



Penbode Pet Vets

Since 1840

All About Your New Puppy





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Introduction

Getting a new puppy is an exciting time in your life, but it can also be daunting for new owners. Your new family member will rely on your help to stay happy and healthy and will need your guidance to grow up to be a well-socialised dog. We have produced this guide to help you through the early stages of puppy ownership, as getting things right from the start can prevent more serious problems further down the line. Penbode Pet Vets are on hand to help you at all stages of your dog's life. Our staff have a wealth of knowledge and don't worry - when it comes to puppies, there are no such things as silly questions. If you have any issues please call us for advice.



1. Insurance

Modern day veterinary medicine is a highly sophisticated and technological branch of science, but this comes at a cost. MRI and CT scans are increasingly being used for diagnosis and this has a high price tag – we regularly see cases that cost well into the thousands. At some point during their life, your dog may fall ill or have an accident, requiring medical attention. Your dog could suffer from a lifelong problem which requires regular and ongoing treatment. One of the most distressing situations arises when a pet's illness is curable or an injury repairable but unfortunately the owner cannot afford to pay for the treatment. Because of this we always advise owners to have sufficient insurance in place to cover these unforeseen events. Choosing the right health insurance for your pet can seem very daunting when you start browsing through comparison websites. For a detailed guide to choosing an insurance plan for your puppy, please see [Appendix B](#).



2. Getting to Know the Physical Characteristics of Your Puppy

Getting your puppy used to being touched and handled is an extremely important part of their development. Puppies need to learn that being touched all over their body is safe, and a good thing – as well as having certain areas manipulated, such as their ears, mouth and feet. This means that if they need to be examined by a vet, or given pills or ear treatments, they are comfortable and less likely to become scared and defensive.

Try and do a short handling session every day. You should handle your puppy calmly and confidently, but gently. If the puppy fidgets or is resistant to being touched, then build up gradually and reward them with treats and/or praise for correct behaviour. If your puppy is very calm and relaxed ask other family members or friends that the puppy already knows to have a go as well.

Eyes – Gently steady your puppy's head with both hands and look into their eyes. Look for any discharge or unusual redness that could be a sign of a problem.

Ears – Lift each flap in turn and look into the ear canal to check for any redness, discharge or bad smells. If your pet's ears are irritating them it is important never to put anything into the ear unless you are instructed to do so by a vet, in case something like a grass seed is causing the irritation. Applying drops will push it further down the ear canal making it more difficult to get out.

Mouth – Lift one lip at a time as this is less intrusive than putting your hand over the muzzle. If you are interested in brushing your puppy's teeth it is a good idea to start now by using a cotton bud to massage the gums and teeth (we'll introduce toothpaste once they have their adult teeth). Little and often is best to start with. We run complimentary dental clinics with one of our qualified nurses if you would like to learn how to look after your dog's teeth properly.

Coat - Should be clean and soft, ideally no grease or dandruff. Long-haired dogs should be groomed at least every other day and short-haired dogs at least once a week.

Feet - Some dogs have very sensitive feet so it is extremely important to be gentle and build up slowly. Start by simply touching their feet, moving on to holding each in turn for a short period. Eventually you should be able to examine individual toes and nails on all four legs. Claws should not be clipped until absolutely necessary - walking on pavement should be enough to wear them down. Please bear in mind that sharp nails aren't necessarily long nails. If the nails are particularly sharp, you can file the ends down with an emery board to blunt them, rather than cutting them.

Tail - Another sensitive area and, unfortunately, the first thing we have to do when your dog is poorly is take a rectal temperature. It is a good idea to try and practice gently holding the tail and raising it slightly.

In order to get your puppy used to handling it is helpful to use treats to form positive associations. For your puppy to learn that tolerating handling gets a reward, the treat needs to come after the handling (e.g. touch the foot then give the treat). However, if you just need to get something done urgently, for example at the vets, allowing a constant supply of food will hopefully distract your puppy long enough to complete the task. Try smearing a little bit of peanut butter on a cupboard door, a plate or a commercially available 'Lickimat'. For a really good example of teaching dogs handling tolerance, see 'The Bucket game' by Chirag Patel on YouTube. Puppy clinics are available with our nurses where your puppy can come in for some enjoyable handling experiences and you can discuss any concerns. We recommend that they come in at least monthly until they are six months old, then every three months until fully grown.



Remember to take lots of photos as your puppy grows - they won't be this small for long!



Our Top Tip

If your puppy continuously bites whilst being handled, start with tiny sessions of 30 to 60 seconds and try to stop before the puppy starts biting again. Begin with the least sensitive areas, such as the back and chest and gradually over the course of a few weeks build up so that you can touch the majority of the puppy without him reacting badly using your hands and then a soft bristle brush. As your puppy becomes more confident and tolerant of being handled start to gently lift ears, lips and feet.

If your puppy continues to bite seek the advice of a behaviourist.



3. Identification and Microchipping

A microchip is a small device, approximately the size of a grain of rice, which is inserted under your dog's skin, usually on the back of the neck. The microchip holds a unique number which is registered to your dog on a national database. Microchip scanners are used to read the microchip. Vets, the police and dog wardens all use microchip scanners to identify dogs. Microchipping is a legal requirement for dogs over 8 weeks old. The breeder should have already had your puppy microchipped, but the database will need to be updated with your details. Remember, if you move to a new house you will need to update your details on the database **by law**.



Your puppy will also need to wear an ID tag on a collar when out in public – this is also a legal requirement. The ID tag must contain the owner's name and address. It is not compulsory to include a contact telephone number, but we would highly recommend that you do. Remember, a microchip is not a tracking device – it only provides the unique number which identifies you as the dog's owner. This is why it's so important that your details in the database are kept up to date.



Microchip
and grain of
rice for
comparison

For more information on your dog and the law please see Appendix A

4. Safety

Safety in and around your home

Puppies are naturally curious, so when you aren't supervising your puppy directly, it is important to ensure they are safe. Initially you may wish to limit the rooms your puppy can get to by using house lines, baby gates, pens and crates. It is equally important to provide your puppy with things to do so they don't find inappropriate items to play with or chew (see Play, Toys and Chews). While they are learning to make good choices with toys, it is a good idea to stay safe by covering cables and ensuring household cleaning products and small items that could be swallowed are kept out of reach. A bouncy, clumsy puppy could injure themselves on slippery floors so place non-skid mats on laminate or tiled floors, paying particular attention around corners and at the top and bottom of steps.

Safety outside your house

Make sure that your garden is secure or there is a fenced off area to prevent your puppy escaping. Make sure all family members keep doors and gates closed at all times. You may need to fence off areas of your garden where you do not want your puppy to go. If possible, restrict your puppy's access to your driveway.

Toxins and poisons



There are many toxic hazards around your home and garden, including medicines, cleaning products, pesticides and plants. Puppies can be exposed to these toxins in different ways, like ingestion, contact with the skin or eyes and inhalation. If you think your puppy has been poisoned, you will need to get veterinary attention straight away. Do not try to make your puppy vomit at home.



It will help your vet if you can provide the following details:

- What product you think your puppy has been exposed to (including brand names and a list of ingredients if possible or take the product or packaging in, if safe to do so.)
- How much they have been exposed to.
- When it happened.
- If you have seen any changes in your puppy since the incident occurred.

Human Foods

Toxin	Symptoms (may include some or all)
Chocolate	Vomiting, diarrhoea, excitability, twitching, tremors, fits
Onion family (including leeks, shallots, garlic and chives)	Lethargy, stomach problems, rapid breathing, discoloured urine. May take a few days for symptoms to show
Grapes, currants, raisins and sultanas	Stomach problems, kidney problems. Look out for signs of increased thirst 
Xylitol (found in many sugar free items and nicotine replacement products)	Weakness, lethargy, collapse, seizures, liver problems 
Other poisonous items include alcohol, blue cheese, raw bread dough, macadamia nuts and mouldy food	

Household Products

Chlorine based bleaches	Corrosive injury to mouth and gut. Excess salivation and stomach problems if diluted eg bleached water drunk from toilet bowl
Detergents	Vomiting, breathing problems, dehydration if ingested. Eye irritation through direct contact
Oven / drain cleaners	Tissue damage, salivation, stomach problems, ulceration, chemical burns, breathing difficulties, difficulty swallowing
Other toxic household items include dishwasher tablets and salts, kettle descalers and metal polishes	

Medicines	
Toxin	Symptoms (may include some or all)
Ibuprofen and NSAIDS (non steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs)	Severe tummy upset, blood in their stools, ulceration, vomiting, increased thirst, inappropriate urination and kidney failure
Oral contraceptives	Mild stomach upsets and disruption to seasons in bitches
Paracetamol	Vomiting, brown gums, increased heart rate, changes to breathing, swelling to face and paws and delayed liver failure
Psoriasis creams (containing vitamin D derivatives)	Weakness, profuse vomiting, diarrhoea, increased thirst, muscle spasms, seizures, heart problems, kidney failure and calcification of the lungs and gut
Other toxic medicines include antidepressants, aspirin, blood pressure medications, diabetes medications, heart medications and sleeping aids	

In the garden	
Funghi	Stomach upset, blood in the stools or urine, hallucinations, seizures, kidney or liver failure
Daffodils / tulips / crocus bulbs	Vomiting, stomach upsets, excess salivation, seizures, increases to blood pressure, heart rate and temperature
Toads	Irritation to and pain in the mouth, disorientation, increased breathing, heart rate changes and fits
Other garden toxins include acorns, compost, foxgloves, conkers, apple seeds, fruit stones (plums, cherries) and yew trees	

In the Shed	
Antifreeze	Vomiting, diarrhoea, weakness, drunken appearance, kidney failure
Herbicides	Vomiting, dehydration, blood in the stools or vomit, mouth ulcers, breathing problems, heart problems, kidney and liver failure
Rat and Mouse Poison	Internal bleeding, weakness, lethargy, lameness, bruising, vomiting, excitability, changes in temperature, seizures
Slug Pellets	Tremors, twitching, seizures
Other toxins found in sheds and garages include creosote, teak oil, fertilisers, fuel, gloss paints, insecticides, white spirit and waterproofing sprays	



5. Your Puppy's Health

Vaccinations

There are a number of fatal diseases that can affect dogs in the UK, and some of these can be transferred to humans. Having your puppy vaccinated is the only safe way to provide immunity against these diseases and if carried out, regular boosters can protect your dog for life. As long as their mother is immune, puppies will usually be protected for the first few weeks of their life. The vaccination course will involve two or three injections, with vaccinations being given between two and four weeks apart. The first vaccination can be given as early as six weeks of age depending on the brand used. At three weeks following the final vaccination your puppy is fully protected to venture out and about. Annual boosters will ensure that the protection is effectively maintained. When your vet gives your puppy the initial vaccination course they will give you a certificate and a record card. Keep this safe as you will need it when you attend training classes or put your dog into boarding kennels etc.



Remember, when you vaccinate your dog, not only are you protecting your dog but you are helping to stop the spread of disease to other dogs





What diseases can we vaccinate against?

Canine Parvovirus - A highly contagious disease that can be fatal to dogs. The disease attacks the dog's intestines rendering them unable to absorb vital nutrients. Vaccinations are repeated every three years following the first booster.

Canine Distemper - Closely related to the human measles virus, canine distemper can be fatal. It attacks the dog's nervous system. Vaccinations are repeated every three years following the first booster.

Infectious Hepatitis - This is an acute liver infection spread through the faeces, urine, blood, saliva and nasal discharge of infected dogs. Vaccinations are repeated every three years following the first booster.

Leptospirosis - A bacterial infection that can lead to major organ failure. It is contracted by your dog coming into contact with urine from infected dogs, rats and foxes. Vaccinations are repeated yearly.

Infectious Bronchitis - An extremely unpleasant infection showing as a whooping type cough. It is passed from dog to dog and can cause severe airway damage. Vaccinations are repeated yearly.

Rabies - A viral disease that causes inflammation of the brain. Vaccinations are repeated every three years if the dog is travelling overseas.



Parasites

When it comes to parasites, prevention is better than cure. At Penbode Vets we offer the **Protect4Life Pet Health Plan** which will help you spread the cost of veterinary supplied parasite prevention medication, and provide discounts on other treatments. There are different ways to treat your pet. The important thing is planning, your veterinary surgeon will work out a parasite protection plan specifically for your dog dependent on their lifestyle.

Fleas

Fleas are tiny wingless insects that feed on the blood of animals. They reproduce rapidly, by laying eggs, so if you spot one on your dog, it is likely your house will already be harbouring flea eggs. The flea eggs lie dormant in the soft furnishings of an owner's home and when conditions are right, develop to adult fleas which then lay more eggs, which soon leads to an infestation. Due to their life cycle and modern heating keeping our homes warm, fleas are a year-round problem. Some dogs are allergic to flea saliva and can get dermatitis as a result of being bitten. The irritation causes the dog to scratch and chew at its skin, resulting in sores and scabs. Humans can also be bitten by fleas, usually lurking in the carpets, resulting in raised itchy lumps. Fleas are also the intermediate host for a type of tapeworm. During grooming a dog can ingest these fleas and develop tapeworm. We offer complimentary flea checks with our qualified nurses, so please make an appointment.



Ticks

Ticks are oval shaped insects which attach themselves to a host animal to feed. They look like greyish/brown warts. Most dogs pick up ticks when moving through long grass and thick vegetation. Tick saliva contains an anaesthetic, so your dog will not feel the bite and neither will you! Ticks can transmit a number of serious diseases to dogs and humans, such as Lyme disease. This can cause serious health issues.



Our Top Tip

Never pull a tick off as you may leave its head under the skin which can become infected. Use a tick removal tool which, when used correctly, ensures that all of the tick is removed. Remember to kill the tick afterwards so that it cannot attach itself to another animal.

Worms

There are two common types of worm that can infect your puppy – roundworms and tapeworms. Due to the life-cycle of the roundworm it is fair to assume that all puppies are infected with roundworm at birth. Dogs can pick up roundworm eggs from soil that has had dog faeces on it. The eggs can lie dormant in the soil for up to two years. Eggs can also be present in a dog's coat, so it is important that you wash your hands after touching your pet, as worm larvae can cause permanent damage to human eyesight. Tapeworms, which dogs can catch by eating infected mice, birds or fleas, are often the reason that dogs drag their rear end on the ground. If your dog has tapeworms, little egg-filled segments of the tapeworm's body will crawl out of your dog's bottom, causing intense itching.

6. Diet and Nutrition

Diet is a complicated issue for owners, the food you feed your puppy during their first year is critical to their development. There is a huge range of commercially available dog food on the market and it is difficult for owners to choose, as these products vary considerably in quality and palatability. Your breeder should tell you what food they have started your puppy on, but this can vary widely between breeders and you are not obliged to continue with their choice. A quality veterinary approved diet will be balanced and contain the correct levels of protein and minerals. Whilst these diets tend to be more expensive than some brands, they can be more economical in the long run because you can serve smaller portions. Cheaper food tends to be bulked out with lots of fibre – which can also lead to lots of messy faeces to clear up! Puppies need several small meals every day. Start by feeding your puppy four meals a day and reduce this to three meals when they are four to six months old. When they reach adulthood this can reduce to two meals a day.

Top tips for feeding your puppy

- Try not to vary their diet, as this can affect their digestion. Any changes in diet should be made gradually, over the space of a week to avoid stomach upsets
- Choose a product specifically designed for puppies – your vet will be able to offer advice
- Don't overfeed – pet obesity causes many life-threatening problems later in life which can be both distressing and costly to treat. Your vet will be able to advise you on portion size for your puppy's age and breed
- Allocate a portion of their daily food allowance to use as rewards for training. This can be made up from dry kibble or fresh cooked meats. Keep the latter as high value rewards for training new commands.
- Make sure your puppy has access to fresh drinking water at all times. Remember to wash food and water bowls before each meal in order to prevent the spread of germs



7. Exercise and Sleep

Dogs should ideally be walked at least once daily, as this will help to strengthen their bones and muscles and help with weight control. Always take water with you on a walk and if the weather is hot, walk them at cooler times of the day and be mindful of hot surfaces such as pavements. A general guideline per walk is five minutes per month of age – so a three month old puppy should have no more than a 15 minute walk. The most important consideration is the type of exercise your puppy does. As they are growing it is important to avoid jumping and twisting movements that can put extra strain on developing joints. Try to roll or hide a ball or toy for your puppy to find instead of throwing it and lift your dog in and out of the car and carry them down flights of steps. If, at any time during a walk, you notice that your dog is struggling beyond their usual capabilities, consult a vet to see if there are any underlying causes.

Puppies are bundles of energy but also tire quickly. Look out for signs of them being worn out while playing or walking. Puppies should not walk long distances or participate in energetic sports, such as fly ball and agility, until their bodies have fully matured at 18 months old. Fortunately, there are lots of other ways to tire your puppy out which are equally as beneficial (see [Play, toys and chews](#)). Like babies, puppies need regular naps. A puppy should be sleeping for 16–20 hours a day. Puppies that are not getting enough good quality sleep will struggle to learn new things and will likely show behaviour problems such as excessive mouthing and restlessness.

Our Top Tip for Zoomies! Puppies that have a mad five minutes is a common behaviour which we call ‘zoomies’. It occurs because your puppy is either over tired or not tired enough! Ensure your puppy has had enough mental stimulation during the day and try to work out roughly what time this occurs so that you can put the puppy ‘to bed’ or into a separate quiet area to chill out with a Kong before the zoomies start!



8. Neutering

If you are not planning on breeding from your dog then having them neutered is one of the best decisions you can make for them. There are hundreds of abandoned dogs in rescue centres, so as a responsible dog owner you should do everything you can to avoid unwanted pregnancies. When neutering is performed on male dogs it is known as castration and on female dogs it is known as spaying. The ideal age to neuter your dog very much depends on the individual and is best discussed with your vet or nurse. Generally males are castrated between 12-18 months. Females can be spayed at six months of age, before their first season. However we recommend females (more importantly large breeds) are neutered after their first season.

A common misconception is that your dog will become fat after neutering. It is true that neutering can alter the metabolism in both male and female dogs and make them more susceptible to weight gain, however a simple adjustment to their feeding quantities will prevent your dog from becoming overweight. Your vet or nurse can teach you to Body Condition Score your dog, so that you know how to tell if they are beginning to gain weight and can offer advice on a suitable diet and correct feeding quantities.



Castration

Castration is the surgical removal of the testes under anaesthetic. This is a routine procedure generally carried out as a day patient.

The health benefits of castration are:

- It will eliminate the possibility of testicular cancer
- It greatly reduces the chances of your dog getting prostate disease
- It can reduce the risk of perianal tumours and hernias

It is a common misconception that testosterone is to blame for many problem behaviours in male dogs and that castration can improve a dog's behaviour. The removal of the testes stops production of the male hormone testosterone. This misconception is only true if the behaviour is sexually driven (attraction to female dogs, escaping from the garden, roaming, mounting and inappropriate urine marking). Some of these behaviours, however, may not always be sexually driven. Testosterone can also have a positive effect on the behaviour of a growing dog by helping to improve their confidence. Early neutering can be shown to increase a dog's anxiety by removing testosterone at a time when they need it most.

If you are considering castrating your dog due to behavioural problems we advise you speak to a vet or a dog behaviourist to see whether the operation is likely to cure the problem or make it worse.



Spaying

There are many advantages to having your bitch spayed – some medical and some behavioural.

- Spaying prevents the bitch from coming into season. Usually this happens twice a year but in some bitches it is once a year and in others it is three times a year. The season usually lasts for around three weeks. Sometimes during their season the bitch will have a swollen vulva and a discharge of blood and/ or mucus. You may also see marking behaviour where she will urinate small amounts on objects. She may also show signs of restlessness and a lack of appetite
- It prevents unplanned pregnancies
- It stops the unwanted attention of male dogs, who are very persistent in trying to mate with your bitch. Equally, many non-spayed female dogs will seek to escape to find a mate when they are in season
- Spaying eliminates the possibility of a false pregnancy. This is when the bitch feels unwell, produces milk, starts nest building and may become aggressive as a result of increased anxiety
- It prevents a potentially fatal condition called Pyometra, which is an infection of the womb
- It greatly reduces the chance of developing mammary cancer if the bitch is spayed before reaching maturity

There are lots of theories about the disadvantages of spaying – some of these have an element of truth to them but some don't.

“Spaying makes bitches incontinent”. This is untrue. That said, certain breeds are predisposed to incontinence and spaying may exacerbate this situation. If your bitch is prone to weeing when excited or nervous, we recommend that you wait until after she has had her first season to have her spayed. Discuss this with your vet.

“Spayed bitches lose their character and become useless as a guard dog”. This is simply untrue. If your bitch is nervous or aggressive towards other dogs or people it may be advisable to wait until she is a little older to spay her. If you think this is the case please seek the advice of a behaviourist to discuss the situation further because as with male dogs, sometimes neutering can make the problem worse.

Spaying is generally recommended either before the bitch has her first season at six months of age or two-three months after a season. This is when her hormone levels and blood supply to her uterus are normal.

There are two ways of performing a spay operation:

- A traditional spay – involving a midline (tummy) incision to remove the uterus and ovaries
- A Laparoscopic Spay (keyhole surgery) – three smaller incisions to remove just the ovaries. This procedure is less invasive so reduces the risk of infection and speeds up recovery and healing times (see pic)

Both procedures require a general anaesthetic and your dog can usually go home the same day.

We offer free of charge pre-neutering checks with our qualified nurses so please make an appointment and come in to discuss neutering options for your dog.



9. Building a Good Relationship

It is vital that you establish a good relationship with your dog with clear boundaries and guidelines. Ensure your puppy understands what is expected from them by agreeing clear house rules with the whole family. Consistency is important to stop your puppy becoming confused and frustrated.

For example:

- Will the dog be allowed upstairs or on the sofa? Remember that if your dog is allowed on the sofa in your home you can't expect it to stay off the sofa in somebody else's home. You could always try teaching your dog that they can only go on the sofa when there is a blanket on there, or when they are specifically invited
- Do you want your dog to be fed from the dinner table? If not, reward your dog for lying in its bed quietly while you are eating
- Agree to keep kitchen surfaces clear. Dogs will repeat behaviours that work for them so if your puppy jumps up on the kitchen counter and finds food it is highly likely that they will do it again
- Ignore any barking for attention, wait for your puppy to be quiet before interacting
- Agree on what words you are going to use for specific commands so your puppy doesn't get confused
- Always be positive and exciting while training in order to motivate your dog



Training

Training your puppy should always be a fun experience. Ensure your puppy is trained in a positive, relaxed environment and only use reward based methods which stimulate a waggy tail response. You want to build a relationship that is based on trust and a mutual like of each other!

Top tips for training your puppy:

- Do not use your cue word (such as 'sit') when beginning to teach a new behaviour – your puppy will not yet know what it means
- Lure or shape your puppy into performing a behaviour and reward your puppy at the precise moment that they are performing that action. You can mark this moment using a clicker or a marker word such as 'yes' then follow quickly with a treat
- You must give the marker word/click within one second of your puppy performing the action otherwise they won't make the connection between the action and reward
- Reward every time the puppy performs the behaviour and once the puppy has learnt what you are asking them to do you can then add your chosen cue word. Following more repetitions the cue will then be associated with the action
- If your puppy is having trouble understanding what you are trying to teach them, try breaking the task into smaller segments. For example, if you want them to lay down, start by getting them to sit, then use a treat to lure them to drop their head to the floor
- If you are training your puppy in a different location you may find that distractions or a change in environment mean that your puppy does not understand what you are asking from them. In this case it is worth going back a few steps to a point where your puppy is capable of performing a task and gradually increasing difficulty from there. Vary your training locations to ensure your puppy can perform behaviours in a variety of situations
- Be patient – practice makes perfect. Be careful not to repeat a cue over and over if your puppy does not perform the behaviour straight away – you are just teaching the puppy that your cue word has no value

Remember that training is life long – regularly reward behaviours you want at all stages of your dog's life



Crate training

A dog crate is a very useful accessory. It is your puppy's safe, secure den. Dog crates have a number of functions:

- It's a useful safe space for your dog at home
- It can be taken away with you, if you are staying with friends or in holiday accommodation
- It keeps puppies safe
- It's a transferable skill that can be used for other exercises - settle work on mats and other areas requiring self-control (greeting visitors etc)

As dogs are sociable animals, crates should be situated in a social area such as a kitchen or living room.

[Appendix C](#) details how to train your puppy to love the crate



Car Travel

Some puppies will experience anxiety and or motion sickness while travelling so it's a good idea to expose them to car rides early on. To start with get your puppy used to the car without going anywhere, or even running the engine. Use treats to make positive associations with the car. Get them used to the sound of the indicators and the radio and also the movement of the windscreen wipers. After a few sessions in the car switch the engine on (making sure you are in a well-ventilated area) and get them used to the engine noise and vibrations.

Once they are used to being in the car, take them on some very short journeys - just a few hundred yards to begin with.

It helps if you don't travel when your puppy has a full or completely empty stomach. If your puppy shows signs of stress, or motion sickness becomes an ongoing issue contact the practice for advice.

Rule 57 of the Highway Code states that drivers are responsible for making sure animals are suitably restrained in a vehicle so that they cannot distract or injure the driver or themselves during an emergency stop. To comply with this always use a crate or a dog seatbelt/harness. For more information on how the law affects you as a dog owner please see [Appendix A](#)



Toilet Training

Puppies have an instinctive desire to move away from their sleeping area to go to the toilet, but this does not necessarily mean that they will go outside – it is up to you to teach them that the entire house is the designated ‘sleeping area’.

It’s generally easier if one or two people in the house take responsibility for house-training and ideally the puppy needs constant supervision until they have learned good habits.

Watch your puppy’s body language for signs that they want to go to the toilet. These include wandering around uncomfortably with a faraway look in their eyes; sniffing at the ground and circling.

Ideally, take your puppy outside, to the same spot, at least once every hour until you are seeing good results and then slowly begin to decrease the number of times you take them out.

As a general rule, puppies will need to urinate immediately after waking up and within 15 minutes of eating. They are also likely to need to defecate within 30 minutes of eating, so be ready at these times to take them out. Choose a place you want them to associate with toileting. This could be an area of the garden or an outdoor space nearby. Dogs prefer to urinate on absorbent surfaces but it’s useful to teach them to go on a variety of surfaces. For example, some dogs will not toilet on concrete and others won’t toilet on gravel. If you teach them to toilet whenever you require, it will make life easier in the long run.

Repeat words to them that they will associate with going to the toilet such as ‘be quick’ or ‘be clean’ but make sure it is something you can say in public. Say the phrase you wish to use as you see them starting to go, (you will be able to use these words as prompts later on) and wait for them to finish. Then reward them with something really good – treats, praise or play. It’s really important that the fun stuff happens after they have been.

If your puppy doesn't toilet straight away wait a few minutes before going back inside. Keep an eye on them inside and then take them back out after 10 minutes and try again. You may have to repeat this several times. Remember that the dark and certain weather conditions may be scary for your puppy, which will make them more likely to want to toilet inside. Ensure that you are going outside with your puppy during these conditions and try to create positive experiences. Always pick up after your dog and dispose of the mess responsibly. See [Appendix A](#).

It all sounds so simple but every puppy is an individual and accidents are inevitable:

- Don't expect your puppy to tell you when they need to go out
- Don't punish your dog if they have an accident inside, simply ignore them or it can make them scared of toileting in front of you - even when they are outside
- Don't leave the door open to the garden so that they can come and go as they please. Unless you are going to go outside with them, it can lead to missed opportunities to reward them thus delaying house training
- If you notice your puppy is starting to show signs of wanting to go to the toilet, you can attract their attention and encourage them to follow you outside. Do not pick them up or they will not learn the vital lesson that is 'when I need to go to the toilet I need to walk out of the door and into the garden'
- Don't use ammonia based cleaning compounds to clean a spot your puppy has urinated on as they smell similar to urine and may encourage your puppy to toilet there again. Use a warm solution of biological washing powder to clean the area
- Changing a puppy's diet can lead to changes in output, maintain consistency with what you feed
- Overnight it is too much to expect a puppy to go 6-8 hours without going to the toilet. If your puppy wakes you up during the night, it is worth getting up and taking them outside as then they will be housetrained more quickly. Do not play with them or they will start waking you up regularly in the night for play sessions



Some people prefer to use newspaper or training pads for toilet training. However, this is just turning the training into a two-stage process. You are training your dog to use a 'pad' and then again to go outside. It is quicker to start training outside. Also, puppy pads are expensive and, in our experience, most puppies seem to think they are something to shred or run around the house with!

10. Socialisation and Habituation

- **Socialisation** is the process whereby an animal learns how to recognise and interact with its own species and other species such as cats and people. This interaction helps each species learn the body language and communication skills of each other
- **Habituation** is the process whereby an animal becomes accustomed and desensitised to environmental factors so it can learn to ignore them. This includes both sights and sounds such as thunder, fireworks, doorbells etc.

Socialisation and habituation are two of the most important things that will happen to a puppy during their early life and are an important factor in the future wellbeing of your dog. They need to meet all kinds of different creatures as well as getting used to all the smells, sounds, sights and experiences in their world. Puppies that grow up without good experiences spend their life afraid, wary and more likely to be aggressive.

Socialisation is an ongoing process throughout your dog's life as they continue to come across new things, but active socialisation should continue up until maturity. At 12–18 months there is a second period during adolescence when they may need extra support.

Puppies that have missed out on early socialisation will need extra effort to help them catch up, it is important to be slow and patient while they overcome any fears.



It is a good idea for your puppy to mix with a wide variety of different people, animals, vehicles and environments. This exposure to novelty now will allow them to cope better in different situations when they are older. Do remember, however, that good socialisation is not just about how much you expose your dog to, but how positive that experience is. Ensure your puppy is in a positive frame of mind when going into a new situation. It's really good practice to start to observe your puppy's body language as they react to things in their environment. Are they happy or tense? Is your puppy trying to make themselves smaller by lowering their ears and tail and by crouching? Is your puppy trying to get away but is restrained by their lead? If you think they are scared, then make changes to the situation so that they are less overwhelmed. There is a huge difference between your puppy having positive associations with something rather than just tolerating it. Puppies that just 'tolerate' situations are more likely to have problems later on.



Allow your puppy to approach new things in their own time and under no circumstances should you use the lead to drag them towards new things.

Games with toys or feeding treats can help to speed up the process and enable your puppy to feel comfortable more quickly.

If the puppy is refusing treats and games they are probably feeling too anxious and you need to do something else to help them. Put more distance between yourself and the new situation or only meet one new person instead of two at once.

Try not to make too much of a fuss if the puppy is apprehensive. Showing your concern will make them think that there really is something to be afraid of. Be relaxed and jolly and at the same time change the situation to give your puppy less to be anxious about.

Remember, the more enjoyable experiences a puppy has as they grow, the more likely they are to mature into a well-adjusted adult dog.

If you have a particularly nervous puppy that seems to always be anxious in novel situations, don't force them, speak to a behaviourist to learn about what you can do to help your puppy gain confidence.

Meeting strangers

When meeting strangers in the home for the first time it may help to have some treats handy to reward good interactions. The person they are meeting needs to be relaxed as your puppy will smell and sniff them and will pick up if they are nervous.

Puppies may be tempted to growl, bark and jump at visitors so asking your visitor to drop a couple of treats on the floor will show your puppy that strangers are not to be feared and will keep your puppy on the ground. Let your puppy go to the person, rather than the other way round and, once your puppy has learned to sit, each new 'friend' should ask them to sit and then give them a reward. This will make your puppy less likely to jump up.

Meeting other dogs

It is a good idea for your puppy to meet other dogs and animals to help them to socialise. Your puppy can meet other vaccinated dogs straight away but you must wait until they are fully vaccinated before meeting dogs in public areas. Choose your play dates wisely, a calm adult dog is the perfect teacher for your puppy. If you are socialising your dog with other puppies ensure they are of similar size and confidence levels. Supervise play closely and keep sessions short – five minutes is plenty. They will not learn appropriate play with other puppies so you will need to stop play and have a time out if you see inappropriate play (such as biting, one puppy persistently chasing another puppy, or a puppy pinning another down for more than three seconds). Interactions with other dogs can either take place off lead in a safe space or on a loose lead. Make sure you are relaxed and keep a positive tone. Most importantly, if you feel your puppy is not enjoying the experience remove them from the situation immediately, take a break and try again after considering what could be changed to create a more positive interaction.



Dogs and children

Puppies are inquisitive and like to play... so they are a magnet to children. It is therefore important that children are taught how to behave around a puppy because the puppy can growl and will nip if they feel threatened.

Children should be taught to:

- Never scream or run towards your puppy
- Never harass or mistreat them
- Never to be rough with them
- Never encourage play biting
- Never stare at your puppy or put their face close to your puppy's face
- Never corner your puppy
- Understand that your puppy is a living creature - not a toy

Look out for signs that your puppy is getting tired of a child's attention and give them their own quiet space. **Never leave a dog alone with children.**

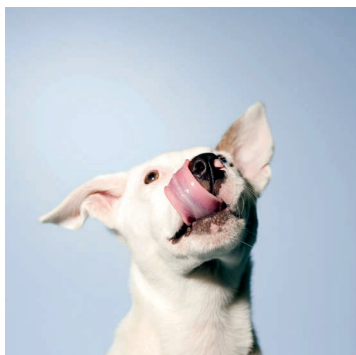
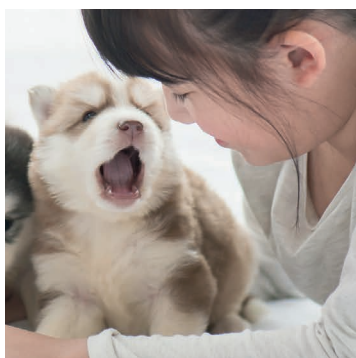
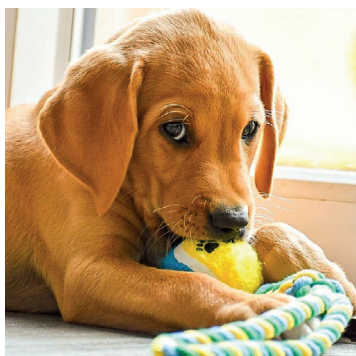
Sadly, incidences in which dogs have bitten people are on the rise and the majority of those bites are to young children and toddlers. These bites are entirely preventable. Dogs do not communicate in the same way we do and they have limited ways to tell us when we have pushed them too far. The typical response from a victim after a dog bite incident is that the dog gave no warning, but unfortunately it is much more likely that the dog has given off a whole lot of subtle signals that have been completely missed.



It is important to watch and learn your dog's body language so you can understand when they are trying to tell you something.

Signs of stress can include:

- Lip licking
- Yawning
- Staring while showing the whites of the eyes ('whale eye')
- Turning the head or body away, or leaning away
- 'Shake-offs' - this looks like the dog is shaking water off its coat



To learn
more about keeping
your children safe
around dogs and about
canine body language
scan the
code below





11. Play, Toys and Chews

Play sessions help establish a friendship and mutual trust between you and your puppy and this is essential if they are to be trained easily and effectively. For example, if your puppy stays near you whilst on walks, waiting for you to play a game then they will not want to wander off by themselves and get into mischief. Your puppy is also more likely to return to you in case you are going to play another game with them.

Games are also an outlet for a dog's natural hunting abilities, which many of them retain. Directing your dog's desire to hunt and chase onto toys will prevent them from finding other, less appropriate outlets for these activities (e.g. livestock chasing).

Your puppy will need some toys to play with and chew on. A toy can be anything that is non-toxic and will not splinter or cause harm in any way. It should also be big enough that it cannot be swallowed and should be removed before it breaks into smaller pieces. Kongs and Nylabones are good toys to leave with your puppy (as long as the correct size has been purchased) as they help to prevent boredom and reduce any separation related problems. Kongs are hard rubber toys which can be stuffed with treats and will keep a puppy entertained for a long time. Remember to clean the Kong with warm soapy water after use.

Avoid giving your puppy cooked bones and rawhide chews. Cooked bones can splinter and cause mouth injuries and rawhide chews can soften, breaking into small pieces which can get stuck in the teeth or throat. Don't throw sticks for your dog. Sticks can cause horrific injuries to a dog's mouth and throat. Try and discourage your puppy from chewing on sticks on their walks as these can splinter.

It is vital that you never try and take items from your puppy without 'trading' it for something else. This reduces the likelihood of guarding behaviour over food and toys as they will learn that it's ok to give something up as something better is coming



Our Top Tip

Have a box of toys but rotate which toys are available regularly so that your puppy doesn't get bored. Keep some toys that are just for when the puppy plays with you (including whilst out on a walk). Tug toys are really useful for this purpose



12. Mouthing, Biting and Chewing

Mouthing helps your puppy gather information about the world around them in the only way they know how. Getting punished or ignored for mouthing will only serve to increase two things:

Frustration. Frustration is a negative emotion which has the consequence of increasing the speed and intensity of the behaviour, hence why mouthing can end up in grabbing and nipping. The pain induced by teething can also add to their frustration.

Anxiety. When mouthing (an act of accessing information) leads to a puppy being isolated if the owner ignores them, the puppy will end up with no information and no guidance which can often lead to anxiety.

To approach mouthing, you firstly need to assess whether your puppy's needs are being met. Ensure they have enough sleep (20 hours a day for a young puppy) and enough opportunities to play (and that's appropriate play with you, not getting your older dog to play babysitter!). This will reduce frustration levels.

When your puppy mouths, you need to show them a more appropriate way of getting information. Always have a chew toy in your pocket to give to the puppy when they start mouthing. If you don't have a chew then scatter a few treats on the floor to direct their attention downwards. You can then praise them. Try to direct them onto a calm activity rather than a tug toy that could potentially increase excitement, therefore a chew is a better option. Nylabones, and Dogwood toys made by PetStages are good options for this, but any non-splintering chew will be fine.



Top Tips

- If you have young children and toddlers in the house, it can be challenging to calmly teach your puppy to curb their biting behaviour. Children running away and screaming in high pitch voices as a response to being bitten around the ankles just turns biting into a game. So, for small toddlers we recommend they wear wellington boots so that puppies cannot evoke such a reaction and children can safely ignore the biting behaviour, while you can redirect the puppy to a calmer activity.
- Don't pick up an excitable or over-aroused puppy as they are more likely to nip you in order to get away. Instead, handle your puppy when it is calm and relaxed and reward them for allowing gentle touch, so that they learn that being handled is a good thing.
- Cuddling or kissing your puppy may also result in your puppy nipping in an attempt to get away. Try not to force your puppy into close contact, always give them a choice.

The key is patience and consistency, so every family member needs to do the same. Biting will not stop immediately. Instead, it will reduce over three-four weeks and ideally should have stopped before they lose their puppy teeth at around 18 weeks of age. At 16-18 weeks if you are not seeing any (or enough) improvement, please seek further help from us.

Chewing

All puppies should be provided with appropriate toys that 'give' when chewed. The Kong puppy is excellent for this and can also be used to dispense food which provides mental stimulation and positively rewards your puppy for focussing on these items rather than furniture. Never punish your dog for chewing - it is normal behaviour. If you find your puppy chewing something inappropriate, simply exchange the item for a more appropriate chew toy



13. Resource Guarding

Many dogs can show resource guarding behaviour. They may run away with stolen objects or chews and if approached may show repelling behaviours such as growling and snapping. This behaviour is related to the value of the item to them and is a defensive response. It is essential to teach your puppy from a very young age that it is rewarding to relinquish items. It is also important to teach them to give up an object when you ask them to. This will help when they pick up valuable or dangerous items. When your puppy is chewing an item teach them to regard your approach as a positive interaction. This can be done by regularly approaching them when they are chewing or playing with a toy, and offering them a treat. When your puppy gives up the toy for the treat add the cue 'give' or 'drop', then pick up the object. Praise your puppy and return the toy. Repeat this daily in order to make this a response that they are happy to perform on cue. When situations arise where they have an object they are not allowed, swap the item with a toy of value to them. Practice adding a little food to your pup's bowl when they are eating. Do this daily to get them to relax in case anyone approaches whilst they are having their food. Do not ever take your dog's food away from them as this will make them anxious and can cause resource guarding.



14. Jumping Up

Puppies will spend a lot of their time jumping up. At an early age this can be a very endearing behaviour and one which we respond to by cuddling or talking to them, thus rewarding the behaviour. However, when your puppy grows up and becomes a large adult this can cause problems.

Did you know that dogs that jump up, as well as enjoying the interaction with you, will be trying to access scent information from your face. Your smells can tell a dog a lot about where you have been, what you have been doing and who you have been with.

To prevent jumping behaviour while still allowing for a positive interaction, start as you mean to go on by teaching your puppy an alternative behaviour to jumping up, such as a sit or hand-touch. Practice at home, and once your puppy is good at this then allow greetings using this behaviour.

Don't worry if your puppy is already jumping up. Manage the situation by using a baby gate or lead in these circumstances or try scattering food on the floor. This will stop them practicing the behaviour until you have perfected your alternative behaviour. If your puppy does jump up at you or someone else, distract them by throwing a treat onto the floor then ask for a sit or hand-touch. Practice makes perfect.



15. Separation Related Behaviour Problems

Dogs are very social animals and have evolved to live in groups. Although dogs shouldn't be left alone for long periods, if they are left alone for short periods when they are young then they are more likely to feel relaxed when left alone for some part of the day.

It is important to give them a safe place to be – one where they learn to be calm and relaxed and one that they are safe from the world and the world is safe from them too.

You have to decide where you want to leave them alone. You can either put them in a dog crate or pen, or fix a stair gate in the doorway to a room that they should stay in. It is important that you don't just put them in this room or crate when you are leaving them as they may learn to associate this room with isolation.

The key is to make positive associations with being on their own. Start by giving them something to do that is a calm, passive activity. A stuffed Kong toy, snuffle mat or chew is ideal.

Gradually start to increase distance between you and the puppy. For example when you need to use the bathroom or perform household chores. Build up the length of time you are elsewhere in the house. You can use a dog appeasing pheromone in the room to relax your puppy. Your vets will be able to give you advice on which product will best suit your needs.

Once they are comfortable with this, you can try leaving the house for a few minutes. Again, as long as they don't show signs of distress you can gradually increase the length of time you are away.

When you return, keep your greetings low key, offer a hand to sniff but don't overly fuss them. You don't want to make a big deal of you coming and going.

If you cannot progress to this stage and your puppy is showing signs of distress when they are left alone, you need to contact the practice for further advice.

Dogs that do not like being alone may show physiological signs of fear, including an increase in heart rate, panting and salivating – all classic signs of separation related distress.

They may also exhibit unwanted behaviour including:

- Destructive behaviour – scratching at carpets, chewing door frames etc
- Vocalisation – barking, whining or howling
- Inappropriate toileting

Boredom or frustration is another common cause of separation related behaviour problems, particularly in young dogs or working breeds. Destructive behaviour when alone can be a sign that your dog is bored or frustrated. To avoid this, ensure your dog is given enough mental and physical stimulation during the day.







Appendices

Appendix A - The Law and how it relates to you as a dog owner

This owner-friendly guide from the Blue Cross is designed to help pet owners understand their responsibilities, but it should not be considered legal advice. Please note, the information below applies to England and Wales. The rules may be different in Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Animal welfare

Keeping your dog happy and healthy

Did you know that all British pet owners have a legal duty to provide for their pet's welfare needs? All domestic animals have the legal right to:

- live in a suitable environment
- eat a suitable diet
- exhibit normal behaviour patterns
- be housed with, or apart from, other animals
- be protected from pain, suffering, injury and disease

You may hear people referring to these five welfare needs as the 'five freedoms'.

Dog owners who fail to ensure their pet's welfare needs are met face prosecution and importantly, they run the risk of causing suffering to an animal who they have taken into their home and have a responsibility to care for. Failing to meet a pet's welfare needs could cause them to become sick, hurt, upset or stressed. Owners can be taken to court if they don't look after their pets properly and face a prison sentence of up to six months, and a fine of up to £20,000. They may also have their pet taken away from them, and be banned from having pets in the future. **Law: Animal Welfare Act 2006, section 9.**

Aversive training devices

In Wales, dog collars that are capable of giving an electric shock are banned. These include collars operated by remote control, anti-bark collars, and collars that are linked to electric fences. Owners who use these on their dogs (or cats) in Wales can go to prison for six months and face a fine of up to £20,000. Electric shock collars use pain and fear to train or control dogs. Blue Cross is campaigning for a UK-wide ban on these cruel devices. **Law: Animal Welfare (Electronic Collars) (Wales) Regulations 2010.**

Tail docking

It's against the law to dock a pet dog's tail, in whole or in part. Exemptions to the rule are if tail removal is needed for medical reasons, or, if the dog is destined to become a working dog then a puppy's tail can be docked if they are less than five days old. This exemption only applies to certain breed types, and these defined types are different in England and Wales. **Law: Under the Docking of Working Dogs Tails (England) Regulations 2007, Docking of Working Dogs Tails (Wales) Regulations 2007.**

Cruelty

Animal cruelty is a criminal offence. Allowing a dog to suffer unnecessarily could land you in prison for six months, a £20,000 fine, and a ban on keeping animals. Note: the Government has announced its intentions to increase animal cruelty sentences to a maximum of five years in prison. **Law: Animal Welfare Act 2006, section 4.**

At home, in someone else's home, or on private property

Allowing your dog to be 'dangerously out of control' is now against the law on private property, as well as in public. This means owners can be prosecuted if their dog attacks someone in their home, including in their front and back gardens, or in private property such as a pub. An exemption is in place if a dog bites someone who has no legal right to be in your home, for example a burglar. You will need to make sure your dog is not a threat to delivery drivers, postal workers, health workers and other professionals who may visit your property. A dog doesn't have to have bitten or physically injured someone for an offence to take place. If a person feels your dog may hurt them, they may still be considered 'dangerously out of control'. This applies to all dogs of all sizes, breeds and types. We strongly recommend reading up on canine body language so you can tell when your dog is uncomfortable in a situation at home, such as a delivery driver knocking on the door or if you have visitors, particularly children. This means you can try training your dog to cope, or move them to a place where you know they will be safe while you deal with visitors. **Law: Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 amends the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991.**

Dog barking too much

All dogs bark sometimes, it's perfectly natural. However, when they bark a lot over a long period of time they can become a noisy nuisance to your neighbours. If the problem has gone on for too long and has caused a lot of upset, your local authority's environmental health department can formally ask you to stop your dog from continuing the behaviour, and if you don't, they can take your dog away from you. Usually, when dogs bark persistently over a long period of time, it is because they are distressed. Common reasons include being left home alone for too long, because they want attention, or because they are worried by something. We recommend contacting a qualified behaviourist to help you resolve the underlying issue. **Law: Environmental Protection Act 1990.**

Dog fouling

Dog fouling consistently ranks as the number one thing local councils receive complaints about, and it's easy to understand why. It smells, it gets stuck to your shoes and it causes a hazard to the environment. You must scoop that poop in most public places, however there are some areas where picking up is not a legal requirement (unless a specific order or bylaw has been placed), and these are heathland, woodland, land used for the grazing of animals. Your local authority also has the power to introduce Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs) to curb dog fouling, including requiring dog owners to pick up after their dogs in certain areas or requiring owners to carry poo bags on them at all times. Owners can be issued with a fixed penalty notice of up to £100 for not complying with regulations. Areas with a PSPO on them should be indicated by signs. Even if you walk in areas with no legal requirement to pick up poo, it's important to get into the routine of doing so. It might seem like not much harm has been done, but canine faeces can contain parasites that, if not cleaned up, can spread to grass and, if eaten, can cause blindness in people and pregnant cattle to abort their young. Owners of assistance dogs who have a disability that prevents them from picking up poo, for example a Guide Dog being walked by a registered blind person, are exempt from these rules. **Law: Environmental Protection Act (1990), Litter (Animal Droppings) Order 1991; Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014.**



Dogs on leads

There is no blanket law requiring dogs to be kept on a lead in all public spaces, however there are a series of orders that mean you have to leash your dog in certain places in your local area, for example children's play areas, sports pitches, roads, parks, and beaches. Local authorities have the power to introduce these orders under a number of different laws and can issue fines or fixed penalty notices for those who don't comply. Many local authorities have introduced Public Spaces Protection Orders over the last couple of years to restrict dogs to always being walked on a lead (or exclude dog entirely) in certain public spaces. Look out for signage detailing restrictions. We also recommend checking your local council's website for details of any restricted areas. **Law: Road Traffic Act 1988, section 27; Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014.**

Out of control in a public place

Dogs must not be allowed to be 'dangerously out of control', which means injuring someone or making someone fear they may be injured. This applies to any breed or type of dog. Owners (or the person in charge of the dog at the time) who allow their pets to hurt a person face punishments of up to three years in prison for injury, or 14 years for death, an unlimited fine, disqualification from owning pets, and having their dog euthanised. It is also an offence to allow a dog to injure a registered assistance dog. In cases where no injury is caused, owners can still go to prison for six months, be fined up to £5,000, be banned from owning pets and have their dog euthanised. We highly recommend taking your dog to positive reinforcement training classes and making sure they are well behaved members of society. **Law: Dangerous Dogs Act 1991, section 3.**

Out and about in public

We recommend checking your local authority's website to find out about any laws or restrictions on dogs in your area.

Dogs and livestock

Dogs should not be allowed to 'worry' livestock. This means owners must prevent dogs from attacking and chasing livestock, and be on a lead or under close control in a field containing any livestock. Even if your dog does not bite livestock, chasing or barking at them can cause pregnant animals to abort their young through stress. When walking in the countryside or other areas where you're likely to come across cattle, sheep, horses and other animals, we recommend keeping your dog on a lead. Be particularly wary of farm animals with their young. If you feel threatened or are chased by livestock, then let go of the lead for your own safety. It's usually the dog they see as a threat rather than you and most dogs can easily outrun a cow. If you are walking across farmland where you can see livestock, or even if you think sheep, cattle, goats or other animals maybe nearby, it's really important to put your dog on a lead. Even if your pet does not usually chase, they may become excited by unusual smells, sounds or movements, and it's better to be safe than sorry. **Law: Dogs (Protection of Livestock) Act 1953, Animals Act 1971, section 3.**

Dogs in pubs, restaurants and cafes

There is no law or any health and safety regulations that ban dogs from being in premises where food and drink is served or sold; however they must not enter areas where food is prepared, handled or stored, for example the kitchen. It's up to the owner of establishments that serve food and drink whether they'd like to welcome dogs to join in the fun or not. **Law: Food Hygiene Regulations 2013, under EU Regulation (EC) 852/2004, Annex II.**



Dogs and roads

Walking your dog by a road

Your local authority has the power to ask you to keep your dog on a lead when walking along ‘designated’ roads. A designated road is one your local authority has chosen as such, and the designated section of road to which the law applies should be marked with signs. While there is no countrywide blanket ban on walking dogs off-lead along roads, we recommend keeping your dog on a lead or under very close control when walking by any road to prevent accidents. **Law: Road Traffic Act 1988, section 2743.**

Dogs and road traffic accidents

If your dog is injured on the road

Drivers who injure dogs with their car, motorbike or other vehicle must give their name and address to the owner, or person in charge of the dog. If there is no person with the dog at the time, the driver should report the incident to the police within 24 hours. **Law: Road Traffic Act 1988, section 170.**

If your dog injures someone on the road

Claims can be brought against dog owners who are proven liable if their dog causes a road incident that causes injury, illness or death. We strongly recommend that dog owners take out third party liability insurance to protect against any costs or compensation you may need to pay if your dog does cause an accident. Legal costs are expensive and can run into tens of thousands of pounds without insurance. **Law: Animals Act 1971, section 2.**

Travelling with your dog in a car or other road vehicle

The Highway Code requires dogs (and other animals) to be ‘suitably restrained so they cannot distract you while you are driving or injure you, or themselves, if you stop quickly’ (rule 57). While breaking the Highway Code is not an offence in itself, allowing a dog to distract you could be taken into account in the event of an accident. Bear in mind that in a crash, an unsecured dog will be thrown forward with significant force. This could result in your pet’s death, and depending on the size of your dog, could also injure or kill the driver or passengers.

Identification

Dogs need to have two forms of identification when in a public place.

Microchipping

All dogs must be microchipped, and the owner's detail must be registered on one of the authorised databases. The law, which came into force in April 2016, applies to dogs and puppies over the age of eight weeks. Exemptions are available if a vet believes there is a valid health reason not to microchip a dog. The vet must issue the owner with a certificate of exemption in this instance. Owners are required to keep their pet's details up to date, for example if they move house. If you rehome your dog to someone else, you must give the new owner the correct microchip registration paperwork so that they can contact the database and register as the dog's new owner. Owners who do not get their dog microchipped and registered with an approved database face a fine of up to £1,000 if caught.

Microchipping puppies

Puppies must be microchipped before they go to their new homes under the new law which came into effect on 6 April 2016. The breeder should be the first registered keeper of the puppy – they are breaking the law if they do not register the puppy by the time he or she is eight weeks old. Breeders should also pass on correct microchip paperwork to the new owner when the puppy goes to its new home. **Law:**

Microchipping of Dogs (England) Regulations 2015, Microchipping of Dogs (Wales) Regulations 2015.

Collar and tag

All pet dogs must wear a collar with the owner's name and address on it when in a public place. The owner's details can be inscribed on the collar itself or on a tag attached to the collar. Even if your dog is microchipped, they still need to wear a collar or tag. Exemptions apply for some working dogs. It's up to you whether or not you put your telephone number on the collar or tag as well, but we recommend you add your mobile number so you can be contacted at any time should your dog go missing. **Law: Control of Dogs Order 1992.**

Appendix B - Choosing the Right Health Insurance for your Pet

Choosing the right health insurance for your pet can seem very daunting when you start browsing through comparison websites, but it is important you choose a policy wisely to ensure the very best treatment is provided throughout your pet's life. You are more likely to claim on your pet insurance than on your home insurance so at Penbode Pet Vets we strongly recommend insuring your pet for illness and injury in order to provide you with peace of mind that the best treatment can be given if the unthinkable was to happen.

Types of pet insurance:

1. Lifetime cover A lifetime insurance policy will cover for a condition throughout the life of your pet. There will still be a policy limit, paying out a set maximum either per condition, or across all conditions that a pet may have in a year but this amount will reset every year to ensure cover for the life of your pet. This is the most comprehensive cover, and the type that we recommend.

2. Maximum benefit A maximum benefit policy will have a set limit per condition but will not renew each year so once that set amount is reached, that condition will no longer be covered and you would have to fund any treatment for the rest of your pet's life. The limit for these policies can vary greatly between insurance companies- so do your research.

3. Time-limited A time limited policy will again have a set limit in pounds that the insurance company will pay out per condition but it will also have a time limit, typically 12 months. So even if the cash limit wasn't reached after a set period of time the condition will still be excluded from further claims. These policies are also known as annual policies. These tend to be one of the cheapest types of policy, so look quite inviting, but take care, if your pet is diagnosed with a condition that may reoccur this policy won't cover it after a set period.

4. Accident only cover What it says on the tin. They will cover for accidents up to a set limit, for example a broken leg, but not for illness, for example a skin condition. Please be careful with these policies, as most pet insurance claims are for illness.

Confused?

Here is an example: Archie the Doberman has a heart condition, and his medication costs £1,000 per year and your policy limit covers up to £3,000 worth of treatment per condition. The illustration below describes how much cover the different types of policy provide with the diagrams representing pots of gold coins. With lifetime cover your pot will refill every year; with maximum benefit, your pot will eventually empty and with time-limited your pot will empty after a year even if you didn't reach your limit in the first year of claiming.

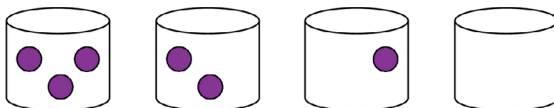
Lifetime

Max cover £3,000



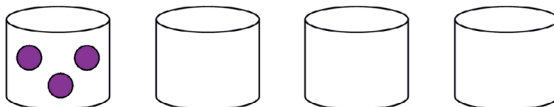
Maximum benefit

Max cover £3,000



Time limited

Max cover £3,000



1

2

3

4

Years

Remember that with advances in veterinary medicine, we are now able to do more to help your pets, this does however come at an increased cost. The above example is not an exaggeration, we are now able to keep our pets alive and healthy for longer than we ever could before and some bills for ongoing medicine for a large dog can easily exceed £100 per month. Another example is the care of a cat following a road traffic accident. The bill, which could include hospitalisation and initial patient stabilization, pain relief, nursing care, x-rays and a complicated fracture repair may total over £2,000. Our pets really do become part of the family and without an NHS for pets, we do need to plan ahead and ensure we have something in place should our furry friends fall ill.

Please also bear in mind:

Pre-existing conditions

Be very careful if you decide you want to switch to another pet insurance provider. Very few policies will cover pre-existing conditions, which means whether you have made a claim or not and decide to switch, your new provider will exclude that condition. A lot of insurance companies will not allow you to take out a new policy if your pet is over a certain age, usually eight years old (which is middle-aged for some cats!)

Excess

As with most insurance there will be an excess to pay to your vet before claiming back any money from an insurance company. Some insurance companies may also ask you to cover your excess plus a set percentage of your vet bill. Remember that if you make a claim, most insurance companies will increase your premium the following year so think about whether it is worth claiming for a small bill.

Extras

Look out for any extras that may be beneficial to you such as covering the cost of kennelling your pet should you go into hospital, providing a reward if your pet is lost or stolen or for prescription food, supplements or physical/ behavioural therapies. It is also very important to ensure your dog has third party liability cover in the event that they cause damage to other people or belongings.



Dental treatment

Many insurance companies will only pay for dental treatment if it is a result of an accident. Some may pay for the first dental procedure but not subsequent treatments.



Preventative care

Pet insurance will not pay for flea and worming treatments, vaccinations or for elective procedures. At Penbode Pet Vets we have the Protect4Life Pet Health Plan that will allow you to spread the cost of preventative care and provide discounts on procedures. Please see our leaflet or the website www.protect4life.co.uk for more details.

Making a claim

If you feel you need to make a claim you will need to obtain a claim form from your insurance provider and complete the first section which contains your personal details, details of your pet and when you first noticed your pet was unwell. It is usual policy to ask you to settle your bill with us and claim the money back from your insurer. We may be able to do a direct claim from your insurer in some circumstances. Once we have your insurance form we will complete the rest of the form and send it to your insurance company along with a copy of your invoice and pet's clinical history. Please remember that your pet insurance policy is an agreement between yourself and the insurance company. Whilst we do complete and send in claim forms we are not able to speak to your insurance company directly about your policy. We will however be happy to speak to you if you have any concerns regarding a claim.

Appendix C - Teaching your dog to love their crate

It is important for your puppy to become accustomed to using a crate as it is likely to be useful throughout your dog's life, not just at the puppy stage. Crate training games should be enjoyable for both you and your dog as you want them to learn that the crate is a good place to be. Additionally, as the games used in this exercise are so much fun it can also improve the relationship between you and your dog.

Preparation is everything

Before you start crate games with your dog you will need the following:

The Crate	Wire or plastic sided with a hinged door on the front It needs to be of a suitable size for your dog to enter and exit easily. Minimal padding/bedding is required as your dog needs to be able to find treats quickly
Rewarding Treats	Such as liver, chicken or cheese These are treats that will only be used when playing crate games. Rewards need to be small so that they can be easily picked up and swallowed quickly
Space	A quiet area with space around the crate and no distractions is best to make it easier for your dog to get it right
Cue Word	You will eventually need both a 'go to your crate' and 'come out of your crate' cue word. You can use whatever words you want but if there is more than one owner you will need to use the same cue so write your cues down and be consistent

Step 1 – Getting your dog into the crate

Without forcing your dog into the crate, use high value treats to reward any interaction with the crate such as being near the crate, sniffing it, stepping in etc. Reward these choices with no verbal cues. Your dog will soon learn that interaction with the crate gets rewarded and will start to progress into the crate. Reward heavily as your dog moves into the crate. Feed treats firstly at your dog's feet and then on to the crate floor as your dog enters, rather than directly to the dog. If you have a dog who won't go into the crate on their own use a mat/flat dog bed and reward interaction with the mat/bed as above. Keep repeating, and when the dog is actively seeking the mat/bed, reward with treats placed on the mat. Move the mat to the entrance of the crate and reward the dog for going on to the mat. Move the mat half in to the crate and throw treats on to the mat. Continue until the mat is inside the crate, when your dog goes into the crate to seek the mat, reward by throwing treats into the crate.

Repeat the above until your dog is happily entering and staying in the crate. This may take a few sessions before moving on.

Step 2 – Shutting the door

Now your dog is happy to enter the crate, we then need them to stay relaxed within the crate and not bolt out of the door when it is opened. The aim is for your dog to leave the crate following the release cue only. You would therefore need to reach Step 4 by the end of this session. Steps 2, 3 and 4 should take less than an hour, but do make sure you give yourself plenty of time to get to the final stage. You will need to practice for some time to perfect your dog's 'crate etiquette' and this can take between a week and a month.

The Rules

It's important when training dogs to be very specific about what you are aiming for. Inconsistency is one of the main reasons that dogs struggle to learn tasks. Crate games consist of two rules:

- 1) No part of the dog's body is allowed outside of the crate. No nose poking out or paws across the threshold of the crate- your dog will soon figure this one out.
- 2) When you touch the crate door, the dog must **remain relaxed** in a sit position. This helps to ensure your dog is away from the door.

It must be the dog's choice to be calm and remain in the crate to earn rewards. You don't want your dog to be tense and waiting for your every move.

Training tips

Only use one treat in your hand at a time. Keep the rest away from the crate. If you have a handful of treats your dog will try and follow your hand out of the crate again. No verbal interrupters such as 'ah ah', yelling or physical blocking of the doorway with your body should be used. The aim of the game is to watch your dog for signs that they are going to try and leave the crate and just calmly but quickly shut the crate door. For your dog to learn effectively, the choice must be theirs. Just like us, dogs prefer to do things if they are choosing to do it rather than having to do it.

Once your dog is happily inside the crate, shut the door, latch it and immediately open it again. Feed your dog a treat high and towards back of the crate, through the bars. Delivering the treats at this level will help your dog to choose a sitting position without being cued – if they're standing, do not feed but move the treat above their head from one side of the crate to the other, keep doing so until they sit, then immediately reward. Then shut the crate door again. It is important the delivery of the treat is away from the door, this helps your dog understand that the value is inside the crate. Repeat this 5-10 times.

Top Tips:

- Every time you shut the crate door, lock it and stand up
- Don't touch the door unless your dog is calm – you need to be rewarding calm behaviour
- The sound of the latch opening will become the signal for your dog that he is about to get a reward – he will start to automatically sit.

Move onto Step 3 only when your dog is choosing to sit and remain at the back of the crate calmly when you touch the latch

Step 3 – Increasing duration

Repeat the step 2 exercise but occasionally do not feed straight away – leave a longer gap.

Repeat this 5–10 times.

Try opening the door and moving away slightly – what does your dog do? If they have sussed out the game, they will have worked out that if they stay in their crate, they get rewarded. If your dog is managing to stay put even with the crate door open, the next step is to add some distractions. There are several different things you can try:

- pick up their lead – the lead is very motivating for your dog so remember if they move forward, the door gets closed
- try and attach the lead, treat and close the crate door but leave the lead on
- try and remove the lead, treat and close the cage door
- put the lead on, reward your dog and then take the lead off again
- try adding different distractions such as dropping a treat outside the cage door, moving around, moving away. Do something unpredictable. Reward for staying calm and in the crate.

Any forward movement – close the door! Keep repeating – this is building value for being in the crate. With success the door doesn't have to close each time.

Top tips:

- Remember to always feed at the back of the crate so that you don't inadvertently reward your dog for moving forward
- Don't let your dog out of the crate until after Step 4 – your dog must NOT escape
- You can feed your dog its reward through the bars at the top if you are using a wire crate and you find that easier but remember the stimulus for the reward is the sound of the crate door opening that noise MUST happen first
- If the dog is constantly failing, return to Step 1 to add more value to the crate before moving on
- Don't try and block your dog – open the door confidently and let your dog choose. If you try and block mistakes, your dog won't learn
- Likewise, try and help your dog to succeed – don't wait until he is halfway out of the crate, watch your dog for the slightest sign of movement towards the crate door and calmly close the door before any part of them breaks threshold

Step 4 – The release cue

Make sure you clear the immediate area of anything that your dog may find reinforcing such as toys or treats on the floor. Attach the lead and reward your dog in the crate. Stand on the end of the lead and give your dog its release cue (such as 'OK'), only say it once and let your dog come out of the crate. If your dog does not know the release word yet you may need to encourage your dog out by patting your leg, they will quickly learn the release cue. Stand up, turn and face the crate. Be patient and let your dog choose. Resist the temptation to cue or lure your dog back into the crate. Your dog should receive no acknowledgement, response or reward at all for being outside of the crate. If your dog has understood the game, it should make the choice to go back inside the crate. Give your dog massive praise and a high value reward for turning around and heading back into the crate. If they are not keen to go back in, it means the crate does not hold enough value so you need to build on that by repeating the previous steps and possibly trying higher value treats. Do not repeat this stage back to back, mix it up with Steps 2 and 3 to continue building value.

Top tips:

- Never force your dog into the crate
- Puppies can be gently held (either side of their chest) if they are not used to wearing a lead yet

Maintaining the Love

Continue to play crate games randomly throughout your dog's life to ensure the value of the crate is being maintained. Always reward your dog whenever they are being calm inside their crate.



Online resources



Scan
to
Join



Having a puppy is so exciting, but it can also be overwhelming at times. This standalone digital mini course will prepare you for **EVERYTHING** you need when introducing a new puppy to your house whether they are going to be the only dog, or whether you are introducing them to dogs you already have.

This step-by-step guide will walk you through all the games to train your puppy. We cover it all, leaving you feeling like a super-hero puppy owner!

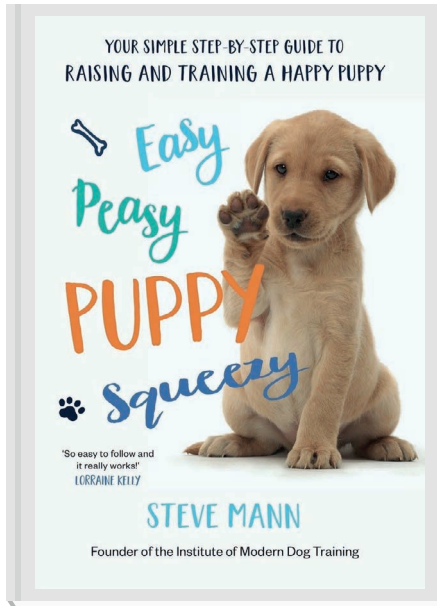


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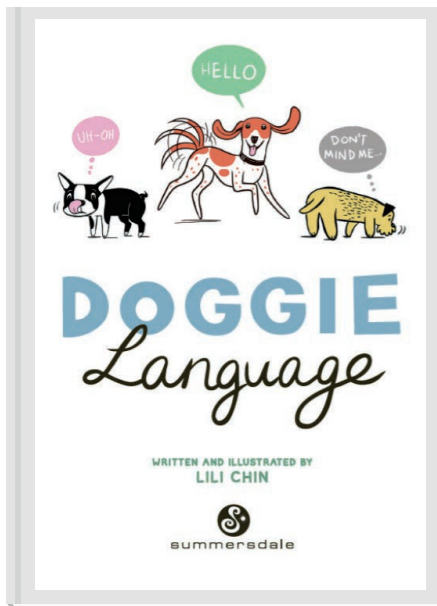
Browse expert videos for how-to guides and top tips for teaching your puppy or dog a variety of essential skills.

Further Reading



Easy Peasy Puppy Squeezy by Steve Mann

"Using simple, proven, science-based and ethical techniques, I'll show you how to have the best relationship with your pup, as well as teaching you how to get: super-fast recalls, great loose lead walking, perfect manners and much, MUCH more... I promise, it really is easy peasy and every tip, trick and lesson will bring you and your puppy closer together. I'll see you on the other side, Enjoy!" Steve Mann



Doggie Language by Lili Chin

This small but mighty book is your perfect illustrated guide to seeing and understanding the subtle visual cues used by your beloved pup to express how they're feeling in different situations. The more we notice and listen to what our best friends are telling us, the better chance we have of helping them feel safe and happy

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