



BEST PRACTICES

General Dog Care (Source taken from ASPCA)

A dog can be a wonderful addition to any home, but whether you're an experienced pet parent or a first-time adopter, it's important to keep your canine companion's health and happiness a top priority. Below are some useful tips for all dog parents.

And remember: If you're considering bringing home a new dog, please make adoption your first option. We encourage you to browse our directory of adoptable dogs in your area or visit our Find a Shelter page to start your search.

Feeding

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

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

Puppies should be fed a high-quality, brand-name puppy food (large breed puppy foods for large breeds). Please limit "people food," however, because it can result in vitamin and mineral imbalances, bone and teeth problems and may cause very picky eating habits and obesity. Clean, fresh water

should be available at all times, and be sure to wash food and water dishes frequently.

Exercise

Dogs need exercise to burn calories, stimulate their minds, and stay healthy. Individual exercise needs vary based on breed or breed mix, sex, age and level of health. Exercise also tends to help dogs avoid boredom, which can lead to destructive behaviors. Supervised fun and games will satisfy many of your pet's instinctual urges to dig, herd, chew, retrieve and chase.

Grooming

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

Handling

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

Housing

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

Licensing and Identification

Follow your community's licensing regulations. Be sure to attach the license to your dog's collar. This, along with an ID tag and implanted microchip or tattoo, can help secure your dog's return should she become lost.

Fleas and Ticks

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

Medicines and Poisons

Never give your dog medication that has not been prescribed by a veterinarian. If you suspect that your animal has ingested a poisonous substance, call your veterinarian or the ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center for 24-hour animal poison information at (888) 426- 4435.

Spaying and Neutering

Female dogs should be spayed and male dogs neutered by six months of age. Please visit our Spay/Neuter Your Pet page to learn more.

Vaccinations

Your dog may benefit from receiving a number of vaccinations. Please visit our Pet Vaccinations page to learn more.

Dog Supply Checklist

- Premium-quality dog food and treats
- Food dish
- Water bowl
- Toys, toys and more toys, including safe chew toys
- Brush & comb for grooming, including flea comb
- Collar with license and ID tag
- Leash
- Carrier (for smaller dogs)
- Training crate
- Dog bed or box with warm blanket or towel
- Dog toothbrush

The Scoop on Poop

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

CRATE TRAINING YOUR PET

Most orphaned pets have some unresolved issues when they are transitioned in their new homes. Many of these issues will not emerge until days or weeks later. By taking a pro-active leadership role with your new pet – by being the alpha pack leader – you can provide the security and comfort zone necessary to dissolve those issues before they manifest.

Crating is the key! Your pet will always be a better pet and companion if it remains in close contact with you. You will discover key things about this little canine that will enrich the pet/caretaker bond.

This can only be accomplished if the pet remains in close contact with you.

The greatest aid to allow your dog to live comfortable with you is a CRATE. Utilizing the natural instinct of the dog that is a denning creature is a better way to share living quarters and it is also better for the dog.

INTRODUCING YOUR PET TO ITS CRATE

Crating should always be a pleasant experience for your pet. Introduce your pet to its crate within a few minutes after you bring him/her home. This will become its own place within your household – its den, so to speak.

1. Buy a crate that is large enough for your pet to stand up and turn around and lay comfortably.
2. Put a nice mat in the crate for your pet to lay on.
3. Place a piece of your own clothing that carries your scent in the crate.
4. Place the crate somewhere that is out of the way but not isolated.
5. Choose a location out of the direct sunlight and out of drafts.
6. Select a spot where the dog can see what is going on in the room.
7. Invite your pet to sniff out his/her "den."

Leaving your pet for the first time can bring up old memories of abandonment. You must desensitize your pet by doing the following:

Leave your pet in their crate with a nice new or different toy and leave the room for 15 minutes. Turn on the radio or TV for company.

Always have a comfort toy in the crate. This can be their security blanket or a teddy bear or any other type of toy they cannot destroy but identifies with pleasure.

Come back in and let your pet out and greet it with a hug.

Take your pet outside to eliminate.

Come back in and give your pet a small treat.

Do this several times throughout the day and make each time you are gone a little longer.

Continue to do this until your pet is comfortable in its crate and knows you will return.

Most destructive behavior occurs when your pet has been left alone unsupervised. A phone ringing or someone at the door can create anxiety that will trigger destructive behavior. Anxiety can be diffused by placing your pet in its comfortable crate each time you must leave the house or area, even if it is only for just a few minutes. Continue this as long as your pet displays a tendency to be anxious about you leaving.

Unwanted behavior can be unlearned. It takes patience and understanding. Stand back and analyze how you would think if you were in your pet's paws and had your pet's background. This will help you provide the security your pet needs when you are not around. Call PP2CR if you have ANY questions.