

PUPPY AND KITTEN CARE GUIDE

CHOOSING YOUR PUPPY

When choosing your new puppy it's important to consider which breed would be most suited to your family and your lifestyle

Good websites which outline the needs of each type of dog are www.dogbreedhealth.com and www.your-right-pet.org.uk

Puppies reared in a home environment make the most suitable pets; those that are kept away from human contact (such as puppy farms) may be nervous around people.

If you get your dog from a breeder, meeting the mother is important as the mother's temperament contributes to that of the puppies. Be wary of advertisements offering to deliver the pup to you.

If the puppy is a purebred or pedigree, research potential health problems and ask to see proof that the parents have been screened.

A friendly puppy? Puppies should be interested and playful. Although they sleep for long periods, do watch out for those that are sleepy all the time or those that are overly nervous.

HEALTH

A healthy puppy should not be thin and should have a shiny coat. There should not be any discharges for the eyes or nose, the ears should be free of black wax and the puppy should not have a cough. The area under the tail should be clean.

When you have your puppy, make an appointment for a check-up with the Vet as soon as possible. And remember that this can even happen before you fully commit to taking on a new puppy. Occasionally you might prefer to settle in your new puppy for a few days before you visit us, however we will always be pleased to help with a new puppy whenever you come along.

Hopefully your puppy will be perfect and nothing will be wrong. However sometimes we find simple things that we can help you with; ear mites, fleas etc. are common, not very serious and are easily cleared. Very occasionally your first veterinary examination can reveal more serious problems such as heart murmurs, cleft palates, retained testicles and hernia. Most of these can be resolved with appropriate management.

VACCINATION

If any vaccination has been done, ask for the vaccination record or certificate which should have been signed by a vet and show brand and batch numbers. You will need this to continue vaccinations and it is likely to be required if the pup has to go into kennels in late life

- Puppies should be vaccinated with a combination vaccine (called a "5-in-1") at least twice initially and then once annually. This vaccine protects the puppy from distemper, hepatitis, leptospirosis, parvovirus, and parainfluenza. A puppy's vaccination program cannot be finished before four months of age.

- If you have an unvaccinated dog older than four or five months, he will need a series of two vaccinations given two to three weeks apart, followed by a yearly vaccination.

BASIC CARE

Feeding

- Puppies 8 to 12 weeks old need four meals a day.
- Feed puppies three to six months old three meals a day.
- Feed puppies six months to one year two meals a day.
- When your dog reaches his first birthday, one meal a day is usually enough.
- For some dogs, including larger canines or those prone to bloat, it's better to feed two smaller meals.

Premium-quality dry food provides a well-balanced diet for adult dogs and may be mixed with water, broth or canned food. Your dog may enjoy cottage cheese, cooked egg, fruits and vegetables, but these additions should not total more than ten percent of his daily food intake.

Puppies should be fed a high-quality, brand-name puppy food. Please limit "people food," however, because it can result in vitamin and mineral imbalances, bone and teeth problems and may cause very picky eating habits and obesity. Clean, fresh water should be available at all times, and be sure to wash food and water dishes frequently.

Exercise

Dogs need exercise to burn calories, stimulate their minds, and keep healthy. Exercise also tends to help dogs avoid boredom, which can lead to destructive behaviours. Supervised fun and games will satisfy many of your pet's instinctual urges to dig, herd, chew, retrieve and chase.

Individual exercise needs vary based on breed or breed mix, sex, age and level of health—but a couple of walks around the block every day and ten minutes in the backyard probably won't cut it. If your dog is a 6- to 18-month adolescent, or if she is an active breed or mixed-breed from the sporting, herding, hound or terrier groups, her requirements will be relatively high.

Grooming

You can help keep your dog clean and reduce shedding with frequent brushing. Check for fleas and ticks daily during warm weather. Most dogs don't need to be bathed more than a few times a year. Before bathing, comb or cut out all mats from the coat. Carefully rinse all soap out of the coat or the dirt will stick to soap residue.

Handling

Small dogs, sometimes referred to as "lap dogs," are the easiest to handle. To carry a puppy or small dog, place one hand under the dog's chest, with either your forearm or other hand supporting the hind legs and rump. Never attempt to lift or grab your puppy or small dog by the forelegs, tail or back of the neck. If you do have to lift a large dog, lift from the underside, supporting his chest with one arm and his rear end with the other.

Housing

Your pet needs a warm, quiet place to rest, away from all drafts and off the floor. A training crate is ideal. You may wish to buy a dog bed, or make one out of a wooden box. Place a clean blanket or pillow inside the bed. Wash the dog's bedding often. If your dog will be spending a lot of time outdoors, be sure she has access to shade and plenty of cool water in hot weather, and a warm, dry, covered shelter when it's cold.

Identification

Follow current licensing regulations. Along with an ID tag an implanted microchip or tattoo, can help secure your dog's return should he become lost.

BEHAVIOR INFORMATION

Housoiling

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Lack of consistent housetraining is one of the most common reasons for pet owners to give away a new puppy. Most dog owners recognize that puppies do not come pre-trained and that there will have to be some effort on their part to teach the puppy where to go.

However, some new dog owners or those who haven't done it or raised a puppy in years, fail to realize just how difficult and time-consuming the process can be. Combine this with the difficulty of training certain breeds, the distractions that take time away from training (such as having young children or jobs with long hours) and bad weather, and it's easy to see how this task that should be simple can become quite complicated.

The basic goal of housetraining a puppy involves the development of surface preferences. This refers to the tendency for puppies to seek out preferred elimination surfaces (soil, grass, carpet, tile, etc.) based on early experiences with these surfaces. So, if the puppy has consistent access to grass in your yard and is rewarded from an early age for eliminating on this surface, the puppy will always seek out this surface. Conversely, if the pup is allowed the freedom to choose a surface on her own, such as your new Oriental rug, this selection may end up becoming her preferred surface. To a puppy, it's all about what feels good and what is familiar. Eliminating on surfaces that you find objectionable is not related to the puppy being vindictive or un-trainable. It's just about a biological need to eliminate waste, and the dog is looking for the best place to do that. It is the owner's responsibility to direct the pup to an area that is mutually acceptable for both. So, how do we accomplish this?

Confinement



It is nearly impossible to achieve housetraining by allowing a puppy to roam the house freely when alone or overnight. Roaming will allow the pup to try various surfaces until she finds one to her liking. As a result, it is imperative that she be restricted to an area where it is least likely that she will choose to eliminate. The most common choice is to use a crate or cage called an exercise pen. However, some owners find that they can successfully use a small area to accomplish the same goal. Bathrooms, utility rooms or gated off

areas of other rooms can provide enough deterrent for the puppy. The idea is that most puppies typically do not soil in the same area in which they rest. Whatever method you

choose, the idea is that the puppy cannot have enough room to have a “bedchamber” (a place to sleep) and a “bathroom” (a place to eliminate). If using a crate, it should be large enough to allow the puppy to lie down, stand up and turn around without giving enough room for eliminating a separate area for elimination. Some owners will purchase a crate that is large enough to accommodate their dog as an adult, and use a partition to gradually increase the space available to the dog as she grows. Some crates have these partitions built in or you can use a board secured to the sides of the cage.

Whatever method you use, it is critical that the pup is not forced to remain confined for a period beyond what the timeframe during which she can retain urine or stool. The rule of thumb is that you take the puppy’s age in months, convert to hours and then add one more. So, for example, a 2-month old puppy can be expected to hold it for 3 hours (2 months, plus one) before she will need to eliminate again. There are some breed differences here with smaller breeds not having as much capacity and may not be able to go as long without having the opportunity to eliminate compared to larger breeds. This time period should be kept in mind not only when the puppy is alone but also sleeping overnight . Consider setting an alarm clock during the night so that you get up and take her outside at appropriate intervals. While pups prefer not to lie in their own waste material, they will if they have no other choice, thus making confinement less effective.

Supervision

If allowed to proceed without close supervision, puppies will choose whatever place feels right to eliminate on. In order to prevent this natural instinct from dominating the process, it is imperative for you to closely supervise your dog at all times. The pup should NEVER, EVER be out of sight of a responsible person when loose in the home. If strict supervision is not possible for whatever reason, place the pup in the crate or an appropriate confined space; otherwise use one of the following methods to achieve good supervision:

- Close doors to keep the puppy in the same room as the person supervising
- Put up baby gates to restrict the puppy’s access to the house
- Use the umbilical cord technique where the puppy is tethered to you by attaching a leash from the puppy to your waist. This technique ensures that the puppy stays within your view.

While monitoring the puppy, if you notice signs that she needs to go, quickly lead her to the desired location. You may notice the puppy sniffing the ground, circling a spot, moving towards the door where you go outside, or just behaving in an anxious manner. If you happen to find urine or stool in the house, there is no need to use any form of punishment. Punishment, even verbal correction, will merely result in the puppy learning to eliminate in

secret in order to avoid being punished. In addition, punishment after the fact results in confusion and anxiety for the pup since the act has no relation to the elimination that occurred earlier. I also believe in the use of a rolled up newspaper at these times....used to hit yourself on the head for not watching your puppy closely enough!

Scheduling

Like anything in a puppy's life, consistency is critical to get a change in a behaviour. That goes for housetraining as well. The first point to keep in mind is that a puppy's urge to eliminate is often tied to eating and drinking. In general, a puppy will have an increased urge to urinate after drinking and a similar urgency to defecate after eating. This does not mean that what they drink immediately is urinated out or their food immediately turns to stool. The body has a natural reflex to void accumulated waste material in response to



consumption of liquids and food. You can use this to help with training. I typically recommend feeding puppies three times per day and removing the food AND water bowls within 20 to 30 minutes. Once the pup is finished eating and drinking, immediately take her out to the desired elimination spot. In this way, she can anticipate having three clear opportunities to eliminate.

It should be routine to also allow the puppy an opportunity to eliminate before leaving her home alone and when you return. In addition, repeat that when waking in the morning and before going to bed at night or after vigorous play and sudden stops in activity.

Reinforcing Elimination

The challenge is being patient. Reinforcement only works when you deliver the reward (praise and food work best) immediately after your pup eliminates. Therefore, you have to wait with her so you can deliver the reward immediately. This usually means having the puppy on a leash so that you can keep her near you and get her to the spot you want her to go in. By having her consistently eliminating at this one spot, this location will acquire a bathroom quality for the puppy and will increase the likelihood of her using this spot long term. Reward appropriate elimination behaviour by using praise, food treats, and access to free exercise (allowing your pup to play in the yard) immediately AFTER she goes.

Finally, do not allow your puppy to have free access to the house if she has not eliminated in the proper place. If she doesn't go in the desired location within a few minutes, return to the house with the puppy on leash or in her cage, and then repeat the process until she goes.

Cleanse Soiled Areas

Be certain to cleanse areas already soiled so that your puppy does not develop an attraction to the location. Agents that have enzymatic activity to remove odours work best.

Other Causes of Houstraining Failure

There are other reasons for a new puppy to have accidents in the home besides difficulty with houstraining. This is why your first move when you have a puppy with houstraining issues is to contact your veterinarian. Your veterinarian will be able to rule out problems such as urinary tract infections, urinary bladder stones, congenital abnormalities, diabetes and other hormonal abnormalities.

A common behavioural cause of elimination problems in puppies is separation anxiety, in which anxiety associated with being separated from the owner can cause the puppy to have accidents when alone. Other symptoms of separation anxiety include destructive behaviour, vocalization (howling and barking) and excessive drooling.

Key Points

- See your veterinarian to rule out medical causes of elimination problems
- Choose an appropriate method of confinement for when you cannot supervise your puppy
- Choose an appropriate method of supervising your puppy
- Relocate puppy to proper location if you notice her beginning to eliminate
- Do not punish accidents
- Reward proper elimination immediately afterwards using praise, treats and play
- Be certain to cleanse soiled areas in order to remove any lingering odors which may serve to attract the puppy back to the area.

CRATE TRAINING

Crate training is an excellent way to teach your dog good behaviour, as well as give your dog his own special space. Benefits of crate training include:

- Prevents damage to your furniture and other household valuables while you are away or sleeping
- Helps you teach your dog proper chewing and elimination (bathroom) behaviour
- Provides security for your dog and safety for young children in your home
- Easy traveling
- Improves your relationship with your dog
- Gives your dog a den which is the natural habitat for dogs

Before you begin crate training, make sure that the crate is large enough for your dog to stand up and turn around in. When using the crate for house training it is important to make sure the crate is only large enough for your pet to stand up and turn around in, because any larger and they can potty in one area and sleep in the other. Pet stores carry many different sizes of crates so you can find the one that best fits your dog.

Because dogs are social animals and need interaction to be happy, place the crate in a room where it is bright and there is lots of activity, i.e. your family room. If you put the crate in an area that is dark and lonely the dog will feel it is being punished and will learn to hate the crate. Finally, the crate should be used as your pet's retreat, or "sanctuary" — it should not be used for punishment (the crate should contain his favourite safe and suitable toys). Use the crate to avoid problems such as chewing and jumping before they occur, and use a separate space if you wish to put your dog in "time out."

Crate Training Puppies

Begin crate training with your puppy early in the day so he has the whole day to adapt to the crate. Place his favourite treats, toys or food in the crate to motivate him to enter the crate on his own. The first time you confine your puppy to the crate he should be ready to take a nap, so schedule this for after a play or exercise session and after he has gone to the bathroom. Leave the room but stay close enough to be able to hear him. It is normal for your puppy to cry or whine at first, but never reward him by letting him out when he cries. It

may be difficult, but you must ignore his cries until they stop before you release him from the crate.

Playing “crate” games can help dogs learn to love the crate. One such game is to teach your dog to lie down and stay when you open the door to the crate. Once the dog has done this they are given a “release cue” and are given a treat for their good behaviour. Other games include “go to your crate” game. This game is done by hiding treats in the crate or throwing treats in the crate when the dog goes in so that they associate going into the crate with rewards. It is important that the dog not see you put the treats in the crate

Crate Training Adult Dogs

Crate training an adult dog is similar to crate training a puppy except for the introduction of your dog to his crate. Set up your dog’s crate in his feeding area and leave the door open for a few days. Place food, treats and toys in the crate so the dog is motivated to enter on his own. Close the crate door only after your dog fully enters the crate on his own.

As with puppies, your dog may cry or whine at first (remember not to reward them by going to them when they cry). Gradually increase the amount of time that your dog must remain quiet in the crate before you release and reward him. With patience and lots of treats you dog will learn to love his den and will go to it whenever he wants some personal time.

A puppy may refuse to budge while on leash one day, and try to drag you down the street on the same leash the very next day! Dogs who walk well on leash face fewer dangers and have more fun. It's well worth the time to develop this skill with your puppy.

What's this Thing on My Neck?

The first step in leash training is to get the pup used to a collar. Expect the pup to scratch at it. Put the collar on when the pup is eating and playing under your supervision. Distract the puppy from thinking about the collar.

Remove the collar only at a time when the pup is NOT trying to get out of it. If you take the collar off when the pup is obsessing over getting it off, you encourage the pup to fight the collar. To the puppy, it seems that fighting the collar worked, and got that nasty collar removed!

Just like wearing a watch or a ring feels strange to you at first, the strange sensation of a collar can annoy a dog. In the same way that your senses habituate to the jewelry, the dog will get used to the collar when handled properly. Of course the collar needs to fit and should not be of a stiff or uncomfortable design. A lightweight nylon collar with a buckle or snap is a good choice.

Remove the collar whenever your pup goes into the crate. Consult your dog's breeder and veterinarian about safety with the particular breed or mix as far as leaving a collar on when the dog is outside unsupervised. Ideally a puppy wouldn't be left outside unsupervised, but if the puppy is going to be in this situation, the risks must be weighed. Some breeds are especially prone to the collar catching on something and strangling the dog (the reason collars are to be removed whenever a dog is crated). On the other hand, a dog left outside unsupervised is at risk of being lost, and collar identification saves dogs' lives. Both of these risks are also factors for dogs outside in covered kennel runs.

Some puppy breeders give you a head start on leash-training your new puppy by tying a piece of coloured yarn or rickrack around the neck of each pup. This practice varies from breeder to breeder and from breed to breed-what's ideal for some is not a good idea for others. Whether the breeder has done this or not, your puppy will likely start ignoring the sensation of wearing a collar within a few days of your conditioning.

Is This Another Tail or a Toy?

The next step is to add a leash. Some pups seem overwhelmed by an entire leash all at once. In these cases you can start with a string, shoelace, or something of the sort. Add length as the puppy gets used to it.

Experienced dog people learn that chewed leashes can be useful later, and this is one of those times. Dogs tend to chew through leashes several inches from the snap. This leaves a "tab" of leash material with a handy snap on it to attach and detach easily from the collar. Tabs occasionally come in handy for other training, too, so if your mouthy young dog "creates" one for you from a leash, be sure to save it!

Attach the leash or the short item to the collar when the puppy is eating or playing, and let the pup get used to it being there. As with the collar, don't remove it when pup is making a fuss about it. Remove it at a time the pup has forgotten it's there.

Do not leave a leash on an unattended dog. It can catch on things and trap the dog in dangerous and traumatic situations. Leashes are only safe during supervised times.

Distract your puppy into play or other interaction with you whenever the puppy seems bothered by the leash or starts to chew it. It's fine to apply Bitter Apple to the leash, but realize this substance does not last long as a chewing deterrent, and will need to be reapplied for every session. Doing this can keep leash-chewing from ever becoming a habit, and save you money, work and the worry of a loose dog.

Training Techniques

Before you pick up the other end of the leash with it attached to the puppy, you need to first put in some time conditioning your puppy to come to you and to move with you. Treats are ideal for this training. Don't be afraid the puppy will always need treats to walk on a leash. Leash walking has its own rewards, but a young puppy doesn't know that yet. The treats will help get things moving in the right direction.

Feeding time is a good time to work on this conditioning, when you have the dish in your hand and an eager puppy at your feet. Back away from the puppy. Use your body language and the puppy's name to attract the puppy to follow. Move around a bit with your puppy, making it a fun game, before putting down the dish and thus delivering a great reward.

At other times when your puppy is likely to be interested in games and treats, use a bit of food from the puppy's next meal to condition the puppy to look at you and move with you). Keep moving away from the puppy, encouraging the puppy to follow you. Young puppies naturally do this anyway, so the training is easy and fun.

At all times, be prepared to reward your puppy with little treats, games and other things the puppy likes, for moving with you, coming to you, and looking at you. Make this a habit, and develop your body language and voice to what works best with THIS puppy.

Each puppy is different. Pups have different things they like best, and different things they respond to in different ways. You can build your puppy's desires to interact with you by how you use your praise, treats, petting, and the games you and your puppy play together. All of this factors into your leash training as well as all other training, both in puppyhood and later.

The Leash Has Two Ends

With your puppy used to the presence of the leash attached to the collar and used to moving with you, you're ready to pick up the free end of the leash. Now it's time to visualize the real goal of leash walking.

When a dog freezes up on leash and won't move, obviously you can't get anywhere. So part of the goal is for the dog to relax when wearing a leash. You're off to the right start there, having conditioned your dog to the presence of the leash with no pressure.

A dog pulling on leash can suffer damage to the throat, which is potentially very serious in some breeds. The person trying to hold the other end of the leash may not be able to control the pulling dog, and can even be injured. Therefore a huge part of our goal in leash

training is to teach the dog to walk with the leash LOOSE, no pulling. This is not only for the purpose of having control, but also to be humane to the dog.

Ironically, it's not the dog who causes the pulling-on-leash problem. Humans instinctively hold the leash tight. A dog's completely normal and natural response to a tight leash is to pull. If the dog did not pull against the pressure, the dog would be constantly off-balance.

From the first minute you pick up the leash, keep it loose. Follow the dog at times, and at other times use the skills you have been developing to induce your dog to follow you. Resist the impulse to pull the dog around on leash, or even to guide the dog with the leash. Work hard at remembering to communicate through your voice, body language and various motivators. Keep building those abilities! Keep your attention on your mental communication with the dog, rather than trying to communicate through the leash.

If your puppy makes an attempt to pull you, your job is to stand still. The message to the puppy is simply that pulling on the leash is fruitless. It doesn't work. When things don't work, people and dogs eventually quit doing those things! You can help yourself and your puppy so very much by making sure that right from the start, pulling on the leash never works for your puppy. Then pulling will never become a habit, and your puppy will be spared innumerable problems-as will you!

As soon as the puppy notices that trying to pull you didn't work because you stopped, switch into your attention-getting, puppy-follow-me mode, and get that puppy moving with you! This is the game. And to a puppy, it really does need to be a game. Make it fun for the puppy. It will be fun for you, too, and that's one of the great benefits of living with dogs!

A Great Start

If this training seems like a lot of effort, the truth is that raising a puppy IS a lot of effort. The puppy is constantly learning, no matter what you do or don't do. It's actually less work, and much more fun, to shape the learning in the right direction. Doing a good job of conditioning your puppy to the leash helps with many other important dog behaviours at the same time. Have a great time leash-walking with your puppy!

Puppies bite. 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 behaviour 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 "Yiping" when puppy teeth touch human skin for them to stop this behaviour. Give a "Yipe!" 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 needs to be what a puppy would do when the idea is "Ouch! That hurts! I don't like it! Stop it right now!"

In the litter, that offended puppy would then retaliate in some way, or refuse to play with the rough puppy for a while. Some puppies have strong predatory instincts that are overstimulated when a person yipes, and for these puppies this would then not be an appropriate method.

Also, make sure no one is playing "mouth games" with the puppy, encouraging it to put teeth on humans for any reason. You need to react with your "yipe" or other intervention every time teeth touch a human, whether it hurts or not, so the puppy will understand this vital concept: no teeth on people. Even a gentle touch could get someone hurt if they jerk their hand away, and people will do that, especially kids.

My favourite intervention for a dog putting teeth on people in play is not a quick fix, but it has nice benefits and is very safe to do with most dogs. I simply hold the mouth closed for 15 seconds (work up to this time--at first it might frighten the dog to hold for more than about 5 seconds), while praising the dog. I say "[Dog's name], Close Your Mouth. GOOD Close Your Mouth!"

This teaches the dog the words for the behaviour I want--and eventually you can remind the dog about the mouth by just saying those words. But that stage won't last long, because if you are very consistent about doing this intervention every time the puppy puts teeth on people, eventually the puppy will never do so at all.

By handling the mouthing from a positive point of view with praise--although it's still a correction: done every time the dog mouths a person's skin, it shows the dog the correct behaviour of keeping teeth off people and praises the dog for doing it--you gain other benefits, such as accustoming your dog to being comfortable having someone control its mouth.

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 behaviour by simply putting a toy in the dog's mouth. We can definitely take a cue from these trainers by redirecting our dogs' mouthing behaviour into their toys, after we have carefully shown the dog not to mouthe us.

I also find it useful to teach the dog the word "Kiss" for licking. When the dog is highly stimulated in play and seems to need to touch me in some manner, I can remind the dog "Kiss" and then praise the dog for licking me.

In the early stages of working on mouthing behaviour with a puppy or new dog, keep in mind that you want to teach any new behaviour/command in a quiet situation with minimal distractions. So start teaching "Close Your Mouth" with the praise at times when the dog is quiet. Soon you can do it quickly and smoothly whenever mouthing occurs, even if the dog is excited. But you will in the process be bringing the dog's excitement level down and helping your dog develop self-control.

The praise is important to helping the puppy or dog learn to have no fear of a human taking control of its mouth. You are praising the puppy for accepting the restraint at that instant, not for the mouthing done 3 seconds ago.

And be sure you don't cause your dog to bite its lips or tongue when you restrain the mouth--it should be comfortable for the dog, as it should be any time you require your dog to obey any command of yours.

he first time most people find a new puppy's noise bothersome is when they confine the pup at night in a crate, exercise pen, or small room with a baby gate across the doorway. It's natural for a pup alone to call out for someone to come. Pups alone in the wild would not survive! The puppy is following instinct.

The first thing you need to know about helping your new puppy learn to remain quiet in confinement is NOT to go to the puppy in response to noise. If noise does not work, the puppy will eventually give up that method of communication.

If you have responded to the noise by going to the puppy, you have now reinforced this instinct. The process of conditioning your puppy to relax and remain quiet in confinement is going to take longer. You will need extra patience. Remember, this is not your puppy's fault, and getting mad at the puppy will not help. Be consistent about going to the pup ONLY when the pup is quiet.

In particular, do not wait and wait while the puppy makes more and more noise, and then you finally go to the puppy. By doing this, you would teach your puppy to be especially PERSISTENT about making noise! If you have done this already, remember you are going to have to be very patient indeed to give your puppy time to unlearn this unfortunate reinforcement. If you stop reinforcing a behaviour, eventually it will fade. But the more strongly it has been reinforced before you stop reinforcing it, the longer it will take to fade.

Punishment would NOT speed your puppy's learning to be quiet, any more than it would help your human infant learn not to cry. Punishment would greatly increase stress on the puppy, create more behaviour problems, and seriously damage your relationship.

You can help your puppy accept confinement more quickly by introducing the confinement area gently, giving the pup treats while in the confined area. You can also make confinement less stressful for the puppy by placing the crate or exercise pen in your bedroom at night. This lets the pup get used to the confinement without at the same time having to deal with being alone.

It's a good idea to always give a pup or dog a treat upon entering the confinement area, along with high-quality chew toys. Make sure, of course, to use only treats consistent with your dog's diet as recommended by your veterinarian.

Your goal is for the dog to rest calmly in confinement. Since dogs sleep fourteen or more hours a day, it's reasonable to use confinement if that time will be sleeping time. Excessive confinement is physically and mentally unhealthy for dogs.

There are adult dogs who cannot tolerate confinement to crates. Some of these dogs can be trained without crates to the point of being able to be safely loose in your house. Those suffering from severe separation anxiety may require the help of medication from your veterinarian during the adjustment process.

The ability to rest calmly in a crate can mean life or death to your dog at some point in the future, so it's extremely important to help your puppy develop this skill. Situations where a dog needs this ability include recovery from medical problems, travel, emergency evacuation, and adjustment to a new home or a new family. It will never again be as easy for the dog to develop the ability to rest calmly in a crate as it is in puppyhood.

Socialising Your Puppy

Puppies enter the world not knowing about people or the world in which we all live. A puppy needs to learn about the things, people and other animals in her environment. If she is not properly taught, she may grow up to be a fearful, anxious and/or antisocial dog.

Socialise Early

The first few months of a puppy's life is crucial to her development. As soon as you get your pup, you can start teaching her how to listen to you, how to act around people and other dogs. Start slowly with quiet one-on-one interactions and work your way up to interaction with multiple people in noisier environments. Friends, relatives and their pets can help socialise your puppy by simply coming to your home to meet and play with your new friend!

Behaviour problems are cited as the top reasons why pets are relinquished. Early training and socialising are the best way to create good manners and a solid bond. Once your puppy is sufficiently vaccinated (according to your veterinarian); take her on as many walks and outings as possible. However, avoid areas that may be high risk for disease such as parks or neighbourhoods with stray dogs. Your veterinarian may be able to provide advice on good areas in your community to take your puppy.

To encourage your puppy to interact with other pets and people, reward her with a small treat whenever she meets a new friend. Start with mild exposure and only reward her for non-fearful responses. It is important to remember to take things slowly and have patience with your furry companion. The world can be a very scary place for a young puppy and it takes time to teach them that it doesn't have to be frightening.

Variety is the Spice of Life

To fully socialize your puppy, make sure that she meets a variety of people of all ages and appearances. It is especially important to introduce your puppy to children because they do not act like adults (they move erratically, are loud and approach with no regard to boundaries). If your puppy only encounters people of a certain age or appearance, she may show aggression or fear when later introduced to people who appear or act different (for example, females, children or men with facial hair).

[Information taken from HealthyPet.com](https://www.healthy.com/animals/dogs)

TRAINING

A well-behaved companion canine is a joy. But left untrained, your dog can cause nothing but trouble. Teaching your dog the basics—"Sit," "Stay," "Come," "Down," "Heel," "Off" and "Leave it"—will improve your relationship with both your dog and your neighbors. If you have a puppy, start teaching him his manners as soon as possible! Use little bits of food as a lure and reward. Puppies can be enrolled in obedience courses when they have been adequately vaccinated. Contact your local humane society or SPCA for training class recommendations.

You should always keep your puppy or dog on a leash in public. Just be sure your pet will come to you at all times whenever you say the word. A dog who is disobedient or aggressive is not ready to play with others.

PUPPY HEALTH PROBLEMS

Dental Health

While many of us may object to our pet's bad breath, we should pay attention to what it may be telling us. Bad breath is most commonly an indication that your dog is in need of a dental check-up. Dental plaque caused by bacteria results in a foul smell that requires professional treatment. After a professional cleaning, the teeth and gums may be maintained in a healthy state by brushing the teeth regularly, feeding a specially formulated dental diet and treats, and avoiding table scraps. Your veterinarian can give you more tips on minimizing dental disease and bad breath.

You can clean your canine's teeth with a dog toothpaste or a baking-soda-and-water paste once or twice a week. Use a child's soft toothbrush, a gauze pad or a piece of nylon pantyhose stretched over your finger.

Some dogs are prone to periodontal disease, a pocket of infection between the tooth and the gum. This painful condition can result in tooth loss and spread infection to the rest of the body. Veterinarians can clean the teeth as a regular part of your dog's health program.

Bad Breath

While bad breath caused by dental disease may not be too serious if caught early enough, some odors may be indicative of fairly serious, chronic problems. Liver or intestinal diseases may cause foul breath, whereas a sweet, fruity smell may be indicative of diabetes. If your dog's breath smells like ammonia or urine, kidney disease is a possibility. Any time you notice your pet has bad breath accompanied by other signs of ill health, such as loss of appetite, vomiting, weight loss, depression, excessive drinking or urinating, schedule a visit to the veterinarian.

Fleas and Ticks

Daily inspections of your dog for fleas and ticks during the warm seasons are important. Use a flea comb to find and remove fleas. There are several new methods of flea and tick control. Speak to your veterinarian about these and other options.

Medicines and Poisons

Never give your dog medication that has not been prescribed by a Vet. For example, did you know that one regular-strength ibuprofen tablet can cause stomach ulcers in a ten-pound dog? Keep rat poison and other rodenticides away from your pet. If you suspect that your animal has ingested a poisonous substance, call your Vet.

Spaying and Neutering

There are many benefits of spaying/neutering your pets. Females should be spayed—the removal of the ovaries and uterus—and males neutered—removal of the testicles—by six months of age. Spaying before maturity significantly reduces the risk of breast cancer, a common and frequently fatal disease of older female dogs. Spaying also eliminates the risk of an infected uterus, a very serious problem in older females that requires surgery and intensive medical care. Neutering males prevents testicular and prostate diseases, some hernias and certain types of aggression.

For more on this important surgery, read our [Why Spay /Neuter Your Pet ? PDF](#)

Worms

Dogs are commonly exposed to worms and possible infestation—even in urban areas. Microscopic eggs produced by intestinal worms are passed in an infected dog's feces. Most puppies, even from healthy mothers in good homes, carry roundworms or hookworms.

The key to treatment is correct diagnosis. This will ensure that the medication is effective against the parasite your pet has. A dewormer that eliminates roundworms, for example, will not kill tapeworms. Your veterinarian can best determine the culprit—and prescribe the appropriate medication.

FUN FACTS

- The nose knows! Your dog can detect odours about a billion times better than you can.
- The average lifespan of a dog varies from 8 to 16 years, depending on breed type, size, genetics and care.

DOG SUPPLY CHECKLIST

- Premium-quality dog food and treats
- Food dish
- Water bowl
- Toys, toys and more toys, including safe chew toys
- Brush & comb for grooming, including flea comb

- Collar with license and ID tag
- Leash
- Carrier (for smaller dogs)
- Training crate
- Dog bed or box with warm blanket or towel
- Dog toothbrush

THE NO-NO LIST

- Do not feed your dog the following:
- Alcoholic beverages
- Chocolate
- Coffee
- Grapes & raisins
- Mouldy or spoiled food
- Onions, garlic & chives
- Poultry bones
- Salt & salty foods
- Tomato leaves, stems & unripe fruit
- Yeast dough

THE SCOOP ON POOP

Keep your dog on a leash when you are outside, unless you are in a secured, fenced-in area. If your dog defecates on a neighbour's lawn, the sidewalk or any other public place, please clean it up.

CARING FOR KITTENS & CATS – WHICH ONE IS RIGHT FOR YOU?

Everyone loves kittens but kittens need a lot of care to keep them healthy and happy

With a kitten, you also need to put more effort into training, from making sure the tiny baby understands what's expected regarding the litter box to helping your kitten learn to stay off the counters. You also need to kitten-proof your home — or keep your baby confined in a safe part of the house whenever you're not watching him — and then spend a few months picking your kitten off the curtains, off the kids, off the back of the couch, or off your slippers.

An adult cat may be a better choice for families with very young children or for someone who's handicapped by advanced age or illness. For all their activity, kittens are fragile and may accidentally be hurt by young children who don't understand the concept of "gentle." Similarly, a kitten isn't the best choice for anyone who's a little unsteady on his feet or isn't able to chase or otherwise keep up with an energetic feline baby.

On the other hand, a kitten can be perfect for a family with older, more responsible children, or a source of delightful amusement to an active older adult. You just need to look carefully at your living situation and consider the problems and pleasures a kitten will bring.

Finally, consider the matter of time. An adult cat does quite well on her own alone in the house while you work — most of the time she's sleeping anyway. A kitten needs your time, for raising her and for watching over her to keep her out of trouble.

Where to get Your Pet

Consider carefully what sort of pet will best match your lifestyle. Do you have sufficient time/energy for a kitten? Could you give a loving home to a rescue cat? This website should help you www.yourright-pet.org.uk

Register with a Vet

Do this straight away and make an appointment to get your new pet checked over as soon as possible. You are also welcome to visit us before you collect him/her. Our vets and nurses will be able to answer all your questions and help clear up any concerns that come to you in the first days of getting used to your new family member.

Most things we find at your kitten's first general health check are straightforward. Simple things like ear mites, fleas and other visitors are common findings and easily cleared. However very occasionally we pick up other health problems like heart murmurs, cleft palates, retained testicles and hernias. When health problems are detected we are here to help you and will advise about how to manage them.

Vaccinations

To provide protection against potentially fatal infections such as feline infectious enteritis and feline influenza (cat flu) kittens need to be vaccinated. The first injection in the course is given at eight to nine weeks of age with a second at about 12 weeks. The kitten should be kept away from other cats and stay indoors for ten days after the second injection to ensure maximum protection. To maintain a protective level of immunity, adult cats require regular boosters.

Bringing the kitten home – Settling in

Supplies Needed

- Balanced, brand name food. Make sure it's for the right age. Dry food is better for your pet's teeth. Canned food is more similar to a natural diet for cats, so some of both is probably best.
- Food and water bowls. Ceramic and metal are best. Some pets are sensitive to plastic.
- Cat toys – make sure there aren't any small parts or string that can fall off and be swallowed
- A cat brush
- Cat toothpaste and toothbrush
- "Breakaway" collar and ID tag
- Scratching post or scratching pad
- Litter box – 1 per cat, plus 1 extra
- Litter – scoopable litter is best. Don't use dusty or perfumed litter.

- Cat carrier
- Optional: Cat condo, cat leash and harness, cat bed, cat “plants”

Experiencing a brand new home is daunting for a tiny kitten. Every kitten has a unique personality – some are shy while others are confident. With this in mind it’s best to choose a room where he/she can be kept for the first few weeks to adjust to the new surroundings gradually. This confinement also aids in toilet training and avoids the risk of ‘accidents’ elsewhere in the house. Check the room for potential hazards such as fireplaces, full length curtains, breakable objects. Keep windows securely fastened. Give reassurance and time to adjust to new surroundings before making introductions to other animals and people in the household. Ensure all windows and doors are closed and there is a guard in front of the fireplace. Ensure the kitten knows where the bed, litter tray and food bowls are.

The kitten’s bed should be in a safe place to go when things get too much. It needs to be warm, dry comfortable and draught free. Buy a bed from a pet shop or use a strong dry cardboard box with a hole cut in the side. It should contain soft bedding and be placed in a warm safe place.

On the first few nights a warm water bottle (not hot) under a blanket may help compensate for the absence of the kittens mother or litter mates. If you happen to have or can borrow a large secure pen then this is ideal for providing a safe den and can hold a kittens litter tray and bed. It is also an excellent way to introduce other animals

Feeding Your Cat/Kitten

Kittens (under 6 months): 3-4 times a day

Over 6 months: Feed twice a day (amount depends on food type and how active your cat is)

Training your cat to eat twice a day: When your kitten turns 6 months old, offer food to him/her twice a day only. Leave the food out for ½ hour only. Your cat will quickly learn to eat all of his/her food during the half hour.

Avoid giving your pet too many treats since cats can become overweight as they age

Limit milk, as cats and kittens don’t need it and it could cause diarrhea.

Chores

Daily

Clean litter box, feed (see above), clean water/food bowls, change water, play with your cat, brush teeth once, walk (optional)

Weekly

Thoroughly clean the litter box using a mild soap and replace litter

2 Times a Week

Brush hair (gently)

Yearly

A trip to the Vets for a check-up

Training Your Cat to Walk on Leash

- Use a leash and harness for cats
- Start in a fenced-in yard
- Reward good behaviour with treats

Dangers -- Never Feed Your Cat/Kitten:

- Alcoholic drinks
- Chocolate
- Coffee
- Grapes and raisins
- Moldy or spoiled food
- Onions, garlic and chives
- Bones
- Tomato plants
- Unripe fruit
- Yeast dough
- Any houseplants – some are poisonous

Scratching Post

Cats love to scratch! Train your cat to use a scratching post by:

- Placing catnip around the base of the post
- Rewarding your pet when he/she uses the scratching post

Brushing Your Cat's Teeth

It is not easy, but cats are healthier if you brush their teeth. Use cat toothpaste and brush. Start when they are kittens, so they get used to it.

SPAYING AND NEUTERING

Female cats should be spayed and male cats neutered by 6 months old. This reduces unwanted behaviour like urine spraying and some diseases like Feline AIDS later in life as well as unwanted pregnancies..

MICRO-CHIPPING

It is a very good idea to microchip your kitten before he/she is old enough to start going out. A microchip is placed just under the skin between the shoulder blades and if the kitten gets lost the chip can be read by veterinary Practices and rehoming centres so you and your kitten can be reunited.

HEALTH INSURANCE

It is worth considering a reliable pet insurance policy to help with any possible costs due to illness and injury. Our staff have been trained to advise you on what cover would best suit your needs.

INTRODUCING OTHER PETS

First, be sure that your new kitten is vaccinated. Still, quarantine him/her for one week (two to three weeks is even better); then put her in his/her own room in your house to start the introduction process.

The key to introducing a new pet is to GO SLOW! Give the new cat about one to two weeks in her own room where the two cats can sniff each other under the door. Once they are doing this with minimal hissing, switch the situation. Put your cat in the room for a few hours and let the new kitty roam the house. This allows the resident cat to smell the new cat's scent and explore without worrying about having to fight the newcomer. It also allows the new cat to explore the new house and become familiar with hiding areas.

The next step is to let them see each other from across a room or through a tall baby gate you put across the doorway of the room where the new kitty is. Then, when they're used to this, let the cats out together SUPERVISED, and put down a treat (canned cat food, tuna, etc.). Use two dishes on opposite sides of the room so that both cats are in the same room eating their special treat. Do this at roughly the same time every day, and soon the cats will

be running to be in the same place at the same time. When hissing and growling subsides, and then start moving the dishes closer together. If they start growling at each other, you have moved the dishes too close, too quickly and need to back off. Soon they will associate a good thing with seeing each other.

Do not let them together unsupervised, as they could fight and hurt each other. The entire process will probably take about 6 weeks, and even then they may not be buddies but can be in the same room without hissing at each other.

Special care should be taken with introductions to dogs. Those not used to cats need to be kept as calm as possible, on a lead and told to sit quietly. The kitten should be in a safe place, so as to have time to get used to the dog and make an approach on his/her own terms. This might take quite some time and requires patience and rewards for the dog behaving well.

Good luck, and remember -- patience!