



MONTGOMERY
ANIMAL HOSPITAL

Puppy Care Guidelines



CONGRATULATIONS!

Owning a new puppy is a wonderful experience, but a big responsibility. Sometimes the responsibility is greater than you expected. There are so many decisions for you to make – what do I feed, can I bathe her, what vaccines are needed? Everyone around you is going to have an opinion about what you should do. Montgomery Animal Hospital is here to help you make decisions that are medically guided and best for your family.

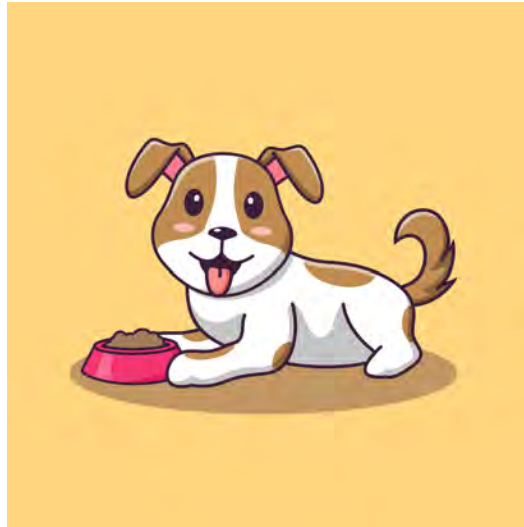
We have put together this “Puppy Notebook” for you. This notebook will teach you how to raise a puppy with the best chance at being happy and healthy, and give you information that allows you to make decisions for your puppy and be comfortable with those decisions. The information in our notebook has been accumulated from over 40 years of experience as well as the newest research and guidelines.

Feel free to ask questions as you go through this notebook. We are here to answer your questions and to keep your new best friend happy and healthy.

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Feeding Your Puppy



Picking a quality diet to feed your new puppy is an important decision for you to make. The problem is: there are so many choices. How do you know which pet food to pick?

This is even a difficult decision for veterinary professionals because there is no simple way to compare one diet to another. Using our [Guidelines for Choosing a Quality Pet Food](#) is a good place to start your decision process.

How to feed your puppy:

- Puppies require twice the nutrients per pound of body weight as an adult dog
- Choose a food formulated for puppies (AAFCO Life Stage - “growth”)
- Offer small portions frequently (three times daily) and make food accessible only at specific times so they can be meal trained, instead of leaving it out all the time
- Always provide access to fresh water
- Apart from a potty break, allow your puppy to rest after eating
- At 10-14 months (depending on breed) gradually change from puppy food to adult food
- Puppies should be kept trim with only a slight layer of fat noticeable over ribs- a veterinarian can help you monitor this
- Avoid feeding excessive table food and treats, although some treats are important for positive reward training

Montgomery Animal Hospital's Guidelines For Choosing Quality Food



- 1. Choose a brand of food produced by a nationally recognized company.**
 - These companies have research and development departments and are on the cutting edge of developing quality pet foods.
 - Small, local pet food companies are not involved in the science of developing a pet food, only in the formulation of a diet. This is similar to how you or I would follow a recipe in a cookbook to make a family meal. It does not mean that they are experts on pet nutrition, or can provide medical dietary recommendations.
 - Companies that we recommend include (but are not limited to): Hill's, Purina, and Royal Canin.

- 2. It is not usually helpful to look at the ingredients list.**
 - Nutrients (amino acids, carbohydrates, fat, vitamins & minerals) are the building blocks a pet needs for growth and maintenance.
 - Ingredients used to formulate a diet can vary in nutrient quality from low to high, and there is no way to tell the quality based on a list. The higher the quality of an ingredient, the more nutrients are available during the digestive process.
 - There is a lot of misinformation about "bad ingredients". A great example is the term "by-product". By-products are often organ meat like liver, kidneys, and spleen. Just because one company lists "chicken liver" and one lists "chicken by-products" does not mean one diet is better or different than the other.



3. Beware of marketing buzzwords! Many companies try to mislead you with these.

- Consider “*natural*”. This word is not defined or regulated in the pet food industry and can mean anything. Rocks and trees are “natural” but not full of nutrients for pets.
- “*Grain free*” is another buzzword used a lot. Grains (corn, rice, barley, etc.) are filled with nutrients that pets need and should be a component of a healthy diet for pets. Grain free diets have also been associated with the development of a heart condition called dilated cardiomyopathy (DCM). At least until there are more studies on this topic, grain free diets are not recommended.

4. Look for the “AAFCO statement” on the pet food package label.

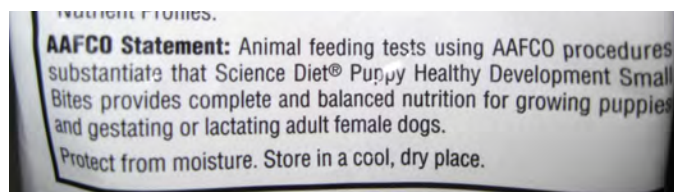
AAFCO – Association of American Food Control Officials.

This federal agency is responsible for establishing and regulating nutrition standards for animal diets in the USA.

AAFCO places one of two statements on all pet food labels:

- “**Formulated Statement**” – This pet food is formulated to meet the nutritional levels established by AAFCO pet food nutrient profiles for growth (or maintenance) of pets. Note: These profiles are usually minimally guaranteed levels.
- “**Feeding Trials Statement**” – Animal feeding tests using AAFCO procedures substantiate that this diet provides complete and balanced nutrition for growing pets or maintenance for adult pets.

The feeding trial method is the best standard for determining nutritional quality of a diet. This is the best way to determine if the ingredients being used to formulate a diet have the right amount of nutrients for growth (or maintenance). Very few pet food companies go to this extent to test their product because of the expense of running pet food trials.

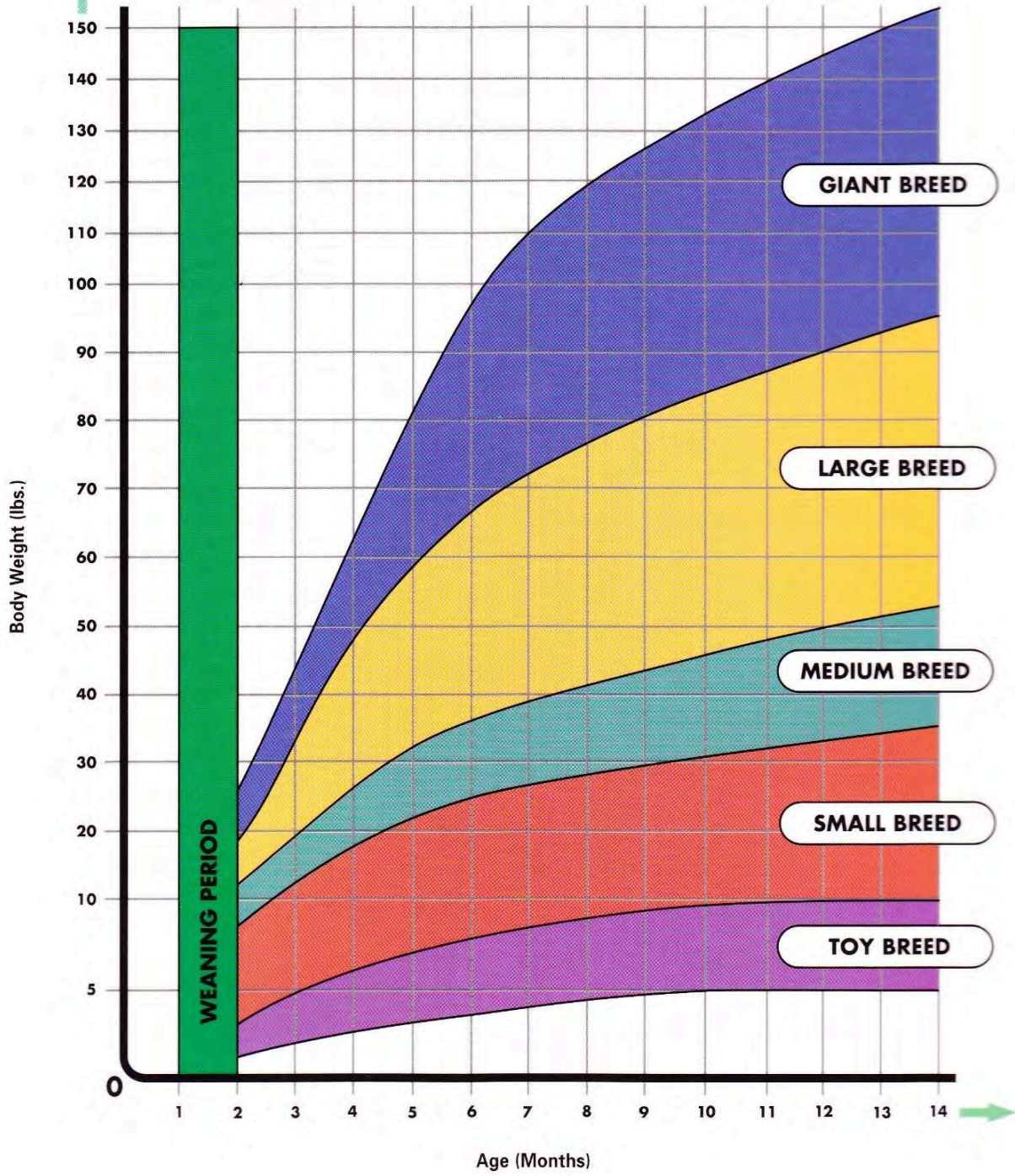


5. Check the pet food package label for the AAFCO life stage of the food you are feeding.
- **Gestation/Lactation** - for pregnant and nursing mothers due to the high energy requirement
 - **Growth** - for kittens and puppies under 1 year old
 - **Maintenance** - for adult dogs and cats over 1 year old
 - **All Life Stages** - this is a recognized life stage label, but it is formulated for the most physiologically demanding life stages- gestation/lactation/growth. *It is not the best option for most adult cat & dog maintenance.*
6. Finally, does my pet like the food I have selected for him or her?



For even more general diet information, check out the WSAVA (World Small Animal Veterinary Association) Nutrition FAQ handout provided in the folder!

Body Weights of Growing Dogs of Different Breeds



Vaccinating Your Puppy



It is important to make a plan to vaccinate your puppy. Protecting them from infectious diseases, some of which can be lethal, is one of the first steps in keeping them happy and healthy. Normal puppies which are allowed to nurse absorb antibodies from their mother's milk (maternal protections) that will protect them until they are 8-10 weeks old.

Around this time, when maternal protection is starting to decline, all puppies should start being vaccinated. This will start to stimulate their own immune systems to protect them against these potentially lethal diseases.

Vaccines we give dogs are divided into core and non-core vaccines. This division is based on the lifestyle of a dog. Core vaccines are the ones every dog should receive regardless of lifestyle. Non-core vaccines are recommended, but optional, for a dog whose lifestyle increases risk of exposure.

Puppy Core Vaccines:

1. **Distemper, Hepatitis, Parvovirus** (boosters at 2, 3, and 4+ months of age)
2. **Rabies** (12+ weeks of age)
3. **Leptospirosis** (2 boosters starting 2+ months of age)

Puppy Non-Core Vaccines and risk factors:

1. **Bordetella/Parainfluenza:** Social situations such as boarding, grooming, dog parks, daycare, show & agility participation
2. **K9 Flu (Influenza):** Social situations such as boarding, grooming, dog parks, daycare, show & agility participation
3. **Lyme:** Spending a lot of time outside and/or traveling into known endemic areas (New England area, upper Midwest). Lyme disease is more and more prevalent in Ohio and this vaccine should be considered for additional protection.

Non-Core vaccines are usually started after or during the puppy's core vaccine schedule.



WHAT TO EXPECT after your pet's vaccination

It is common for pets to experience some or all of the following mild side effects after receiving a vaccine, usually starting within hours of the vaccination. If these side effects last for more than a day or two, or cause your pet significant discomfort, it is important for you to contact your veterinarian:

- Discomfort and local swelling at the vaccination site
- Mild fever
- Decreased appetite and activity
- Sneezing, mild coughing, "snotty nose" or other respiratory signs may occur 2-5 days after your pet receives an intranasal vaccine

More serious, but less common side effects, such as allergic reactions, may occur within minutes to hours after vaccination. These reactions can be life-threatening and are medical emergencies.

Seek veterinary care immediately if any of these signs develop:

- Persistent vomiting or diarrhea
- Itchy skin that may seem bumpy ("hives")
- Swelling of the muzzle and around the face, neck, or eyes
- Severe coughing or difficulty breathing
- Collapse

A small, firm swelling under the skin may develop at the site of a recent vaccination. It should start to disappear within a couple weeks. If it persists more than three weeks, or seems to be getting larger, you should contact your veterinarian.

Always inform your veterinarian if your pet has had prior reactions to any vaccine or medication. If in doubt, wait for 30-60 minutes following vaccination before taking your pet home.

Parasite Prevention

Your new puppy may already be carrying internal or external parasites. Diagnosing, treating, and preventing parasites is an important goal to keep your puppy happy and healthy- both today and throughout their life. **In addition, some parasites can be transferred from dogs to people.**

The parasites we are most interested in treating and preventing in your puppy in our area are:

1. **Heartworms** - a worm that lives in the heart and blood stream, and is spread through mosquito bites. If a dog contracts heartworm, it is expensive and takes 6+ months to treat, and can permanently damage the heart or be deadly.
2. **Intestinal worms** - most commonly spread from other animals, feces, urine, or contaminated soil. Untreated, these can lead to anemia and other problems, especially in young puppies. These include:
 - Roundworms
 - Hookworms
 - Whipworms
 - Tapeworms
3. **Fleas** - fleas are not seasonal, and not just outdoors. A pet can get fleas at any time and from any place. Fleas can infest your house, and they also spread tapeworm.
4. **Ticks** - the most common tick exposure area is in grass, and ticks can be active in as low as 40 degree (F) temperatures. Ticks can spread several diseases including Lyme disease, Anaplasmosis, and Ehrlichiosis



A fresh stool sample submitted to a laboratory for microscopic examination is the best way to check for intestinal parasites. Heartworm and tick exposure are usually detected through a blood test. Flea exposure is usually detected during physical examination and history of the puppy.

Flea, tick, and heartworm prevention is strongly recommended all year long.

So how do we treat and prevent parasites?

In short, we use different medications given regularly on a schedule to both treat and prevent parasites. Thanks to modern medicine, we now have a long list of options to choose from. Some medications treat fleas and ticks, while others treat heartworms and intestinal parasites, and a few even do all in one. Some need to be given once a month, some need to be given every 3 months, and one option even lasts 1 year. Here is a non-comprehensive summary of some common brand options:

Brand Name	Route	Length	Heartworm	Fleas	Ticks	Roundworm	Whipworm	Tapeworm	Hookworm
Interceptor Plus	Oral tablet	30 days	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓
Sentinel Spectrum	Oral tablet	30 days	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Heartgard	Oral tablet	30 days	✓			✓			✓
Revolution	Topical (rub on)	30 days	✓	✓	*partial				
ProHeart 12	Injection	1 year	✓						*partial
Simparica Trio	Oral tablet	30 days	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓
Nexgard Plus	Oral tablet	30 days	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓
Credelio	Oral tablet	30 days		✓	✓				
Bravecto	Oral tablet	12 weeks		✓	✓				
Frontline	Topical (rub on)	30 days		✓	✓				
Seresto Collar	Collar	8 months		✓	✓				

Our recommendation? Whichever options effectively cover heartworms, fleas, and ticks that you will remember and that your puppy tolerates. You may need to use more than one medication. Recommendations may vary further based on age or medical conditions. Feel free to discuss this further with your veterinarian at any time.



Spaying and Neutering



What is “spaying and neutering”?

This refers to the surgical removal of sexual organs. For female dogs, their uterus and ovaries are removed, and this is commonly called “spaying”. For male dogs, their testicles and spermatic cords are removed, and this is commonly called “neutering”.

Why should I have my pet spayed or neutered?

This procedure eliminates the risk of accidental puppies, prevents different types of reproductive cancers, and has several other benefits- more are listed in the chart on the next page.

Should I delay spaying or neutering until my puppy is older, or (in the case of females) after 1-2 heat cycles?

There are some recent studies that suggest delaying spay/neuter in large breed dogs until a male dog is 1+ years old or a female dog has 1-2 heat cycles may help prevent joint disorders. This is why you will hear this recommendation from friends, breeders, online communities, etc. The trade off is that delaying spay/neuter increases the risk of other medical conditions. There is also no known benefit for small breed dogs, although many people have gotten this confused. The risks and benefits of a delayed spay/neuter can be discussed with your veterinarian, and you can make the best plan for your puppy that you are comfortable with.

Common Myths

Spaying or neutering your pet does not:

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

Our staff 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.



**Spaying your female pet
(ovariohysterectomy):**



**Neutering your male pet
(castration):**

Removal of the ovaries and uterus. Ideal age is around 6 months, although some recent evidence suggests some benefits to spay later in certain breeds	Removal of the testicles and spermatic cord. Ideal age is 4 to 6 months, although some recent evidence suggests some benefits to neuter later in certain breeds
If spayed before the first heat cycle, your pet has a less than 1 percent chance of developing breast cancer	Greatly reduces the risk of prostate cancer and prostatitis
If spayed after one heat cycle, your pet has an 8 percent chance of developing breast cancer	Reduces the risk of perianal tumors
If spayed after two heat cycles, the risk increases to 26 percent. After two heat cycles, there is no further protective benefit against breast cancer	Reduces roaming and fighting
Pets with diabetes or epilepsy should be spayed to prevent hormonal changes that may interfere with medication.	Eliminates or reduces spraying or marking in males neutered before 6 months of age or before the onset of these behaviors
Eliminates the risk of ovarian and uterine cancer.	Eliminates the risk and spread of sexually transmitted diseases
Eliminates risk of a life-threatening uterine infection (“pyometra”) that occurs in 1 in 4 unspayed female dogs of any age	Eliminates the risk of testicular cancer that occurs in about 1 in 4 unneutered male dogs
Eliminates unwanted pregnancies	Eliminates unwanted litters

General Training Tips

“When is the best time to begin training your puppy? The very day you bring your new friend home! It is a little learning sponge, with lots of needs, a rapidly growing mind and body, and no knowledge of your house rules. Every single interaction you have with it, every choice a puppy makes, every behavior a puppy does teaches it whether or not to repeat and strengthen that behavior – or to extinguish or weaken that behavior. This is your unique opportunity to build lots of value for the behaviors you want to see more while managing to prevent practice of behaviors you do not want to see.”

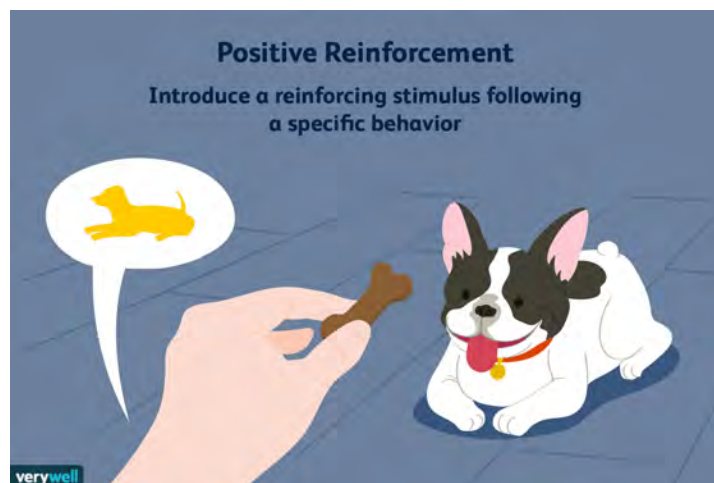


- Lisa Desatnik, CPDT-KA, CPBC; Certified Dog Trainer & Certified Fear Free Dog Professional

There are so many skills that we want a puppy to learn, and so many different training methods you will hear about. Specific skills like potty training are reviewed in more detail on the following pages, but these are some basic training tips and recommendations that can apply to all situations.

1. Use Positive Reinforcement Training

- What does this mean? This is when a puppy gets rewarded for doing a behavior correctly. For example, when a puppy goes to the bathroom in the right spot, she gets a treat that she likes. This reinforces the behavior with a positive reward (hence, “positive reinforcement”). Rewarding items for puppies could include attention, praise, toys, or- commonly- treats.
- Positive reinforcement methods are recommended for all desirable behaviors. It is a very effective training method that creates a happy association for the puppy, and does not promote fear or fear-based reactions.



2. Avoid Aversive Punishment Based Training

- What does this mean? Punishment is the term for when a discipline is given to a puppy for an incorrect behavior. For example, when she barks, she is yelled at, told “no”, or shocked with a collar.
- Why do we want to avoid this technique? For one, it does not tell the puppy what she SHOULD be doing instead of this behavior. If she is punished for not sitting at the sit command, she does not understand what she is supposed to do, and therefore is not sure what to do to avoid punishment.
- More importantly, punishments will also create an association of fear for the puppy. That means anything she has been trained on using punishment can become associated with fear and anxiety: sitting, staying, pottying inside, playing with her mouth. It can also create unintended associations, like fear of people raising their hands or holding a remote. ***This fear can predispose dogs to behavioral issues like anxiety and aggression later in life.***



3. Instead, remove positive reinforcers for undesired behaviors.

- What does this mean? It means that when a puppy displays a behavior we do not want to continue, we remove any potential reinforcement for that behavior. For example, when a puppy jumps up on someone, we walk away and do not give the puppy any attention until they display appropriate behavior like sitting or waiting. And once they display an appropriate behavior- back to positive reinforcement!



A dog trainer note: You may decide to find some extra help for training your puppy (or even adult dog) from a dog trainer. Dog trainers can be wonderful tools and extremely helpful! However, please make sure to vet a dog trainer thoroughly. Technically, anyone can call themselves a dog trainer. Here are some quick tips to help select a helpful dog trainer:

- Research or ask about their certifications
- Fear Free Certified trainers are highly recommended
- Make sure they are aligned with the above training recommendations - positive reinforcement, no fear-based punishment. Some trainers will use alternative phrases or explanations to justify fear-based punishment and try to make them sound reasonable.
- One common buzzword is “balanced training”- a code word for using both positive reinforcement and fear-based punishments. Avoid balanced training.
- Another common tool you may hear about is “e-collars”- which is short for electric collars, which is a nice term for shock collars. Avoid any training program that utilizes e-collars. It may “not hurt that much” - but again refer to the above explanation why we do not want fear based learning in dogs, regardless of the “acceptable level of pain”.



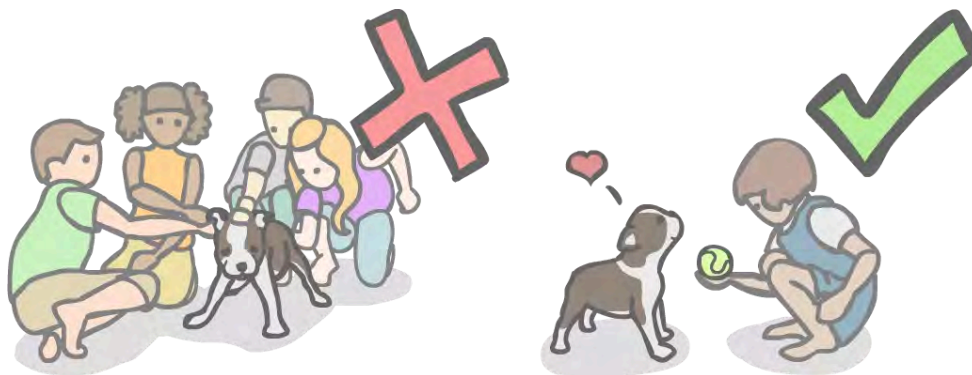
Socialization

Socialization goes right along with training for puppies!

What is socialization? It is the idea of exposing and acclimating your puppy to different items, people, experiences, and things in the world. If done correctly, this helps create a well-adjusted dog who is comfortable in many different situations.

Think of all the things you want your happy adult dog to handle comfortably: going on car rides, being in a crate, meeting new people, living with other pets, the sound of someone walking outside, resting in the house when you are gone, getting a veterinary examination, having their nails trimmed- and the list goes on!

It is important for your puppy to have neutral to positive experiences with a variety of situations to get them comfortable. You can help make new experiences positive by using treats and other rewards. It is important not to punish a puppy who is fearful or push them to do something that makes them more fearful- instead, work on small steps with positive reinforcement. Use short or abbreviated lengths to start with to make sure your puppy is not overwhelmed (such as a 30 second car ride, or one person petting at a time).



Some great examples of socialization opportunities are:

- Having new people come over to the house
- Greeting new people when out on the leash
- Going on short car rides
- Going to the vet
- Puppy classes with other vaccinated puppies
- Playing with one adult vaccinated dog who is friendly and good with puppies- for safety, it is better if the dog is not too much bigger than the puppy
- Playing new sounds for your puppy
- Handling their feet and body (see “grooming” section for more)
- Meeting other friendly animals like cats
- Meeting people who look and dress differently, or are different ages



Please note: until your puppy is fully vaccinated at 16+ weeks, they should NOT be in high-traffic dog areas such as dog parks, breweries, or unvaccinated groups. This puts them at risk of deadly disease. There are plenty of low-risk socialization alternatives.

Puppies have sensitive socialization periods of 3-14 weeks when the experiences they have are even more impactful than at other times in their development. Usually they come home from the breeder or shelter at 8+ weeks, so the first few weeks with your new puppy can be especially important (although socialization should continue past this).

Similarly, puppies can be very sensitive to scary or traumatic experiences during this time. This is especially true roughly around 8-10 weeks of age, and this time period has been termed “**Fear Period**”. A single scary event can cause life-long fear of that stimulus- for example, getting attacked by a dog at this time could lead to life-long fear of other dogs. There is also a second fear period somewhere in adolescence around 4-11 months. Handle your puppy with care during these time periods! This is another reason why fear-free training methods are recommended in general.

Understanding Puppy Fear Periods

How to Help Your Pup Get Through Them

First puppy fear period 8 to 11 weeks old Second puppy fear period 6 to 14 months old



<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Be patient, calm, and gentle with your puppy.✓ Provide a safe and secure environment for your puppy.✓ Give your puppy plenty of positive reinforcement, praise, and treats for good behavior.✓ Use desensitization and counter-conditioning techniques to help your puppy overcome their fears gradually.✓ Allow your puppy to approach new things or people at their own pace.✓ Continue to socialize your puppy, but avoid overwhelming them with too many new experiences at once.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✗ Don't punish or scold your puppy for their fearful behavior.✗ Don't force your puppy to interact with people or objects that scare them.✗ Don't push your puppy too hard or expose them to more than they can handle.✗ Don't reinforce fearful behavior by comforting or coddling your puppy excessively.✗ Don't ignore your puppy's fears or dismiss them as insignificant.✗ Don't stop socializing your puppy altogether, as this can lead to long-term behavioral issues.
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Houstraining (Urination, Defecation)

1. Begin house-training at about 2 months of age. This is when most puppies leave their moms and come home with you anyways, so it can usually begin immediately.
2. **Use positive reinforcement-** meaning when they correctly eliminate outside, the puppy is rewarded. Treats are usually the most common motivator for a puppy, but praise and toys are sometimes more rewarding for certain puppies.
3. **Do NOT use punishment** when the puppy eliminates inside. This does not tell the puppy what they SHOULD be doing, can confuse them, and can even create a negative association with using the bathroom. That makes potty training even harder! Be patient, and expect mistakes.
4. Consistency and repetition are essential! All family members **must** treat the puppy in the same manner, using the same technique.
5. Limit their opportunities to make mistakes:
 - a. If they are not **DIRECTLY** and **ACTIVELY** supervised, they should be put in a small confined area such as a small play pen or crate. Puppies will usually not soil in their bedding area. When left out, they **WILL** find a separate area to eliminate in.
 - b. Continue confinement/supervision until they are not eliminating inside- then slowly increase the amount of space they have access to
6. Give them opportunities for success:
 - a. The puppy will need to eliminate after meals, naps, play periods, and regular intervals. Take them outside for a chance to go at all of these times, and more. Give them plenty of opportunities to do the correct thing.
 - b. Stick to a regular schedule, regardless of weekends/holidays/etc. Puppies do not know what day it is, and consistency is key!
 - c. A rule of thumb is that puppies can “hold it” for one hour per each month of age.
7. Dogs rely heavily on scent. To avoid repeat accidents, clean and deodorize the area of urine/feces. It is important to use an enzymatic cleaner that breaks down the small proteins left behind.

Puppy Grooming and Care Training



Even if your puppy will not need to be professionally groomed throughout their life, it can still be useful to socialize your puppy for general grooming and handling. This will help them get used to at home care, veterinary handling, and any grooming that may be needed when they are older.

For dogs whose hair is long, continually grows without shedding, or becomes matted (such as poodles, any poodle/doodle mix, yorkshire terriers, shih tzus, pekingese, pomeranians, and others): there is a MEDICAL NEED to have your dog regularly groomed. It is extremely important to socialize your puppy for grooming. Plan your first grooming appointment after vaccinations finish (around 16+ weeks old) and work with the groomer for a gentle introduction to grooming. Plan to have your dog groomed every couple months for the rest of its life.

As with every training opportunity, take small steps to slowly acclimate your puppy and use positive reinforcement. Stop and take a break if your puppy becomes stressed or wiggly.

General Grooming Tips:

Haircoat

- Practice gently brushing and combing. For high maintenance hair coats, plan to do this every few days.
- Practice bathing. This may need to be done between once a month to once a week, depending on the dog's lifestyle and coat. Use a pet shampoo.

Nails

- Start by practicing handling and touching paws, and work up to full nail trims.
- Ideally, 2 people should be used to trim nails- one to hold the puppy and distract them with food, and another to clip the nails.
- Many people find nail trims too difficult to do at home, which is completely okay. It is still very useful to handle your puppy's paws so that they are not scared of the sensation if they need to get them trimmed elsewhere.

Ear Care

- Practice rubbing and handling your puppy's ears
- Most dogs do not have a medical need for ear cleaning, but some may develop conditions that require regular ear cleaning
- To clean your dog's ears, use a liquid ear flush designed for ears. Squirt the flush into the ear, massage the base of the ear, allow your dog to shake their head, and then gently wipe the inner portion of the ear flap with a cotton square or cotton ball.

Dental Care

- All pets benefit from at home dental care every day throughout their life. This is the perfect age to help your puppy get used to dental care.
- Practice handling your puppy's mouth and introducing a soft pet toothbrush into their mouth.
- Use a toothpaste formulated for animals such as CET enzymatic toothpaste.



Puppy Confinement Training Tips



This article is from [VeterinaryPartner.com](https://www.veterinarypartner.com)

Published: May 04, 2022
Breanna Norris, KPA CTP

The goal of confinement training is for the puppy to be comfortable in their crate or other safe haven, such as an exercise pen or behind a gate. This area should not be used as a punishment but as a relaxing place to go for nap time or to gnaw on a chew toy.

When you bring your puppy home, be sure to have the crate accessible from the family's common space. For some people, it will be convenient to have multiple crates, such as in the living room, bedroom, and office.

Crate training can go wrong when people confine the puppy and then leave. Puppies should not be left to "cry it out" and crates should never be kicked or shaken to quiet a puppy. Begin by either removing the door or tying it back so it doesn't startle your puppy.

Toss several treats in the back of the crate and allow the puppy to find them. Do this multiple times a day and when the puppy goes inside to check for treats, you can reward them again.

Next, add the door. As your puppy goes into the crate, gently close the door, and give your puppy a treat through the door. Open the door and allow them to come out. Only close the door for a few seconds at first, then slowly increase how long the puppy is confined.

To practice, have the crate nearby while you watch a movie, read a book or work at your computer. Your puppy should have a safe chew, or you can drop treats in the crate in the same spot each time so that the puppy can relax rather than hunt for them. If your puppy is relaxed

with you nearby, try doing some activities with a little more movement, such as folding laundry or making dinner. Your puppy should still be able to see you and you should continue to give treats.

If your puppy remains comfortable, try briefly leaving the room, then return and give a treat. If your dog gets upset, leave for a shorter time and return before they become stressed, giving a treat before they vocalize. If they still seem upset, let them out. Don't let the puppy continue to cry.

Before practicing crate confinement, be sure your puppy has been taken outside to the bathroom and is ready for a nap. Too much time in a crate can make the dog anxious.

Confinement can be scary and frustrating for your new puppy so go slowly with training. A negative experience in the crate can make training harder. Keep sessions short and positive. If you are concerned that your puppy is showing signs of separation anxiety, seek professional help.



Chewing and Mouthing



This article is from [VeterinaryPartner.com](https://www.veterinarypartner.com)

Beck Lundgren, DVM

Revised: September 04, 2019

Destructive chewing is a common problem in puppies and adult dogs. Chewing by puppies is a natural, normal behavior. Puppies chew because they're teething, they're playing, they're learning about their environment, they're trying to escape from their kennel, etc.

One of the main ways puppies learn about their world is to put things in their mouths and chew on them. It is unlikely that you will be able to stop normal chewing behavior completely in puppies. Trying to stop a normal behavior can cause stress and anxiety, and lead to more serious behavior problems.

Teething occurs in puppies up to eight months of age. That means chewing problems can be worse in younger animals than in older ones. Adult dogs may be destructive chewers because they have separation anxiety, they're playing, they're hungry, they don't get enough exercise, they weren't properly trained as puppies, etc.

How can you minimize the damage to your home and household?

The basic methods are to keep your puppy/dog busy, prevent access to things that you don't want damaged, and provide your pet with acceptable things to chew.



1. **Keep your dog busy.** Exercise, fun, reward-based training sessions, playtime, feeding from food dispensing toys rather than bowls, etc., allow our dog to use her brain and muscles.
2. **Dog proof your house.** In other words, keeping things (clothes, children's toys, small objects, etc.) that can be destroyed off the floor and out of the dog's reach. Keep closets, drawers, and toy boxes closed. Take objects off of any surface the dog can reach.
3. **Supervise your dog.** If there are times you cannot watch the dog while she's running loose in the house, put her in a secure area (dog kennel, crate, enclosed room, etc.) or leash her to your belt. If you decide to use a kennel or crate, you'll have to acclimatize her to it or she may develop behavior problems.
4. If there are items that you cannot prevent your dog from having access to, you may decide to try deterrents, such as making the area around the object unpleasant (plastic rug runners or motion/vibration detectors).
5. **If you catch your dog chewing an inappropriate object, don't scare her or try to punish her.** Use the treat-in-trade method by offering her a treat or something else worth trading for; when the pup is clearly invested in the new item, pick up the discarded one. With swapping, the pup will not fear an owner's approach when she has something she values because the owner's approach is generally associated with getting something better! Start using this technique early in her training and encourage swapping for lots of items so that she can learn the technique and will learn to readily give up even a highly prized object. It's always better to reinforce positive behavior than to punish your pet because punishment can cause anxiety and other undesirable behaviors to develop. Dr Sophia Yin's book *Perfect Puppy in 7 Days* has more training tips.

6. **Provide plenty of acceptable chew toys.** What is acceptable depends on the size of your dog, what she finds appealing, etc. Many items have been commonly used (large bones, rawhide chews, plastic bones, hooves, Kong toys, rubber toys, puzzle/foraging toys, dental treats, and so on). However, some are no longer as acceptable as they once were. Cattle hooves, sterilized large bones, plastic bones, etc. can damage teeth. Rawhide chews may become choking hazards if the dog isn't supervised and the rawhide taken away when it becomes small enough to be swallowed. Ask your veterinarian or veterinary dentist for professional preferences on what are safe, acceptable chew toys. Always praise/reward your dog for chewing appropriate things. Remember that toys will be destroyed; that's how you know it's a toy your dog likes.
7. Do not give your old dog old shoes, clothes, or children's toys for her to chew on. Dogs really can't tell the difference between those items and your "good" shoes, clothes, etc.
8. If an animal is protecting resources and showing aggression, the animal should be avoided when it has those items and should have a veterinary behavior consultation because there may be a more complex problem going on.
9. If these things don't help, or if the destructiveness gets worse, consult your veterinarian for help.

Destructive behaviors (chewing, barking, digging, etc.) are not only damaging to your home and possessions, but they can also lead to injury to your dog. Plus, they are a major reason dogs are taken to animal shelters and humane societies. With a little time and work, you and your dog should be able to have a good life together and could avoid being part of those statistics.



Pet Healthcare Financial Planning



Planning for the unexpected!

Most pet owners understand and plan for the expected veterinary cost of pet ownership—food, vaccinations, neutering, and the occasional minor medical problem. What most pet owners do not think about is what happens when the unexpected occurs – for example, being hit by a car causing major bone fracture and surgery, or a major medical problem needing diagnostic testing and referral to specialist for treatment.

You, the pet owner, are faced with difficult and sometimes emotional decisions about the medical care to provide your pet. The time to think about how you will finance that level of care is now and not during a crisis situation.

There are 4 ways to plan for those unexpected costs:

1. Start a savings plan now for your new pet and fund it monthly.
2. Use your personal credit card to cover those expenses.
3. Apply for a Care Credit healthcare credit card.
4. Purchase a health insurance policy for your pet.

Choose a pet health insurance company that knows veterinary medicine and has been providing policies to clients for many years. Some companies that provide other insurances (home, auto, etc) will bundle pet insurance for additional savings.

Future Adult Medical Recommendations

You will probably have the most veterinary visits per year during your puppy's first year of life. As they transition into normal adult veterinary care, there are going to be some changes and dates to plan for.

Routine Care

- Healthy adult dogs have exams and check ups with a veterinarian once per year
- Vaccines are due approximately once a year as well, but there is some variability, especially if boosters were spread out at different times as a puppy
- Healthy adult dogs also need routine testing to monitor for parasites and disease
 - A blood screening for heartworm and tick borne disease once per year
 - A fecal screening for intestinal parasites once per year
 - At around 3-4 years of age, when they are no longer "young adults", a full blood count and chemistry panel is recommended
- Over 70% of pets develop dental disease by age 3, and will be monitored for this at each annual examination. A dental cleaning may be recommended or discussed in the near future!

This is a guideline for a healthy adult dog and does not fit every patient. This plan may change depending on other health conditions that need to be monitored, or the needs and temperament of individual patients or their families.

Anxiety at the Vet's Office

When dogs reach social maturity around 1 year of age, their temperament and tolerance of different situations may change. Things they seemed to tolerate well as a puppy may no longer be tolerated. This is the age when dogs may start to show signs of anxiety, and are mature enough to reach for aggression if they are scared.

Your dog may act differently at their 1 year old visit compared to when they were a puppy. They may be anticipating something scary, like needle pokes or strangers. We will always gauge a dog's comfort level and read their body language, and may discuss signs of anxiety with you and adjust our plan to minimize their fear.



Recommended Readings and Additional Resources:

1. *After You Get Your Puppy* by Ian Dunbar
2. *Puppy Start Right: Foundation Training for the Companion Dog* by Kenneth and Debbie Martin
3. *Perfect Puppy in 7 Days: How to Start Your Puppy Off Right* by Sophia Yin
4. *The Perfect Puppy* by Gwen Bailey
5. *The Culture Clash* by Jean Donaldson
6. *The Other End of the Leash* by Patricia McConnell
7. *The Dog Who Loved Too Much* by Nicholas Dodman
8. *Don't Shoot the Dog* by Karen Pryor
9. *Purely Positive Training* by Sheila Booth



VeterinaryPartner.com is a website with good information on a large variety of topics that is written only by veterinary professionals.



FearFreeHappyHomes.com is a website with good information on pet behavior and fear free training.



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If you have questions, we are only a phone call away (513-791-7912).

Thank you for allowing us to care for your pet.

