

EVERVET



# PUPPY CARE



ADVICE FOR NEW PUPPY OWNERS





# Congratulations!

Adopting a puppy is such an exciting time. There is a lot to learn and it is easy to become overwhelmed with well meaning but often confusing advice. We wrote this booklet to give you a simple overview of puppy care and to start you off feeling well informed about your puppy's individual needs.

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TO  
THE

# Basics



## Housing & Introduction

When your pup arrives home, let him quietly become familiar with his new surroundings. Show him where his bed is and have him sleeping there from the very first night. A crate is ideal for sleeping in and should be big enough to fit him when he is an adult. Put a blanket, toy and water bowl in the crate and puppy pads down in case he needs to toilet. Your puppy will also need a comfortable bed or mat as a place to rest in each room where he will spend time..

Adaptil ([adaptil.com/au](http://adaptil.com/au)) can help a worried pup settle by mimicking the action of the natural comforting pheromone released by a mother dog. It is available at our clinics. A ticking clock or a hot water bottle swapped in a blanket can also be soothing to a new puppy and help them settle to sleep.

Pups have two speeds; asleep and full throttle. When awake they can be adventurous and mischievous. Make sure rubbish bins are secure and beware small objects left lying around that are fun to chew but dangerous to swallow. If you need to block access to part of the house a baby gate works well and can allow him to see what is going on while remaining safe in his own area.

If you have other pets, make the introductions in a neutral area, away from feeding or sleeping areas. Be sure to feed them separately, as dogs can be territorial about their meals.

## Feeding

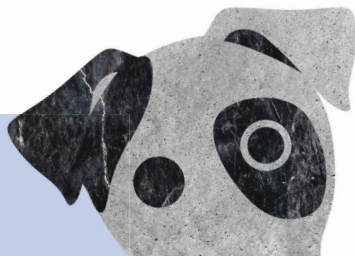
Initially feed a diet as similar as possible to what your puppy is used to and gradually transition to the diet of your choice.

Ideally, your pup's diet should be based on a premium quality commercial puppy food that is balanced and contains all the vitamins and nutrients a puppy needs. Other types of food can be added in smaller amounts to give variety.

Any time you make changes to the diet do it gradually, as sudden changes can cause stomach upsets or diarrhoea.

Until they are three months old puppies may be fed up to four times daily. Reduce to three times daily until six months of age and then to twice daily.

When deciding how much to feed, use the recommendation on the packet as a starting point. If they are plump and not eating all food offered, feed less, if they are lean and hungry, feed more.



YOUR  
BUDDY'S

# Health



## Health Care and Wellness

You will no doubt be keen to ensure that your puppy grows up to be a healthy, happy and polite member of your family and society in general.

Our veterinarians, veterinary nurses, puppy preschool educators and support staff are a terrific resource for you to use when making decisions about your puppy's health and lifestyle.

A wellness program for your puppy is a preventative health plan that is developed in collaboration with you and is matched to your puppy's needs, taking into account your dog's breed, your lifestyle and other factors.

As your puppy matures through adult, senior and elderly life stages the focus of the wellness plan changes too, becoming more tailored to individual needs and lifestyle.

We can help to remind you when health checks are due or parasite control needs to be given. As the years go by we look forward to welcoming you both in as friends when time for a wellness visit to the vet comes around.



## Vaccination

Vaccination protects against diseases that otherwise cause serious illness or death and the vaccination program for your puppy will be tailored to suit you and your puppies individual needs.

As a general rule, at six to eight weeks puppies are vaccinated against Distemper, Hepatitis, and Parvovirus. At ten weeks this vaccine is repeated and as well as vaccination for Canine (kennel) Cough. Some dogs require a further Canine Cough vaccination at fourteen weeks of age.

Regular booster vaccinations are given throughout life. The frequency of the booster vaccinations depend on the vaccines used as well as your dog's lifestyle and environment.

The diseases we vaccinate for are:

### DISTEMPER

Distemper causes severe fever, respiratory symptoms (coughing, sneezing, nasal discharge, pneumonia), eye discharge, vomiting, diarrhoea, loss of appetite, listlessness and dehydration. Nervous signs such as muscle tremors, convulsions, loss of balance and progressive paralysis can occur later in the course of the disease. The recovery rate is low.

### HEPATITIS

Infection with this virus can result in sudden death. Other patients suffer high fever, loss of appetite, pain, blue eye (cloudiness of the cornea) and jaundice.

### PARVOVIRUS

Parvovirus causes severe diarrhoea, vomiting, abdominal pain, fever, loss of appetite, and extreme depression. It is often accompanied by rapid dehydration, bleeding from the bowel and collapse.

### CANINE (KENNEL) COUGH

This disease is characterised by a harsh, non productive cough that may persist for up to three weeks. In young, elderly or immunocompromised dogs it can predispose to a potentially fatal secondary pneumonia. Severe forms of canine cough are either caused by a virus (Parainfluenza) or less commonly a bacteria (Bordetella).

## Heartworm Disease

Heartworms are long, threadlike worms that live in the chambers of the heart and major blood vessels. This parasite is spread by mosquito bites.

Heartworm infection causes heart and lung failure and, as you may imagine, treatment can be risky. That is why prevention is best.

Fortunately for our puppies there are many safe preventative treatments available, from an injection that is given once a year at the annual checkup visit, to topical applications or tablets that are combined with flea and worm treatments and given monthly.

The combination products we recommend are Advocate for those who prefer a topical treatment or Nexgard Spectra which is a tablet. Both are effective, easy to administer and safe.

## Intestinal Worms

Roundworm, hookworm and whipworm are parasites that inhabit the digestive system of dogs, puppies in particular. These worms are a cause of failure to thrive, malnutrition, diarrhoea and other health problems.

It is important to treat for these worms regularly in young puppies. Worming tablets and syrups are available for fortnightly use.

From ten weeks puppies can also suffer from tapeworm infection, so it is important to commence an allwormer medication by twelve weeks of age.

Some dog worms can infect humans and even cause serious health problems. For that reason regular ongoing worm treatment becomes especially important if you have a young family.

Hydatid tapeworm is a human health risk and can be contracted by dogs who visit farms. For farm dogs in risk areas a tape worm tablet is given every six weeks. Dogs visiting Tasmania must be treated for hydatid worms before they travel.



## Fleas

Fleas are small, fast, blood-sucking insects which can cause considerable irritation and distress.

Some puppies arrive at their new home harbouring a happy and healthy flea population. These fleas can quickly lay eggs in the environment from which fleas can emerge intermittently for months to come.

Other puppies are given a flea treatment by their breeder. For these puppies the risk of flea infestation begins once they leave your house to play in the back yard, romp in the park, go to the groomers or sit at your feet at a local cafe.

Allergy to flea bites is the most common cause of severe itching in dogs. For dogs that are not allergic it is easy to mistake their irritation for “normal” dog scratching and so many people do not treat their pets adequately and that is why fleas abound in our environment.



## Parasite control program

A sensible parasite control and prevention program, tailored to your pet’s lifestyle is needed.

There are many products available. Some are applied to the skin, others are given orally. Some are not safe for young puppies, and others are not safe if you have cats in the household. Always read the safety directions on the packaging carefully.

Choosing the right parasite control program for your pup can be confusing and often it helps to talk it through with someone who understands all the options available. We are your informed experts, feel free to discuss parasite control with us anytime.

### Parasite control schedule

Weeks of age	Worm	Flea	Heartworm prevention
2	✓		Monthly for life, (Advocate or Nexgard)
4	✓		
6	✓		
8	✓	✓	or
10	✓		
12	✓	✓	Proheart Injections given at three, six and fifteen months and then annually.
16	✓	✓	
20	✓	✓	
24	✓	✓	

## Care of Teeth and Gums

Were you aware that nearly 80 percent of dogs show signs of dental disease by three years of age? It's critical to get your puppy's oral health off on the right foot in order to avoid future problems.

Performing regular mouth examinations on your puppy is a vital first step to monitoring their dental health.

Lifting your pup's lip and examining the teeth for discolouration, gum disease or bad breath should be done regularly. Use preservative-free peanut butter on your finger as a reward. Seek our advice if your pup will not allow you to examine the mouth.

The best method of keeping your dog's teeth clean is by brushing them. Talk to the vet or any of our helpful nurses for a lesson in tooth brushing.



Familiarise your puppy with home brushing right from the get go using specially formulated pet toothpaste and brushes. Aim to clean your pup's teeth at least three to four times per week.

Chewing is an important behaviour as your puppy explores his environment and can also be a useful way to remove dental tartar later in life.

We recommend giving your pup only veterinary approved dental chews and toys, talk to us about those approved by the Vet Oral Health Council.

Bones are liable to cause broken teeth and digestive problems and so we do not recommend the feeding of bones or other hard chews such as antlers and hooves.

Getting your puppy used to eating a high quality dry food diet at an early age is a great idea, it will help ease the transition to one of the excellent oral care diets when your pup reaches adulthood.

Puppies normally lose their baby teeth by seven months of age, it is important that we check the mouth at this time to ensure that adult teeth have erupted normally. It will be necessary to supply your puppy with plenty of safe chewing options over this period, especially if you value your shoe collection!



## Desexing

There is ongoing discussion about the benefits and risks of desexing male and female dogs. Wherever you look you will find differing opinions as to whether the surgery should be done and when.

Let pups mature until six months of age before desexing. Then discuss this important decision with the veterinarian.

Pets that have been desexed use their food more efficiently. If you cut down the food a little and adopt a common sense approach to exercise. They will not become fat.

### MALES

Male dogs are castrated which is the surgical removal of both testicles.

#### PROS

- Stops unwanted puppies
- Less roaming and wandering
- Fewer strays and abandoned pets
- No testicular cancers
- Markedly reduced prostate disease
- Less aggressive tendencies towards both people and dogs
- Reduced registration fees

#### CONS

- Slightly increased chance of urinary incontinence problems when older.

For large breed dogs that have been desexed before skeletal maturity, there may be an increased risk of cruciate ligament injuries and a reduction in the incidence of some cancers.

### FEMALES

Female dogs are spayed which is the surgical removal of the ovaries and uterus (ovariohysterectomy).

#### PROS

- Stop unwanted puppies
- Fewer strays and unwanted pets
- Stops six monthly cycles where the dog bleeds, becomes attractive to male dogs and is prone to wander in search of a mate.
- Far less chance of breast cancer
- Eliminates womb infections
- No problems associated with pregnancy and birth
- No pseudo-pregnancies
- Reduced registration fees

#### CONS

- Slightly increased chance of urinary incontinence problems when older.

DON'T  
FORGET

# Education



## Basic Training

Gentle, reward-based training can be started immediately after your puppy arrives. Be consistent and patient with your puppy and they will learn quickly.

Remember that puppies have a short concentration span and are easily distracted. Keep lessons short and fun with lots of rewards.

Puppy preschool helps puppies develop social skills and is highly recommended for all pups. Obedience training comes later, once they have learned the basics and developed some social skills.

## Toilet Training

### AVOID NEGATIVE MESSAGES

Scolding, hitting or rubbing a pup's nose in its urine or faeces is confusing and frightening for the pup and will not help them understand that you want them to toilet somewhere special.

Instead, take your puppy regularly to the place where you want them to eliminate and give them ample praise

when they do. During the night and whenever your puppy is left alone in the house, make sure there are puppy pads or newspaper down so that they always have somewhere they are allowed to go.

### FEEDING ROUTINE

Dogs respond to routine so feeding at regular times and an evening walk to empty out before bed really helps.

### REWARD ELIMINATION IN THE CORRECT PLACE

A dog is more likely to eliminate straight after a sleep, meal, or play session.

The signs to look for are restlessness, sniffing, circling, squatting or leg cocking. When you see this behaviour immediately take the pup, without reprimand, to the desired place and praise them when they go.

### CLEANING UP

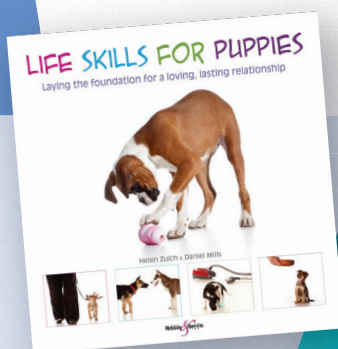
Clean up any urine or faeces in the house when the dog cannot see it being done and without making a fuss. Use an enzymatic cleaner such as Biozet to clean up soiled spots

## Socialisation

The dog to human bond is established early in a pup's life and it is essential your pup masters social skills early. Encourage your family and friends to interact with your pup.

Playing with healthy, vaccinated dogs prior to receiving all puppy boosters does carry a small risk, that risk is likely to be outweighed by the benefits of socialisation. It is sensible to avoid unknown dogs and dog parks until fully vaccinated.

Introduce your puppy to new people and dogs calmly. Avoid excitement and excessively rough play. Always supervise young children with your puppy. Try to give equal attention to other pets in the household in order to minimise any disruption to their routine.



Recommended reading for puppy owners.



## Our Puppy Preschool

### AIMS

Our puppy preschool classes are a great opportunity for your puppy to learn socialisation skills and for you to get help with behaviour or training challenges you may be facing. It is also a whole lot of fun!

### YOUNGSTERS ONLY

The preschool is open to puppies from six to sixteen weeks of age. They are not obedience classes. During the four weeks of classes we socialise the puppies so they can interact with other dogs (of all sizes) and people without fear or aggression.

### SCHOOL FOR YOU TOO

Puppy school is also a great opportunity to discuss many aspects of pet care and behaviour including mouthing and biting, toilet training, nutrition, dentistry, bathing and grooming.

### ENROL NOW

To enrol pups must have an up to date vaccination history and a clean bill of health. Classes run for an hour a week over four weeks.



## Car Travel

Spend some time making the car a “happy place” for your puppy by sitting in the stationary car and giving treats and pats. If the puppy is happy and relaxed then progress to a short trip that ends with a walk at the park or some pleasurable experience. To avoid car sickness, no food should be given to the pup for about two hours before the trip.

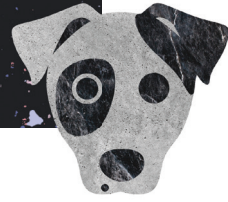
If your puppy doesn't settle or respond to treats fed during travel, please contact us so we can discuss the best way to help them out. You may want to consider the use of Adaptil products to assist with travel.

You never know when you may have to brake suddenly, so a car harness or crate is recommended for all pets travelling in cars.

## Separation Anxiety

To lessen the chance of your puppy developing separation anxiety expose them to short absences from an early age as part of their normal routine. Never make a fuss when coming and going as excitement on your return can lead to heightened anxiety at the time of your departure.





## Environmental Enrichment

It is important to make the home environment as interesting as possible for your pup. Toys should be rotated regularly, so that they are exciting when they come out again. Treat balls or Kongs can be filled with food (or a meal) and will keep your pup occupied for hours.

Digging pits or sand pits can be provided to focus your pup's attention on one area of the garden. Bury treats or toys for your pup to find. This makes the digging area more fun than the rest of the garden.

Environmental enrichment will help to reduce the risk of destructive behaviour and nuisance barking

## Obedience & Training Contacts

Sylvie Martin 0425713227  
[crosspaws.com.au](http://crosspaws.com.au)

Anna Lindars Alma Park,  
Menzies Reserve, 0417 572 711

Melanie Norgate 0402 931 580  
[melanienorgate.com](http://melanienorgate.com)

Underdog Training and Behaviour  
Consulting, 0402 112 105  
[underdogtraining.com.au](http://underdogtraining.com.au)

Bayside Companion Dog Training School,  
0400 551 042 [baysidedogs.org.au](http://baysidedogs.org.au)

## Off Leash Parks

There are many parks in our city where our puppies can play and exercise off lead. Check out your local council's website for a full listing.



PAY  
ATTENTION TO

# Hygiene



## Grooming

All puppies that have long hair or thick coats should begin being groomed as early as six to eight weeks.

Long haired dogs should be brushed daily. Be gentle when brushing your puppy and make it an enjoyable time with plenty of rewards. If it is enjoyable you will be less likely to get grooming and bathing phobias when your puppy is older.

Brushing puppies before you feed them will make them look forward to grooming sessions. It's best to place the puppy on a chair or table and then brush from the top of the head to the tip of the tail, not forgetting the chest and face.

## Nail Clipping

Nail clipping is a quick and easy task that is easily overlooked. Familiarising your puppy with having its paws handled and examined is important from an early age. If neglected, nails may become overly long and more prone to injury or painful ingrowth.

Our nurses will clip your dog's nails for a small fee. They are also very happy to teach you how, just ask.

## Bathing

Puppies like to get down and dirty, but it is a mistake to bath them too often.

Dry your puppy off with a towel when they get back from the park and brush the dirt out after it has dried or use water rather than shampoo to rinse off dirt.

If you do bathe your puppy use a gentle puppy shampoo, rinse it off thoroughly and use a conditioner afterwards.



UP  
TO DATE  
**Docs**



## Registration

Councils require puppies over three months of age to be registered. Dogs must be microchipped before registration. It is cheaper to register desexed dogs. Visit your Council's website for more information.

## Identification

State legislation requires your puppy to be microchipped. A microchip is a permanent invisible means of identification that is implanted by injection.

Other forms of identification such as a dog tag with your telephone number and the council registration tag on their collar are good to have as well.

## Pet Insurance

Pet Health Insurance is something we think that you should consider as the costs of treatment for a puppy that becomes seriously unwell can be substantial.



## Enjoy!

Owning a dog is a rewarding and joyful experience. Making an effort to learn all you can about how to care for and live with your puppy will set you up for a lifetime of companionship and love.

We are here to help. If you have any questions or problems please talk to us.





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