

Care of the Outdoor Dog

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HOUSE DOG OR DOGHOUSE

A dog is much happier if he is allowed to live and grow up in his owner's home where he receives the love and companionship he needs. If it is necessary for your pet to be an outdoor dog, he still needs just as much attention and affection. Forcing a pet to live a solitary life can lead to boredom and a bored dog is often a problem dog, prone to barking, chewing or other misdeeds.



But many dogs—except the toy breeds, young puppies, dogs with very short hair, sick or old dogs—can adapt well to outdoor living. The best time to decide whether your pet will be an "outdoorsman" is while he is still a puppy—before he has the opportunity to become a house dog. It doesn't take long for him to become accustomed to heated or air conditioned rooms and comfortable rugs.

Once you have decided on the outdoors for your pet stick to it. A house dog by day and a doghouse dog by night, or allowing your pet to sleep inside one night and outside the next, is hard on him. These inconsistencies weaken his resistance and leave insufficient opportunity to adjust to cold weather.

And remember, a dog can suffer from extremes of temperature in the summertime just as much as in winter. If your pet is an outdoor dog, it is far better to let him spend most of his time outdoors than to keep him in air-conditioned rooms all day and his doghouse at night.

Acclimate your pet to the outdoors during mild weather so his coat and body adapt to the temperatures as the seasons change. His coat will become thick enough to withstand even very cold temperatures, provided his doghouse is dry and windtight. If you have a hunting dog that is a house pet, he needs special conditioning to the outside before you take him out to hunt. Be sure he gets plenty of exercise to develop tough pads on his feet. The exercise also helps take off any excess fat.

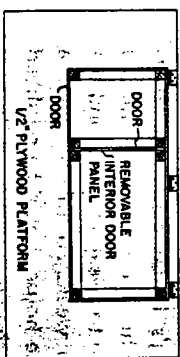
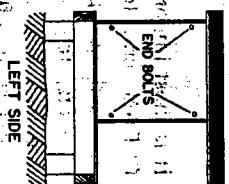
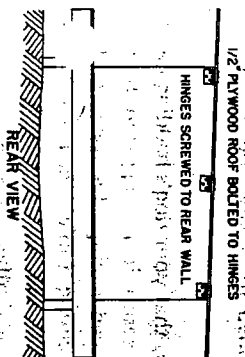
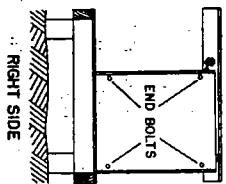
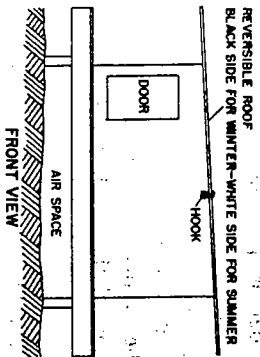
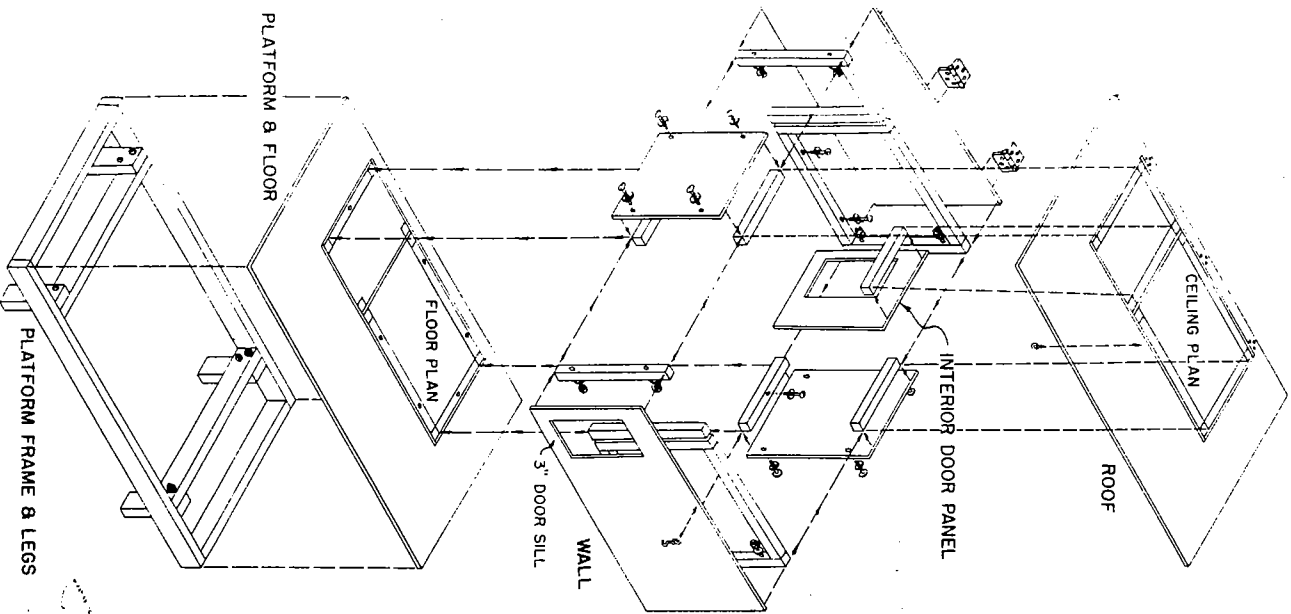
DESIGN FOR A DOGHOUSE

Opposite are drawings for a comfortable house for your dog.

Beneficial features of this house include:

- Slightly-sloped roof extending beyond the body of the house to provide a shaded area for your dog.
- Interior panel which can be removed during warm weather to improve air circulation.
- Door sill, at least three inches high, to prevent drafts in cold weather. (A door made of heavy canvas or burlap can be used in addition to the sill for more protection in winter.)
- Platform to provide your dog with a "porch"—an area on which he can rest above the ground.
- House raised six inches above the ground to keep the floor and platform dry and to allow for air circulation underneath the house.
- Wooden floor which dries faster and is warmer than concrete.
- A reversible roof which can be painted black on one side to allow maximum heat absorption in winter and white on the other side for reflection of the sun's rays in the summer.
- A hinged roof for easier cleaning.
- Walls secured to the floor by bolts to permit disassembly of the house for easy relocation.

The Care of the Outdoor Dog



- ASSEMBLY**
- 1. NAIL 1/2" PLYWOOD PLATFORM TO 2x4 FRAME.
 - 2. BOLT 2" x 1/4" LEGS TO FRAME.
 - 3. NAIL 1/2" PLYWOOD WALLS TO 2x2.
 - 4. ASSEMBLE WALLS WITH END BOLTS.
 - 5. BOLT WALLS TO PLATFORM.
 - 6. BOLT 1/2" PLYWOOD ROOF TO HINGES.



If your dog seems hesitant about entering his new home because of the darkness, prop open the roof and let him explore it during the daytime.

Other doghouse plans may be obtained from Carnation Company, Friskies Pet Foods Division, Carnation Building, 5045 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, California 90036; and Gaines Dog Research Center, 250 North Street, White Plains, New York 10625. There are also firms which specialize in building doghouses. Pre-constructed houses are available in several sizes with optional features, such as carpeting, insulation and electrically heated floors. Pre-constructed houses and houses ready for assembly are available at some lumber yards and through the catalog service of the major mail order firms.

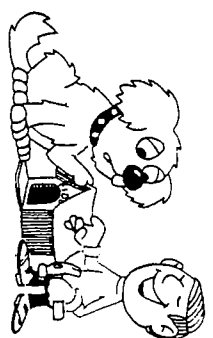
But whether the doghouse is your handiwork or someone else's, keep in mind that the house must be windtight, watertight, and adequately insulated (cable insulation may be necessary in particularly cold climates).

THINK SMALL

If you live in a cold climate and are contemplating an unheated doghouse, THINK SMALL. A common mistake is to build a house so large that the dog's body heat is insufficient to warm the house. In severe climates, and especially if the dog lives alone, the house should be just large enough for the grown dog to sit without bumping his head. Nor do two dogs require a house twice the size of a single-dog dwelling (twice as much body heat from the dogs in a single-dog dwelling makes the house warmer for both dogs). And remember, the doghouse is a bed, not a playroom.

The following guidelines will help you determine the proper-sized sleeping area for your dog:

Allow 36 square inches of floor space for every inch of height of your dog from the point of his shoulders to the ground. (Example: a dog 20 inches tall needs 720 square inches of floor space, 20 x 36 inches = 720 square inches.)



Add an inch or two to your dog's measurement from the crown of his head or the tip of his ears (whichever is taller) to the ground, when he is in a sitting position, to determine the inside height of his house. (Example: a dog measuring 20 inches at the shoulders will have a sitting height of about 23 inches, and his house should be about 25 inches high.)

Here is an example of the dimensions for the dog house featured in this pamphlet, if the dog has a sitting height of about 23 inches:

- Doorways: 9" x 15"
- Entrance area: 12" x 20"
- Sleeping area: 36" x 20"
- Combined area of interior (entrance and sleeping area): 48" x 20"
- Platform: 36" x 72"
- Roof: 36" x 72"

FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Weatherproof plywood, at least one-half inch thick, is probably the best building material to use (ordinary plywood does not weather well), but brick, metal, cinder or concrete blocks are also used. Before deciding which to use, consider carefully your climate and the conductive properties of the material to absorb heat or cold.

Wooden surfaces should be covered with an exterior varnish or paint WITHOUT LEAD. Also, because dogs love to chew, wooden seams and edges should be covered with metal, such as steel or aluminum.

The color of your dog's house is also an important consideration. Results of a study made by the Ralston Purina Company at the Purina Dog Care Center showed that a doghouse painted white was six to eight degrees cooler than a black doghouse when the outside temperature was 25 to 30 degrees Fahrenheit. The white doghouse was 15 to 20 degrees cooler when the outside temperature was approximately 90 degrees. Let your dog's comfort, rather than your preferences, guide you in your choice of paint color.

Another factor to consider is placement of the doghouse. It is a good idea to change the location of the doghouse according to the seasons to take advantage of shade in summer and the warmth of the sun in winter. During the winter try to locate the front of the doghouse toward the south and away from northerly winds.

All dogs, whether they live indoors or outdoors, need a comfortable bed protected from drafts. A grown dog can become conditioned to weather but not to drafts.

It is most important, too, that your dog's bedding be CLEAN, and for that reason it is suggested that shredded newspaper or cedar chips be used. Old blankets, towels, or carpeting (unless cleaned frequently) retain moisture and invite unwelcome guests, such as fleas, ticks, and other parasites.

Cleanliness of your dog's house cannot be over-emphasized. The roof of his house should be hinged or removable to allow you to sweep the floor and put in fresh bedding once a week. At LEAST once a month the interior of the house should be scrubbed thoroughly (the house should be completely dry before your dog reenters).

Dogs living outdoors in cold weather need more heat energy than house dogs. Such items as beef suet, meat or bacon drippings are good additions to his winter diet.

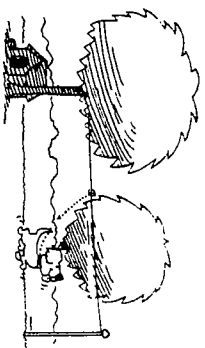
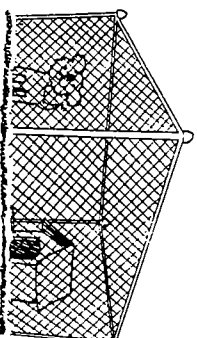
To assure that your dog has drinking water readily available, fill his bowl with water at least twice a day—cold water in the summer and warm water in the winter.

PROTECTING YOUR OUTSIDE PET

All dogs living outdoors should be restrained in some way to protect them from the dangers of traffic, spoiled or poisoned foods, or dog-nappers. Not only will your neighbors appreciate this, but it also helps eliminate the problem of dogs running loose and forming packs which kill or injure livestock and

wildlife. It is also important for your pet to have regular check ups by his veterinarian. This should include inoculations to protect him from rabies, distemper and other diseases transmitted by other dogs or wild animals that may stray into your yard.

If a fenced yard is not feasible, consider a pen or run. A pen need not be large. A pen ten feet wide and twenty feet long is more than adequate for most dogs. One of the best fencing materials is galvanized steel woven into what is sometimes called chain link fencing. To keep your pet from climbing out, or under, the fence should be at least six feet high and the bottom edge of the fence buried about six inches in the ground.



Sometimes a fenced yard or pen is impractical or too expensive. As an alternative, you can construct a "wire run" by stringing a cable

between two posts or trees thirty feet or more apart. Another version of the wire run is to use a heavy wire or cable on the ground stretched between two posts. Put a ring on the wire which slides back and forth. Then use a chain or wire leash approximately five feet longer than the height of the wire run and attach one end to the ring and the other to the dog's collar—preferably a leather collar or harness. Be sure that you do not use a "choke" or sliding training collar. Nor should any type of metal collar be used since metal retains heat in the summer and cold in the winter.

If you are tying your dog to a tree, doghouse, or other stationary object, the chain must be at least twelve feet in length so he can run, exercise and seek shade whenever he wishes. To avoid your pet becoming entangled in his chain, use a chain with swivel snaps at both ends. This feature is more likely to prevent tangles.

BE A RESPONSIBLE PET OWNER

Although keeping your pet confined to your yard, or restraining him in some way, helps to keep him from wandering, your dog may still not be protected from visits from other dogs. Don't risk letting your pet add to the already alarming animal overpopulation problem. For information on pet animal birth control contact your veterinarian, local humane agency or The American Humane Association.



The American Humane Association is a non-profit federation established in 1877 to help prevent cruelty to children and animals. We thank you for your interest and support. There are well over 1,000 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 expert and friendly help. If you do not find one in your immediate area, ask:



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The American Humane Association
5351 S. Roslyn Street
Englewood, CO 80110