

Care of Dogs

CARE OF

DOGS

Dogs are loyal friends and companions. They will give you unqualified love and devotion, asking only a little care, based on common sense, in return. We hope this pamphlet will help you enjoy your dog, whether you've adopted it as a tiny pup or a mature adult.

FEEDING A PUPPY

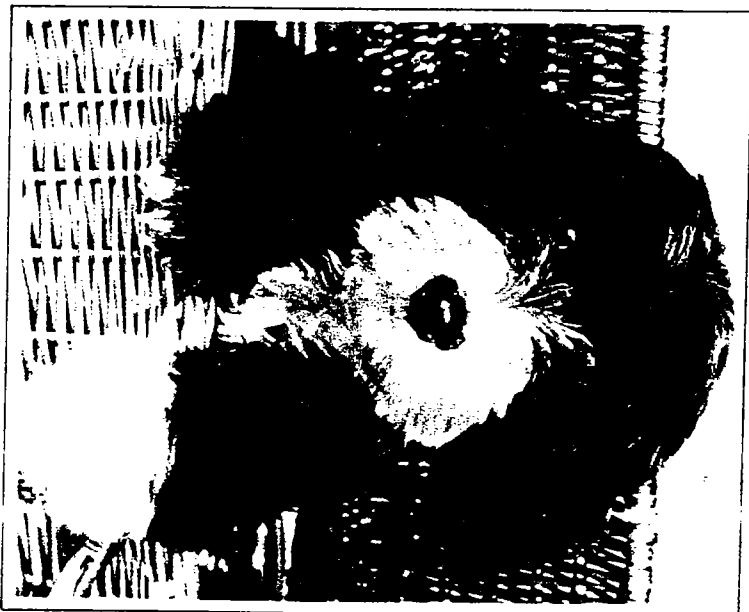
Puppy feeding is the mother dog's job for the first four weeks of life. She will pass on, through her milk, important immunities against disease to protect the puppies until they build up their own resistance.

If the mother isn't available, you'll have to take over. Equip yourself with a plastic eye dropper or very small nursing bottle and nipple (dolls' bottles and nipples are about the right size), and be prepared to feed your puppy every three to four hours. Your veterinarian can advise you on formulas. One substitute for bitch's milk is a baby formula mix such as Enfamil, Similac, or Esbilac, available at drugstores, pet shops, and some markets. Or you can use evaporated milk and water, in equal parts, with one tablespoon of white Karo syrup and two or three drops of cod liver oil added to a day's ration. Serve the formula warm, not hot, and slowly increase the quantity as the puppy grows.

At around two weeks you can begin gradually to introduce solid foods, in addition to his formula. A little Pabulum mixed with formula, cottage cheese, egg yolk moistened with milk, or lean beef scrapings mixed with cooked mashed vegetables are all good starters. Puppies who are perpetually hungry soon get the idea of dish feeding. By four weeks your pup should be weaned. Keep him on a soft diet a little longer, but at around six weeks he should be ready to cross over — *gradually* again — to a diet of high grade pet foods. There are prepared puppy foods on the market which make a good transition diet.

Your puppy will need four meals a day — morning, noon, late afternoon and bedtime — until

he is three months old. You can drop the night feeding at three months and the noon meal at six months. By one year of age most dogs thrive on a single daily feeding (given in the evening), but some like a morning snack. Dogs have precise food requirements. They need protein, fats, carbohydrates, water, minerals and vitamins in exact proportions. The lack of any of these can result in retarded growth and health problems.



The easiest and probably most economical way to provide a nutritious diet is by feeding your dog prepared pet foods which are scientifically formulated. But some important warnings here: not all commercial foods are completely balanced. Some are meant only as supplements — "extras" to add to a basic diet. Choose brand name foods labeled "complete," "balanced," or "fully nourishing." Such claims are regulated by law and mean that your dog will be getting all his nutritive needs.

Shy away from cheap, little-known dog food brands. They may contain inferior ingredients

such as poor quality nutrients which look good on the package label, but pass through the dog unused.

For quantity, follow instructions on the carton or can, making allowances for your pet's appetite and temperament. Quantity is based on the weight of the dog, but remember that puppies need a great deal more food per body weight than the mature animal. *Do not overfeed.* Obesity, with all its attendant health problems, is becoming almost as common in dogs as in people. Give your pet 15 to 20 minutes to finish his meal, and then remove his dish. If food remains, slightly decrease his servings: if he cleans his bowl and still seems hungry, give him a little more next time.

Commercial dog foods come in three forms — canned, dry or semi-moist. Your dog's tastes will probably determine your choice. Be sure to introduce new foods very gradually, because an abrupt change in diet can be upsetting. You can add taste treats of your own, of course, but never let supplements amount to more than 20% of your pet's basic diet of scientifically balanced dog food. Stay away from rich gravies and sweets, and *never* feed your dog fish, chicken, turkey, or pork bones. These splinter easily and can do serious damage to the intestines.

One final, all-important word on feeding. ALWAYS keep fresh, clean, cool water where your dog can help himself when he's thirsty. A dog without water suffers real anguish. Water is vital to his health.

THE HEALTHY DOG

Take your dog to the veterinarian as soon as possible after you get it, no matter what its age. Choose a veterinarian whose location and hours are convenient for you. The doctor will examine it thoroughly and schedule the shots needed to protect it against the most common dog-killing diseases: distemper, hepatitis, and leptospirosis. Booster shots are required each year. For community health protection, rabies shots are required by law in most areas, with regular booster shots thereafter.

During your first visit to the doctor, discuss the regular preventive care your pet will need. Ask what the signs of illness are, so you'll know to get help immediately if your pet becomes ill. Find out how to get emergency help outside regular office hours. Preventative health care and planning for emergencies before they occur are keys to a long, healthy life for your dog.

NEUTERING

Overbreeding of pet animals has produced far more dogs and cats than there are homes available, and the results are tragic. Millions of lovable puppies and kittens must be euthanized in animal shelters because there simply are no homes available for them. To avoid adding to this tragic overpopulation problem, have your dog neutered.

Neutering has many other benefits for you and your dog. Your pet will be a more content family member. Roaming and overaggressiveness are often linked to sex drive. Neutered pets are calmer and more affectionate. Your pet will be healthier, less likely to develop certain cancers or be injured in fights with other animals. You won't have to put up with straining or spraying. If your dog is a female, you won't have to fight off males when she is in season, or find homes for the offspring. (It takes more time, effort and money than you'd think to raise a litter of puppies for eight weeks, then advertise and find homes for them.) And you won't have to suffer the heartbreak when some or all of the puppies don't find new homes.

Neutering is a surgical procedure which prevents pets from reproducing. Male dogs are ready to be neutered at eight months, females at six months. You can make an appointment with your regular veterinarian, or check with the local humane society for the numbers of low-cost spay/neuter clinics in your area.

Females can even be neutered in season or early pregnancy, but the risk is somewhat greater. The veterinarian must be informed of her condition. The best and easiest thing for you and your pet is to get her neutered before she comes in season the first time.

Dogs have no psychological sex drive. They do not feel any need to reproduce, and are happier when they're neutered.

ROAMING DOGS

If you allow your dog to roam free you're asking for trouble — and you'll get it. Trouble for your dog, trouble with your neighbors, and trouble with the law.

Automobiles are the greatest danger for roaming dogs. Considering the number of people hit by cars each year, it's foolish to think any dog is smart enough to avoid injury indefinitely on its own.

Roaming dogs frequently treat themselves to garbage feasts that can include fish bones, spoiled food, and plastic or tin foil wrappers, with results ranging from indigestion to death. Parasite infestations and infectious diseases may result if your dog strikes up a friendship with an unhealthy stray. And, there are people who will purposely harm animals they find roaming free.

Neighbors are not fond of roaming dogs because they're often responsible for overturned garbage cans, dug-up lawns, trampled garden beds, and the fouling of public and private property.

The best way to keep your dog safe is to keep it in your house or fenced yard, and walk it on a leash. In most areas, animal control ordinances require you to do this or face a possible fine.

IDENTIFICATION TAGS

License and rabies tags are usually required by law, also. In addition to these, it is important to give your dog an identification tag with your current name, address and phone number on it. Even the most carefully cared-for dog can accidentally become lost, and an ID tag makes it easier for neighbors or animal shelter workers to return your pet to you. Without any kind of tag, you will have a much harder time finding the dog, and many owners search long and hard without ever finding their pet at all.

Be sure to keep the information on the tag cur-

rent. When moving, get an ID tag made with the new address and put it on your animal before the move. Many animals are lost in the confusion of moving and, being in an unfamiliar neighborhood, are unable to find their own way home.

GOOD GROOMING

Grooming is not simply a matter of good looks, though this certainly is a side effect. A better word for it would be cleanliness. Nothing is more important to the health and well-being of a dog than regular grooming. It takes only a few minutes, and yet it is the most commonly neglected part of dog care.

Long-haired dogs should be combed and brushed daily to remove dirt, tangled or matted hair, burrs, and other uncomfortable objects. You can buy equipment for this in any pet store. Short-haired breeds require less attention, but they should be brushed at least twice a week. Nail clipping (especially important for inactive older dogs) and cleaning tartar from teeth are also part of good grooming. Both can be done at home, but you'd better get a demonstration from your veterinarian first.

With regular grooming most dogs rarely, if ever, need a bath. In fact, frequent bathing can be harmful, because it removes natural oils and may cause skin inflammations. When your dog gets into something that only a bath can handle, use warm water and a mild soap, protect his eyes and ears, rinse him very thoroughly, and keep him out of drafts until he is dry.

PARASITES

Regular grooming is also one of the most effective ways to protect your pet against pests. Fleas, ticks, lice and mites are the most common ones. Any one of these can make a dog's life miserable, and a serious infestation can cause disease or chronic skin ailments.

Cleanliness is the best prevention. As you groom your dog, keep an eye out for fleas and ticks; it takes only a few to start a colony. And give your dog's bed or kennel a good brushing, scrubbing and airing every few months.

There are all kinds of sprays and powders to help repel or kill fleas and ticks. Be sure to read the directions on the product you choose, and follow them very carefully. Most of these products are poisons, and if you use them too much or too often, you could harm your pet. When in doubt, talk to your veterinarian about parasite control.

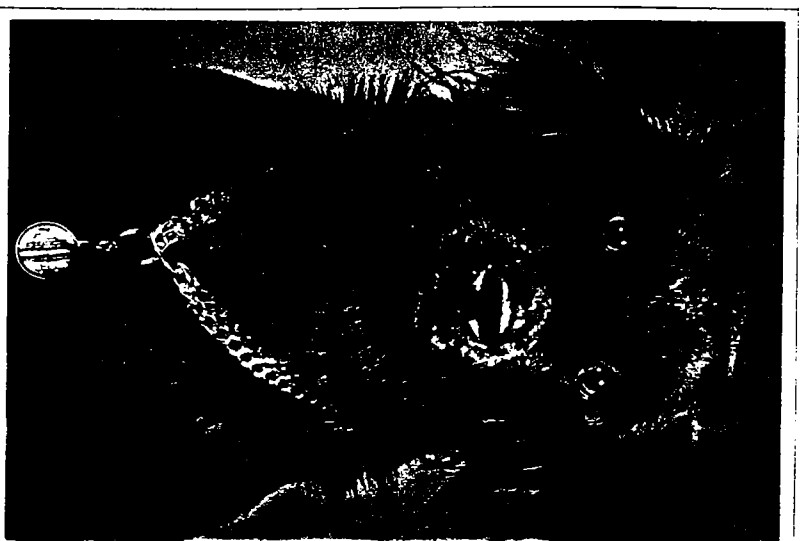
HOUSING

Every dog needs a bed of his own, in a quiet spot well protected from drafts. This is his refuge and haven, and even the puppy will quickly adopt it as his private property, where he can get the undisturbed rest that he needs. Any box or basket padded with old towels or blankets, or a sack stuffed with cedar shavings will do. If possible, the bed should be indoors. If he is to live outdoors, make sure his kennel is wind-tight, water-tight and well insulated against heat and cold. And be consistent; dogs cannot tolerate abrupt changes in temperature. With the exception of very small breeds, most dogs can stand cold, but not drafts, so make sure his bed is in a protected spot. Dogs are clean by nature; help him by keeping his quarters clean.

HOUSEBREAKING

Puppy's first lesson in discipline will be inspired by necessity, when you see that first spot on the rug. Scrub it up, then set out *patiently* to teach puppy the house rules. For the first week or two confine him to one room as much as possible, and keep a large area of that room covered with newspapers. Place puppy on these papers frequently — as soon as he wakes up, after all meals, whenever you see him circling or squatting, and just before bedtime. When he performs well, praise him. When he makes a mistake, scold him with a firm "no," and place him on the papers.

Remember, he's only a baby. A scolding must come instantly or it will have no meaning, because puppies have short memories. Don't spank or strike him for his mistakes, and never rub his nose in the mess. Your puppy wants very much to please you, and you'll find that praise works better than punishment.



As you see signs of progress, gradually cut down on the size of the papered area. Give him the run of the house now and then, but keep an eye on him, because mistakes are inevitable. Outdoor training can be started at three to four months of age, or earlier if climate and easy outside access make this possible. The approach is the same as in the paper training, with frequent regular trips to the backyard.

GOOD MANNERS

A mischievous puppy is cute, but an untrained adult dog is a nuisance. There are certain basic commands your pet should respond to, not for show, but for his safety and others' safety. He should learn to come when called, to sit or stand on leash, and to obey "down" and "quiet."

Dogs like to be trained, and you can easily teach your pet these basic rules of good behavior at home. Get a book of simple instructions from your library, and set aside a quiet time and

place to work every day with your pet. All experts agree that dogs learn more quickly with kindness than with punishment. Be firm, but patient. Work for short periods at a time only, always use the same commands, and always praise him or reward him when he performs well. Never strike your dog for failure. It accomplishes nothing and could make him fearful. Training should be fun for both master and pet.

Almost all communities now have restraint laws. Observe them. Pet ownership is a privilege and you have no right to allow your dog to be a nuisance. Keep him home and keep him quiet. Remember that the laws are for your protection too!

Undisciplined dogs, such as the roamers or constant barkers that can be the plague of a neighborhood, are very often neglected dogs. Just giving your pet lots of love and companionship will go a long way toward making him quiet and content. Play with him, walk with him, let him feel secure in your love. Then add a few obedience lessons, and you'll have a good canine citizen.

American Humane is a national federation of concerned individuals and animal care and control agencies dedicated to the prevention of cruelty, neglect, abuse and exploitation of animals. Founded in 1877, it is a charitable, tax-exempt organization with headquarters in Denver, Colorado, and offices in Washington, D.C. and Hollywood, California. There are over 3,000 agencies in the United States and Canada which are concerned with the prevention of cruelty to animals. Learn the name and address of your nearest humane agency. Then, when you need advice and help with any animal problem, you will know where to turn for help. If you do not find an agency near you, ask:



American Humane
P.O. Box 1266
Denver, CO 80201

AMERICAN HUMANE

1985, The American Humane Association
GI-1004