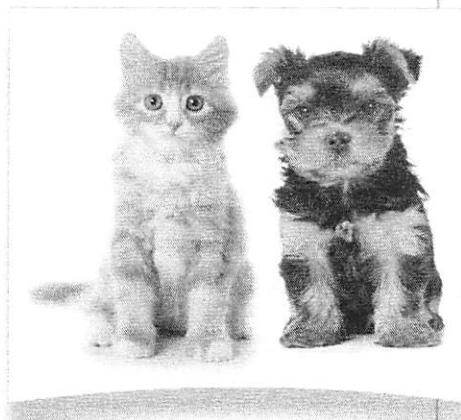


## Fact Sheet

### Welcoming a New Pet

Congratulations on your decision to bring a pet into your home. Whether you're acquiring a puppy or kitten, or adopting an adult pet, you're probably eager to learn more about proper care and feeding. The following tips can help you get off on the right foot with your new family member.



#### Veterinary care

Just as you require regular visits to your doctor to stay healthy, so does your pet. At a minimum, a veterinary visit should be a once-a-year event, and more frequent checkups may be needed. Regular exams are likely to include a thorough physical exam, a weigh-in, immunizations and parasite checks (a heartworm test and fecal exam). Blood tests and dental cleanings are also routine procedures.

#### Feeding

Your new pet may be eyeing your plate with interest, but don't give in! Pets shouldn't eat like people. Cats are carnivores, so they need plenty of protein in their diets — roughly twice the percentage that you do — and they need it in the form of meat, poultry or fish. And while your dog, like you, is an omnivore, that doesn't mean he should share your meals. A food formulated especially for dogs is much better, and treats should make up no more than 10 percent of a dog's caloric intake.

#### Parasite prevention

You've probably heard of pests such as heartworm, fleas, ticks and intestinal parasites, but understanding how and when to prevent them is a different matter. Both dogs and cats can become infected with heartworms, whether they spend their time indoors or out. Because mosquitoes spread heartworms, dogs and cats need protection year-round, thanks to a mosquito's ability to survive in a variety of environments. A bonus is that many heartworm preventives also protect pets against other internal parasites. Meanwhile, fleas and ticks live on the outside of pets. Not only are these pests unwelcome houseguests, they also can cause allergies and spread diseases to your pet and your family. Ask your veterinarian how you can keep your pet protected from all these parasites.

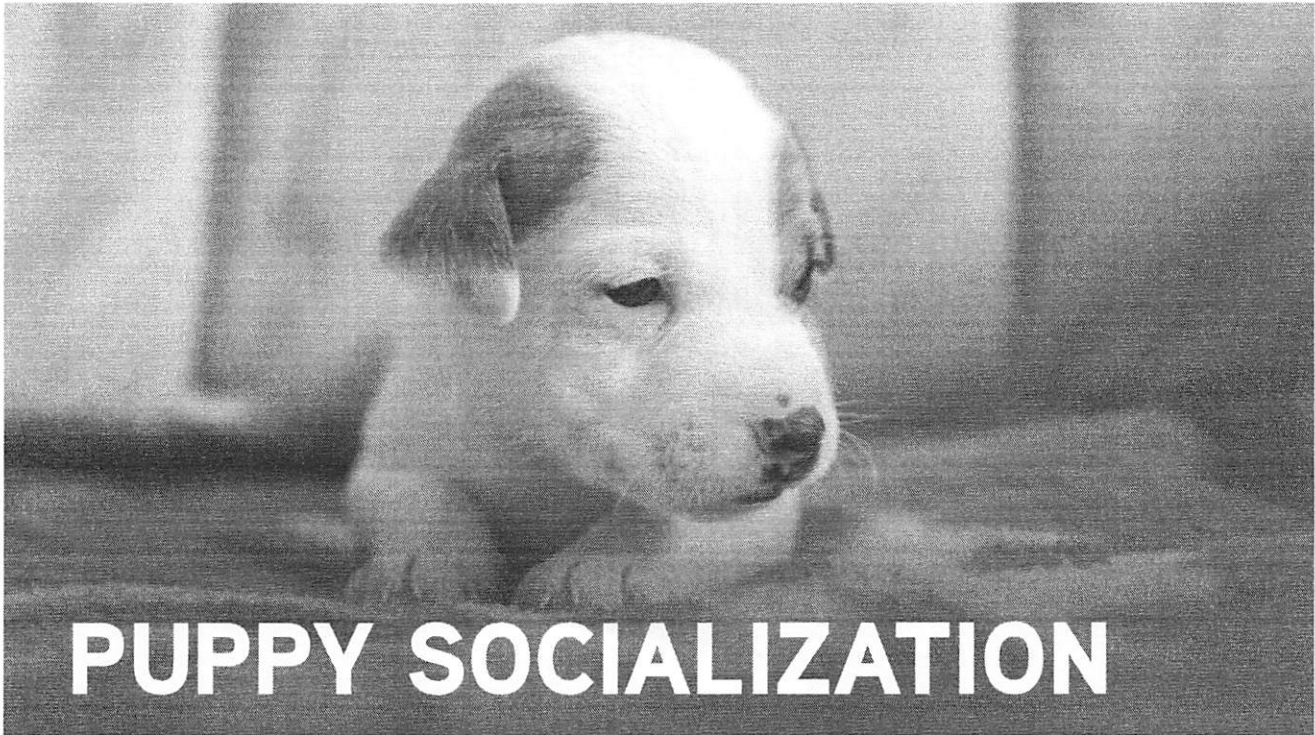
#### Bathing

Most of us wouldn't dream of letting a day go by without a shower or bath. But daily bathing is unnecessary for pets, and can dry out their skin and hair. Most dogs are fine with a bath every three months, unless they get extra dirty or have silky hair. Cats usually keep themselves clean without any help from you, although brushing long-haired cats on a regular basis is advised to keep their fur tangle-free and help prevent hairballs.

#### Communicating with your pet

Dogs and cats relate to their owners in different ways. As pack animals, dogs expect you to lead their pack and to give them rules to follow. Cats attach to their people as social partners, using affectionate behaviors, such as purring, kneading and rubbing against you to show their affection.

Bringing a pet into your home is one of the greatest joys in life, but it means more responsibilities. Understanding your pet's behavior, as well as the do's and don'ts of pet health care, will help make your bond with your pet a lasting one.



# PUPPY SOCIALIZATION

Socialization is the process of preparing your dog to enjoy interactions with other dogs and be comfortable with other animals, people, places and activities. Socialization should begin during the puppy's "sensitive period" which is between 3 and 14 weeks of age.

## SOCIALIZATION TIPS:

- When adopting from a puppy raiser ask for their socialization plan pre- and post-adoption; avoid puppy raisers unable or unwilling to share this plan.
- For all dogs adapt or create your socialization plan to prepare your dog for his or her life in your household including planned exposure to the species, individuals, environments and activities that will be part of his or her new life at a pace that will encourage calm or playful responses from your dog.
- Provide regular positive experiences with these and other diverse experiences to encourage your dog to enjoy new experiences without becoming fearful or aggressive.
- Provide praise, play and treats to reward engagement.
- Allow the dog to withdraw if he or she is uncomfortable.
- Move at a pace appropriate for your dog's temperament.
- Well-managed puppy socialization classes are a good way to begin to socialize a puppy within the sensitive period and to learn more about socialization.
- Continue to reward your dog for calm or playful responses to social interactions and new experiences throughout his or her life.
- For dogs with special behavioral needs work in consultation with your veterinarian and/or another animal behavior expert.
- Puppies that have not been fully vaccinated should not be exposed to animals of unknown vaccination status or potentially contaminated areas (such as outdoor parks).

Questions or concerns? Ask us.

We are always happy to help.

[AVMA.org/socialization](https://www.avma.org/socialization)

Briarwood Veterinary Hospital - 8213 S. Saginaw St., Grand Blanc, MI 48439 - (810)  
695-6055

### **PUPPY WELLNESS VISIT**

**Your Pet's Vaccine /Treatment Schedule will be as follows:**

8 weeks of age = PE w/ veterinarian & DAPP  
(Distemper/Adenovirus/Parainfluenza/Parvovirus) #1

Stool exam # 1

Appointment: Deworming  
\_\_\_\_\_ Heartworm and Flea/Tick Prevention

12 weeks of age = PE w/ veterinarian & DAPP  
(Distemper/Adenovirus/Parainfluenza/Parvovirus) #2

Bordetella

Influenza #1(optional)

Appointment: Stool exam # 2  
\_\_\_\_\_ Deworming  
Heartworm and Flea/Tick Prevention

16 weeks of age = PE w/ veterinarian & DAPP  
(Distemper/Adenovirus/Parainfluenza/Parvovirus) # 3

Rabies 1 year

Influenza #2 (optional)

Appointment: Stool exam # 3  
\_\_\_\_\_ Deworming  
Heartworm and Flea/Tick Prevention

20 weeks of age = Exam w/ technician & Leptospirosis # 1  
Lyme # 1

Appointment: Stool exam # 4 (to be determined at appointment)  
\_\_\_\_\_ Deworming (to be determined at appointment)  
Heartworm and Flea/Tick Prevention

24 weeks of age = Exam w/ technician & Leptospirosis # 2

Appointment: \_\_\_\_\_  
Lyme # 2  
Stool exam # 4 (to be determined at appointment)  
Deworming (to be determined at appointment)  
Heartworm and Flea/Tick Prevention  
ECG/EKG (Electrocardiogram of the heart) for evaluation for anesthesia  
Wellness Profile in preparation for spay/castration and to test for Heartworm.

6 months of age-2 years of age = Spay/Castration Appointment : \_\_\_\_\_



# What To Expect After Your Pet's Vaccination



*Congratulations. By vaccinating your pet, you have taken an important step toward protecting your pet and your family.*

Vaccination is the most common veterinary preventive measure in history. It's a safe and effective way to protect pets and people from serious disease.

It's common for your pet to experience mild side effects from vaccination. Typically starting within hours of vaccination, any symptoms are most often mild and usually do not persist for more than a few days. This is a normal response by your pet's immune system during the process of developing protective immunity.

## **Common** symptoms your pet may experience

- Mild fever
- Decrease in social behavior
- Diminished appetite or activity
- Sneezing or other respiratory signs with intranasal vaccines
- Discomfort or mild swelling at the injection site

Rare side effects, such as an allergic reaction, may occur. Your pet may experience symptoms of a more serious reaction to the vaccine within minutes or hours of the vaccination.

## **Rare** symptoms could include

- Swelling to face and legs
- Repeated vomiting or diarrhea
- Whole body itching
- Difficulty breathing
- Collapse

If your pet experiences any of these rare symptoms, you should contact your veterinarian immediately, as your pet may require additional medical treatment.

BeVaccineSMART.com

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# **17 Plants Poisonous to Pets**

Some of the prettiest household decorations can be the most lethal to pets. To help safeguard the animals in your community, share this list from the ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center with adopters and post it on your social media channels.

## **Lilies**

Members of the *Lilium* spp. are considered to be highly toxic to cats. Even ingestions of very small amounts of the plant can cause severe kidney damage.

## **Marijuana**

Ingestion of *Cannabis sativa* by companion animals can result in depression of the central nervous system and coordination problems, as well as vomiting, diarrhea, drooling, increased heart rate, and even seizures and coma.

## **Sago Palm**

All parts of *Cycas Revoluta* are poisonous, but the seeds or "nuts" contain the largest amount of toxin. The ingestion of just one or two seeds can result in very serious effects, which include vomiting, diarrhea, depression, seizures and liver failure.

## **Tulip/Narcissus Bulbs**

The bulb portions of *Tulipa/Narcissus* spp. contain toxins that can cause intense gastrointestinal irritation, drooling, loss of appetite, depression of the central nervous system, convulsions and cardiac abnormalities.

## **Azalea/Rhododendron**

Members of the *Rhododendron* spp. contain substances known as grayantoxins, which can produce vomiting, drooling, diarrhea, weakness and depression of the central nervous system in

animals. Severe azalea poisoning could ultimately lead to coma and death from cardiovascular collapse.

#### Oleander

All parts of *Nerium oleander* are considered to be toxic, as they contain cardiac glycosides that have the potential to cause serious effects that include gastrointestinal tract irritation, abnormal heart function, hypothermia and even death.

#### Castor Bean

The poisonous principle in *Ricinus communis* is ricin, a highly toxic protein that can produce severe abdominal pain, drooling, vomiting, diarrhea, excessive thirst, weakness and loss of appetite. Severe cases of poisoning can result in dehydration, muscle twitching, tremors, seizures, coma and death.

#### Cyclamen

Cyclamen species contain cyclamine, but the highest concentration of this toxic component is typically located in the root portion of the plant. If consumed, Cyclamen can produce significant gastrointestinal irritation, including intense vomiting. Fatalities have also been reported in some cases.

#### Kalanchoe

This plant contains components that can produce gastrointestinal irritation, as well as those that are toxic to the heart, and can seriously affect cardiac rhythm and rate.

#### Yew

*Taxus* spp. contains a toxic component known as taxine, which causes central nervous system effects such as trembling, coordination problems and difficulty breathing. It can also cause significant gastrointestinal irritation and cardiac failure, which can result in death.

### Amaryllis

Common garden plants popular around Easter, Amaryllis species contain toxins that can cause vomiting, depression, diarrhea, abdominal pain, hypersalivation, anorexia and tremors.

### Autumn Crocus

Ingestion of *Colchicum autumnale* by pets can result in oral irritation, bloody vomiting, diarrhea, shock, multi-organ damage and bone marrow suppression.

### Chrysanthemum

These popular blooms are part of the Compositae family, which contain pyrethrins. If ingested they may produce gastrointestinal upset, including drooling, vomiting and diarrhea. In certain cases depression and loss of coordination may also develop if enough of any part of the plant is consumed.

### English Ivy

Also called branching ivy, glacier ivy, needlepoint ivy, sweetheart ivy and California ivy, *Hedera helix* contains triterpenoid saponins that, if ingested by pets, can result in vomiting, abdominal pain, hypersalivation and diarrhea.

### Peace Lily (aka Mauna Loa Peace Lily)

*Spathiphyllum* contains calcium oxalate crystals that can cause oral irritation, excessive drooling, vomiting, difficulty in swallowing and intense burning and irritation of the mouth, lips and tongue in pets who ingest.

### Pothos

Pothos (both *Scindapsus* and *Epipremnum*) belongs to the Araceae family. If chewed or ingested, this popular household plant can cause significant mechanical irritation and swelling of the oral tissues and other parts of the gastrointestinal tract.



## Schefflera

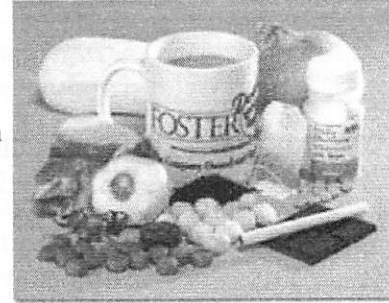
Schefflera and *Brassaia actinophylla* contain calcium oxalate crystals that can cause oral irritation, excessive drooling, vomiting, difficulty in swallowing and intense burning and irritation of the mouth, lips and tongue in pets who ingest.

## Foods to Avoid Feeding Your Dog

*Drs. Foster & Smith Educational Staff*

**Q.** Which foods could be dangerous for my dog?

**A.** Some foods which are edible for humans, and even other species of animals, can pose hazards for dogs because of their different metabolism. Some may cause only mild digestive upsets, whereas, others can cause severe illness, and even death. The following common food items should not be fed (intentionally or unintentionally) to dogs. This list is, of course, incomplete because we can not possibly list everything your dog should not eat.



Items to avoid	Reasons to avoid
Alcoholic beverages	Can cause intoxication, seizures, low blood sugar, arrhythmias, coma, and death.
Avocado	The leaves, seeds, fruit, and bark contain persin, which can cause vomiting and diarrhea.
Bones from fish, poultry, or other meat sources	Can cause obstruction or laceration of the digestive system.
Cat food	Generally too high in protein and fats.
<u>Chocolate, coffee, tea, and other caffeine</u>	Contain caffeine, theobromine, or theophylline, which can cause vomiting and diarrhea and be toxic to the heart and nervous systems.
<u>Citrus oil extracts</u>	Can cause vomiting.
Fat trimmings	Can cause <u>pancreatitis</u> .
Fish (raw, canned or cooked)	If fed exclusively or in high amounts can result in a <u>thiamine (a B vitamin)</u> deficiency leading to loss of appetite, seizures, and in severe cases, death.
<u>Grapes, raisins and currants</u>	Contain an unknown toxin, which can damage the kidneys. There have been no problems associated with grape seed extract.
Hops	Unknown compound causes panting, increased

	heart rate, elevated temperature, seizures, and death.
Human vitamin supplements containing <u>iron</u>	Can damage the lining of the digestive system and be toxic to the other organs including the liver and kidneys.
<u>Macadamia nuts</u>	Contain an unknown toxin, which can affect the digestive and nervous systems and muscle.
<u>Marijuana</u>	Can depress the nervous system, cause vomiting, and changes in the heart rate.
Milk and other dairy products	Some adult dogs and cats may develop diarrhea if given large amounts of dairy products.
<u>Moldy or spoiled food, garbage</u>	Can contain multiple toxins causing vomiting and diarrhea and can also affect other organs.
<u>Mushrooms</u>	Can contain toxins, which may affect multiple systems in the body, cause shock, and result in death.
<u>Onions and garlic</u> (raw, cooked, or powder)	Contain sulfoxides and disulfides, which can damage red blood cells and cause anemia. Cats are more susceptible than dogs.
Persimmons	Seeds can cause intestinal obstruction and <u>enteritis</u> .
Pits from peaches and plums	Can cause obstruction of the digestive tract.
Raw eggs	Contain an enzyme called avidin, which decreases the absorption of <u>biotin (a B vitamin)</u> . This can lead to skin and hair coat problems as well as neurologic abnormalities. Raw eggs may also contain <i>Salmonella</i> .
Raw meat	May contain bacteria such as <i>Salmonella</i> and <i>E. coli</i> , which can cause vomiting and diarrhea.*
Rhubarb leaves	Contain oxalates, which can affect the digestive, nervous, and urinary systems.
Salt	If eaten in large quantities it may lead to electrolyte imbalances, seizures, and even death.
String	Can become trapped in the digestive system; called a "string foreign body."
Sugary foods	Can lead to <u>obesity</u> , dental problems, and

	possibly <u>diabetes mellitus</u> .
Table scraps (in large amounts)	Table scraps are not nutritionally balanced. They should never be more than 10% of the diet. Fat should be trimmed from meat; bones should not be fed.
Tobacco	Contains nicotine, which affects the digestive and nervous systems. Can result in rapid heart beat, collapse, coma, and death.
Yeast dough	Can expand and produce gas in the digestive system, causing pain and possible rupture of the stomach or intestines.
<u>Xylitol</u> (artificial sweetener)	Can cause very low blood sugar (hypoglycemia), which can result in vomiting, weakness and collapse. In high doses can cause liver failure and death.

\*We suggest that people considering a raw diet for their pet educate themselves thoroughly regarding the safe handling and preparation of raw ingredients, and the proper balance of nutrients required to maintain their pet's health.

# HOUSE BREAKING YOUR PUPPY



One of the most essential and often frustrating tasks associated with a new puppy or dog is housebreaking. If done with a little advanced planning, it can be accomplished in a very short period of time. If attempted without forethought, your dog may never be completely reliable.

## A DOG'S PERSPECTIVE

The process of housebreaking is defined here as eliminating outside only. It is possible to teach a dog to use "piddle pads" or a litter box, but that is outside the scope of this handout. Housebreaking takes place in three steps:

1. All puppies need to learn a specific place to eliminate. They have likely already made a transition from eliminating in the whelping box to some other area on the breeder's property. However, dogs are poor generalizers; it will be necessary to show your puppy where you want it to eliminate.
2. They must also learn to "hold it" when the designated "place" isn't readily available. This is a matter of not allowing the dog to make a mistake. Some dogs are naturally fastidious (clean) and try to avoid eliminating in a space where they are confined, while other dogs are not. This may be learned or genetic. In either case, our task is to reinforce cleanliness while at the same time helping the dog be successful.
3. Asking to go out is usually the last step. This involves both praise for the desired behavior and redirection of the undesirable behavior if caught in the act. This redirection must not involve any form of punishment. Punishment can be counter-productive.

From a time and work prospective, Step 1 (learning the right place) will be relatively easy and Step 3 (asking to go out) will take a bit more time and patience. Most of the work will be involved in Step 2 (teaching the dog to "hold it").

## LEARNING "A" PLACE TO ELIMINATE:

You've probably noticed most dogs will take their time when eliminating, making sure they have the "right spot." Virtually all acts consisting of elimination involve other conscious behaviors, the most important of which is scent marking. By "baiting" our target area with the puppy's own scent or the scent of another dog, we can motivate our puppy to deposit his scent in the same place. Urine works best, as it contains more of the chemical markers called pheromones, however, fecal material will also work. Only a small amount is necessary, be careful to control your puppy so that it does not attempt to eat another dog's feces - or its own.

Teach your dog to eliminate only in one defined area of your yard. Choose this area carefully. It should be narrowly defined - such as a six-foot radius. While it may seem convenient initially to choose a spot close to the door, most dogs would instinctively choose an area away from the "nest." It will also be more sanitary for you to have the refuse area away from the house.

Once you choose an area, be consistent. Always use this area each time the pup needs to eliminate until he is fully housebroken. Always take him out the same door and make sure you go with him. It is also important to teach your pup from the start to eliminate while on a leash. This not only keeps him from wandering, but also allows you to create a greater sense of urgency, avoid the "fiddling around" that often accompanies outdoor breaks.

Getting your pet to eliminate while on a leash will also give you a much greater sense of security when traveling with him away from home. There are many areas where it would not be safe to take your pet off leash to eliminate. Many dogs, if never trained to relieve themselves on leash, will refuse to do so.

Making a transition from "his" spot to other designated areas outside your yard will progress as the dog learns to eliminate outside. Dogs are not good generalizers, but once they have learned to go on a scented surface - usually grass - they will learn, with prompting, that it is OK to go in another area of your choosing.

### **LEARNING TO HOLD IT**

Learning to "hold it" is both a matter for the dog and the owner. A dog's natural behavior to be clean in its den with prompt your puppy to wait until taken out to relieve itself. On the other hand, helping the puppy manage its physiology is the owner's responsibility. Providing a suitable, contained environment (preferably a crate) will encourage the dog to resist the urge to eliminate. It is also important to take the puppy out frequently so he doesn't have to hold it too long. Finally, it is vital that the puppy's feeding and watering schedule be structured and in tune with your ability to monitor his behavior and take him out on a regular basis.

There are three steps in the process of teaching a dog to avoid eliminating inside:

1. Try not to let the dog make a mistake.
2. Always reward the dog for desirable behavior.
3. If a mistake is made, correct, do not punish.

### **TRY NOT TO LET THE DOG MAKE A MISTAKE**

First, dogs are creatures of habit. If they are allowed to eliminate in the house, they will quickly "learn" that it's ok to do so. The key here is to never let them think it is ok by not letting them make a mistake. It is much harder to unlearn an unwanted behavior than to teach a proper one.

How can you prevent the dog from making a mistake? Your first line of defense is to constantly monitor your pup's behavior whenever it is in a position to have an "accident". First, you must try to anticipate when it will need to eliminate. The most common occurrences include:

1. When waking up.
2. A short time after eating (may vary from immediately to  $\frac{1}{2}$  hour).
3. After play session or other period of activity.
4. When in an excited state, such as greeting returning owners or visitors. This is not to be confused with submissive urination; an autonomic release which is not under conscious control.

### **WATCH YOUR DOG AT ALL TIMES WHEN LOOSE**

You must learn to never let the pup out of your sight while it is loose in the house. First, confine the pup to the room you are in with a barrier, such as a baby gate. Next, keep a close watch; most dogs engage in a ritualistic, identifiable pattern of behavior just before they eliminate. This may include circling and sniffing, a short burst of

hyperactivity, or other repetitive action. It may begin to move toward the door. A bit of observation on your part will help you recognize your pup's particular pattern so that you can quickly move the dog outdoors at the appropriate time. When you can't watch your dog, place it in a confined space, such as a crate.

### **SET A ROUTINE - AND STICK TO IT**

The tendency of dogs to habituate their behavior can help you to minimize mistakes in another way. Just as our digestive systems become "regular" when we keep the same schedule every day, so will a dog's system adjust to a time schedule if kept constant. For the first month of your pup's life in its new home, you can greatly enhance its (and yours) chance of success by waking, feeding, walking and retiring your pup at approximately the same time each day and night.

### **FEEDING SCHEDULE**

Most puppies should be fed three times a day to lessen hunger urges, provide needed nutrition, and to reduce the volume of food given at each meal. Continue feeding three times a day for the first 12 weeks or longer as directed by your veterinarian. When three meals are no longer necessary, most animal health care professionals recommend maintaining dogs on two meals per day to avoid hunger stress, reduce energy highs and lows, and lessen the chance of a gastric torsion or bloat.

If you feed dry food, wetting it with warm water will usually make it more palatable and prevent the dog from over drinking in response to a dry meal. This over drinking can later make it more difficult for the pup to hold its urine.

### **RELIEF SCHEDULE**

Most new puppies have not learned to "hold it" and must be let out periodically until they learn this important step. Every two hours between meals or excessive periods should be sufficient.

Note - If you have more than one puppy, you must take them out separately so that they focus on the task at hand.

If all this makes sense to you so far, then let's try to tackle the next obstacle. How do you keep the pup from making a mistake when you cannot watch it?

### **CONTROLLED CONTAINMENT**

The single most useful item for housebreaking your pup is the dog crate. Dogs are inherently clean animals. Even wild canids, such as wolves, will leave their den to eliminate as soon as they are old enough to do so. Most dogs will, likewise, avoid fouling their own nest. While a substantial variance exists from dog to dog, a crated puppy approximately 10-12 weeks old in good health should be able to hold its urine while sleeping for approximately 4-8 hours (the time will be less during the day when the dog is awake). Withholding water approximately two hours before bedtime and keeping the puppy calm should help this process along. If the puppy is on medication, consult your veterinarian before withholding water.

If the pup does wake up whining in the middle of the night, it's probably telling you that it wants (needs) out. Oblige it - immediately. The same, of course, hold true during or after nap times during the day, when the pup will probably have to urinate more frequently.

The crate will also serve to instill a sense of discipline into your pup's life. If introduced properly, the crate will not be perceived by the pup as punishment, nor should it be used that way by you. The crate becomes both a sanctuary (den) for the pup as well as a means of containing it when it cannot be watched. Do NOT feel "guilty" about denying your pup its freedom. Think of it this way - is it better to allow the pup to make frequent mistakes including house soiling, chewing, etc., thereby creating stress for all concerned, or for the pup to learn that freedom is a privilege rather than a right? Alternatively, is it fair to "deny" the pup his own den?

### WHAT TO BUY

The best kinds of crate to purchase is one made of wire an open on all sides. The gauge of the wire should be strong enough to hold your dog as it gets older and spacing of the wire should be close enough so that the dog cannot place its head or paws through the openings. Plastic or fiberglass crates are not recommended for home use. They also are not as well ventilated and may become too warm over long periods of use and may create a build up of doggy odor.

Also make sure the crate will be adequately sized for your dog when it is full grown. This will give you a great deal more versatility later on and also provide a means of transporting your dog in a car or truck in a safe and controlled manner.

### INTRODUCING THE CRATE

The easiest way to introduce a new pup to its crate is at bedtime. Most young puppies are worn out by the end of the day and will be ready to sleep when the lights are turned out. Be sure to walk your pup right before you retire. Place the pup in the crate making sure there is a pan on the bottom and place the crate beside your bed.

If needed, you can place an object in the crate that is heavily scented with your smell - such as a T-shirt or a small towel. A small teddy bear or other stuffed animal may also give the pup something to snuggle up to. Be sure to remove any stuffed object immediately if the puppy gets at the filling. Also, be careful not to make the object too large, however, as this may induce the dog to utilize the object to absorb its urine, thereby escaping its own mess. Dog beds, thro rugs or carpet scraps in the crate are usually counterproductive. If the pup does urinate on an object in the crate, remove it and all other absorbent materials.

If the pup resists the crate or you are introducing an older dog to a crate for the first time, you can help it become adjusted by crating a positive association. Start by feeding in front of an open crate - then just inside the door - and finally inside the crate itself. Always leave the door of the crate open when the dog is not inside as an enticement to return to its "den" when tired.

If, as suggested, you have purchased a crate that is adequately sized for your dog as an adult, it will be necessary to block off a portion of it for housetraining purposes. The purpose of this important step is to ensure that the pup is not able to eliminate at one end of the crate and escape to the other. Leave just enough room for it to turn around and lie down comfortably. As the pup grows, you can expand the area of the crate available to it.

As mentioned above, we recommend that the crate is placed beside your bed at night. Your presence will reassure the pup and help it get through the initial shock of being taken away from its littermates. You will also be able to better monitor your pup should it need to go out during the night.

During the day the crate should be moved (or a second crate can be used) to a well lit, well trafficked area of the home so it feels the presence of its "pack." Do not use a garage, basement, confining bathroom or utility room.



The family room is the preferred choice as this is an area where many of the family members spend a great deal of time. The kitchen also works well as it is usually bright and open, has great smells, and has a tile floor for any spills or accidents. It also offers a less vulnerable area from which to give the dog limited freedom as it matures.

If you choose to use the kitchen, try to place the crate in an area where he will have clear view through to the family room. This will help to eliminate isolation distress and facilitate greeting of guests. As your pup gets older, you may wish to leave him in his crate in the family room or kitchen at night. A baby monitor can be used to hear any cues which may indicate a need to eliminate.

### **THE CRYING BABY SYNDROME**

Dogs that cry in their crates excessively usually need more time to acclimate to the crate and have other underlying issues such as separation anxiety. A small amount of whining when initially crate training can usually be ignored. Answering every verbal cue with attention from you can greatly prolong the process. Assuming the dog is empty, try to wait it out for a few minutes. Do not acknowledge the dog by either reprimanding or trying to console him. A visual barrier to keep him from making eye contact with you will probably help. When it is time to let him out, try to catch a "quiet" period to do so.

### **BE DILIGENT**

Give your pup every advantage to do the right thing. When you awaken in the morning, the first thing you should do is get your pup outside to eliminate. Make it almost like a reflex action. MOVE - Keep a robe, slippers, overcoat, or whatever else you need at your bedside to make like Clark Kent. As you are getting the puppy out of its crate, ask it if it needs "to go potty" to start forming the association between the act of elimination and a verbal cue, then quickly whisk it out the door. Initially you want to carry the puppy from your bedroom to the back door to minimize the chance that it will stop to make a deposit on the way out. After it gets used to the routine and comfortable with a leash this should no longer be necessary.

Transfer the pup and crate (or use a second crate) during the day to a well trafficked area of the home. As mentioned previously, we prefer the kitchen or the family room. Finally, if you are busy at home, need to leave the house, or your pup is just tuckered out (puppies, like babies, sleep a lot), put the pup back in the crate.

### **WHEN YOUR PUPPY IS LOOSE**

There will be frequent times during your family's daily routine when the pup will be loose in the home. As explained earlier, an ounce of prevention is worth a ton of cure. To reiterate:

1. Keep the puppy in sight at all times; use baby gates to confine it to areas where it can be watched.
2. Watch for elimination cues.
3. Use a verbal phrase to form an association that it's time to go out to eliminate.
4. Get the puppy outside as quickly as possible.
5. Praise for desired behavior.

Above all it is important that you do not wait for the puppy to have an accident. Good habits and bad ones are built by repetition.

### **A REMINDER ABOUT USE OF THE LEASH**

For convenience, many owners don't use leashes on young puppies. Often the pup is small, can't outrun us and wants to fight the lead, which it finds confining. As a result, we merely encourage the pup to follow us or carry it to a spot and put it down. This is a mistake. Puppies need to learn to walk on a leash and also to relieve themselves

while on a leash. As mentioned previously, the latter could be extremely important if you are away from home or in an area where you can't safely take your dog off leash. There also comes a time in every dog's life when he realized he can outrun you. The consequences could be disastrous.

### **ALWAYS REWARD THE DOG FOR DESIRABLE BEHAVIOR**

This is the real secret to successful dog training. Communicating to the dog what you don't want can be confusing and frustrating; clearly and unambiguously communicating what you do want is the true objective.

How do you accomplish this feat - with simple and sincere praise every time your pup eliminates outside at least for the first few weeks. This means you must take out rather than let your dog out until it is reliably housebroken.

As previously discussed, be sure to take it to the same spot every time. Use a command like "go potty" or "do your business" to help the dog understand that is has been brought outside to eliminate and not to play. When the dog does eliminate, PRAISE, PRAISE, PRAISE!!! Just as a correction indicates to the dog that is has done something wrong, praise tells it that is has done the right thing. Try to avoid using food treats to reward elimination. The dog may begin to ask to go out just to get a treat or become so focused on the food that it forgets its task. If an extremely challenging situation necessitates the use of a food reward, it should be phased out once you are getting a consistent result.

### **REPITITION AND CONSISTENCY**

While many disagree on the time frame, new learning first takes place in a short-term context, and is later transferred to the long-term memory. For a task like housebreaking, this transfer, with repetitive, consistent training should take about 30 days. For this reason, it is important that your message to the dog - whether correction (see below) or reward.

Always be the same. Use the same tone of voice when you catch the pup having an accident. Take it out through the same door to the same place in the yard and praise the puppy the same way each time it does something to please you. Above all be patient. Some pups learn very quickly and others take a bit longer. But by avoiding confusion and anger you will be in a position to facilitate the process.

### **POOR RESULTS**

If you've been diligent about following the procedure outlined above and still haven't achieved a good result, you may need to look elsewhere for the cause. Three common problems which can interfere with the task of housebreaking include an immature physiology, a food which is not well assimilated, or a possible medical problem such as a urinary tract infection. If you suspect any of these difficulties, it may be wise to seek council from your veterinarian. Once resolved, you can go back to your normal housebreaking routine.

### **IF A MISTAKE IS MADE, CORRECT. DON'T PUNISH**

Correction is the process of letting the pup know it has made, or about to make, an error and redirecting the undesirable into desirable behavior. If the pup does begin to eliminate in your presence, the proper way to correct is to interrupt the act with an "eh!", a hand clap, or other non-frightening sound (the dog's name also works well as an interrupter). Go quickly to the puppy (do not charge or frighten it), then follow the procedure outlined above to get the puppy outside to finish the process.

Punishment, that is, punitive treatment for mistakes, will only serve to make a negative connection in the dog's mind between an elimination product and your presence. If the dog make this connection, it may decide to not eliminate

when you do take it outside. This may also indirectly encourage the dog to "hide" from you and eliminate in another room of the house. Punishment also may cause fear and resentment, and can ultimately lead to an aggressive response.

### **CORRECT ONLY WHAT YOU SEE. WHEN YOU SEE IT.**

When making a correction, keep in mind the fact that the dogs have a very limited sense of time. For a puppy to make the connection that something it does is wrong, the correction must be either at the same time or immediately following (within a few seconds of) the undesirable act. If you miss the boat, forget it. A puppy will not connect its mistake with your actions if administered later. Merely clean up the mess and try to be more diligent.

Remember - any "correction" for a housebreaking mistake should be geared toward redirecting the behavior. It should not be harsh, but rather educational.

Be impartial. If you catch a dog in the act, correct the behavior, not the dog. It is not a personal statement about the animal itself. Anger will be counterproductive. Dogs, like people, have a sense of self-worth. Directing your displeasure at the pup can have seriously detrimental effect on its self-confidence and its ability to cope with stress as it gets older.

### **DON'T'S**

Do not "show" the puppy its mess or rub its nose in it. It is both degrading and useless for helping the pup to make a connection with what you do or don't want. It may also have the catastrophic effect of encouraging coprophagy - stool eating - which is a fairly frequent, but nonetheless disgusting habit developed by some puppies. Striking your puppy, either with your hand, newspaper, or any other objects can have even more serious repercussions. It can break down the bond of trust. Make your pup hand-shy, or worse yet - teach the dog to fight back with its teeth. In short, don't do it.

Finally, if your dog does have an accident in the house, be sure to clean it up and deodorize the area thoroughly. This will help prevent your dog from coming back to the same spot next time it has the urge. If feasible, it may also be helpful to temporarily block your dog's access to this area.

### **ASKING TO GO OUT**

Once a pup has learned to "hold it" in its crate and in the house, the next step is for the pup to learn to "ask" to go outside. This is a fairly simple step but the time frame for the pup to learn it may be longer. The key components are:

1. Continually reinforce the connection between the phrase you select and the act of elimination.
2. Make sure you use the same exit door.
3. Take, don't let the dog out.
4. Praise the desired behavior.

While the time frame will vary, your pup will start to provide an indication that it needs to go out. This indication may take the form of standing at the exit door, running, circling, or jumping up on the door, coming to you first, perhaps barking or pawing, and then running toward the door etc. in any event, don't miss this golden opportunity to reinforce your dog's response with praise. It is usually easiest to reinforce

whatever signal or cue your dog presents. Trying to teach a new or specific cue can prolong the process and confuse the pup.

As an example, a puppy that whines in the crate can often be encouraged to whine at the door (lots of praise) before going out. Don't wait too long, however, as it is better for the puppy to get outside quickly rather than have an accident in the house.

### PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

Let's review three possible scenarios:

First: Your pup has an accident in the house. You scold it, clean up the mess and go about your business. What the pup has learned is that elimination evokes your displeasure. The result? Next time, it'll try not to be noticed by sneaking off to a part of the house - where you aren't - to heed the call of nature. Wonderful. To add insult to injury, your pup may not want to eliminate when you take it for a walk. After all, you taught it that elimination in your presence is a punishable act.

Second: Your pup has an accident. You correct it as in the first scenario, but put that pup outside before going about your chores. Has the pup learned anything different? Slightly. Your pup will probably make one of two associations: either that eliminating in your presence is bad, in which case the outcome is the same as above, or that eliminating in the house is a ticket to the great outdoors. Oh goody.

Third: Your pup starts to circle and sniff. You verbally signal the dog with an urgent "do you need to go potty?" and whisk it outside. The pup now fulfills its need and is lavishly praised for doing so. The message? Eliminating in the house is not permitted but eliminating outside brings great favor. A few repetitions of this scenario and your pup will begin to make the connection, not only about house training but also about the relationship between behavior, correction and praise. This will develop the start of a foundation for all your dog's future training.

Still having difficulty? Poor housebreaking habits are the #1 reason puppies are turned into shelters. Please seek help from a professional before frustration gets the best of you!

### CRATE TRAINING YOUR DOG

A crate is both a man's and a dog's best friend.

Dogs are "denning" animals by nature. They will instinctively seek out a spot, a "cave" where they feel protected. Introducing the dog to a crate at an early age gives him the sense of security, and makes him feel safe. It also protects him from the advances of small children and other pets.

A crate also gives the owner peace of mind. You wouldn't leave a toddler out in a home unsupervised. Neither should you allow a puppy or untrained dog more freedom than they can handle. Teaching a dog to accept containment keeps him out of trouble, keeps him from getting hurt and - perhaps most important - keeps you from getting angry. Crate training also greatly facilitates housebreaking. Most dogs will instinctively keep their dens clean. This will establish good habits, prevent mistakes, and decrease the amount of time required to complete the process.

### CRATE TRAINING A NEW PUPPY

Puppies that have just left their littermates are accustomed to warmth and body contact. However, separation from the litter does not need to be traumatic. If you work a regular schedule, try to get your pup prior to a long weekend or take a few days off. This will help make your pup's transition to a new home much easier.

When you bring your new puppy home, try to spend some time with him before containment. Puppies will generally have two speeds - fast and stop. An activity that requires an output of energy will better prepare him for a rest period. Purchase to an open metal crate. Travel crates are too confining. Place the crate in a well trafficked area of your home, e.g. the family room. If you purchase a crate that will be large enough for the puppy when he is a full-sized adult (we recommend this), be sure to clock off a portion so that the puppy only has room to turn around and comfortably lie down. If there is too much space, it will allow your puppy to eliminate in one area of the crate and retreat to the other side. Increase the space as your puppy grows. There are crates available with adjustable panels that may make this process easier.

### HELP YOUR PUPPY STAY CLEAN

As previously indicated, most puppies will try to keep their "nest" clean. Avoid putting blankets or newspapers in the crate, as this will give the puppy a place to soak up his urine. However, a stuffed animal can be used to give the puppy something to cuddle up to for warmth and security. Check frequently to make sure he isn't tearing at the fabric, as this will encourage destructiveness and could possibly result in ingestion of the stuffing. When your pup is tired, make sure he first relieves himself outside, then coax him into the crate with a treat. Start giving him a cue like "go kennel". If he is mobile, play the "treat game" (see below). Next, place a small food dispensing toy or other high value treat in the crate with him. Close the door, but stay within his sight. Make certain his surroundings are quiet and non-distracting. Your pup should consume the treat and fall asleep quickly. When he wakes up, it will probably be time to take him out. Repeat this process throughout the day.

### CRATING YOUR PUPPY OVERNIGHT

When it is finally time for you to retire, you have options. If your puppy is very young (under 12 weeks) he will probably not be able to hold it through the night. You may wish to move the crate to the bedroom (or use a second crate) where the dog can "feel" your physical presence, or if the dog seems secure where he is at, turn out the lights and leave the room quietly. A baby monitor beside your bed can be used to alert you if your puppy stirs in the middle of the night and needs to relieve himself.

### CRATING IN THE BEDROOM

If you choose to use a second crate in the bedroom, you can eliminate it as soon as your puppy is sleeping through the night. Reason - keeping the puppy in the bedroom beyond this period could possibly increase the puppy's need for physical presence to a point where he becomes dependent on it. This could later develop into isolation distress or separation anxiety. However, as your pup matures, becomes fully housebroken, and feels secure in your home (free run of the house), you may wish to allow him back into the bedroom, the age at which this transition takes place will vary greatly, but in general, averages about 1.5 to 2 years.

### THE TREAT GAME

To facilitate this process, you should raise the value of the crate. Start by feeding your dog in his crate. Make the meals high value by adding warm broth or a bit of canned food. As your dog develops a more positive attitude toward his crate, you can begin placing him in it with a highly palatable food dispensing toy - such as a "Kong" stuffed with cheese or peanut butter - or other high value edible item.

Play the "treat game." To start, throw a treat in front of the open door of the crate. Next, throw the treat just inside the door of the crate, then gradually deeper into the crate. Once the dog begins to go into the crate after the treat, also reward him when he turns around to come out. Finally, coax him into the crate by pretending to toss a treat and reward him after he goes in and turns around facing you. Play this game frequently. To make the game

even more interesting toss a treat into his crate when he isn't looking. The surprise will teach him to focus on his crate with greater frequency.

### CRATING WHILE YOU ARE AWAY

When your dog is focused on his food or a high value treat, you can begin to close the crate door for brief periods of time. Initially, you should stay within sight. As the dog becomes more interested in the food reward, you can gradually extend the time he is in the crate and begin to slip out of sight. Start with only 2-3 minutes and build slowly up to 30 minutes. Be careful, however, not to go too fast. Be sure to open the crate door and let your dog out before he becomes too anxious. If he starts whining, however, try not to reward this behavior and wait for a brief moment of silence before letting him out. A visual block, such as a piece of Styrofoam or cardboard, may help to quiet your dog by preventing him from making eye contact with you.

### CHANGE DEPARTURE CUES

Gradually increase the time your dog is left alone in his crate. To prevent the dog from knowing when you are leaving, change your departure cues. Leave through different doors, pick up your keys and make dinner or put on a jacket and watch TV. If he cues on what clothes you wear, change in the laundry room. Remember to always crate the dog well in advance (15-20 minutes) then, silently slip out the door. Try not to let him see your actual departure so that he doesn't associate being crated with being left alone.

### CRATING WHEN YOU ARE AT HOME

It is important that your dog or puppy view the crate as his "own room" - a place where he can be secure and comfortable when sleeping or taking rest breaks. To reinforce this comfort level, crate your dog periodically when you are at home. Don't let your dog make a connection between crating and leaving. For example, crate your dog for brief periods when going out to get the mail, making a phone call, or using the bathroom. This also prevents your puppy from having an accident or getting into something for even the brief moment he is not supervised. As your dog gets older - and is fully housebroken - you can place a comfortable bed in his crate. Leave the crate door open and encourage the dog to go in on his own. Most dogs will learn to love their crates. Again, be sure to place the crate in a well-trafficked area of the home so that it never represents isolation. This also facilitates controlled greeting of guests and allows the dog to remain in the room with you when it is not appropriate for him to be loose.

### DON'T GIVE YOUR CRATE AWAY

Don't abandon your crate even after your dog is fully housebroken and has earned free run of the house. It will prove to be a valuable tool when you need to separate him from visitors or other activities. It will also make it easier for him to be boarded, watched by others, or left overnight at the veterinarian's office. Place him in it periodically - e.g. family meal times. For maximum safety, you may also choose to crate your dog in the car when traveling.

### CRATE TRAINING AN OLDER DOG

There are a few extra steps that are necessary when crate training an older dog that has not been previously crated, or one with an aversion to the crate. Play the reward game before even trying to put the dog in the crate. Feed him in front of, but outside the open door of the crate. Slowly move the food just inside the open door, then gradually toward the back of the crate. As with a new puppy, raise the value of the meal by adding warm broth or some really stinky (fish based) canned food.

Only after the dog is eating in the crate without hesitation should you attempt to close the door. This may take days or even weeks; be patient. When you are able to close the door without reaction, do it only while the dog is eating and stay close. When the dog is finished eating, open the door without ceremony. Time in the crate can be gradually extended or the routine expanded for a treat filled toy.

If your dog is housebroken, you can place a blanket or cozy bed in the crate with him. Be sure, however, to also place a chewable object in the crate. Chewing relieves stress. Monitor this setup closely. If the dog chews on the blanket or bed, it is best to remove it until he is more comfortable with containment.

### **DITCH THE GUILT**

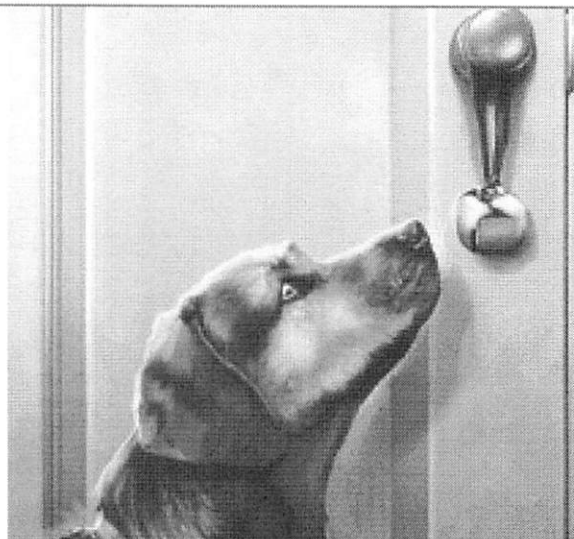
For those of you with "crate guilt" remember that the crate is both you and your dog's friend. Remember a crate accomplishes 3 important objectives - 1. It keeps your dog out of trouble. 2. It keeps your dog from getting hurt. 3. It keeps you from getting angry. You will feel far more guilt if your dog or puppy destroys something of value, ingests or bites into something harmful or gets you or others in your household to the point where you do something you will later regret. Be proactive. Never use your crate for punishment but do use it to help your puppy or new dog become a well-adjusted companion.

# 10 easy steps to houstrain your dog

You can easily teach your dog to eliminate in an acceptable location by keeping a close eye, recognizing his signals, understanding his instincts, and rewarding his appropriate behavior.

1. Prevent undesirable elimination by not allowing your dog to wander all over the house without supervision *and* by keeping your dog confined in a small area when you can't observe him constantly.
2. When your dog sniffs the ground or circles around, quickly but calmly take him to the desired elimination area. Ideally, don't wait for these behaviors. Take your dog outside regularly as described below.
3. Feed your dog a measured amount of food at the same time every day. When your dog walks away, or after about 10 to 15 minutes, pick up the bowl.
4. Be aware that puppies instinctively desire to eliminate after eating, drinking, playing, resting, sleeping, or being confined. These rules apply to most adult dogs as well.
5. Five to 30 minutes after any of the above activities, take your dog to the selected place for elimination.
6. Use a specific verbal cue that you want your dog to associate with desirable elimination, such as "Go potty" or "Do your business."
7. When your dog begins to eliminate, *quietly* praise him.
8. When your dog is done, praise him enthusiastically, pet him, and reward him with food *immediately*. Don't wait until he heads for the house. If he doesn't eliminate, return him to his confinement area, and take him outside again in about 15 minutes.
9. Reward each time with praise, but as your dog learns, give food rewards intermittently.
10. Remember, it is your responsibility to prevent accidents! Prevention is the key to success, but if someone fails to prevent your dog from having an accident, *don't* scold the dog, and quietly clean up and deodorize the soiled area. Preventing accidents requires that you become aware of how often your puppy needs to eliminate. Young puppies (8 to 10 weeks of age) may need to be taken outside every 30 to 60 minutes.

Information provided by Valarie V. Tynes, DVM, DACVB, P.O. Box 1040, Fort Worth, TX 76101. This client information sheet may be photocopied for distribution by veterinarians to their clients. Written permission is required for any other use.



## Teach your dog to ring a bell

Houstraining some dogs can be especially challenging because they do not learn to clearly signal when they need to eliminate. Teaching a dog to ring a bell when it needs to go outside can be a huge help when houstraining. It takes time but is relatively simple if you follow the following steps:

- Purchase a small bell, and set it near the door through which you usually take your dog out for elimination. Ring the bell immediately before opening the door to go outside with the dog. Your dog should already be leashed so that you can step outside with her as soon as you ring the bell. Do this every time you take your dog outside for several days. Allow your dog to only explore the designated elimination area, otherwise your dog may associate ringing the bell with play time instead.
- Next, suspend the bell at the height of your dog's nose right next to the door. Gently touch the bell to your dog's nose, causing it to ring, every time you take her outside. Repeat this step for several days.
- At this point, depending on how quickly your dog makes associations, she may begin approaching the bell on her own when she needs to eliminate. If she doesn't, smear a little bit of cheese or peanut butter on the bell each time you prepare to go outside, and use this to lure your dog toward the bell. Allow your dog to lick the bell, causing it to ring, and then praise your dog as you take her outside.

Once your dog begins ringing the bell on her own, you must take her outside every time so that she learns that making the bell ring reliably predicts being allowed outside.





## Brushing Your Dog's Teeth

- Periodontal disease can lead to tooth loss and affects most dogs by the time they are 3 years old.
- Depending on your dog's overall health, bacteria from periodontal disease can spread to affect other organs.
- Have your dog's teeth checked by your veterinarian before you start brushing them.
- Make toothbrushing enjoyable for your dog by rewarding him or her immediately after each session.
- Be very patient when teaching your dog to accept toothbrushing.
- If your dog won't tolerate toothbrushing, your veterinarian can recommend plaque-preventive products for your dog.

### PERIODONTAL DISEASE— WHY BRUSH?

Periodontal (gum) disease can lead to tooth loss and affects most dogs by the time they are 3 years old. Depending on your dog's overall health, bacteria from periodontal disease can spread to affect other organs. One of the best ways to help prevent periodontal disease is to brush your dog's teeth daily, or at least multiple times a week.

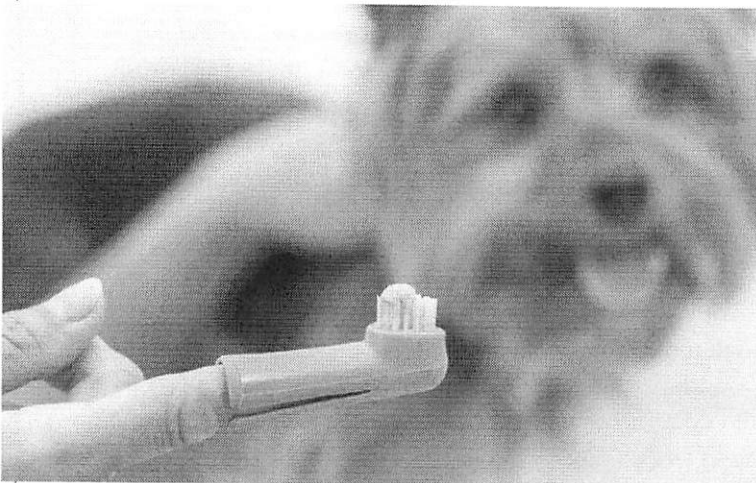
Dogs are never too young to start having their teeth brushed at home; in fact, the younger they are, the better.

Have your dog's teeth checked by your veterinarian before you start brushing them. Your veterinarian may recommend a dental cleaning to remove any existing plaque and tartar, which contribute to periodontal disease. If your dog has severe dental disease, extraction of the affected teeth may be recommended. Follow your veterinarian's recommendation on how long to wait after dental cleaning or extraction before brushing your dog's teeth.

### WHAT YOU NEED

- Baby toothbrush or pet toothbrush that is an appropriate size for your dog; if your dog won't tolerate a toothbrush, a small piece of washcloth can be used
- Pet toothpaste
- Treat or other reward your dog really likes

**Note:** Do not use toothpaste for people or baking soda to brush your dog's teeth. Human toothpaste is made with ingredients that can cause stomach upset if swallowed (e.g., detergents, fluoride). Dog toothpaste comes in different flavors (e.g., poultry, beef, vanilla mint). You may need to try a couple flavors to find the one your dog likes the best. The more your dog likes the toothpaste, the easier it will be to train him or her to accept brushing.



## Brushing Your Dog's Teeth *continued*

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### Signs of Dental Problems

- Bad breath
- Sensitivity around the mouth
- Loss of appetite and/or weight
- Yellow or brown deposits on the teeth
- Bleeding, inflamed, and withdrawn gums
- Loose or missing teeth
- Pawing at the mouth or face
- Difficulty chewing

### TECHNIQUE

- Toothbrushing should be a bonding experience that is constantly reinforced with praise and rewards. Be very patient—teaching your dog to accept toothbrushing may take weeks. Make toothbrushing enjoyable for your dog by rewarding him or her immediately after each session.
- You only need to brush the outside of your dog's teeth—the side facing the cheek. Only do as much at a time as your dog allows. You may not be able to do the whole mouth at first.
- If you are ever worried about being bitten, stop. Ask your veterinarian about how best to care for your dog's teeth.
- Start by letting your dog get used to the toothbrush and toothpaste. Put them out and let your dog sniff them. You can let your dog taste the toothpaste to see if he or she likes it.
- Also, get your dog used to you touching his or her mouth. Lift his or her lips, and slowly and gently rub your dog's teeth and gums with your finger

- When your dog is comfortable with you touching his or her mouth and is familiar with the toothbrush and toothpaste, gradually switch to putting the toothpaste on your finger, and then to putting the toothpaste on the toothbrush. At first, let your dog lick the paste off the brush to get used to having the brush in his or her mouth. If your dog won't tolerate a toothbrush, a small piece of washcloth can be used. Place a small amount of toothpaste on the washcloth, and rub it over the outside surfaces of your dog's teeth.
- Brush your dog's teeth along the gum line. Work quickly—you don't need to scrub. Work up to at least 30 seconds of brushing for each side of the mouth every other day.
- If you notice any problems as you brush, like red or bleeding gums or bad breath, call your veterinarian. The earlier problems are found, the easier they may be to treat.

### OTHER WAYS TO CONTROL PLAQUE

Although there's no substitute for regular toothbrushing, some dogs just won't allow it. If you can't brush your dog's teeth, ask your veterinarian about plaque-preventive products. Feeding dry food may also help keep your dog's teeth and gums in good condition. The Seal of Acceptance from the Veterinary Oral Health Council appears on products that meet defined standards for plaque and tartar control in dogs and cats. You can find a list of these products at [www.vohc.org](http://www.vohc.org). **TVN**

## Important reasons to spay or neuter your pet

More than 4 million pets are euthanized in U.S. animal shelters each year simply because they have no home. Many are puppies and kittens less than 6 months old.

Help stop this needless loss of life. Spay or neuter your pet.

Spaying your female pet (ovariohysterectomy):

**Removal of the ovaries and uterus.**

**Ideal age is 4 to 6 months.**

- Eliminates the risk of ovarian and uterine cancer.
- Eliminates unwanted pregnancies.
- If spayed before the first heat cycle, your pet has a less than 1 percent chance of developing breast cancer. If spayed after one heat cycle, your pet has an 8 percent chance of developing breast cancer. If spayed after two heat cycles, the risk increases to 26 percent. After two years, no protective benefit exists.
- Pets with diabetes or epilepsy should be spayed to prevent hormonal changes that may interfere with medication.

Neutering your male pet (castration):

**Removal of the testicles and spermatic cord.**

**Ideal age is 4 to 6 months.**

- Eliminates the risk of testicular cancer, the second most common tumor in male dogs.
- Greatly reduces the risk of prostate cancer and prostatitis.
- Reduces the risk of perianal tumors.
- Reduces roaming and fighting.
- Eliminates or reduces spraying or marking in males neutered before 6 months of age or before the onset of these behaviors.
- Eliminates the risk and spread of sexually transmitted diseases.
- Eliminates unwanted litters.

### Common myths

**Spaying or neutering your pet does not:**

- Cause laziness or hyperactivity
- Postpone or delay normal behavioral maturity
- Reduce its instinct to protect your family and home
- Alter its personality in any manner
- Cause immature behaviors

**Our staff members can answer your questions about spaying or neutering your pet or any other procedure your pet may undergo at our hospital. Please don't hesitate to ask.**

# Teaching your new puppy the right way to play

Puppies can play rough. So to ensure a lifetime of safe and happy interactions, learn how to play appropriately with your new puppy from the start.

Most puppy play consists of chasing, pouncing, barking, growling, snapping, and biting. So how can you tell the difference between normal play and possible signs of true aggression in your new puppy?

## NORMAL PLAY BEHAVIOR

In normal play, a puppy may play bow (lower its head and raise its hind end), present its front end or side to the owner, hold the front part of its body up, wag its tail, dart back and forth, emit high-pitched barks and growls, and spontaneously attack. Of course, even normal play can become too intense.

## AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR

Behaviors that may indicate a problem include prolonged, deep-tone growling; a fixed gaze; a stiff posture; and aggression that is situational or stimulus-dependent (not spontaneous). These aggressive behaviors may be related to fear, possessiveness, conflict, or pain. Talk to your veterinarian if your puppy is exhibiting these behaviors.



## 7 steps to proper play

Follow these steps to prevent inappropriate play:

### 1) Provide plenty of exercise.

New puppies are bundles of energy, so give them productive ways to expend that energy such as going on walks or playing "Monkey in the middle" (see sidebar).

### 2) Provide mental stimulation.

Rubber toys that can be filled with treats, such as Kong (Kong company) or Busy Buddy puzzle toys (Premier), offer puppies a chance to chase and bite the toys and obtain a food reward.

**3) Play with your pup.** Playing fetch or throwing a soccer ball for your pet to push around will sap some of your pup's energy.

**4) Teach and review basic obedience commands.** A well-trained dog is more likely to follow orders when behaving inappropriately.

**5) Conduct leadership exercises.** Follow three rules to maintain overall order:

- **Nothing in life is free.** Ask your puppy to respond to a command such as "sit" before it receives anything it wants or needs.
- **Don't tell me what to do.** It's OK to give your puppy the love and at-

tention it needs, but if it becomes too pushy about getting attention, such as by nudging, whining, barking, or leaning, pull your hands in, lean away, and look away. Walk away if your puppy is too difficult to ignore. Once the puppy stops soliciting attention for 10 seconds, ask it to sit and give it attention.

### • Don't move without permission.

Anytime you begin to move from one area of the home to another, ask your puppy to sit and stay for a second or two before you give it a release command to follow you.

### 6) Don't sit on the floor with your pup.

This tends to get puppies excited, puts family members in a vulnerable position, and makes it more difficult to control the puppy.

### 7) Promote socialization.

Puppies must have frequent, positive social experiences with all types of animals and people during the first three or four months of life to prevent asocial behavior, fear, and biting. And continued exposure to a variety of people and other animals as the puppy grows and develops is an essential part of maintaining good social skills.

### NIPPING BAD PLAY BEHAVIOR IN THE BUD

If your puppy plays inappropriately, here are the right ways to handle it.

- **Distract the bad behavior.** Always have a toy on hand that your puppy can transfer its attention to.
- **Speak up and step out.** If your puppy is biting hard, yell "Ouch!" and stop playing.
- **Interrupt problem behaviors.** A shake can or a water gun will startle puppies and stop the behavior. But don't use these techniques if a pet has a sensitive temperament or if they seem to make things worse.
- **Set up a dragline.** Both indoors and outdoors during supervised play, put the puppy on a leash that you can quickly grab to stop the behavior.
- **Use head halters.** These halters provide a more natural sense of control than ordinary collars do and limit the chances of biting.
- **Consider muzzles.** In extreme cases, muzzles may be used for short periods to prevent the biting behavior.
- **Give the puppy a time out.** If your puppy won't stop a bad behavior, put it in a room or in its kennel with toys to keep it busy until it calms down.

### WHAT NOT TO DO

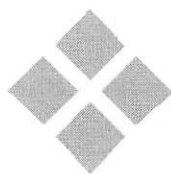
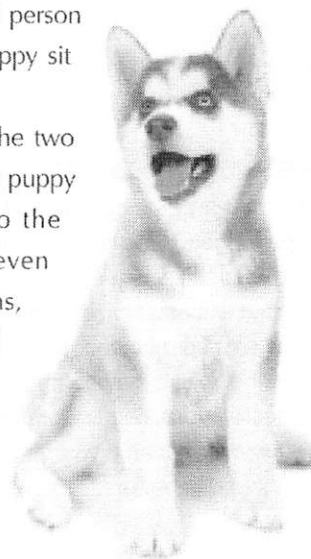
You and your family should never use physical punishment, such as scruff shakes, alpha rollovers, squeezing the puppy to the floor, thumping its nose, or swatting.

### Monkey in the middle: An exercise in obedience

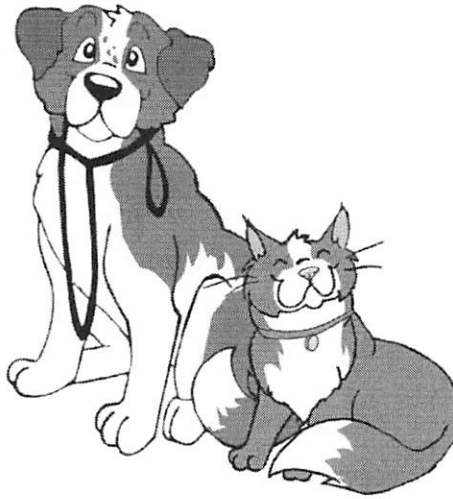
This game not only exercises energetic puppies, it also reinforces the basic commands of "sit" and "come," enhances name recognition, and teaches a puppy to run up and sit to get attention (instead of jumping up on people). At least two people are needed, and each person should have six to 12 small treats (regular puppy dinner kibble is usually adequate) at hand.

The two people sit opposite each other with about five to six feet in between. The first person calls "Skippy, come" in a high-pitched, upbeat voice. As the puppy approaches, the first person has the puppy sit for a treat. Immediately, the second person calls "Skippy, come" in a high-pitched, upbeat voice and has the puppy sit for a treat. Immediately, the first person calls again and has the puppy sit for a treat, and so on.

The distance between the two people can increase as the puppy becomes accustomed to the game—the people can even move into separate rooms, increasing the strength of the "come" command and the exertion needed to obtain a treat.



Remember, everybody wins when you take the time and effort to teach your new puppy how to play appropriately. You'll gain a well-behaved pet, and the puppy is more likely to remain a happy, important part of the family.



## Boarding and Grooming

Facility	Services	Location	Contact INFO
Best Doggone Trims	Grooming	5225 S. Saginaw Rd #1, Flint, MI, 48507	810-695-1895
Paw-Tastics Pet Salon	Grooming	11356 Seward St. #4, Grand Blanc, MI, 48439	810-694-3336
Groomingdales	Grooming	1495 N Belsay Rd, Burton, MI, 48509	810-742-7445
Four Paws Hotel and Day Resort	Grooming Boarding Daycare	8145 Industrial Park Dr, Grand Blanc, MI 48439	810-771-7266
Stonington Kennels	Grooming Boarding Obedience Classes	11225 Horton Rd, Goodrich, MI 48438	810-636-2112
All American Pet Resort	Grooming Boarding Daycare	2736 Product Dr Rochester Hills, MI 48309	248-299-3647
Petsmart	Grooming Obedience Classes	6260 Saginaw Rd, Grand Blanc, MI 48439	810-953-0019

All pets are recommended to be up to date on **Bordetella, Canine Influenza, and Rabies vaccines** if they are going to be boarded or going in for grooming.

For appointments to update vaccines or questions in general contact Briarwood Veterinary  
Clinic at 810-695-6055