplasia, bloat, cancer, and some eyelid abnormalities.

The most huggable dogs are the St. Bernard, Bernese Mountain Dog, and Newfoundland. The most protective are the Greater Swiss Mountain Dog, Bullmastiff and Great Dane, and the most elegant, the Scottish Deerhound, Great Dane, and Borzoi. All require some daily exercise, and the St. Bernard and Newfoundland shed profusely a couple of times a year and drool almost constantly

Size, therefore needs to be taken into consideration when you're training a puppy. However, all dogs, small or big, require training. But giant breed dogs, the St. Bernard, the Great Dane, the Newfoundland, the Irish wolfhound and so on, have special needs. For one, because of

their size, large dogs learn early in life that they can push owners aside and use their weight to get what they want.

An aggressive dog that hasn't been trained and is 150 pounds is a lethal weapon. The training for both kinds is basically the same. Reward good behavior, don't reward bad, be patient, be consistent. The lessons are the same too. So are the basic commands. Sit, stay and so on.

### **But there are a few differences.**

First of all, time is of the essence. They get big very quickly. So by the time they're four, five or six months old, they're so big that if they don't want to go somewhere, you can't do anything about it. You can't pick them up and take them or even drag them.

Next, because of their size, the giant breeds learn early in life that they can push owners aside and use their weight to get what they want. Before you know it, your little cute puppy is this huge menacing dog.

Early training is absolutely necessary. People should start training their giant dogs the moment they come into the home, as 8-week-old puppies. If you use positive reinforcement techniques, you should be able to swiftly teach such basics as sit, lie and stay.

Socialization is vital for the giant breeds. To you, he may be a 40-pound puppy that goes, "let's bite" but to people he will be perceived as an aggressive dog. Which is why intensive socialization, up to two years with those giant dogs is a must. A puppy kindergarten class won't do it. You need to expose their dogs to different situations, strange dogs and new people as often as possible. Owners of giant guard breeds need to make sure they never fall behind on the socialization.

On the plus side, the giant breed dogs tend to be laid back. They also frequently seemed more attuned to their owners than other breeds. Perhaps its because the dogs are closer to the mouths and the hands, so voice and body language are more obvious to them. Newfies, Afghans, Great Danes, generally speaking, don't need loud commands. The owners have to speak softly to their dogs, and they don't need the energy that smaller dogs require.

Speaking of proximity, owners have to be careful about carelessly swinging their arms and hitting their Great Dane in the nose. It's a common mistake first-time owners of giant dogs make. This is usually seen by the Dog as a slap and therefore may disobey a 'come' command. No matter how much they love you, they figure out that your elbows and knees are dangerous places to be, and you have to work twice as hard to bring them back to you.

Learning to control the dog's movement is essential. Start by going into a small space, like a half-bath, strapping on the treat pack and spending perhaps a minute each session getting the

dog to follow you around, without a leash, in that constricted area.

You can use a choke chain if you want. Otherwise, a head halter can be used. Others recommend the head halter to stop the dog from pulling. Trainers are of two minds about head halters, with some arguing that the dog doesn't learn anything from them.

Some canine behavioral theorists feel it should be used for the life of the dog if you feel like it. The head halter is an important training tool. It doesn't train by itself, but if the dog pulls on the halter, it turns itself toward you. The owner should immediately reward the dog for doing so.

Finally, if you use food to train your dog, make sure the treats are big enough to give the dog a sufficient taste.

### **Small Breeds**

As we said earlier, the training is the same. But sometimes, these breeds can be quite tough to train. As always, early training and socialization should be the rule. Unfortunately, small and toy breeds tend to get spoiled because of their size and appeal.

The Miniature Pincher, Chihuahua, Lhaso Apso are difficult to train. Pomeranians and Maltese don't give you that much of a hard time and are easier to train.

Terriers are headstrong. All terriers are tough, stubborn, and difficult to train and if not trained properly, and from early stage, could easily turn aggressive. Whether you own a: Pit Bull Terrier or their closest cousin, Staffordshire Terrier, to Jack Russell Terrier, Bull Terrier or Scottish, Carin, Wheaten. If the word terrier comes after it, you need to prepare yourself for a challenging dog. The exception is the Boston Terrier.

### **Easy to Train Breeds**

Some breeds are easy to train. They are rarely stubborn, dominant, or become aggressive toward people, dogs or kids.

- Maltese
- Sheltie
- Collie
- Saint Bernard
- Australian Shepherd
- Toy or miniature Poodle
- German Shorthair Pointer
- Pointer

## Love, laughter & licks

However, it is best to remember that no dog is impossible to train. It is up to the owners to give them the right training. Genetic disorders and medical issues play a very small role in bad behavior.

Take a look at the pointers below. They will help you define your dog's pack status (below the humans):

- Feed the dog after all members of the family have eaten
- Ensure he has his own area in the house (do not allow him the freedom to roam around all rooms). Ensure that he stays in the area. Get a mat and make sure he stays upon it. If he won't stay there, isolate him, preferably outside. Eventually he will prefer to stay on the mat than be isolated.
- Ignore the dog when he wants attention. Give him attention only when you choose to
- Ensure that the dog is fed by the person that is most dominated by him
- Teach the dog to drop and command him into that position whenever he acts aggressively.
- Ensure he drops before being fed. Break his meal into smaller portions and make him drop before allowing him to eat each portion. If he won't drop, don't feed him (don't physically force him to drop). Wait an hour and try again. A hungry dog is more likely to want to please. Besides, getting the dog to do something on his own is more effective (and less dangerous) than forcing him down.
- Reward the dog for allowing his food to be removed by adding something extra nice to the removed bowl and immediately replacing it. The dog will learn that the removal of the bowl is not a threatening gesture.
- Teach the dog to give and reward this act with something better than the thing given: a nicer toy, food, a retrieve and so on.
- Leave a collar and long lead (say 12 feet) on the dog when he is supervised. If it misbehaves, you are able to correct it without having to go too close. For instance, if the dog won't remain on his mat, you are able to grab the lead and drag the dog to the isolation area (preferably outside).
- Ensure that the dog always waits for people to go through doorways first
- Regularly touch your dog all over or groom it. Reward any progress towards compliance.
- Never allow the dog to jump on anyone.
- Do not play 'tug of war' games with the dog; the dominant dog sees this as a way to gain supremacy. It's not a game, its warfare. If the dog wins, he moves another rung up the pack hierarchy.

## **A Few Definitions:**

### **Leash:**

A leather, nylon, or cotton strap with a clip at one end for the dog's collar and a loop at the other end. They come in several sizes, but the six-foot size is the most common for obedience training and walks.

### **Collar:**

This is a leather, chain, nylon, or cotton apparatus that fits around the dog's neck and is used for control. There are several types: buckle, slip collar, choker and prong. Buckle collars are used for puppies and mild-mannered dogs that do not pull against the leash. Leather or flat nylon slip collars are good for dogs that are boisterous and dogs that pull hard against the leash. Chain or round nylon choker collars need skill to use but are the most common in training classes.

### **Head collar or halter:**

This is somewhat similar to a pony halter, the head collar works by controlling the dog's head, not pulling on his neck. A head collar is helpful for strong dogs, for dogs that are somewhat aggressive to other dogs, and for teaching dogs to focus on the handler.

### **Harness:**

A set of straps that fits around the dog's body. They leave no control over the head or neck. The harness is fine for small dogs and mild-mannered dogs, but should not be used on boisterous dogs or dogs that pull on the leash.

### **Puppy kindergarten:**

A special class for puppies that lays stress on behavior and socialization and teaches owners how to handle and teach their puppies the basic commands.

### **Basic obedience:**

A course of basic commands, that dogs and handlers are expected to master before the end of the class session.

### **Advanced training:**

Classes for dogs that need a bit of refined behavior for the show ring or for continued success at good manners.

### **Canine Good Citizen test:**

This is a 10-step, pass-fail test. It proves a dog's good manners and an owner's sense of responsible dog ownership. Dogs must be licensed and well-groomed, sociable to people and other dogs, and understand basic obedience commands. Failing any part of the test is as good as failing the whole test.

### **CD:**

Companion Dog, This is the first level of obedience titles involving mastery of sit, heel, down, stay, and come commands in a variety of exercises. To earn a CD, a dog and handler must achieve a qualifying score of 170 points (out of 200) at three separate shows under three different judges. A CD is earned from the novice class.

### **CDX:**

Companion Dog Excellent is the second level of obedience titles adding jumping and retrieving to the CD level and requiring that all work be done without a leash. The same three qualifying scores under three different judges are required to earn the title. A CDX is earned from the open class.

### **UD:**

Utility dog is the third level of obedience titles. It adds scent discrimination, directed retrieves, and directed jumps to the skills required. Dogs must also earn three qualifying scores under different judges to earn a UD from the utility class.

### **OTCH:**

Obedience trial championship, earned by continuing to compete at the open and utility levels and winning first or second place enough times to amass 100 points.

## **Everything you wanted to know**

### **Why do dogs chase cars?**

It is a very natural instinct. Chasing cats, other dogs, and cars is a part of their genetic structure. It can be quite irritating. You're minding your own business, walking your dog along your public sidewalk. Suddenly, the ears perk and suddenly a cat is spotted off about 200 feet away. Then the chase begins. There's no stopping your dog, even if he's on a leash.

You can stop this behavior. Don't look at the cat or car any other object your dog is chasing. That's acknowledging to your dog that that other object is something interesting and is worth pursuing. The best thing you can do if you see your dogs ears perk up is to instantly tell it no, so it won't be tempted to go after it.

Start walking in the direction away from the object. Then sharply jerk your dog's leash. Jerk it once and then wait for it to adjust to walk by your side. Perhaps you need to say heel.

Many people feel they should drag their dogs away from the cat or dog. But this won't solve the problem as well as a swift jerk and then a heel. Do this as many times as is necessary until your dog has corrected the situation and you have her attention once again.

### **What exactly is off-leash dog obedience training?**

Off-Leash is when your dog exhibits perfect behavior without a leash. You can put your dog on “Down-Stay” and do not need to get a leash. When your dog is off-leash, you can go out to your car, or work in your yard and the dog will hang out with you, and not run down the street.

Off-Leash is never having to put your dog on a leash to obey you or to be under your control.

### **Will group obedience classes help me with my dog’s problem?**

Group classes will not help problems such as aggression, jumping up, whining, bolting, inappropriate marking, excessive barking, shyness, digging, chewing, biting, and running away. If the causes of the problems are psychological, then a vet is a better idea.

### **How soon should I start my puppy?**

As soon as possible.

### **How do I select the collar that is right for my dog?**

There are three main considerations in choosing a Dog Training Collar that’s right for your dog and your training needs:

What range do you need? Where do you want to take your dog? Around the home and yard, or for distance control on hikes or in the field?

The collar should match your dog’s size and temperament. Size is less important, as most collars work with most sized dogs. Very small dogs probably need one of the systems designed for little dogs. An extremely large dog may require the purchase of an extra large collar

Next, what is the goal of your training? Basic obedience training can be accomplished with the Basic Obedience Collars. Polishing basic training, teaching tricks, agility training, and more sophisticated goals are best accomplished with one of the Advanced Training Collars. Sportsman will want to choose a Sporting or Hunting Collar that has the ruggedness, long range, and extra features needed in the field.

### **What collar is right for my dog’s temperament?**

Most training collars work with most dogs’ temperaments. Dogs that are unusually docile or unusually aggressive require a broader range of available correction levels. Here’s a range of temperaments:

**Docile:** apathetic (not coming when called, housebreaking issues)

**Mild-Mannered:** Active and Playful, but easily calmed with firm command or reward

**Playfully aggressive:** No signs of violence or malicious biting, but is sometimes tough to control

**Aggressive:** Overexcited easily, bites playfully, and may injure itself or others, breaks items in home, runs into walls

**Violently Aggressive -:** Tendencies toward attacking, maiming, very territorial.

### **Do I need a trainer and if so, how can I get a good one?**

Yes. A good trainer can help you train your dog the right way. He is necessary not only to help your dog become a well trained dog but also to help you become a good owner. Choose one who uses humane training techniques that encourage appropriate behavior through such positive reinforcement as food, attention, play, or praise. Training techniques should never involve yelling, choking, shaking the scruff, tugging on the leash, alpha rolling (forcing the dog onto his back), or other actions that frighten or inflict pain.

All family members should be encouraged to participate, if possible. Make sure that all lessons are clearly demonstrated and explained. Training should be clearly structured steps, and written materials provided. Each owner should have time to practice with his dog during class. The trainer should give individual attention to each dog. Avoid chaotic classes and classes with too many dogs enrolled. You should be comfortable with the methods your trainer uses.

### Chapter 6

### A Special Experience: Breeding

To witness and take part in the process of creation is a truly unique experience. It strengthens the bond between your dog and you. It gives you a new insight into her world. And help you understand her needs better.

#### **To Breed Or Not To Breed**

Before you breed, you should consider a whole host of factors. : The expenses (housing, feeding, grooming, veterinary bills, licensing fees, registration for purebred dogs and advertising cost) the time involved, and the care needed. You cannot approach breeding purely as a moneymaking opportunity. You must do it out of love for your breed. To avoid genetic diseases you should find out whether your dog has any carriers of such diseases in her family. Siblings, half-sibs, offspring, parents and parents' siblings.

Breeding your female dog is not necessary to keep your dog healthy. In fact spaying and neutering your pet can help them become better pets in many ways.

Every year, so many dogs, including purebred puppies are put to sleep because they are unwanted, lost or abandoned. This is why you need to be sure about being a breeder. Do have your pet spayed or neutered if you do not have a top quality dog and a ready supply of good homes already lined up prior to breeding.

#### **Breeding Time**

A bitch should be bred around the time she comes into her second or third heat. Each breed , will have their heat differently but generally it will occur once or twice a year. Puppies as young as 6 months, can experience their first heat. You need to make sure your pet does not have any adverse genetic traits that could be passed onto puppies. She will also need to be up to date on her immunizations and be in her top peak physical condition.

The first sign you may notice when your bitch is in season is a thin discharge or red blood. How much a dog discharges will vary per dog. After about a week, it will turn to a thin yellow strain, which lasts about another week. Around this time, her vulva will swell and become soft indicating her readiness to mate. Each bitch will vary in how long her heat will last. Most breeders suggest breeding your female at this time, waiting a day or two and introducing the stud dog again.

If your male dog is smaller than your female or if your stud is inexperienced, assistance may be required in helping the dogs to lock and insure the tie is not broken.

### **How To Choose A Stud**

When choosing a stud dog you will need to be vary familiar with the bloodlines within your breed and choose a mate very carefully. Make sure his personality traits complement your female's traits. He should also have a good show record if you are breeding for show stock. When possible, look for several ancestors in common within 3-4 generations back. If you are breeding your purple ribbon (PR) pedigree female to a PR male, the puppies UKC or AKC registration will automatically be considered PR bred with a traceable pedigree back through over 250 ancestors.

### **Gestation**

Once the breeding and the 'locking' time is over, keep your bitch away from all other male dogs. Do not leave her alone for even a few minutes and do not rely on chain link or even high fences to keep out other male dogs. Females can give birth to puppies from more than one father.

Your bitch will have a gestational period of 63 to 65 days from the date she was mated. This can also vary from dog to dog and owners should be prepared to help with delivery prior to that date.

### **Preparation Time**

You will need a whelping box to get your female to sleep there prior to delivery. However comfortable the box is, she may try and make her own den under the front porch or backyard playhouse. If you see her trying to make an outside den, keep a close eye on her and move her inside until delivery. For most dogs the area should be 6-8 inches high on all sides. It should be high enough to ensure that the pups don't wander off but low enough for the mother to scale the wall easily. You will want to keep lots of warm towels and blankets handy in a dimly lit room at time of delivery and the bedding will need to be changed daily.

Your bitch will also begin to lose the hair around her nipples and at times she may lactate earlier. You may not be needed during delivery but stay close by just in case. When the first pup arrives, your mother dog will need to break the amniotic sac open and begin licking and stimulating the newborn to breath. If your dog is pre-occupied or does not appear to know what to do, you can help her by making sure that all fluids have been cleared from the pup's mouth.

## Love, laughter & licks

Afterbirth discharge should follow the birth of each puppy and will generally be eaten by the mother. If you have a large litter, you may want to remove the afterbirth and keep the towel clean and dry. If your new mother is chewing off the umbilical cord too close to the pup's body you can also assist in this problem with sterilized scissors.

Some dog breeds can go many hours' in-between delivering pups but other breeds should not have more than a 15-minute gap between deliveries. Prior to delivering, talk to your vet.

### Chapter 7

### Spaying & Neutering

Neutering is the perhaps one of the best ways to care for your pet. It is the process of removing certain reproductive organs. In the female, the uterus, fallopian tubes, and ovaries; in the male, the testicles. Neuter surgery on female animals is sometimes called spaying. The surgery prevents females from becoming pregnant and prevents males from impregnating females.

Animals are anesthetized during the surgery to spare them from pain. They typically go home within a day of the procedure. Neutering is a relatively safe and simple operation. It helps save your pet's life.

#### The Right Age

Neutering is generally done around the age of two-four months for females and males, before they even reach sexual maturity. Many veterinarians will perform neuter surgery on puppies and kittens as young as 8 weeks of age. This early surgery ensures that your pet will not contribute to pet overpopulation. Besides, their young age helps them recuperate quickly from the procedure.

Neuter surgery is a standard procedure done by nearly every general practice veterinarian.

#### Benefits

Neutering lowers the odds of breast cancer and dangerous uterine infections in females and prostate problems in males. It also reduces the animal's urge to roam. Otherwise, chances are, your pet could run away, become lost, or be hit by a car while roaming loose.

Neutering is not a cure for aggressiveness, but it will lessen the urge to fight for sexual dominance. It also diminishes the likelihood of spraying, wailing, marking territory, or making inappropriate sexual approaches toward people or objects. Animals who are spayed or neutered are three times less likely to bite. Neutering doesn't make your pet fat.

Un-neutered pets may be anxious because they have no outlet for their natural urges. Neutering eliminates this frustration and makes your companion less distracted, more easily trained, and a more contented member of your family.

There are more benefits to neutering. Neutering increases your pet's life expectancy and helps reduce the numbers of animals put to death in shelters. If you love animals and want to help them, neutering is the answer.

### **Spay and Neuter Clinics**

Many clinics offer surgeries for healthy animals who are four months or older. Speak to your veterinarian about the advantages of surgery and when it is appropriate to have your companion altered.

### Chapter 8      **Protective Love: Vaccination and Healthcare**

Your pet needs and deserves basic preventive care necessary to keep him safe from communicable diseases. Every new puppy faces a host of parasites and infectious organisms as it grows. Some can pose a threat to humans too. So take your puppy to your veterinarian as soon as you can. As a pet owner, you are responsible for your pet's health.

If you are a breeder, keep the kennels clean. Kennel runs and puppy cages should be cleaned of organic matter and then bleached before new animals are brought in. Adjacent runs should be bleached if they are contaminated by flowing water during the hosing.

#### **Prevention, Not Cure**

Newborn puppies acquire immunities against many diseases by nursing from their mother. During the first two days of life, a puppy that nurses takes in the colostrum that is present in the milk that is first produced. The antibodies that are passed in the colostrum are vital to the puppy's health and well-being.

These antibodies prevent the puppy from being infected by diseases like Canine Distemper and Parvovirus. These same antibodies are also the reason veterinarians suggest vaccinations to be given after six weeks of age.

For dogs and many other mammals as well, the immunity given by the colostrum loses its affect sometime around the fifth week of age. Unfortunately this is also the time when most puppies are placed into their new homes and exposed to a variety of new environments.

Take your puppy to a vet as soon as possible. He will then educate the owner on the needs of the new puppy, look for congenital defects as well as look for signs of parasitic or viral infections. If all looks well, the puppy will be started on what is commonly called puppy shots.

These puppy shots are also called five in one or DHLPP vaccinations because they are a combination vaccine that will immunize against five very common but potentially deadly diseases.

First vaccination - 8 to 10 weeks

Puppy follow-up vaccinations - every 3-4 weeks until 16 weeks

Adult boosters - annually

How given: Subcutaneously, between the shoulder blades

### Vaccination Schedule

- 6 Weeks Distemper Measles, deworming, fecal flotation, and start heartworm preventive
- 9 Weeks Distemper, Parvo, Corona, 2nd deworming
- 12 Weeks Distemper, Parvo, Corona
- 16 Weeks Distemper, Parvo, Corona, Rabies, and Fecal Flotation
- Annually Distemper, Parvo, Corona, Rabies, Fecal Flotation, and heartworm test

### DHLP-P Vaccines

#### Canine Distemper

This is the D in the series. This is for Canine Distemper, a highly contagious and usually fatal disease. It is caused by the paramyxovirus . A healthy dog coming into contact with the discharge from the eyes or nose of an infected dog transmits it. It is also suspected that the virus can live in the soil from six months up to a year.

#### Symptoms

Loss of appetite, a slight dry cough are the first signs. A thick yellow or green discharge from the eyes or nose, vomiting or diarrhea as well as an increase in temperature are also possible signs. There are some cases where these symptoms appear and then disappear with nothing else happening until suddenly neurological symptoms appear.

The neurological symptoms will often start with just a twitching, shivering or even a chewing gum- like activity. These mild activities will often turn into full seizures that are really traumatic to the family members. The convulsions will at first be sporadic and then progress to non-stop, screaming types of seizures. Eventually, the seizures will become so bad, the heart stops or the respiratory system fails.

Unlike many of the canine diseases, Canine Distemper is not species specific. Dogs, wolves, coyotes, ferrets and raccoons are all at risk.

#### Canine Hepatitis Virus

Canine Hepatitis is the second disease covered by the DHLP-P vaccine. It also is a highly contagious disease. It can be spread by contact with contaminated saliva, urine or stool from an infected dog. The virus itself affects the abdominal organs including the liver.

### Symptoms

Increased temperature, as well as discharges from the eyes, mouth or nose. Sometimes the eyes will actually become red or the dog will hump his back and try to rub on the floor to relieve the pain. As the disease progresses, the animal becomes lethargic, stops eating and often becomes comatose.

Within six to ten days the infected dog will usually die or makes a quick recovery. For those few dogs that do survive the infection, a temporary opacity of the eyes appears.

### Leptospirosis

This spreads through contact with urine from an infectious dog and is a serious bacterial disease.

### Symptoms

The disease itself causes the dog to become lethargic and weak. Some of the other symptoms include abdominal pain, increase in water intake as well as a marked increase of urination, painful sores in the mouth, on the gums and tongue. The tongue may also form a thick, brownish coating. Other symptoms may include bloody diarrhea, vomiting, and a change in the color of the whites of the eyes.

Due to the extensive damage caused to the digestive tract, liver and kidneys, leptospirosis is often fatal. For those who do survive, recovery is very slow.

### Parainfluenza

Canine parainfluenza is a viral disease that contributes to tracheobronchitis in dogs. The common name for tracheobronchitis is kennel cough and it must be noted that the parainfluenza virus is not the only one that can cause the disorder. A separate Bordetella vaccination can be given against the bacterial cause of kennel cough, Bordetella Bronchiseptica.

Parainfluenza and all forms of kennel cough are highly contagious. They can be transmitted by nose-to-nose contact or sharing of dishes between a healthy dog and an infected dog. It can also be contagious by becoming airborne.

### Symptoms

A mild raise in temperature, usually around 102-103F and an ongoing, deep sounding, hacking cough. This cough can be apparent during the day but owners most often take notice of it during the quiet evening hours. Most of the dogs appear healthy other than the cough but its continuation for weeks on end can wear the dog down.

Veterinarians will usually prescribe a form of antibiotic to prevent the chance of a secondary infection and some type of medication to end the spasmodic coughing spells. He will also sometimes recommend over the counter, human cough medications. Check with your veterinarian to see which ones are safe for the dog.

Dogs infected with any version of kennel cough should be kept totally isolated from other dogs and in a warm, humid environment. Many owners find the bathroom or laundry room a perfect place for their pets.

### **Parvo virus**

Parvo is a relatively recent disease. Its first reported cases occurred in 1978 and killed large numbers of the canine population.

Parvo is a highly contagious viral disease. Contact with the feces or vomit of an infected dog is the source of the infection but tracing it back to the contagious dog is extremely difficult.

A puppy can come into an environment in which a contagious dog was in up to six months previously. Strays can spread it by sniffing with another dog through the fence. In 1978, humans were and still are one of the main carriers of the disease. Dog breeders at that time were often wiped out as entire litters as well as their adult dogs became infected with the disease. These buyers would come into contact with an infected dog and carry the disease to each stopping place along the way on their hands, clothes or even shoes.

Today, parvovirus normally attacks younger dogs. With infection, the disease will often take one of two forms: the diarrheal and the cardiac form.

### **Symptoms**

The diarrheal or enteric parvovirus comes suddenly: vomiting and bloody diarrhea, lethargy, lack of appetite as well as an increase in temperature. Puppies not treated for the disease will often dehydrate and die quickly. The estimated mortality rate for untreated puppies is approximately 80-85%. This rate is slightly higher in Rottweillers and Dobermans due to a prevalence of the blood clotting dysfunction called Von Willebraun's disease.

In its cardiac or myocardial form, it can cause congestive heart failure even in those puppies that survive the disease. Congestive heart failure in itself will cause the premature death of the One of the oldest and most reliable tests is to simply do a white cell count. If there is a marked decrease in these cells, it means parvovirus is present.

Puppies that have had one or two in the recommended schedule of vaccines will often have an advantage over those without in actual chances of recovery.

The build up an immunity against parvo and all the other diseases, veterinarians recommended vaccination schedule is a loading dose at six weeks, a follow up four weeks later and another given four weeks after that. Six months after the last DHLPP is given, a follow up parvo vaccination is given and then an annual injection that is usually given.

The vaccines are fairly inexpensive and can be gotten not only through a veterinarian but also through feed and even some drug stores. They are injected under the skin with few puppies having reactions.

### **Worms**

Your puppy could be a victim of several internal parasites referred to as worms. The most common are the roundworms that infest most puppies at some time in their young lives and tapeworms that can be a big problem when flea infestations are high.

Several worms that infect dogs can also infect humans, so treatment and eradication of the worms in the environment are important.

How a dog gets infected by worms depends on the kind of worms the dog has. There are different kinds of worms that live in dogs. All of these kinds of worms are called parasites because they feed off the dog instead of living on their own.

### **Prevention**

Remove dog feces from back yards at least once a week. Use appropriate vermicides under veterinary supervision. You should have the dog's feces checked frequently in persistent cases. Do not mix wormers and do not use any wormer if your dog is currently taking any other medication, including heartworm preventative, without consulting the veterinarian. When walking the dog in a neighborhood or park, remove all feces so that the dog does not contribute to contamination of soil away from home as well.

An early diagnosis of the presence and species of intestinal parasite is important. Simply because not all worms respond to the same treatment. Therefore, stool samples should be taken to the veterinarian for microscopic examination if worms are suspected. Many veterinarians include the stool check as part of the annual health examination.

### **Symptoms**

Diarrhea, perhaps with blood in the stool; weight loss; dry hair; general poor appearance; and vomiting, perhaps with worms in the vomitus. However, some infestations cause few or no symptoms; in fact some worm eggs or larvae can be dormant in the dog's body and activated only in times of stress, or in the case of roundworms, until the latter stages of pregnancy, when they activate and infest the soon-to-be-born puppies. The most common ones in dogs are

roundworms, hookworms, whipworms, tapeworms, and heartworms. Roundworms and hookworms are found a lot in puppies and sometimes in adult dogs. Whipworms, tapeworms, and heartworms are seen more in older dogs.

Evidence of roundworms and tapeworms can be seen without the aid of a microscope, but other worms are not so easily diagnosed. Occasionally adult whipworms can be seen in the stool when the infestation has already caused some debilitation or weight loss in the dog.

### **Roundworms**

Roundworms are active in the intestines of puppies. They cause a pot-bellied appearance and contribute to poor growth. The worms may be seen in vomit or stool; a severe infestation can cause death by intestinal blockage. This worm can grow to seven inches in length. Females can produce 200 thousand eggs in a day, eggs that are protected by a hard shell and can exist in the soil for years. Dogs become infected by ingesting worm eggs from contaminated soil. The eggs hatch in the intestine and the resulting larvae are carried to the lungs by the bloodstream.

Roundworms do not typically infest adults. However, the larvae can encyst in the body tissue of adult bitches and activate during the last stages of pregnancy to infest puppies. Worming the bitch has no effect on the encysted larvae and cannot prevent the worms from infecting the puppies.

These can be treated with an over-the-counter wormer found in pet stores. However, a vet is the best source of information and medication to deal with intestinal parasites. Dewormers are poisonous to the worms and can make the dog sick, especially if not used in proper dosage.

### **Hookworms**

These are small, thin worms that fasten to the wall of the small intestine and suck blood. Dogs get hookworm if they come in contact with the larvae in contaminated soil. As with roundworms, the hookworm larvae becomes an adult in the intestine. The pups can contract hookworms in the uterus and the dam can infest the pups through her milk.

A severe hookworm infestation can kill puppies, but chronic hookworm infection is usually not a problem in the older dog. When it does occur, the signs include diarrhea, weight loss, anemia, and progressive weakness. Diagnosis, is made by examining the feces for eggs under a microscope.

### **Tapeworms**

Another small intestine parasite, the tapeworm is transmitted to dogs who ingest fleas or who hunt and eat wildlife infested with tapeworms or fleas. The dog sheds segments of the tapeworm containing the eggs in its feces. These segments are flat and move about shortly after excretion. They look like grains of rice when dried and can be found either in the dog's stool or stuck to the hair around his anus. Tapeworms cannot be killed by the typical over-the-counter wormer. Check with the veterinarian for appropriate treatment.

### **Whipworms**

Adult whipworms look like pieces of thread with one end enlarged. They live in the cecum, the first section of the dog's large intestine. Infestations are usually light, so an examination of feces may not reveal the presence of eggs. Several checks may be necessary before a definitive diagnosis can be made.

### **Heartworms**

Whether your puppy is indoors or outdoors, he is at risk of exposure to potentially deadly heartworms as well as harmful gastrointestinal parasites. They live in the blood vessels and heart of dogs. Because heartworms live inside the heart, too many of them can cause damage to the dog's heart. The parasitic worm responsible for heartworm disease is called *Dirofilaria immitis*.

This is how the life cycle begins: a mosquito bites and feeds on the blood of an infected dog that is carrying tiny immature heartworms, called microfilariae, in its blood. The mosquito takes in the immature heartworms when it feeds. During the next two-to-three weeks, the larvae develop into the infective stage within the mosquito. When the mosquito feeds again, it can transmit infective larvae to a healthy dog. The larvae enter the dog's body through the mosquito's bite wound, migrate through its tissues, and develop over the next few months into adult heartworms, eventually reaching the dog's heart and lungs.

### **Fleas and Ticks: The Big, Small Problem**

Nothing can cause as much discomfort as fleas. These tiny pests can hop onto your puppy unobserved to feed on its blood and lay eggs, producing yet another generation. Fleas can make life miserable for people and pets alike with a vicious cycle of biting and in some dogs cause scratching and flea allergy dermatitis or anemia. The most common canine pest, the flea is actually highly adaptable.

In her brief 50-day lifespan, a single female flea is over productive: she can lay more than 2000 eggs. Female fleas need blood to complete their reproductive cycle. Baby fleas need blood to grow. Although fleas prefer dog and cat blood, human blood will do just as well.

Fleas are survivors. The female lays eggs on the host animal, but the eggs fall to the ground, carpet, sofa, dog bed, owner's bed, or easy chair. This does not mean the end of the eggs. They hatch in two-to-five days. The flea larva feeds on organic debris in the environment. Within a week or two, depending on temperature and humidity, the larva spins a pupa (or cocoon) to protect it during metamorphosis to the adulthood.

In the hard-shelled pupa, the larva transforms from a tiny maggot-like creature into a six-legged bloodthirsty super-jumper able to leap 100 times its own height, and the cycle begins anew.

Humidity is critical to flea survival. Eggs need relative humidity of 70-75 percent to hatch, and larvae need at least 50 percent humidity to survive. In humid areas, about 20 percent of the eggs survive to adulthood; in arid areas, less than five percent complete the cycle.

### **The Signs**

Fleas can hide in a thick carpet of pet hairs, especially on long-coated or double-coated dogs, and can move among and between hair shafts fast. Now you see one. Now you don't. So look for signs, rather than fleas.

### **Symptoms**

Dry skin, an allergy, or mange mites. If he bites at his rear end especially around his tail or the inside or outside of his thighs, fleas are a possibility. However, he may also have dry skin, an allergy, or mange mites. Flea dirt looks like pepper on the dog. If you drop some of this onto a damp paper towel and it turns reddish, it's fleas.

### **Dermatitis**

When a dog is bitten, proteins (antigens) in the insect's saliva can cause an immune system reaction: the release of immunoglobulin that in turn causes itching. Depending on the type of cell involved (mast cells, basophils, or T-lymphocytes in the blood) and the type of chemicals released, the irritation can begin immediately, in five-to-six hours or in 24-48 hours or a combination of the three.

Small red raised bumps on the base of the tail and along the outside of the back legs, self-induced scratches, and thickened skin on the base of the tail are all signs of chronic flea allergy. Your vet can confirm the diagnosis with an intradermal skin allergy test.

### **Treatment**

You have a flea control products from herbs and electronics to biological controls. Powerful chemicals such as Dursban and diazinon and systemic insecticides such as the ingredients in Proban, Prospot, and Spotton seem to be on the way out. Insecticides can build up toxic levels in the dog if not used extremely carefully. Some products repel fleas, some kill adult fleas, some kill larva or eggs, and some prevent fleas from growing and reproducing.

Garlic and brewer's yeast are popular flea repellents with some but there are no tests that indicate these diet supplements are effective. Many dog owners believe they work, however.

Electronic flea traps are sometimes used to attract and kill the pests before they attack the dog but they do nothing about fleas in the yard or flea eggs or larvae in the house.

Flea collars have mixed results. They depend on the chemical involved, the size of the dog, and the density of the dog's coat.

### **Flea Control**

Control really depends on the extent of the dog's problem and the preferences of the dog's owner. The pill or any kind of topical application takes less effort, but they should not be used alone in a heavy infestation. You need to treat the environment as well. The pill works when flea bites dog but may not be suitable for an allergic dog. Topical solutions kill adult fleas and have some residual action as long as they remain on the pet's hair; even hair that has been shed on carpets and furniture.

Pyrethrums kill adult fleas but are short-lived. Permethrins, the genetically altered form of pyrethrum, lasts for 10 days or so. Pyrethrum and permethrin are often found in shampoos, in pet and premise sprays containing growth inhibitors.

With mild flea infestations, an occasional bath with a permethrin shampoo may do the trick, especially when combined with a premise spray that contains a growth inhibitor or with application of sodium polyborate, an insecticide that kills fleas by lethal constipation and desiccation. More serious infestations may call for big measures especially if the dog is allergic. But whatever platter of flea cures you choose, make sure you do something about it particularly in summer when fleas can invade in hordes.

### Grooming for fleas

Flea droppings will be more obvious than the fleas themselves, so run a fine-toothed comb through the dog's hair near his tail and flick any debris into a container of water. Flea droppings contain blood and will turn the water pink. Once you have identified fleas as the culprit, the attack should be multi-pronged. Comb your dog daily with a fine-toothed comb and drown the fleas in a container of soapy water; dip the dog in a pyrethrin dip that has low toxicity and a residual effect. Treat the house, especially areas where the dog sleeps or spends a lot of time. Wash his bedding, spray his bed or crate, and treat the house and yard as indicated. Put some flea powder in the vacuum cleaner bag as well.

### Ticks

It has eight legs instead of six, which makes it a close cousin of the spider. There are several species that feed on dogs, including the wood tick, the brown dog tick, and the deer tick, and they all thrive in tall grass, shrubby areas, and woods.

Unlike the flea, the tick is lazy and moves slowly. So you can easily pick it off the dog with tweezers as it crawls about looking for a feeding spot. So, after a walk in the woods, check your dog (and yourself) for ticks from stem to stern. Check for feeding ticks around the dog's head and ears and in his armpits and the inside of his thighs. If you miss one as it crawls, you'll likely find it when it latches on to feed, as the engorged body is hard to miss in an inspection.

### Daily Grooming

Daily grooming can help you find ticks that have not yet become embedded in the skin. Ticks can be picked up on the comb and flicked into a container of alcohol. Embedded ticks should be removed immediately. First, forget that old wives' tale about coating ticks with petroleum jelly, burning their rear ends with a match or lighted cigarette, dousing them with lighter fluid or gasoline. Just protect fingers from the tick's body fluids with surgical gloves or a plastic bag, grasp the tick firmly, rock it back and forth a few times, and pull it out. If a patch of skin comes along, it's unlikely that any of the tick's head has been left behind.

Dab on some antiseptic cream on the spot where the tick was removed. This will help prevent local infection, especially on tender ears, a favorite feeding place for ticks.

Keep your grass trimmed and control the spread of shrubbery and tall weeds. This will prevent ticks.

### **Diseases**

Ticks can carry Rocky Mountain spotted fever, encephalitis, tularemia, tick paralysis, and Lyme, so it is important to prevent tick infestations in domestic dogs. Lyme disease, with horrifying symptoms that can mimic fatigue, heart problems, and arthritis and cause birth defects, affects dogs and horses as well as people. Lyme is tough to diagnose but can be treated with antibiotics.

Borreliosis is an infectious disease syndrome spread by a tiny tick called the deer tick. Adult deer ticks are the size of the head of a pin. Specific blood tests, a physical examination and an assessment of your dog's overall health history need to be done. Your veterinarian can determine whether your dog has Lyme with these. The best way to protect your new puppy from Lyme disease can be through a two-dose immunization regimen, typically beginning at 9 weeks of age, and regular use of a product that kills all stages of major types of ticks.

#### **Lyme: Vaccination**

First vaccination 8-10 weeks

Puppy follow-up vaccination 2-3 weeks after the first

Adult boosters annually

### **Viral Diseases**

Dangerous, disease-causing organisms are part of your new puppy's environment. And because puppies are naturally inquisitive, they're good candidates for exposure to infection. But your veterinarian can help protect puppies and adult dogs against a number of infectious organisms through a regular vaccination program.

### **Rabies**

First vaccination - 16 weeks

Puppy follow-up vaccinations - after 1 year

Adult boosters - every 3 years

Restrictions: Rabies vaccinations may not be given to puppies under 15 weeks of age.

Rabies is a generally fatal viral disease that affects the central nervous system and can infect all warm-blooded animals. The disease is zoonotic, which means it can be transmitted to humans bitten by an infected animal. People exposed to rabies must undergo an immunization regimen.

### **Canine Coronavirus (CCV)**

In most cases, canine coronavirus is transmitted when dogs or puppies ingest the disease-causing organism following direct contact with infected animals or their feces. Dogs of all ages and breeds are susceptible. CCV infection can range from very mild and barely noticeable to serious. Dogs infected with CCV may refuse food, seem lethargic, become dehydrated, and suffer from sudden-onset diarrhea that can last from ten days to several weeks. CCV can occur at the same time as canine parvovirus, intensifying the dog's illness and even causing death in puppies.

### **Hip Dysplasia**

Canine hip dysplasia is a genetic disease. It is a malformation of the hip joint that ultimately leads to arthritis. The hip joint is a ball-and-socket arrangement that allows for mobility. The ball is the femoral head, the knob at the top of the upper leg bone or femur. The socket is the acetabulum, a scooped out area on the pelvic structure. The two parts must fit together and be lubricated by sufficient joint fluid to maintain structural soundness and avoid arthritis. Hip dysplasia is joint malformation that occurs when the ball and socket are misaligned, loosely fitted, or misshapen. Dysplastic dogs experience pain, generally are not as active as healthy dogs, and may need expensive corrective surgery as they age.

Nutrition also plays a part here. Puppies pushed to eat more for rapid growth manifest more hip problems than siblings allowed to grow at a slower rate. Many vets recommend that puppies be fed adult maintenance dog foods with less than 25 percent protein and be kept slightly hungry so their bones are not pushed into rapid growth that may be bad for good hip formation.

Hip dysplasia can be mild or debilitating. Mild cases may need no more than an occasional aspirin; moderate cases can be corrected by surgery, and severe cases can result in painful crippling and euthanasia.

Hip dysplasia cannot be detected by observation. Dogs that seem perfectly agile as pups and young adults may actually be mildly dysplastic in one or both hips. Diagnosis is possible only by x-rays of the dog's hips.

### **Autoimmune diseases**

This is a group of diseases that is caused by a failure of the immune system. It includes sebaceous adenitis, pemphigus, and VKH (skin diseases); hemolytic anemia; systemic lupus; polyarthritis; and some thyroid disease. Although these diseases seem to be genetic, they are often triggered by stress. Some seem to be specific to a few breeds, while others affect many

breeds. Little is known about the mode of inheritance; that is, whether they are simple as progressive retinal atrophy and sebaceous adenitis are in some breeds or are, like hip dysplasia, a complex association of many genes. Environmental influence is suspected in the onset of some autoimmune problems, but research is slow in proving a definite link.

### **Heart**

Heart failure in the dog is very similar to humanoids. The explanation of congestive heart failure applies directly to people in many cases. The main drugs used to treat heart failure are almost identical in people and animals

### **Bloat**

Bloat is also known as acute gastric dilation. It is a condition that can kill an otherwise healthy dog in a matter of hours. Dogs affected by this deadly condition are the large, deep-chested breeds such German Shepherds, Collies, Dobermans, Rottweillers, Mastiffs, Wolfhounds and so many others.

The exact cause for bloating isn't really known but generally, it is believed to occur when the dog has eaten an exceptionally large meal, drunken lots of water and then proceeded to exercise strenuously within the next two to three hours.

Exercising immediately after eating causes the stomach to expand with gas or fluid. Expanding food causes extreme distention. If this occurs and is caught by a veterinarian in time, a large tube can be feed down the dog's esophagus and on into the stomach. The audible hiss of escaping gas can be not only heard but also smelled.

If gas isn't the cause, the same tube will be used to pump the stomach and carry the excess liquid away while providing immediate relief to the dog.

During gastric torsion, the stomach does a complete rotation or flips which then causes a constriction of the blood supply at each of the ends. Stomach tissue like any other tissue will become necrotic and die without the necessary blood supply.

### **Symptoms**

A grossly distended abdomen; extreme restlessness often with pacing, excessive salivation and drooling, attempts to vomit without results, whining and cries of pain. Unfortunately owners often don't recognize the problem until it is too late. For the dog to be saved, the owner must notice the symptoms of gastric torsion or bloat early in the onset to have any chance of saving their pet. If the condition is not caught early enough, the dog will usually go into shock, become comatose and then die.

If the owner has been able to get the dog to the veterinarian early enough, and relief isn't apparent by passing the naso-gastric tube, surgery becomes the only option. This is a condition where every minute makes the difference between life and a painful death. It must be remembered that even with surgery, the chances of survival are not that great.

### **Quick! I'm Having An Emergency!**

There may be times when you cannot really know how ill your dog is. However, it's best to take him to a vet even if it turns out to be a false alarm. But if your dog is having a serious problem (bleeding, breathing difficulty) then you should start first aid treatment while on your way to the vet. For example, if you are trying to control bleeding, start at once but meanwhile get the dog into the car and get someone to drive you to the vet. Continue the treatment on the way. If there is no possible way you can get to the vet quickly and safely, get someone to call the vet while you carry on with the first aid treatment.

### **Bleeding**

If bleeding doesn't stop within 5 minutes, you must try to staunch the flow. With a clean cloth, or even your hand, apply direct pressure to the wound. If this doesn't work, apply more bandages or a cotton wool pad on top of the first bandage; don't try to remove the old bandage. If such pressure won't stop the bleeding, find the nearest pressure point and compress the artery against its underlying bone. Use the flat part of your fingers, not your thumb or finger tips. As a last resort you can try a tourniquet, although this carries the risk of stopping circulation to the affected part and causing gangrene. Use it only to save life when nothing else is working and release intermittently.

### **Breathing Difficulties**

This could be due to an obstruction of the air passage to the lungs by a foreign body or the dog's own tongue if it is unconscious, strangulation by his collar, electrocution, drowning, heart attack or chest injuries. If the dog is breathing with difficulty, clear airway and, if necessary, start artificial respiration immediately. If you cannot see breathing movement, place your ear on the dog's chest and listen for a heartbeat or take his pulse. If the heart has stopped within the last minute or so but you think the dog is not yet dead, apply heart massage and artificial respiration together. Never attempt the kiss of life if you have reason to believe that poison is involved.

### **Artificial Respiration**

Open dog's mouth, grasp tongue and pull it well forward clear of back of throat. Wipe away any mucus or blood. Remove any obstruction. Remove any collar or restricting item. If the animal has fluid in its throat or is a victim of drowning hold him upside down by his rear legs for 15-30 seconds. If dog is still not breathing, start artificial respiration. Close mouth, place your mouth over the dog's nose and exhale to force air through his nose to the lungs. Watch the dog's chest for the lungs to inflate. Remove your mouth, and repeat the cycle about six times a minute. You may need to carry on for 30-60 minutes, until the dog is breathing by himself or is pronounced dead.

### **Heart Massage**

If you cannot hear the dog's heartbeat, strike his chest sharply with your fist once or twice in the region just below the dog's left shoulder. If heart is still not going, apply heart massage. Place the dog on his right side on a firm surface. Put the fingers of one hand on each side of the chest over heart area and compress it firmly but not too hard. Then release the pressure. Repeat 70 times a minute.

### **Burns**

Animals, generally, dread fire so burns from a naked flame are fairly uncommon, although a dog dozing by the fire can get singed or burnt. The dog can burn his feet though, by walking on a hot surface, and scalds are also quite common. Puppies, especially, might chew on an electric lead, which will cause a special type of burn, and this will often be accompanied by electric shock.

Do not apply butter, grease or any ointment. Soak cloth in cold water and hold to burned place. Send for the vet if the burn seems serious. A superficial burn is painful, reddens the skin and singes the hair but the latter will not pull out easily. A serious burn is actually less painful because the nerves have been destroyed. The skin may be white, black or brown, and the hair will either be gone completely or will pull out easily.

Keep the burn covered with a wet dressing covered with thick dry towels. Make the dog stay lying down, restrained in warm blankets. Give fluid as for dehydration, unless the dog is vomiting.

### **Convulsions/Fits**

There are basically two kinds of convulsion: the single convulsion which lasts for a minute or two and doesn't recur for at least 24 hours or repeated or continuous convulsions which are serious emergencies and need veterinary attention immediately.

In the latter situation, you should gently restrain the dog so he can't injure himself by placing a towel over him. Don't put your hand on the dog or in or near his mouth as you may get bitten and will require treatment yourself. Once you've restrained the dog, get to the vet immediately. Single convulsions also require veterinary attention but are usually not so serious. Again restrain the animal and get to the vet as soon as possible.

### **Injuries To The Eyeball**

If there is bleeding in the area of the eyes, apply direct pressure with dry gauze pads and go to vet. Laceration of the eyeball itself or penetration by a foreign object is very serious. Place a damp cloth over the place and get to the vet at once. Don't try to wash the eye or remove a foreign body or you'll undoubtedly do more harm than good. A simple bruise can usually be dealt with by a cold compress.

### **Shock**

'Shock' is a term used loosely and often very incorrectly. In both human and animal terms, it is much more serious than the slight feeling of malaise that might occur after a minor accident or fright which is often called 'shock'. The signs of true shock in dogs are: weakness, collapse, coma, unconsciousness, pale color of mouth, lips and eyelids, coolness of skin and legs, rapid but weak pulse (may be over 140 per minute), rapid respiration (over 40 a minute), staring eyes and dilated pupils. If any or all of these signs occur after an accident or prolonged illness, treat for shock as below and call the vet immediately.

### **Heatstroke**

This often occurs if the dog is kept shut up in a house or car without shade, ventilation or water. It can also happen as a result of the dog getting overexcited or being under stress; i.e. at dog shows. Signs are panting, slobbering, vomiting and diarrhoea, raised temperature and ultimately collapse and coma.

Remove dog from hot spot into cool or shady area.

Soak the dog with cold water from a hose or immerse his in a ice bath and gently massage the legs and body until you reach the vet or the animal's temperature returns to normal. Gently dry dog with towel. If the dog is conscious, give him small amounts of water. Give artificial respiration if necessary.

**A first aid kit** is very handy around the house. These are a few things you may need to keep in it.

Cotton gauze bandage wrap - 1.5 inch width, 3 inch width  
Vet Wrap — 2 inch width, and 4 inch width (4 inch is sold for horses)  
Ace bandage  
First aid tape  
Cotton gauze pads  
Regular bandaids  
Cotton swabs or Q-tips  
Benadryl  
Ascriptin (buffered aspirin)  
Pepto Bismol tablets  
New Skin liquid bandage (useful for patching abrasions on pads)  
Oral syringes (for administering liquid oral medicines, getting ear drying solution into ears)  
Needle & thread, safety pins in several sizes, razor blade (paper wrapped for protection)  
Matches, tweezers  
Hemostat (useful for pulling ticks, thorns, large splinters, etc)  
Small blunt end scissors  
Canine rectal thermometer (get one made specifically for dogs)  
Antibiotic ointment (such as Bacitracin, Betadine, or others)  
Eye rinsing solution (simple mild eye wash)  
Small bottle of 3% hydrogen peroxide  
Small bottle of isopropyl alcohol (rubbing)  
Alcohol or antiseptic wipes (small individual packets)  
Small jar of Vaseline  
Specific medications (for allergies, seizures)

### **Cover Your Dog with pet insurance**

Your pet is a very expensive commitment. Unforeseen costs can be quite difficult to handle. That's when dog insurance can aid the responsible ownership of a dog.

The best dog insurance policies are those designed to act as indemnity insurance. This is similar to a car or homeowner's insurance: these dog insurance policies restore financial loss, within the limits of the dog insurance policy, in the case on an unforeseen event.

A good dog insurance should indemnify your dog's medical costs in the case of a pet accident or illness, so big medical bills won't force you to accept less than the best care for your dog. Make sure the insurance policy does not exclude accidents caused by the dog. Every dog

owner is exposed to possible liability for dog bites and other canine-inflicted injuries. Dogs bite nearly five million Americans every year. Children are the victims of the most serious attacks, and the annual losses equal approximately \$1 Billion (see The dog bite epidemic). These losses do not have to be borne by the dog owners and victims because insurance is available to pay for it.

There's good news for dog owners and accident victims. Homeowners' insurance and renters' insurance normally provide at least \$100,000.00 in benefits for victims. Other types of insurance also afford protection for the insured. There's the automobile liability insurance, which may cover dog bites that happen in a car, landlord insurance that protects the landlord (but not the tenants) from claims that result from the actions of renters' dogs, and workers compensation coverage which may apply to bites and injuries that happen on the job. Some companies even sell dog liability insurance.

These days, however, the insurance industry is attempting to sell homeowner insurance policies that exclude dog-inflicted injuries. No dog owner should purchase a homeowner policy with that exclusion, unless he or she buys a supplemental policy that covers injuries by the dog.

The insurance industry also is quietly revising homeowner policies that protected dog owners when they originally bought those policies. Homeowners must carefully read all of the short slips of paper and other notices sent from insurers, in case they eliminate coverage for accidents caused by dogs.

Some insurance companies refuse to sell homeowner insurance to the owners of breeds of dogs that have a reputation for biting, such as pit bulls, Rottweilers, Akitas and Chow-Chows. Other insurers refuse to sell to anyone who owns all breeds of dog. For all these reasons, dog owners need to learn about insurance.

There are various types of insurance that might apply to a dog attack: If you own a dog and either own or rent a home, your homeowner or renter insurance policy probably contains 'personal liability coverage' (or words to that effect). This feature normally protects you from paying damages to other people for most dog injury claims as well as many other claims, possibly including defamation, a trip-and-fall on your front steps. If your dog was in your car when the dog attacked a person, then your automobile policy probably covers the incident.

The limit of coverage is stated in your policy declarations: the personalized page that lists your name and gives monetary information. The insurance also provides you with an attorney and pays all court costs if you are sued.

### **As The Years Go by: An Aging Dog**

As your dog gets older, his digestion gets impaired. You should give him a diet that is light and nutritious. You should reduce the quantity of food per meal and increase the frequency of feeding may be increased. The food intake for the day should be the same. Make available clean and fresh water. Do not change his diet. If a new type of food has to be fed, it should be mixed with the current type and the quantity may be increased gradually.

### **Light Exercise**

Age will reduce his speed while walking. Reduce the distance covered during the walk and stop for rest during the walks. Staircases and tiring games should be avoided since the heart will also not be as strong as it used to be. Activities should only be reduced and not stopped completely.

### **Bedtime**

The older he gets, the more sleep he will need. Make sure the beds are soft and warm. This will make him more active when he is awake.

### **Constipation & Diarrhea**

This is due to the fact that he is eating less fibrous foods and exercising less. Ask your vet for the cause.

### **Impaired Hearing**

All the organs and senses of the body are affected by old age. The sense of hearing which otherwise is really sharp in dogs is also affected by old age. Communicate with your hand.

### **Impaired Eyesight**

His eyes may get weak. During this period the dog smells his way about as well as he can. Don't change the position of household items and other important landmarks (place of feeding bowl, sleeping).

His resistance levels will also be low. Skeletal degenerative diseases are common in aging dogs. Regular brushing of the dog's coat will activate the skin glands and act as a massage for the loose muscles.

### **Everything You Wanted To Know**

#### **Do puppy vaccinations need to be given as a series?**

Yes. Puppies get immunity against disease from their mother. This immunity decreases starting around 8 to 10 weeks, which is why vaccinations are started then. They need to be given in a series because the mother's immunity affects the effectiveness of the vaccination. The mother's immunity wears off around 4 months of age.

#### **How do I choose a good vet?**

Never consult a vet because he lives close by. If for any reason at all, the owner is uncomfortable with their new vet, most will stick with the same doctor anyway. Few people change vets, fewer still to take the time to find the right one in the first place.

First talk to other pet owners. Find out what there is available for 24-hour emergency care. Check if somebody will be with your pet non-stop, all night in case of an accident that requires an overnight stay. Ask if the office accepts insurance plans if you have one, or credit cards or payment plans if you don't. Watch the interaction between vet and vet technicians. Are they friendly? Does courtesy and politeness rule the day?

And last, but perhaps the most important, trust your instincts. If you feel uncomfortable, keep looking.

#### **What are some signs of age-related conditions?**

Refusal to eat could be one sign. Take him to the vet as soon as possible. Weight loss could be a symptom of a very serious health condition. An older dog can develop diabetes. One of the most obvious signs of diabetes is increased appetite without any weight gain. It is a good idea to weigh your dog every other week or so. Other symptoms of illnesses in older dogs include vomiting and diarrhea, increased thirst, weakness or lethargy. Report any abnormality to the vet.

#### **What are zoonotic diseases?**

These are diseases passed on by parasites. Both humans and animals are susceptible to this group of diseases. Some of the most common are: Rabies, Lyme Disease, Brucellosis, Leptospirosis, Listeria and Salmonella .

### **What is Red Mange?**

A microscopic mite called *Demodex canis* causes Red Mange or Demodectic mange. This is transferred from mother to pup through cuddling during the first few days of life. Puppies raised by hand, do not ever get demodex mites. Mites live inside hair follicles: a difficult place for miticides (chemicals that kill mites) to reach. Mites are a normal residents of dog skin; it is only in some individual dogs that mites cause problems.

### **Are some breeds of dog more prone to certain illnesses?**

Yes, most canine breeds are likely to suffer from one or more specific types of disorders, some of which are definitely known to be inherited. Hereditary cataract can occur in Boston Terriers, American Cocker Spaniel, Miniature Schnauzer and Old English Sheepdogs ultimately resulting in complete loss of vision. Collie eye anomaly is an inherited defect of the Collie breed which causes poor vision Hip dysplasia can occur in all breeds but affects more than 20% of dogs in some of them, including German Shepherds and Retrievers. Chihuahuas may suffer from hydrocephalus due to an excess of cerebral fluid. In Bull Terriers, Dalmatians and Sealyhams deafness is commonly found in dogs with a white coat or predominantly white marking and so

### **My dog keeps shaking his head. Is anything wrong?**

Yes. Check if the external ear canal of one or both of his ears is severely inflamed, a condition known as otitis externa. Ear mites can also cause your dog to considerable head shaking and ear scratching. Foreign bodies in the ear canal can be responsible for ear irritation also. To identify and treat the cause the dog should be examined by your veterinarian.

### **Do vaccinations always work?**

No, not always. A very small percentage of animals have immune systems, which do not respond in the normal manner to vaccines or for that matter to natural infections. If a vaccine is administered after its stated expiration date or hasn't been stored in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions, it will not be effective. However, to reassure you, a survey of over 15,000 dogs vaccinated against distemper, in an area where it was common, was undertaken and the results showed that less than 1/2 % contracted the disease.

### **What sort of disease is hardpad?**

Hardpad is not a disease, but is a name given to those cases of distemper in which there is a marked thickening of the horny layer of the skin on the pads.