

Bilmar Puppy Kit



**Congratulations on your new pet! Enjoy the
journey **

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Dog Training:

Berkshire Dogs Unleashed

Training, grooming, group classes

Lenox, MA 413-464-6384

<https://berkshiredogsunleashed.com/>

DogMan dog training

Training, Group training

Jason Shron

Great Barrington, MA

<https://www.dogmandogtraining.com/>

413-429-5251

For Animals

Training

Leea Forman

Lenox, MA

<https://www.trainingforanimals.com>

413-445-8843

Lois Platt

Egremont, MA

413-528-8451

<http://www.reallifeobedience.com/>

Meredith O'Connor

Great Barrington, MA

Dog training and behavior solutions

508-280-0679

Online Training Resource:

<https://www.thesprucepets.com/>

There are many resources available online, our favorite method is "positive reinforcement training," be sure to keep this in mind while you browse the internet.

Doggy Daycare and Boarding Services:

Animal Inn of the Berkshires

Pittsfield, MA
413-442-3472
<https://animalinnofttheberkshires.com/>

Berkshire Pet Pals

Offers kennel boarding, one-on-one boarding in staff member's homes, petsitting, dog walking, overnight and home periodic visits.

Lee, MA
413-446-8099
<https://www.berkshirepetpals.com/Home>

Bow Meow Regency

Sheffield, MA
413-229-0035
<https://www.bowmeowregency.com/>

Camp Wagalot

Stockbridge, MA
413-454-2023 (texting is an option!)
lovecampwagalot@gmail.com

Gina's k9 Bed & Breakfast

Boarding, Daycare, "Puppy playdates"
Copake, NY
518-329-4675
<https://www.ginask-9bandb.com/>

Love us and Leave US

Lee, MA 413-394-5823
Pittsfield, MA 413-464-9200
<https://loveusandleaveus.com/>

Pooch Palace

East Canaan, CT
860-453-4478
<https://poochpalaceresort.net/>

Sit, Play, Stay Resort

Falls Village, CT
860-824-7357
<https://www.sitplaystayresort.com/>

Shaker Hill Pet Resort
Pittsfield, MA
413-499-1580
<https://www.pittsfieldvet.com/shaker-hill-pet-resort.html>

Grooming:

Animal Inn of the Berkshires
Pittsfield, MA
413-442-3472
<https://animalinnofttheberkshires.com/>

Bow Meow Regency
Sheffield, MA
413-229-0035
<https://www.bowmeowregency.com/>

Grooming at Hawthorne
Copake, NY
518-329-1108

Hair of the Dog Pet Grooming
Lee, MA
413-243-0100

Shamrock Dog Grooming
Pittsfield, MA
413-443-9700
<https://www.shamrockdoggrooming.com/>
Best of the Berkshires 2017-2021

Ultimate Dog
Canaan, CT
Also offers walk-in nail trim services!
<https://www.ultimatedog.net/>

Wash & Wag
Great Barrington, MA
413-528-3509
<https://washnwaggreatbarrington.squarespace.com/>

Reading Materials:

Basic Care & Training:

“Parenting Your Dog, Develop Dog-Rearing Skills for a Well-Trained Companion” - Trish King
“The Whole Dog Journal Handbook of Dog and Puppy Care and Training” - Nancy Kerns
“Positive Perspectives 1 & 2 , Know Your Dog, Train Your Dog” - Pat Miller

“How to Teach a New Dog Old Tricks” - Ian Dunbar

“How to be the Leader of the Pack, And Have Your Dog Love You for It” - Patricia McConnell
“Play With Your Dog” - Pat Miller

"The Power of Positive Training" - Pat Miller
"Doctor Dunbar's Good Little Dog Book" - Dr. Ian Dunbar
"Way to Go! How to Housetrain a Dog of Any Age" - Patricia McConnell and Karen London
"Feeling Outnumbered? How to Manage and Enjoy a Multi-Dog Household" - Patricia McConnell and Karen London
"Play Together, Stay Together, Happy and Healthy Play Between People & Dogs" - Patricia McConnell and Karen London

Canine Body Language and Communication:

"Canine Body Language, A Photographic Guide" - Brenda Aloff
"Dog Language – An Encyclopedia of Canine Behavior" - Roger Abrantes
"On Talking Terms with Dogs – Calming Signals" - Turid Rugaas
"Stress in Dogs, Learn How Dogs Show Stress and What You Can Do to Help" - Martina Scholz & Clarissa von Reinhardt

Puppies:

"Your Outta Control Puppy" - Teoti Anderson
"Positive Puppy Training works" - Joel Walton
"Taking care of Puppy Business" - Gail Pivar & Leslie Nelson

Dogs & Kids:

"Living with Kids and Dogs...Without Losing Your Mind" -Colleen Pelar
"Family Friendly Dog Training" - Patricia McConnell & Aimee Moore, 2007
"Raising Puppies and Kids Together: A Parent's Guide" - Pia Silvani & Lynn Eckhardt, 2005 "Your Dog and Your Baby" - Silvia Hartmann-Kent,
"Childproofing Your Dog" - Brian Kilcommons Dogs & Kids - Bardi McLennan
Behavioral Challenges:
"Positive Perspectives: Love Your Dog, Train Your Dog" -Pat Miller
Parenting Your Dog – Develop Dog-Rearing Skills for a Well-Trained Companion- Trish King
The Whole Dog Journal Handbook of Dog and Puppy Care and Training - Nancy Kerns
"How to Behave So Your Dog Behaves" - Dr. Sophia Yin Leader of the Pack: How to Take "Control of Your Relationship with Your Do" - Nancy Baer & Steve Duno

Leash Frustration & Reactivity:

"Feisty Fido, Help for the Leash Reactive Dog" - Patricia McConnell and Karen London "Scaredy Dog! Understanding and Rehabilitating Your Reactive Dog" - Ali Brown

[Bilmar Vet Services Hours and Referral Information](#)

776 Main Street, Great Barrington, MA 01230
Phone: 413-528-1180 Fax: 413-528-1763 Email: hello@bilmarvet.com

Business hours:

Monday 8:30am - 4:30pm
Tuesday 8:30am - 5:00pm
Wednesday 8:30am - 5:00pm
Thursday 8:30am - 5:00pm

Friday 8:30am - 4:30pm
Saturday 8:30 am - 12:00 pm

After Hours Emergency Hospitals

Vet ER and Specialty Hospital (VESH) 413-665-4911 www.veshdeerfield.com 141 Greenfield Rd, South Deerfield, MA 01373 24-hour emergency hospital	Pieper Veterinary 860-347-1122 https:// www.pieperveterinary.com/ 730 Randolph Rd, Middletown, CT 06457 24- hour emergency hospital
Newtown Veterinary Specialists 203-270-8387 www.newtownvets.com 52 Church Hill Rd, Newtown, CT 06470 24-hour emergency hospital	Tuft's University Foster Hospital for Small Animals 508-839-5395 www.tuftsvets.org 200 Westboro Rd Rt 30, North Grafton, MA 01536 24-hour emergency hospital
Upstate Veterinary Specialties 518-783-3198 http:// www.uvsonline.com 152 Sparrowbush Road, Latham, NY 12110 24-hour emergency hospital	Capital District Veterinary Referral Hospital 518-785-1094 https:// capitaldistrict.ethosvet.com/ 222 Troy-Schenectady Rd, Latham, NY 12110 24-hour emergency hospital

8 Signs Your Pet Needs to See the Emergency Vet

Here are eight signs that your pet needs to see an emergency vet. These include a variety of medical emergencies that would require immediate veterinary attention. It is important to note that if your pet seems to be having a serious problem, but their symptoms are not included in this list, you should still call your veterinarian. This is because your pet could still be having a medical emergency, and they will be able to direct you in the right direction when it comes to giving your pet proper care. Here are the eight signs that your pet needs to see an emergency vet.

1. Your Pet Has a Swollen Abdomen (and it Feels Hard to the Touch)

Having a pet with a distended stomach is a sign of bloat, or GDV, and this is a medical emergency that requires surgery as soon as possible. Bloat occurs when the stomach twists on itself and fills

up with air, which eventually also cuts off a pet's blood supply. GDV is much more common in dogs than it is with cats, and large dogs such as Great Danes are the most at risk for developing this condition.

2. Your Pet Has Eaten Something Toxic

There are many different foods that can be toxic to both dogs and cats, and it can become a very serious problem depending on what they ingest. Things like cleaning products tend to be more dangerous than toxic foods, but both can be life threatening. It is important that you call your emergency vet before making the trip over there. This is because you may need to do some things with a vet's direction before going over there such as inducing vomiting.

3. There is Blood in Your Pet's Vomit, Urine, or Feces

Blood is never a good thing to see in your pet's vomit, urine, or feces. Sometimes this can be a sign of some more minor complications such as a UTI when blood is found in urine. However, it can also be a sign of a medical emergency in pets as well.

4. Your Pet is Vomiting Excessively

Excessive vomiting can not only be a sign of a medical emergency in our pets, but it can also cause a medical emergency in the form of severe dehydration as well. As a result if your pet's vomiting is worrisome, excessive, or seems to have been going on for a long time then you should seek emergency veterinary attention.

5. Your Pet is Showing Signs of Shock

Shock is a state in dogs and cats that requires immediate emergency vet attention. This is usually caused by extreme trauma, heat stroke, and even extreme cases of vomiting and diarrhea in small or young dogs and cats. Some signs of shock to look out for include:

- A fast heart rate
- Pale gums
- Signs of severe dehydration (loss of skin elasticity, sunken eyes, sticky gums)
- Signs of extremely low blood sugar (altered mentation, muscle twitching, weakness)
- A slow respiratory/breathing rate

Small dogs, puppies, and kittens are most at risk for developing shock. However, even large dogs can go into shock in extreme cases such as being hit by a car. It is crucial that you take your pet to the emergency vet immediately if you notice any signs of shock.

6. Your Pet is Showing Signs of Extreme Pain

Extreme pain is also a valid cause for taking your pet to the emergency vet. Although extreme pain could easily be caused by an injury, it can be a sign of other conditions as well. It is always a good idea to take your dog to the vet if you believe that they are in pain, especially if that pain seems to be severe.

7. Your Pet Has a Serious Injury

Pets sustaining serious injuries should always be taken to the emergency vet immediately. Things like broken bones and open wounds can cause extreme pain, and things like blood loss, shock,

and extreme dehydration can quickly develop. This is especially true if the animal is young or particularly small.

8. Your Pet is Struggling to Breathe

Breathing problems can be a sign of a medical emergency in both dogs and cats, and you should take your pet to the emergency vet immediately if you notice that they are struggling to breathe. This includes abnormal breathing in dogs with a known medical condition that could affect their breathing such as brachycephalic airway syndrome in dogs.

<https://greenvilleanimal.com/blog/emergency-vet/>

Intestinal Parasites in Dogs and Cats

Dogs and cats can fall victim to many different types of parasites. Because many of these parasites live in their intestines, veterinarians will take stool samples during your pet's annual wellness exam to check for signs of intestinal parasites. Intestinal parasites are not uncommon, especially in young animals, which is why wellness exams are so important for maintaining your pet's good health.

Symptoms

With some parasites, you may be able to see worms in your pet's stool, bedding, or under their tail. Puppies and kittens are especially at risk for health complications from intestinal parasites and, in serious cases, these parasites can be fatal. Another risk is caused by some parasitic infections being "zoonotic," which means that they can be transmitted to humans. These parasites can cause serious health issues in adults and children, including scarring inflammation.

The most common signs and symptoms of intestinal parasites are:

- Diarrhea, with or without blood or mucus
- Scooting
- Vomiting
- Distended abdomen (belly)
- Weight loss
- Decreased activity
- Dull coat

Pets become infected with intestinal parasites in a number of ways, including:

- Drinking contaminated water
- Coming into contact with other infected animals
- Coming in contact with fecal material containing these parasite eggs or larvae
- Swallowing fleas that are carrying the infective stage of Tapeworms
- Nursing from an infected mother
- Predation or hunting which through ingestion transmits the parasite from a rodent or another hunted animal carrying the parasite

Types of Intestinal Parasites

Roundworm

Roundworms are one of the most common intestinal parasites found in dogs and cats. Unlike hookworms, they do not attach to the intestinal wall. Instead, they live in the intestines and consume partially digested food. Once your pet is infected, roundworms pass tiny eggs into his stool. A mother dog or cat who has had roundworms at any time in the past can transmit them to her puppies or kittens before birth. This is true even if the mother tests negative for roundworms because the larvae (immature worms) encyst in the mother's muscle tissue and are not detected by our tests for adult worms. Another major source of roundworm infection for puppies and kittens is the mother's milk. Roundworm larvae may be present in the mother's mammary glands and milk throughout the nursing period. Pets may also become infected by swallowing roundworm eggs, which contain infective larvae. The larvae hatch out in your pet's stomach and small intestine and migrate through the muscle, liver, and lungs. After several weeks, the larvae make their way back to the intestine to mature. When these worms begin to reproduce, new eggs will pass in your pet's stool and the life cycle of the parasite is completed.

Roundworm eggs passed in another animal's stool may be infectious to your pet. In fact, a large number of animal species have been found to harbor roundworms and represent potential sources of infection for dogs and cats, including cockroaches, earthworms, chickens, and rodents.

Hookworm

Hookworms are tiny intestinal parasites named for the hook-like mouth parts they use to attach to the intestinal wall. Pets often become infected when they swallow hookworm larvae, or immature worms, through routine grooming or ingestion of soil or other contaminated substances in the environment. The larvae may also penetrate the skin and migrate to the intestine to mature and complete the life cycle. If a pregnant dog has hookworms, the pregnancy may reactivate larvae. These larvae will enter the female's circulation and pass to the puppies through the placental blood flow. Finally, puppies may become infected through the mother's milk. This is a common route of infection for young dogs. Once your pet is infected, the hookworm attaches to the lining of the intestinal wall and feeds on his blood. Its eggs are ejected into the digestive tract and pass into the environment through your pet's feces, potentially increasing exposure to other animals. In dogs, a

large number of hookworms can cause anemia. This problem is most common in puppies, but it will occasionally occur in adult dogs.

Tapeworm

Tapeworms are long, flat worms that attach themselves to your pet's intestines. A tapeworm body consists of multiple segments, each with its own reproductive organs, which are passed in your pet's feces. Tapeworm infections are usually diagnosed by finding these segments—which often resemble white grains of rice or seeds—in your pet's stool, on his rear, or where he lives and sleeps. In order to become infected with tapeworms, your pet must ingest a flea that contains tapeworm eggs. This process begins when fleas are accidentally ingested upon licking or chewing the skin. The flea is digested within your pet's intestine and the tapeworm hatches, anchoring itself to the intestinal lining. It is important to note that any exposure to fleas may result in a new infection that can occur in as little as two weeks.

Whipworms

Whipworms are parasites that live in the cecum (where the small and large intestine meet) and colon, where they cause severe irritation to the lining of those organs that can result in watery, bloody diarrhea and weight loss. Whipworms can be one of the most harmful worms found in pets if not properly treated. Whipworms pass microscopic eggs in the stool. Pets become infected by ingesting these eggs in soil or other contaminated substances in the environment. Whipworm eggs are very resistant to drying and heat, allowing them to remain viable in your pet's environment for years. Once laid, the eggs mature to an infective stage and reinfect within 10 to 60 days. When the eggs are swallowed, they return to the lower intestinal tract to complete the life cycle.

Coccidia

Coccidia is a single-celled organism that can infect cats and dogs through contact with fecal matter containing the parasite. A pet can become infected by eating contaminated soil, drinking contaminated water, or licking paws and fur that has come into contact with infected feces. After infection, coccidia travels to the intestines and destroys the intestinal lining, which prevents absorption of nutrients. This causes severe diarrhea and dehydration. In some cases, infection can even lead to death. Coccidia is very contagious to puppies and kittens, so frequently cleaning up feces and frequent changes of water to prevent contamination is especially important around young pets.

Giardia

Giardia is another single-celled intestinal parasite that can infect dogs, cats, and humans. Infection is caused by ingesting giardia through contact with contaminated food, water, soil, or fur. Like coccidia, giardia travels to the intestines and damages the lining of the intestinal wall, reducing the absorption of nutrients. Unlike coccidia, infections often have no symptoms. If there is diarrhea, there is usually no blood in the stool. Diagnosing giardia can sometimes be difficult due to the lack of symptoms and multiple stool samples are needed to confirm the infection because of the specialized tests of giardia.

Diagnosis and Treatment

Your veterinarian will take a stool sample to test for the presence of microscopic eggs laid by adult worms. The veterinarian will then mix the sample with a solution that makes the eggs more visible underneath the microscope. In some cases, a routine stool sample test may be insufficient to diagnose a parasite. For example, detecting the single-celled parasite giardia requires a special

solution to be added to the sample. In another case, testing for tapeworm eggs can sometimes cause false negatives. And if the intestinal worms infecting a dog or cat are not mature enough to be producing eggs, the fecal sample test will give negative results—which is why multiple fecal tests over a period of time are sometimes needed to successfully diagnose infection by an intestinal parasite.

After a diagnosis has been made, intestinal worms can be treated by using a dewormer solution. Other types of parasites require different types of medications to treat. There are some over-the-counter treatments for intestinal worms, but these don't work very well. Veterinarians have the most powerful and effective dewormers available for treating your pet and have guidelines that they follow to try to identify and protect our pets and their people. The recommendation is to deworm puppies and kittens automatically, deworm animals intended for breeding programs, and checking a sample of feces (again, a stool sample) at least twice yearly.

Prevention

Preventing infection by intestinal parasites is highly dependent on good sanitation practices.

- Clean up your pet's droppings as quickly as possible to prevent the spread of infection.
- Make sure your pet has a source of fresh, clean water, because these parasites can often be found in contaminated water.
- Prevent your pet from eating soil or grass, which can contain parasitic eggs.
- Remember that droppings from other dogs might be infested—be sure that your dog doesn't interact with these while out on walks.
- Use a monthly heartworm preventative medicine for your pet.
- Use a monthly flea prevention treatment to prevent parasite transmission to your pets from infected fleas.
- Don't allow yourself or your family to become infected—wash your hands after playing with your pet and make sure that outdoor play areas for your children, like sandboxes, do not contain any animal droppings.
-

The good news is that intestinal parasites are easy to treat and even easier to prevent. In fact, if you give your dog heartworm prevention medication, you're most likely protecting your pet from the most common intestinal parasites. Several heartworm medications can treat roundworms and hookworms, and some products can even treat whipworms, tapeworms and one or more stages of fleas. You'll want to talk with your veterinarian to determine which parasite control medication is right for your pets.

<https://shallowfordvet.com/intestinal-parasites-in-dogs-and-cats/#:~:text=Roundworms%20are%20one%20of%20the,tiny%20eggs%20into%20his%20stool.>

Heartworm & Heartworm Prevention

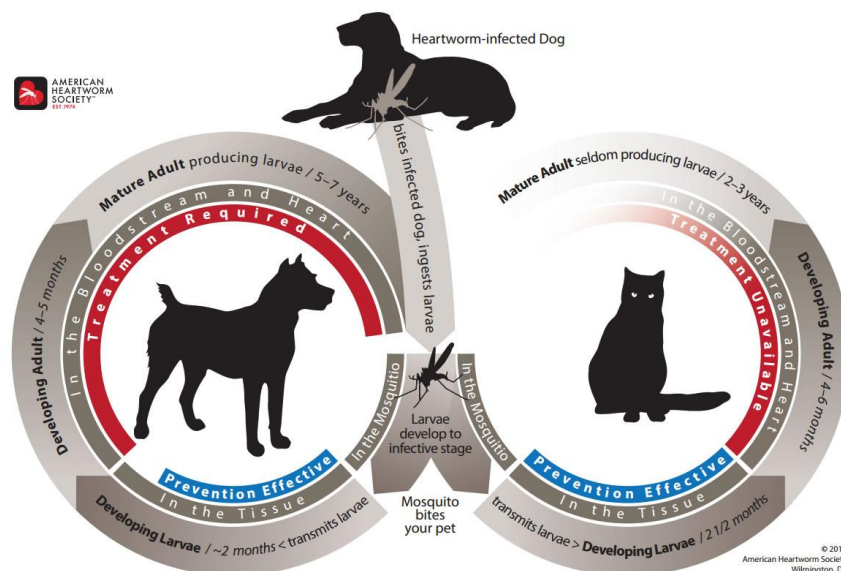
What is heartworm disease?

Heartworm disease is a serious and potentially fatal disease in pets in the United States and many other parts of the world. It is caused by foot-long worms (heartworms) that live in the heart, lungs and associated blood vessels of affected pets, causing severe lung disease, heart failure and damage to other organs in the body. Heartworm disease affects dogs, cats and ferrets, but heartworms also live in other mammal species, including wolves, coyotes, foxes, sea lions and—in rare instances—humans. Because wild species such as foxes and coyotes live in proximity to many urban areas, they are considered important carriers of the disease.

The dog is a natural host for heartworms, which means that heartworms that live inside the dog mature into adults, mate and produce offspring. If untreated, their numbers can increase, and dogs have been known to harbor several hundred worms in their bodies. Heartworm disease causes lasting damage to the heart, lungs and arteries, and can affect the dog's health and quality of life long after the parasites are gone. For this reason, prevention is by far the best option, and treatment—when needed—should be administered as early in the course of the disease as possible.

How is heartworm disease transmitted from one pet to another?

The mosquito plays an essential role in the heartworm life cycle. Adult female heartworms living in an infected dog, fox, coyote, or wolf produce microscopic baby worms called microfilaria that circulate in the bloodstream. When a mosquito bites and takes a blood meal from an infected animal, it picks up these baby worms, which develop and mature into “infective stage” larvae over a period of 10 to 14 days. Then, when the infected mosquito bites another dog, cat, or susceptible wild animal, the infective larvae are deposited onto the surface of the animal's skin and enter the new host through the mosquito's bite wound. Once inside a new host, it takes approximately 6 months for the larvae to mature into adult heartworms. Once mature, heartworms can live for 5 to 7 years in dogs and up to 2 or 3 years in cats. Because of the longevity of these worms, each mosquito season can lead to an increasing number of worms in an infected pet.



Prevention. Here are answers to common questions to help you think about a single medication once a month—or an injection every six months—to keep your pet safe and sound.

Heartworm medicine can be expensive. Why should I spend my money on it?

While it seems expensive, you get a lot more value for your prevention dollar than you realize. Consider this: You can protect your dog from a fatal heartworm infection for an entire month for what you'd spend on a pastry and coffee at your favorite coffee shop. Many monthly medications also offer more than just heartworm protection— some protect against fleas and common intestinal worms, too. That's important to your pet's health as well as that of your family, when you consider that parasites like roundworms and hookworms can be spread to your kids and other household members.

I still don't think I can justify spending money on it-

Here are two important facts you need to know. First, preventing heartworms is a lot cheaper than treating them; heartworm treatment can cost up to \$1,000+ in medication and veterinary bills. Second, while heartworm disease in dogs can be treated and the worms eliminated, the damage left by heartworms is forever, and many dogs are left with residual health problems.

I don't think I need it. Heartworms aren't that common around here.

While heartworm disease may not be common in some parts of the U.S., heartworms have been diagnosed in every state in the country. In parts of the country that stay cold for six months or more, there are lots of warm, protected spots where mosquitoes that transmit heartworms can live. In urban areas, radiated heat is stored in concrete and asphalt and is released at night when mosquitoes are active. In rural areas, mosquitoes may find a warm spot in a hollow log or animal burrow to ride out the winter. In dry locales, thanks to sprinkler systems, birdbaths and watering cans, there are pockets of standing water everywhere where mosquitoes can breed.

Think about it this way: You may never have been in a car wreck, but you still put on your seat belt. Would you risk your life by not wearing one? Why would you risk your pet's life by not giving him or her heartworm prevention?

Tick-Borne Diseases in Dogs

By Eileen Fatcher, DVM

When we think of tick-borne diseases in dogs, Lyme disease is typically the first thing that pops into our heads. But there are a number of other serious diseases transmitted by ticks that dog owners should be aware of.

Lyme disease

Believe it or not, of all the tick-borne diseases, Lyme is clinically the simplest. It typically causes limited, classic symptoms and is easy to treat. It rarely causes serious disease. The one exception to this is if it gets into the kidneys. This is called Lyme nephritis, and it is always bad.

Lyme disease in dogs is caused by a spirochete (spiral-shaped) bacteria called *Borrelia burgdorferi* and is spread by *Ixodes* species ticks (such as the deer tick and black-legged tick). The incubation period (time from tick bite to clinical disease) can be as long as two to five months. The organism migrates from the bite site to the joint capsules.

The blood tests used in veterinary hospitals for detecting Lyme disease are antibody tests (see “Tests for Tick-Borne Diseases”). Today, these are commonly combined with heartworm antibody tests. In addition to the index of suspicion a positive antibody test gives, a diagnosis of Lyme disease requires history of tick exposure, classic clinical signs, and a positive response to treatment.

Some dogs will show mild signs of fever, inappetence, and lethargy, but the classic presentation is lameness with a painful, swollen joint or joints.

The treatment of choice is doxycycline, an oral antibiotic, for four weeks. Response to treatment is rapid, with resolution of signs typically within 24 to 48 hours. The prognosis is excellent, as long as the infection doesn't get into the kidneys.

Because of the possibility of kidney involvement, and the severity of that scenario, any dog testing positive for Lyme should have a urine specimen checked for protein loss.

Lyme nephritis is thought to be immune-mediated in nature. When pathogenic organisms combine with antibodies targeting them, they form substances called immune complexes. These immune complexes damage the kidneys, resulting in proteinuria (excessive protein in the urine) and kidney failure. Aggressive treatment of these patients with antibiotics and immunosuppressive therapy is occasionally successful, but the overall mortality rate with Lyme nephritis is, sadly, very high.

Fortunately, the incidence of Lyme nephritis is fairly low compared to the incidence of Lyme-infected dogs overall.

Anaplasmosis

Anaplasmosis is the name of two different clinical syndromes caused by different (but related) bacteria.

Anaplasma phagocytophilum is a bacteria that infects white blood cells, causing Canine Granulocytic Anaplasmosis (CGA). *Anaplasma platys* infects platelets, causing Canine Infectious Cyclic Thrombocytopenia (CICT). Both types of *Anaplasma* bacteria are carried by the same type of ticks that carry the spirochete bacteria that causes Lyme disease, which means coinfection with anaplasmosis and Lyme is possible.

For either type of anaplasmosis, the incubation period (from tick bite to the dog's illness) is one to two weeks. Signs associated with both syndromes include fever, lethargy, inappetence, pale mucous membranes, weight loss, lymph node enlargement, and splenic enlargement. Dogs with CGA sometimes present with lameness. Dogs with CICT frequently present with evidence of a bleeding disorder, including bruising, blood in stool or urine, and nose bleeds.

Ehrlichiosis

Ehrlichia canis and *Ehrlichia ewingii* are the bacterial causes of this disease. They are spread by *Rhipicephalus sanguineus* (brown dog tick) and *Amblyomma* (the Lone Star tick). The organisms infect circulating white blood cells. The incubation period is one to three weeks.

Acute symptoms of ehrlichiosis in dogs are similar to those of anaplasmosis – fever, lethargy, inappetence, lymph node enlargement, and splenic enlargement. With time, some dogs develop ocular and nasal discharge and lameness. Occasionally, an infection with *Ehrlichia* will cause neurologic derangements, such as incoordination and seizures.

A dog who makes it through the acute stage described above without treatment next enters the subclinical stage. During this stage, which can last months to years, the organism hides out in the spleen. The dog usually has no symptoms during this stage and either recovers spontaneously or moves on to the chronic stage where he becomes sick again.

The chronic stage, which carries the worst prognosis, can result in complete bone marrow depletion, and secondary immune-mediated conditions resulting in bleeding disorders, ocular issues, and kidney failure.

Spay and Neutering your pet

- Ovariohysterectomy, or the typical “spay”: the ovaries, fallopian tubes and uterus are removed from a female dog or cat. This makes her unable to reproduce and eliminates her heat cycle and breeding instinct-related behavior.
- Orchiectomy, or the typical “neuter”: the testes are removed from a male dog or cat. This makes him unable to reproduce and reduces or eliminates male breeding behaviors.

Why spay or neuter?

Every year, millions of unwanted dogs and cats, including puppies and kittens, are euthanized. The good news is that responsible pet owners can make a difference. By having your dog or cat sterilized, you will do your part to prevent the birth of unwanted puppies and kittens. Spaying and neutering prevent unwanted litters, help protect against some serious health problems, and may reduce many of the behavioral problems associated with the mating instinct.

Removing a female dog or cat’s ovaries eliminates heat cycles and generally reduces the unwanted behaviors that may lead to owner frustration. Removing the testes from male dogs and cats reduces the breeding instinct, making them less inclined to roam and more content to stay at home.

Spaying of female dogs and cats can help protect them from some serious health problems later in life such as uterine infections and breast cancer. Neutering your male pet can also lessen its risk of developing benign prostatic hyperplasia (enlarged prostate gland) and testicular cancer.

The procedure has no effect on a pet’s intelligence or ability to learn, play, work or hunt. Some pets tend to be better behaved following surgical removal of their ovaries or testes, making them more desirable companions.

What are the risks of spaying and neutering?

Although reproductive hormones cause mating behaviors that may be undesirable for many pet owners, these hormones also affect your pet's overall health and can be beneficial. Removing your pet's ovaries or testes removes these hormones and can result in increased risk of health problems such as urinary incontinence and some types of cancer. Intact animals retain more muscle mass, and so their mobility may be superior as aged animals versus altered animals. Talk to your veterinarian about the benefits and risks of the sterilization procedure so you can make an informed decision.

While both spaying and neutering are major surgical procedures, they are also the most common surgeries performed by veterinarians on cats and dogs. Like any surgical procedure, sterilization is associated with some anesthetic and surgical risk, but the overall incidence of complications is very low.

Before the procedure, your pet is given a thorough physical examination to ensure that he/she is in good health. General anesthesia is administered to perform the surgery and medications are given to minimize pain. You will be asked to keep your pet calm and quiet for a few days after surgery as the incision begins to heal.

When should I spay or neuter my pet?

Timing of the procedure is something to discuss during a veterinary visit, however there is some compelling data which has led us at Bilmar to generally recommend waiting until an animal is 'mature' before altering them. The age of maturation is different between dogs and cats, and with larger versus smaller dogs.

Housetraining and Crate Training: What Every Owner Needs to Know

Jacqueline Brister, DVM

Whether you have just brought home your first puppy or you have recently adopted an adult dog, teaching your new pet the appropriate time and place to eliminate and providing a safe environment to rest are important for you and your pet's relationship and emotional well-being. Many dogs that end up in shelters are there because of repeated housetraining accidents inside and destructive behavior. By learning the basics of housetraining and crate training, and what you can reasonably expect from your dog, these types of problematic habits can be avoided.

Crate Training

Why crate train?

Crate training teaches your dog to spend time in a kennel or crate. Dogs are naturally den animals, meaning that their natural instinct is to find a quiet area where they can escape when needed, rest, and recuperate from the day. By providing a crate to sleep and eat in, you are giving your dog the perfect den. Most dogs won't eliminate where they sleep and eat, so crate training can be a big help with housetraining. A crate also provides a dog with a safe place to go when scared or nervous. Plus, crates can be a great way to keep a dog out of trouble when you are not at home or are unable to provide proper supervision. Staying in a crate can prevent your dog from finding his way into your closet and eating your favorite shoes; having a feast in your garbage can; or urinating in a less than ideal place in the house.

Crate training tips

Crates, especially when you are beginning training, should be just large enough for dogs to sit, stand, lay on their side, and turn around comfortably. For large breed puppies, select a crate that can be sectioned off so that as they get bigger you can increase the size of the crate area. If a crate is too large, your dog may try to potty in one area and sleep at the other end.

Aim to make the crate one of your dog's favorite areas of the house. You can feed meals in the crate as well as use the crate for bedtime and naptime. You may also want to give your dog a special chew toy that can only be enjoyed while in the crate. Make sure this is a toy that can be safely played with while unsupervised. Avoid using the crate as a place of punishment, such as time-outs for bad behavior. You don't want your dog to associate a special den with times of stress or fear.

To get your dog comfortable with spending time in the crate, start by firmly saying a command or cue word, such as "crate" or "kennel," and placing your dog in the crate. The cue word will help your dog to eventually associate the word with going into the crate alone, so that over time he will

go into the crate without being physically put there by you. Give your dog a treat and lots of praise immediately, and close the crate door for about 5 minutes. Praise your dog again once you let him back out. Over several days to weeks, gradually increase the amount of time your dog spends in the crate.

Words of Caution

Crates can be a wonderful way to keep your dog safe and comfortable, but it is important to know your dog's limits. No dog should spend the majority of the day in a crate. Puppies especially should be limited to the amount of time they spend in a crate to avoid elimination accidents and future behavior issues. A good rule of thumb for the maximum amount of daylight hours a puppy should spend in the crate at a time is to add one to the puppy's age in months. For example, a two-month old puppy should spend no more than three hours straight in a crate during the day. After three hours, give the puppy a break from the crate, go outside to eliminate, and provide some time to play before putting her back in the crate.

Dogs with separation anxiety can be difficult to crate train, and their anxiety behaviors may actually worsen if you attempt to keep them in a crate. Discuss your dog's behaviors with a veterinarian. Your dog may need a combination of anxiety medication and behavior modification therapy, which is a different form of training to help dogs overcome some of their anxieties, before crate training can be successful.

Housetraining

Dog and puppy development

Puppies start learning to leave their family and den area to use the bathroom between three and 12 weeks of age. This means that some puppies may not be fully capable of learning where and when to use the bathroom before the age of three months. For those puppies that are ready to learn, they may not be able to hold their bladder for more than a few hours (typical of puppies less than 4 months of age). Why is that important to know? Owner expectations and the puppy's ability to learn are not always in sync. Housetraining can be a lengthy and sometimes frustrating process. Housetraining an adult dog can also be difficult because she may have been going wherever and whenever was desired up until now. You will have the troublesome task of teaching your dog that previous bathroom methods are no longer appropriate, and on top of that, teaching brand new methods for elimination.

Housetraining tips

Puppies and dogs will provide you with many opportunities for successful trips to go potty. Remember that what goes in will eventually need to come back out again. To help make timing bathroom trips easier, feed your dog on a consistent schedule, ideally two to three times a day. This way, 15 to 30 minutes after eating or drinking, you know it is time for a trip to the elimination area. Dogs, especially puppies, also tend to go right after playing or sleeping. A good rule of thumb during the beginning of housetraining is to take your dog out every two hours for the first couple weeks, plus after sleeping, eating, drinking, or playing. Be sure to take your dog out right before bedtime too.

Use a cue word such as “bathroom” or “potty” every time you take your dog to the bathroom area, so the dog will learn to associate the word with what you want achieved. Try to take your dog to the same area each time. In the beginning, you will need to go with your dog and make sure she actually poops or pees. If successful, immediately reward your dog with treats and praise. It may be helpful to lead your dog with a leash instead of carrying her to the elimination area so that going straight to the appropriate spot becomes a habit.

Constant supervision is important when you begin housetraining your dog. You need to catch your dog in the act of going in the wrong place in order to correctly redirect your dog. If you find pee or poop on the floor, the dog will not understand and make the connection with why you are actually upset. Imagine being in a foreign country, with foreign customs, where you do not speak the language. Someone suddenly begins shouting at you over a mistake you made, which you are unaware of making because the local culture is so different. How are you to know what mistake you have made and when? How are you to prevent this from happening again? Given that you may be completely unaware that you have made a mistake, this person’s behavior towards you might just seem plain rude. At best, you will try to ignore that rude person and go about your business, right? So it is with housetraining! Catching your pet in the act of a mistake will help them correct it in the future. Rubbing your dog’s nose in hours-old pee, however, is probably just plain rude.

If your dog does eliminate in the house while you are watching, interrupt immediately (such as with a squeaker sound or a sharp clap noise), and take him to the elimination area. Use your cue word. If your dog finishes going in the right area, give treats and/or praise.

Keep an eye out for clues or signals that your dog needs to eliminate. Circling, wandering off alone, whining, or going to the door you typically use to go to the elimination area are common signals. If your dog is demonstrating any of these signals, stop what you are doing immediately and take him to the bathroom. If he uses the bathroom when you take him to the designated area, be sure to reward your dog with praise and/or treats so he will continue to provide these signals.

Housetraining and crate training can be tough but rewarding. If you are ever in doubt as to whether you or your pet are on the right track, call your veterinarian for advice. Otherwise, be consistent and persistent, and your pet will love you for it!

How to Socialize a Puppy & Why It's So Important

Bringing home a new puppy is a busy time—but you can't skip over the most crucial step in their development.

By Jessica Comstock

You've bought all the essential puppy supplies, set up vet appointments, and prepared yourself for months of potty training. But once you bring home a new puppy, there's still an important hurdle ahead: socialization.

Socializing your puppy is all about teaching them that the world is a safe place and that new experiences, people, and other animals don't have to be scary. It's accomplished by positively reinforcing new situations to puppies during their magical first three months of life.

Behavioral scientists John Paul Scott and John L. Fuller identified the critical puppy socialization period as being between three and 12 weeks of age. During this stage, it only takes a small amount of experience to affect a puppy's later behavior. And assuming you've brought home your puppy once he's at least 8 weeks old, you've only got a month left to take advantage of this critical time in your pup's development.

"Naturally puppies continue to learn throughout their lives," Bonnie V. Beaver, DVM, a board-certified veterinary behaviorist, says. "[But a] puppy who is not socialized early is neurologically fearful and more likely to act cautious, nervous, and shy around unfamiliar people, animals, and situations."

When a puppy is introduced to new sights and sounds in a positive way, he'll grow up smarter, healthier, and more confident. In other words, he'll take everyday situations like hearing a garbage truck and climbing steep stairs all in stride.

When Are Puppies Socialized?

Socialization is a lifelong process, but the bulk of it occurs during the first 12 weeks of your puppy's life. In fact, socialization can start as early as birth. Although newborn puppies cannot see or hear, their senses of smell and touch are fully functioning. Responsible breeders begin handling the puppies immediately to help them feel comfortable with human touch. At two weeks, pups' ears and eyes open. During this time, they should be exposed to everyday sounds, like the dishwasher and clanging pots. This stimulation both helps them get used to the sounds they'll hear at home and aids neurological development.

Between four to eight weeks, puppies grow stronger, more coordinated, and seek out more adventures. They begin playing with their littermates and investigating environmental enrichment provided by the breeder. A stimulating puppy pen can look like a toddler playground filled with differently textured hanging objects, challenging obstacles, and toys that squeak, honk, and clang. The breeder also should allow the litter to experience both the indoors and outdoors, different sounds, smells, people, and even car rides before letting them go to their forever homes.

How to Socialize A Puppy

Once you bring your puppy home, he needs to continue learning about the world until he's at least 12 weeks old. Even better, approach socialization as a lifelong process. An early foundation is important, but there can be significant regression if your puppy's lessons are not continued through the juvenile and adolescent life stages.

Just keep in mind, you want your puppy's association with everything he might encounter in his world to be positive so he feels safe. Let your pup choose to interact or not and be sure to reward him with soft, chewable treats.

"It's important not to overwhelm your puppy with too many new experiences all at once," Ellen M. Lindell, president of the American College of Veterinary Behaviorists, who received her Veterinariae Medicinae Doctoris degree from the University of Pennsylvania, says. "He needs to feel comfortable, not trapped."

Above all, observe your dog's reactions to different situations. If your puppy is afraid of a new experience, remove him from the situation, praise him, and offer a treat so he associates it with a positive reward. Then try that experience again later.

Here are a few ways to get started with socializing your puppy:

Puppy Socialization Classes

Learning to get along with other dogs is a huge part of your pup's socialization. One of the safest ways to introduce puppies to other dogs is through puppy kindergarten classes. In these classes—which, importantly, are not for obedience training—puppies are exposed to a wide range of new experiences, including playing with different dogs, meeting new people, walking on different surfaces, and more. Doing this alongside a trained supervisor and using positive reinforcement (lots of treats) allows your pup to learn that the world isn't such a scary place.

Socializing at Home

While classes are a great way to expose your puppy to the world, socializing your pup at home is just as important. He'll be spending the majority of his life inside your home, so it's important he learns what sounds, smells, and obstacles he'll run into every day.

To socialize your puppy at home, introduce him to as many new sounds, sights, smells, and people as possible. This puppy socialization checklist is a short list of a wide range of different experiences your puppy should be positively exposed to in their first three months of life.

Objects:

- Mirrors

- Balloons
- Bubble wrap, plastic bags, and packaging
- Brooms
- Hanging flags
- Baby strollers
- Balls and Frisbees
- TVs
- Water (sprinklers, hoses, rain)

Sounds:

- Vacuum cleaners
- Dishwashers and laundry appliances
- Lawn mowers
- Cars
- Fireworks
- Storms
- Music
- Sirens

People:

- People of all ages, genders, races, and sizes
- Children
- Babies
- People wearing glasses, hats, coats, masks, etc.
- People using wheelchairs and other physical aids

Textures:

- Carpet
- Hardwood
- Tile
- Grass
- Dirt

- Sand

Socialization Outings

Taking your puppy on short trips to stores and parks teaches them how to interact with a wide range of people and experiences they can't get at home. Try these fun puppy outings and take treats along with you during these outings to give your pup positive associations with each and every one of them. (BTW: If you want to visit a business with your pup, ask in advance if dogs are welcome.)

- Walk through a large home improvement store.
- Eat lunch at an outdoor café.
- Meander through a garden center.
- Stroll past doors that open and close automatically.
- Walk along a busy, noisy city street.
- Sniff animal odors at a farm.
- Sink into the sand on a beach.
- Climb over fallen branches in the woods.
- Experience the bustle of a bus or train station.
- Visit an office building.

Can Puppies Be Socialized Before Getting Vaccinated?

Getting your puppy out and about gives him a good start in life, as does providing the right veterinary care. This includes puppy vaccinations during his first year. But is it safe for pups to go into the world before their vaccinations are complete?

Because of the puppy's risk of contracting an infectious disease such as canine parvovirus, some veterinarians advise owners to hold off taking their puppies out in public before 16 weeks of age and only after they've completed a full course of vaccinations.

The American Veterinary Society of Animal Behavior (AVSAB) believes puppies should receive socialization before they are fully vaccinated. "Behavioral issues, not infectious diseases, are the No. 1 cause of death for dogs under 3 years of age," AVSAB writes. The organization recommends that puppies receive one set of vaccines as well as a first deworming one week before attending their first puppy class.

Talk to your vet about when it's OK to take your puppy out into the world. Even if your pup is not fully vaccinated, you can socialize him safely using these strategies:

- Welcome company. Invite people you know to meet your new pup in the safety of his own home.

- Visit a friend. Take your puppy to a friend's house, where he can experience a new environment safely.
- Meet other dogs. Avoid dog parks for now. Instead, ask a couple of friends to bring their healthy, friendly dogs to meet your puppy in a clean, outdoor location.
- Let him ride. Until your puppy is old enough to walk outside on his own, use a stroller, wagon, or backpack to take him on outings. This gives him a chance to experience things from a safe place.
- Keep him clean. Avoid letting a puppy walk where other dogs leave urine or feces.
- Use an exercise pen. Lay out a tarp and set up a puppy pen at the park. This gives your pup a new view from a safe position.



How to Prepare Your Dog for a Baby

By Jillian Blume

Preparing for a baby is an exciting and often anxious time, full of big emotions, physical changes and planning. But while you're sprucing up that extra room, stocking up on onesies and swaddle blankets and shopping for a stroller with all the bells and whistles, don't forget your first baby: your dog.

Remember, your dog is used to receiving all of your attention and love, and now she will have to share. Your pup will suddenly be exposed to a barrage of new smells, sounds, and objects, and her daily routine of walks, play, cuddles and naps will change. Dogs thrive on routine. A new baby in the house will disrupt everything in your dog's life – and you can't really explain these changes to your dog. Even worse, lots of dogs are terrified of babies. They smell funny, they make loud, often weird noises, they move unpredictably.

To prepare your four-legged fur baby for a new human in the home, plan early; start working with your pooch months before the baby's arrival.

Brush Up on Training

The best time to begin preparing your dog for a baby is as soon as you discover you're pregnant. The first step is to reinforce your dog's basic obedience training. Practice those all-important commands, like sit, stay, down, drop it, leave it and come.

Observe your dog's overall behavior around the house. Something that's cute now, like jumping all over you when you come home, may not be so cute — or safe — when you're heavily pregnant or carrying a baby.

Consider enrolling your dog in an obedience class, especially if she's never been to one before. If that's not convenient, many dog trainers will come to your home for a session. (There are even ones that specialize in training your dog for a new baby.) A one-on-one session is very effective for addressing problem behaviors.

Expose Your Dog to Babies and Children

Maybe your dog already loves kids. Or maybe you have a dog who's extremely uncomfortable, or even frightened around little ones. In either case, begin exposing your dog to babies and children and provide plenty of positive experiences as soon as you know you're expecting. Even if your dog seems to love kids, she's not used to a baby living in her territory.

Start by taking your dog to areas where there are babies, toddlers and children. Sit on a bench or in the grass out their reach, and see how your dog reacts. Do not yell at your dog if he's skittish or barks! This will create negativity around children, which is the opposite of what you need. If your dog seems curious and friendly, ask a calm, gentle child to give him a treat. See how your dog reacts when someone walks by with a stroller or baby carriage; if your dog remains calm, try walking alongside. If you have a friend with a baby, invite her over, but don't let your dog get too close. You want to ensure the whole experience is safe for everyone. Go slowly, and soon your dog will be accustomed to the sights, smells, and sounds of a baby.

Introduce Your Dog to Baby Equipment

Around four months before the baby is due, get your dog used to baby gear. Bring her into the baby's room, and let her see and smell the crib, toys, clothes, baby bathtub, bottles, baby bouncer, baby lotion and powder and even diapers. Throw a few toys around, let your dog sniff it, and practice the "leave it" command if your dog tries to pick it up.

It may sound crazy, but consider going all-out and get a doll that makes realistic baby sounds. Or get a baby sounds ringtone and play it frequently. Offer your dog a treat when you play these sounds so she associates it with something positive.

Practice, Practice, Practice

It's a good idea to practice walking your dog while pushing a baby carriage. Neighbors might think you're a bit weird, but it will be worth it later on. It will keep your baby safe.

I once watched a new mother pushing the carriage with the dog's leash tied to the handle. Her dog spotted my dogs and lurched across the street to say hello, and...well, you can guess what happened. Figure it out before your baby is onboard.

Walk around the house carrying something (maybe that creepy doll) to practice your dog's down. Use the baby's room or area to work on the "stay" and "back" command — stand in front of your dog, hold out your hand and move slowly forward; your dog will naturally back up. Time for a treat!

Shake Up the Schedule

Around three to four months before your due date, start thinking about walking and feeding your dog at slightly different times (but don't change the number of walks or feedings). Considering middle of the night feedings, you may not be able to walk your dog at the crack of dawn. Just be sure to walk her at night so she isn't uncomfortable.

Now is the time to line up a dog walker you trust, and arrange for a schedule of walks that start before the baby comes home. This gives your dog time to get used to a new person and for you to observe your dog's behavior around the walker. If your dog appears frightened or aggressive after a walk, get another walker.

Make Arrangements

Work out arrangements with someone you trust to care for your dog while you're in the hospital. A friend or relative that won't mind a middle of the night call to pick up the dog will save you a lot of stress when you go into labor. If you have a trustworthy BFF, ask if she can come to your house when you go into labor and stay until you return. Don't enlist a stranger; your dog will already be stressed, especially if you go into labor at home.

In the weeks before your due date, give your dog sitter instructions on food, walks and emergency contacts, including the closest animal hospital. Unless the sitter is your dog walker, have them walk and feed your dogs at least one or two times before the big day.

Set Up Your Dog's Space

Create a safe space for your dog to get away from the noise and chaos of a newborn. If your dog loves her crate, make it super comfy; buy a new crate pad and a crate cover to provide extra privacy. Put the crate in a favorite place.

If you have a dog who does not love a crate, set up a plush bed in her go-to hiding place. If that's under the bed, put down a crate pad. Whatever space you choose, just make sure your dog doesn't feel like you are exiling her. Dogs need their pack, especially in times of stress.

While welcoming a baby is a wonderful time in your life, you want to make sure your dog is comfortable with the transition, too. Be patient; don't yell at your dog if she is needy. This is a huge deal for her. Don't treat her like she is a burden, neglect her, force her outside or give up that special one-on-one time with your dog. Also, don't dump your dog in a shelter. If you prepare correctly, the big change will be an exciting one; not a stressful one.

What to Expect After Your Pet's Vaccination

It's common for pets to experience mild side effects after receiving a vaccine, usually starting within hours of the vaccination.

Side Effects:

The following side effects aren't unusual. However, if they last for more than a day or two, or cause your pet significant discomfort, it's important for you to contact your veterinarian.

- Discomfort and local swelling at the vaccination site
- Mild fever
- Decreased appetite and activity

- Sneezing, mild coughing, “snotty nose” or other respiratory signs occurring 2-5 days after your pet receives an intranasal vaccine

Seek Veterinary Care Immediately If these Signs Develop:

More serious, but less common side effects, such as allergic reactions, may occur within minutes to hours after vaccination. These reactions can be life-threatening and are medical emergencies.

- Persistent vomiting and diarrhea
- Itchy skin that may seem bumpy (“hives”)
- Swelling of the muzzle and around the face, neck, or eyes
- Severe coughing or difficulty breathing
- Collapse

A small, firm swelling under the skin may develop at the site of a recent vaccination. It should start to disappear within a couple weeks. If it persists more than three weeks, or seems to be getting larger, you should contact your veterinarian.

Always inform your veterinarian if your pet has had prior reactions to any vaccine or medication.

Today a _____ vaccine was given.

Vaccine Sticker(s):

Location of Vaccination:

Typical Vaccine Schedule for puppies

DA2PP and Rabies are considered CORE vaccines

This is a typical schedule for vaccines. Your puppy may receive them at slightly different times depending on age, breeder recommendations, lifestyle etc.

6-8 weeks- first in the series of DA2PP vaccines

10 weeks- Bordetella vaccine (Most commonly referred to as “the kennel cough vaccine”)

12 weeks- Second DA2PP vaccine

13 weeks- First Lyme vaccine

14 weeks- First Lepto vaccine

15 weeks- Second/Final Lyme vaccine

16 weeks- Third (final) DA2PP vaccine,
+/- Rabies vaccine (rabies can be given any time AFTER 12 weeks, but MUST be given before 6 months of age)

17 weeks- Second/Final Lepto vaccine

18 weeks- First Influenza vaccine

18 weeks- Rabies vaccine

20 weeks- Second/Final Influenza

We can start elective vaccines any time, BUT we like to space vaccines out-
Here's Why:

Each vaccine has the potential, no matter how remote, to cause a reaction. The more vaccines given together, the higher the likelihood.

If we've given several vaccines together, we will not know which one (or if it was the combination) caused the reaction.

We want your puppy to be protected from disease as safely as possible.

Elective vaccines:

Elective vaccines are not required by law and are not considered imperative vaccines for all dogs. However, these vaccines can be highly recommended based on a patient's risk or exposure to disease.

The Lyme vaccine- The lyme vaccine is an added layer of protection used in conjunction with flea and tick preventative to help avert the transmission of lyme disease. The vaccine is about 80% effective at preventing the transmission of the Borrelia bacteria and is strongly recommended in the Berkshires and areas with high tick volumes. The lyme vaccine is a yearly vaccination, the series starts with an initial vaccine that requires a booster 2-4 weeks later.

The Leptospirosis "Lepto" vaccine- Leptospirosis is an infectious disease caused by the bacteria called Leptospira. The disease causes damage to the kidney and liver and may be fatal in

severe cases. The bacteria is passed in the urine of infected animals and can survive in the environment for long periods of time in warm, stagnant water or moist soil. Wild animals such as skunks, raccoons, opossums, rats, and deer can spread infection to dogs. This disease is zoonotic meaning it can be spread from species to species, including humans. Dogs at higher risk include: those that swim and/or drink from stagnant water sources and ones that reside in an environment where wildlife is present. The leptospirosis vaccine is a yearly vaccine, the series starts with an initial vaccine that requires a booster 2-4 weeks later.

The Bordetella vaccine- Kennel cough is inflammation of the upper respiratory tract, caused by bacteria and/or viruses. The bordetella vaccine helps prevent Bordetella bronchiseptica which is a bacterium commonly associated with this respiratory disease in dogs. Dogs that are at high risk include: those that go to boarding or grooming facilities, play in dog parks, or have exposure to unfamiliar dogs. Kennel cough is very contagious and spread through respiratory secretions. The bordetella vaccine is given either as an injection, orally, or intranasal. It is considered a yearly vaccine, though certain boarding/grooming facilities require it to be given every 6 months.

The Canine Influenza vaccine- The canine influenza vaccine protects against both h3n2 and h3n8 strains of the virus. Similarly to kennel cough, influenza's most common symptoms are associated with inflammation of the upper respiratory tract. In severe cases, patients may present with a fever and develop pneumonia due to secondary infection. Dogs that are at high risk include: those that go to boarding or grooming facilities, play in dog parks, or have exposure to unfamiliar dogs. Outbreaks of the flu have historically occurred in major urban areas, so it is also strongly recommended for dogs that travel or reside in metropolitan areas. Influenza is very contagious and spreads through respiratory secretions. The Influenza vaccine is a yearly vaccination, the series starts with an initial vaccine that requires a booster 2-4 weeks later.

How To Trim a Dog's Toenails: A Complete Guide

by Veterinary Formula on December 17, 2021

Poorly maintained dog nails aren't merely unsightly. They're a health risk for your dog. Overgrown and unhealthy nails can be painful. And, in rare cases, cause long-lasting damage.

Yet many dog owners avoid trimming their dog's nails for fear of hurting them. Unfortunately, the long-term risks of never cutting your dog's toenails far outweigh the risks of an accidental nip.

Trimming your dog's nails doesn't have to be scary. When you take it slow and carefully, the chances of accidentally hurting your dog are low. If you're not willing to risk even that, there are always professional groomers who will do it for you.

Here's everything you need to know when it comes to how to trim a dog's toenails.

Why You Should Trim Dog's Toenails

To start with, long nails can curl into your dog's paw, cutting the skin, causing pain, and possibly leading to infection. Long nails are also prone to splintering and breaking. And because the quick (a vein inside the nail) is usually closer to the tip on longer nails, that means bleeding and pain for your dog.

Even when they don't break or cut the paw, long nails can force the foot to splay, resulting in deformed feet and damaged tendons. Deformed paws also reduce your dog's traction, making it more likely he'll slip and fall and hurt himself that way.

When paws with long nails hit the ground, there's more pressure on the foot and leg structure as well. This can lead to early-onset arthritis over time.

Your Dog's Nails

Before we get into the nitty-gritty of how to trim a dog's toenails, a bit about their nails in general. Your dog's nails consist of a hard outer layer called the shell and a vein in the center called the quick. The quick is pinker than the rest of the nail, so is easy to recognize in dogs with clear or white nails. In dogs with dark-colored nails, you'll need to proceed carefully so as not to cut the quick.

Because it is a vein, the quick will bleed if cut. It also has nerves so it hurts when cut.

The good news is that regularly trimming your dog's nails will cause the quick to recede, making it less likely that you'll accidentally snip it.

How Often Can You Cut Your Dog's Nails?

The general rule of thumb is this, if you hear your dog's nails clicking on the hard floor, it's time for a trim.

More specifically, says Tori Paxton, salon manager and expert groomer at Paws & Anchor in New Jersey, nail trims should be performed every two to six weeks, depending on your dog's breed, size, and lifestyle.

"Many types of dogs means many different foot structures. This can affect the way the nail hits the ground. If the nails are not hitting the ground, it is more likely they'll grow longer, as they won't be naturally 'filed down' by the ground surface."

As dogs get older and less active, there will be less natural erosion, as well. You'll likely need to trim their nails more often. Additionally, the nails on some dogs get more brittle as they get older.

"If a dog's nails are more brittle than normal, it is important to keep them short to avoid breaking and potentially exposing the quick," Paxton says.

What is the Proper Way to Clip Dog Nails?

Here are three easy-to-follow steps for trimming or clipping your dog's nails.

1. Pick up your dog's paw and put your thumb on the pad of one toe. Move any fur out of the way and place your forefinger on the top of the toe above the nail. Make sure you're holding their foot in a comfortable position, that's not pulling too far away from their natural stance. And never try to bend their elbow or knee in the opposite direction.
2. Firmly, but gently, push your thumb up on the pad, while pushing your other finger forward to extend the nail.
3. Start with small cuts at a 45-degree angle, looking at the inside of the nail between each one to make sure you haven't cut too far. Repeat, clipping only a small amount at a time.

One word of warning. Be very careful when clipping past the natural curve of your dog's nails. This is where the quick is often located. On dogs with white nails, the quick should be easy to spot. On dogs with dark nails, keep your eyes open for a chalky white outer ring at the end of each nail. This will indicate when you've approached the quick.

Tips for How to Trim Your Dog's Nails at Home

Start Young

Nail trimming can be scary for some dogs, especially puppies. To reduce any anxiety your pup might feel, start handling his feet while he's a puppy. Hold his paws, squeeze each toe slightly, and praise him for his good behavior. Do it regularly enough and your puppy will learn there's nothing to fear.

Once your puppy is comfortable with having his feet handled, move on to getting him used to the scissors or nail clipper. Let him sniff it. Give him praise and a treat. Touch the scissors or clipper to each paw, and reward him again. Do this for a few days, before you ever try to cut his nails for the first time.

The first time you cut their nails, only do the tiniest tip on one front paw. Let your dog's reaction guide your progress. You might need to stop there for the day.

Heap more praise and treats on him. Repeat this exercise over the next few days until he's ready to let you move on to more nails.

Stay Calm

Your dog picks up on your energy, Paxton says. If you're nervous about trimming their nails, they will be too.

"The calmer both of you are, the easier the whole situation will be," she says.

If you know your dog gets nervous during a trim, keep some treats on hand. "There are also toys/treats you can spread peanut butter on for them to lick that have the same effect," Paxton adds.

Choose the Right Tool

There are several dog nail trimming tools out there including scissor-style clippers and guillotine-style clippers, along with nail grinders and even emery boards. Each has its pros and cons, but not all are suitable for all dogs.

Small dogs in particular do best with a scissor-style clipper. Big dogs with large, hard nails are better suited with a guillotine-style clipper or nail grinder, also called a Dremel.

"Do not use a Dremel on extremely long nails," Paxton warns. "Holding the spinning head in the same place too long can cause heat from the friction. Safety first!"

If you're not sure which tool to use, ask your vet or vet tech what they recommend.

Bright Light Is Best

Having a clear picture of what you're doing is important when trimming your dog's nails. An occasional nick to the quick won't do any harm, but always hitting it teaches your dog that nail trims are something to be afraid of.

Only trim your dog's nails in natural sunlight or with a bright light on. And, if you need glasses to read, you need them to cut your dog's nails. This way, you'll be able to spot the quick before you cause your dog any pain.

Have a Blood Clotter

Despite your best efforts, you will invariably nick a quick at some point. Super Clot from Veterinary Formula stops the bleeding, disinfects, and relieves any pain your dog is feeling.

There are also clotting powders (called styptic powder) but they do not disinfect.

Decide When a Professional Is Needed

There are times when trimming your dog's nails yourself is not the right choice. This is usually when you've put off trimming for too long and the nails are overgrown.

"If the nails are curled into the paw pads, have the nail trim done at a veterinarian's office," Paxton says. "They will potentially need antibiotics to protect them from infection. And, it could be painful."

Trim After a Bath

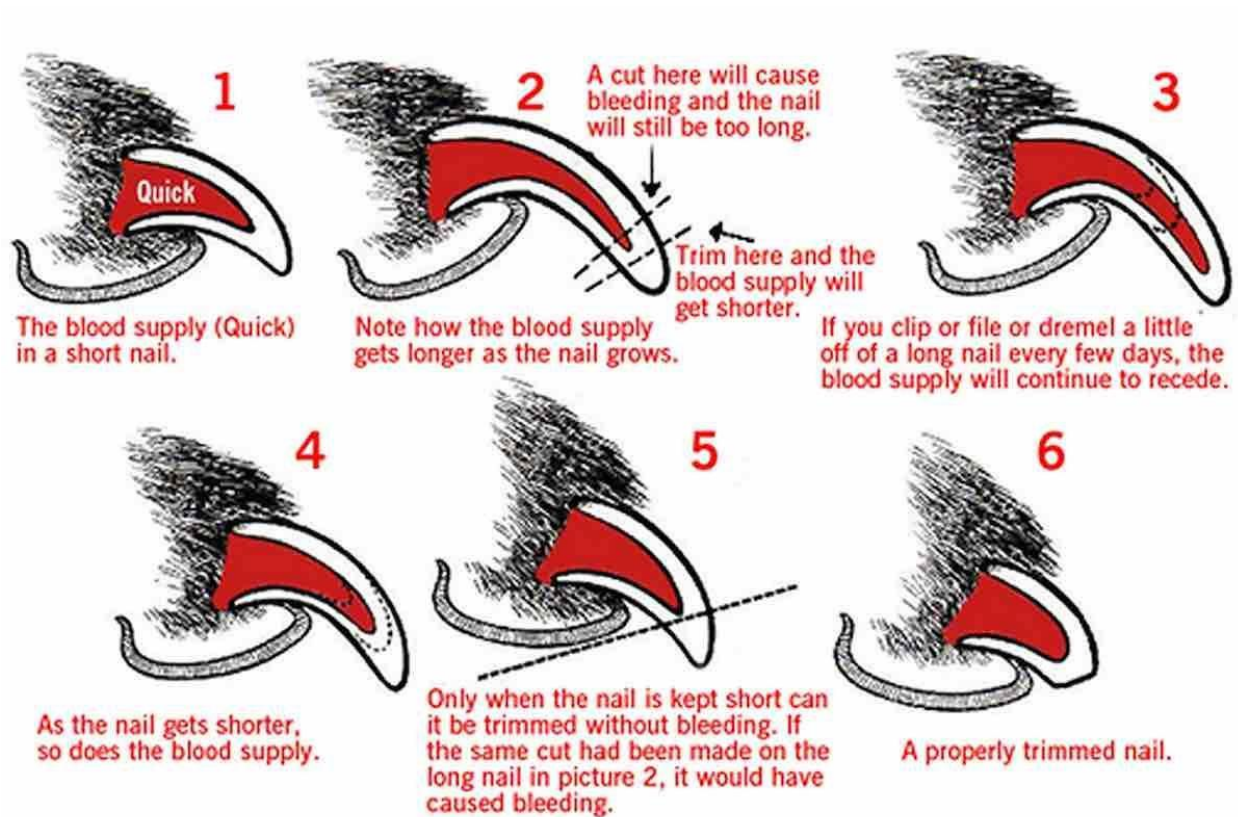
If your dog has super hard nails, waiting until after a bath can help make trimming easier. Nails get softer in water, so they're easier to cut.

Be Patient

The main thing to remember when it comes to how to trim your dog's nails at home is to always be patient.

"Your job is to make your pets comfortable, so try to see things from their perspective," Paxton says. There's no need to rush.

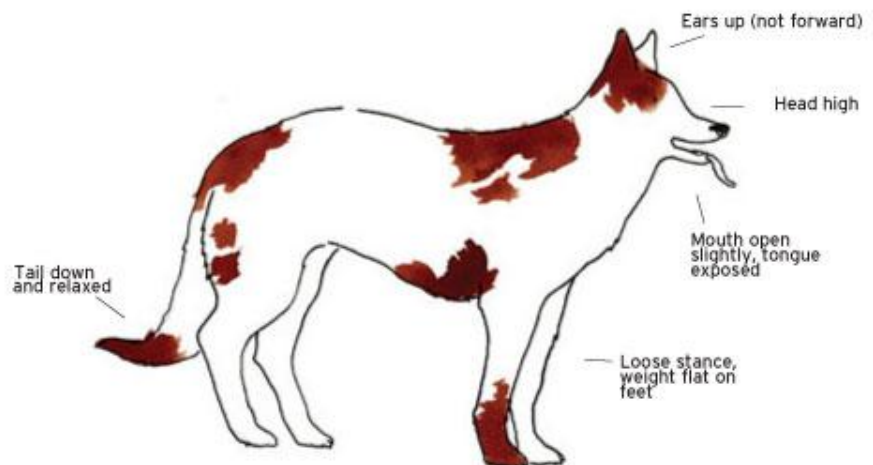
"They give us unconditional love, so remember to return the favor."



Canine Body Language

1. Relaxed Approachable

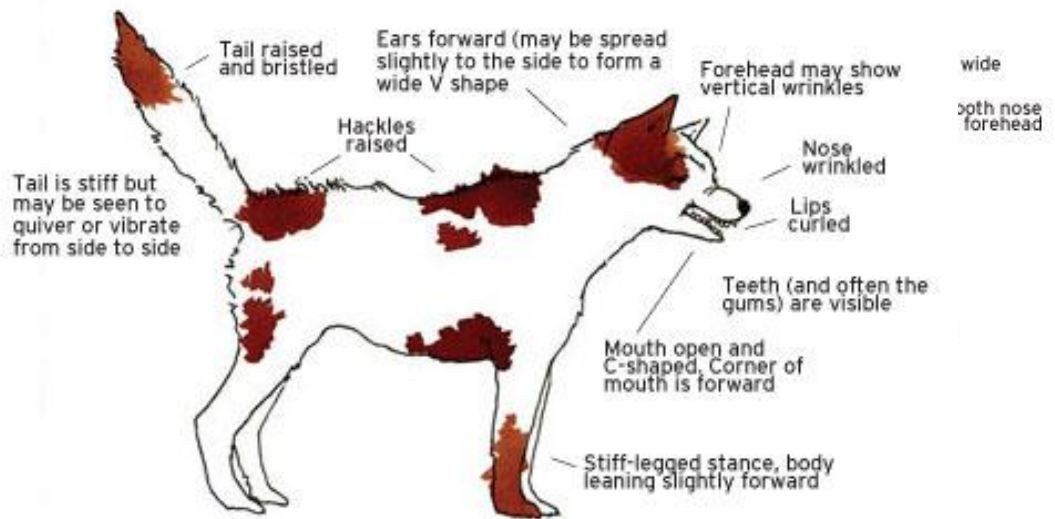
This dog is relaxed and reasonably content. Such a dog is unconcerned and unthreatened by any activities going on in his immediate environment and is usually approachable. Regardless, approach new dogs with caution and don't attempt to rush a dog into a greeting, even if they seem relaxed.



2. Alert- Checking Things Out

If the dog has detected something of interest, or something unknown, these signals communicate that he is now alert and paying attention while he is assessing the situation to determine if there is any threat or if any action should be taken.

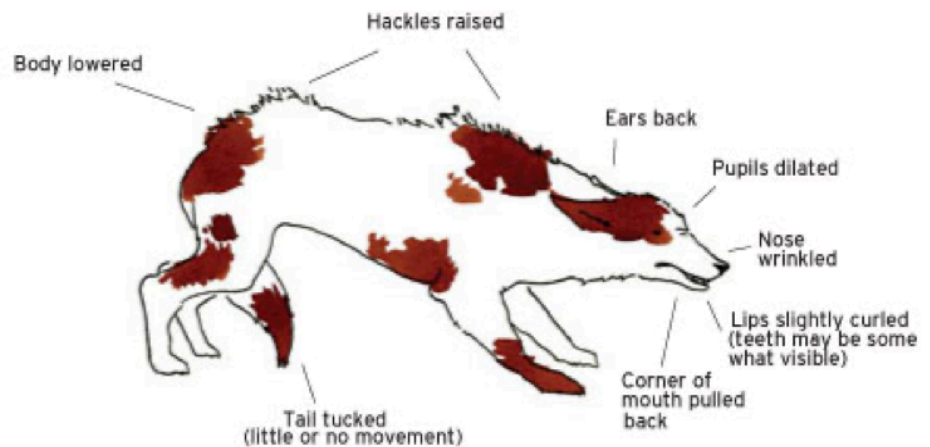
3. Dominant Aggressive



This is a very dominant and confident animal. Here he is not only expressing his social dominance, but is also threatening that he will act aggressively if he is challenged. Knowing whether your dog is dominant or submissive can help your relationship with your dog, and also be more aware of how other dogs around you may act.

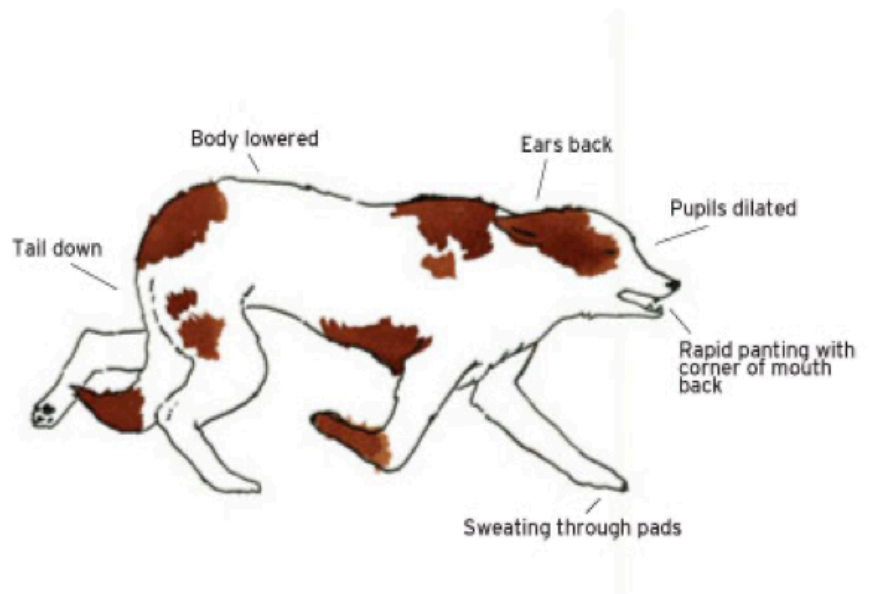
4. Fearful and Aggressive

This dog is frightened but is not submissive and may attack if pressed. A dog will generally give these signals when he is directly facing the individual who is threatening him.



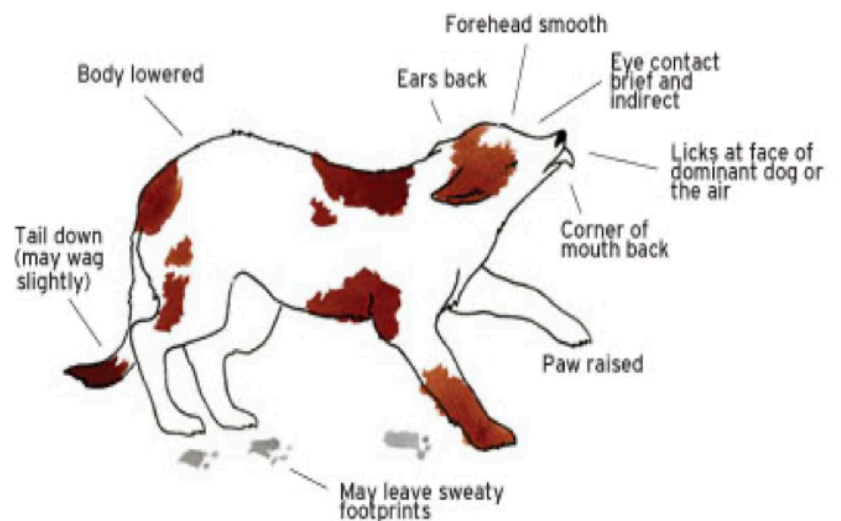
5. Stressed and Distressed

This dog is under either social or environmental stress. These signals, however, are a general "broadcast" of his state of mind and are not being specifically addressed to any other individual.



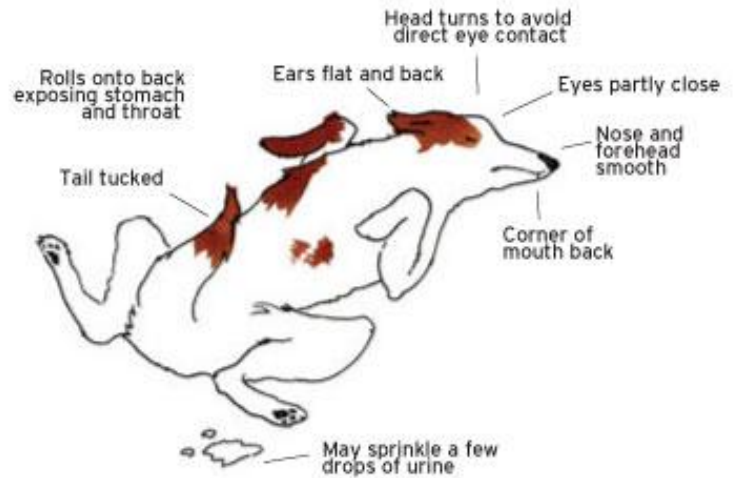
6. Fearful and Worried

This dog is somewhat fearful and is offering signs of submission. These signals are designed to pacify the individual who is of higher social status or whom the dog sees as potentially threatening, in order to avoid any further challenges and prevent conflict. If your dog is always showing these symptoms, he may not feel comfortable in his environment and you may need to try a few extra tips to make your anxious dog feel relaxed.



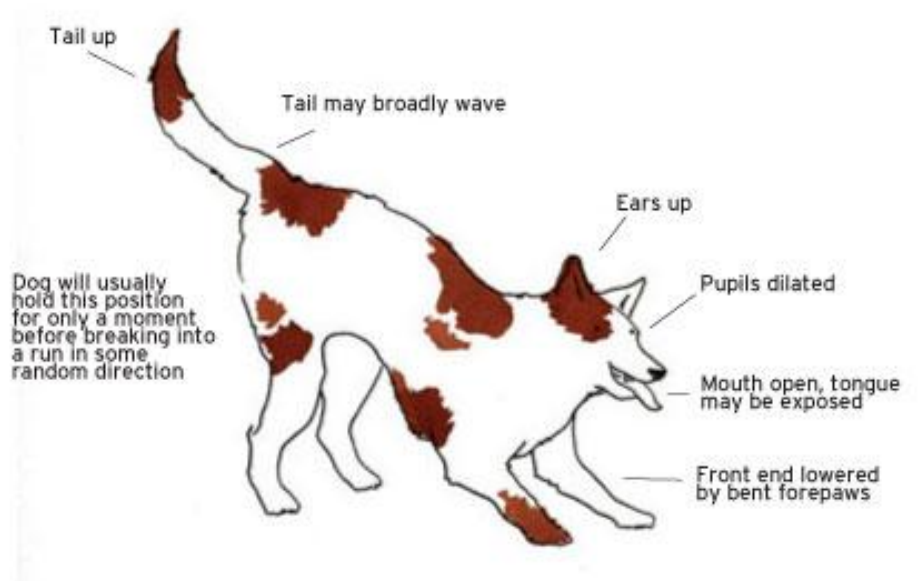
7. Extreme Fear- Total Submission

This dog is indicating total surrender and submission. He is trying to say that he accepts his lower status by groveling before a higher ranking or threatening individual in the hopes of avoiding a physical confrontation.



8. Playfulness

Here we have the basic invitation to play. It may be accompanied by excited barking or playful attacks and retreats. This set of signals may be used as a sort of "punctuation mark" to indicate that any previous rough behavior was not meant as a threat or challenge.



Separation Anxiety (Isolation Distress) Training Tips

What is Isolation distress and Separation anxiety?

Isolation distress and separation anxiety are variations of a behavior problem that cause a dog to panic when left alone. Just like in humans, these panic attacks are illogical. They may cause a dog to do things to self-soothe (such as whining, barking or howling or self-mutilating) or to attempt to

escape to “safety” (to find their humans). Some dogs urinate or defecate out of fear. Others pace, drool, sweat from their paws, destroy exits or places that smell like their family or engage in other unintentional, uncontrollable behaviors. Most dogs that are struggling with being alone have “isolation distress.”

Isolation distress means a dog is comfortable as long as a human being, or living being (such as a canine companion), is with them.

Suspending Absences

In order to overcome panic, we must prevent panic from happening. If we can prevent a dog with isolation distress/separation anxiety from ever reaching a point of panic, we can slowly, gradually acclimate them to longer and longer periods of time alone. This is one of the most important keys to our training. To overcome isolation distress/separation anxiety, you must guarantee your dog that they will not panic. When they trust that this is the case, they will make progress. In the beginning, when your dog can only be alone for a few seconds or minutes without panic, they essentially cannot be without human company. As you progress in your training to 30 minutes, 1 hour, 2 hours and so on, you will slowly regain your freedom.

Confinement

For most dogs with isolation distress or separation anxiety, the use of a crate can make the problem worse. These behavior problems are often comorbid with confinement distress. Unless your dog absolutely loves being in his crate and rests there regularly throughout the day, you are likely to have more success leaving your dog loose in the house.

Pre-departure Cues

Dogs are excellent at picking up patterns of behavior. Most dogs with isolation distress/separation anxiety begin to panic even before you have walked out the door. They recognize the things you consistently do before leaving the house. Because these actions predict that you will be leaving them alone, the actions, themselves, become scary. We call these actions “Pre-Departure Cues.” In order to desensitize your dog to being alone, we must desensitize them to the process of leaving.

Take a look at Sara’s pre-departure cues:

Before Sara leaves the house she puts on a jacket, puts on her shoes, picks up her bag and picks up her keys. Sara then unlocks the door and opens it. After stepping outside and closing the door, Sara then locks the deadbolt. Next Sara walks down one flight of stairs in her building, opens and closes the front door then opens and closes the gate. Each action is a different pre-departure cue. You will want to integrate these into your training one day at a time (i.e., never add more than one pre-departure cue per day). Your dog will notice and/or react to some pre-departure cues but not to others. If your dog alerts to the pre-departure cue you add, give them a few days to adjust to it before adding a new one.

Daily Training:

Try working on your training 5-6 days a week for no more than 30 minutes at a time. Combine short steps away with pauses hanging out around the house as in the below example:

1. Put on shoes. Step out the door, closing it behind you. Wait for 10 seconds. Return and remove shoes. Pause for 30 to 90 seconds
2. 2. Open the door a crack (do not step outside). Close the door. Pause for 30 to 90 seconds

3. 3. Put on shoes. Step out the door, closing it behind you. Wait for 30 seconds. Return and remove shoes. Pause for 30 to 90 seconds
4. 4. Step out the door, closing it behind you. Immediately return.

Each day, make the training a little more challenging if your dog was comfortable with what you did the previous day. Move slowly! If your dog seems uncomfortable with one day's training, repeat the level of difficulty the next day or even decrease the challenge.

You won't be able to move forward if your dog isn't on board. Resolving panic won't happen overnight. Be patient and don't be afraid to reach out to friends and family for help. Your veterinarian, a Board Certified Veterinary Behaviorist and/or a Certified Separation Anxiety Trainer (CSAT) can help.



MICROCHIP FAQs

Q: What is a microchip?

A: A microchip is a small, electronic chip enclosed in a glass cylinder that is about the same size as a grain of rice. The microchip itself does not have a battery—it is activated by a scanner that is passed over the area, and the radiowaves put out by the scanner activate the chip. The chip transmits the identification number to the scanner, which displays the number on the screen. The microchip itself is also called a transponder.

Q: How is a microchip implanted into an animal? Is it painful? Does it require surgery or anesthesia?

A: It is injected under the skin using a hypodermic needle. It is no more painful than a typical injection, although the needle is slightly larger than those used for injection. No surgery or anesthesia is required—a microchip can be implanted during a routine veterinary office visit. If your pet is already under anesthesia for a procedure, such as neutering or spaying, the microchip can often be implanted while they're still under anesthesia.

Q: What kind of information is contained in the microchip? Is there a tracking device in it? Will it store my pet's medical information?

A: The microchips presently used in pets only contain identification numbers. No, the microchip is not a GPS device and cannot track your animal if it gets lost. Although the present technology microchip itself does not contain your pet's medical information, some microchip registration databases will allow you to store that information in the database for quick reference.

Some microchips used in research laboratories and for microchipping some livestock and horses also transmit information about the animal's body temperature.

Q: Should I be concerned about my privacy if my pet is microchipped? Will someone be able to track me down?

A: You don't need to be concerned about your privacy. The information you provide to the manufacturer's microchip registry will be used to contact you in the event your pet is found and their microchip is scanned. In most cases, you can choose to opt in or opt out of other communications (such as newsletters or advertisements) from the manufacturer. The only information about you contained in the database is the information that you choose to provide when you register the chip or update your information. There are protections in place so that a random person can't just look up an owner's identification.

Remember that having the microchip placed is only the first step, and the microchip must be registered in order to give you the best chances of getting your pet back. If that information is missing or incorrect, your chances of getting your pet back are dramatically reduced.

Q: I've heard about something called "ISO standard." What does that mean?

A: The International Standards Organization, or ISO, has approved and recommended a global standard for microchips. The global standard is intended to create an identification system that is consistent worldwide. For example, if a dog was implanted with an ISO standard microchip in the U.S. travels to Europe with its owners and becomes lost, the ISO standard scanners in Europe would be able to read the dog's microchip. If the dog was implanted with a non-ISO microchip and the ISO scanner was not forward- and backward-reading (universal), the dog's microchip might not be detected or be read by the scanner.

Q: How does a microchip help reunite a lost animal with its owner?

A: When an animal is found and taken to a shelter or veterinary clinic, one of the first things they do is scan the animal for a microchip. If they find a microchip, and if the microchip registry has accurate information, they can quickly find the animal's owner.

Q: Will a microchip really make it more likely for me to get my pet back if it is lost?

A: Definitely! In fact, a study of more than 7,700 stray animals at animal shelters in 23 states showed that microchipped animals are far more likely to be returned to their owners. In that study, microchipped stray dogs were returned to their owners at more than double the overall rate for all stray dogs (both microchipped and not microchipped). For stray cats, the difference in return rates was even more dramatic.

For microchipped animals that weren't returned to their owners, the most common reason was an incorrect or disconnected owner telephone number in the microchip registry database. So don't forget to register your pet's microchip, and keep your contact information up-to-date.

Q: Does a microchip replace identification tags and rabies tags?

A: Absolutely not. Microchips are great for permanent identification that is tamper-proof, but nothing replaces a collar with up-to-date identification tags. If a pet is wearing a collar with tags when it's lost, it's often a very quick process to read the tag and contact the owner; however, the information on the tags needs to be accurate and up-to-date. But if a pet is not wearing a collar and tags, or if the collar is lost or removed, then the presence of a microchip might be the only way the pet's owner can be found.

Your pet's rabies tag should always be on its collar, so people can quickly see that your pet has been vaccinated for this deadly disease. Rabies tag numbers also allow tracing of animals and identification of a lost animal's owner, but it can be hard to have a rabies number traced after veterinary clinics or county offices are closed for the day. The microchip databases are online or telephone-accessed databases, and are available 24/7/365.

Q: I just adopted a pet from the animal shelter. Is it microchipped? How can I find out?

A: If the shelter scanned the animal, they should be able to tell you if it is microchipped. Some shelters implant microchips into every animal they adopt out, so check with the shelter and find out your new pet's microchip number so you can get it registered in your name.

Most veterinary clinics have microchip scanners, and your veterinarian can scan your new pet for a microchip when you take your new pet for its veterinary checkup. Microchips show up on radiographs (x-rays), so that's another way to look for one.

Q: Why are microchips sometimes not found?

A: As with almost anything, it's not a foolproof system. Although it's very rare, microchips can fail and become unable to be detected by a scanner. Problems with the scanners are also not common, but can occur. Human error, such as improper scanning technique or incomplete scanning of an animal, can also lead to failure to detect a microchip.

Some of the animal-related factors that can make it difficult to detect a microchip include the following: animals that won't stay still or struggle too much while being scanned; the presence of long, matted hair at or near the microchip implantation site; excessive fat deposits in the region of implantation; and a metal collar (or a collar with a lot of metal on it). All of these can interfere with the scanning and detection of the microchip.

Q: My pet has two different frequency microchips implanted. Do I need to have one removed? Will they interfere with each other? Which microchip will be detected by the scanner?

A: No, you do not need to have one of the microchips removed and no, they will not interfere with each other. The microchip detected by the scanner will depend on the scanner used – if it is a universal (forward- and backward-reading) scanner, it will probably detect each chip as it is passed over it. To detect the other chip, the scanner has to be reset and passed over the area where it is located. If it is a scanner that only reads one microchip frequency, it will only detect a microchip of that specific frequency and will not detect or read the other microchip.

If you know your pet has more than one microchip implanted, make sure you keep the database information updated for each microchip. People don't routinely assume there's more than one microchip (because it is very uncommon), so they will try to find the owner based on the registry number of the microchip they detect.

Q: What are some of the problems associated with microchips? How common are they?

A: The British Small Animal Veterinary Association (BSAVA) maintains a database of adverse reactions to microchips. Since the database was started in 1996, over 4 million animals have been microchipped and only 391 adverse reactions have been reported. Of these reactions, migration of the microchip from its original implantation site is the most common problem reported. Other problems, such as failure of the microchip, hair loss, infection, swelling, and tumor formation, were reported in much lower numbers.

Q: What should I do to "maintain" my pet's microchip?

A: Once your pet is microchipped, there are only three things you need to do: 1) make sure the microchip is registered; 2) ask your veterinarian to scan your pet's microchip at least once per year to make sure the microchip is still functioning and can be detected; and 3) keep your registration information up-to-date.

If you've moved, or if any of your information (especially your phone number) has changed, make sure you update your microchip registration in the manufacturer's database as soon as possible.

<https://www.avma.org/resources-tools/pet-owners/petcare/microchips-reunite-pets-families/microchipping-faq>



Dog Age to Human Years Chart



Dog Size **Small** **Medium** **Large** **Giant**
 20 lbs or less 21-50 lbs 51-100lbs 100+ lbs

Dog Age	Age in Human Years			
	Small	Medium	Large	Giant
1	15	15	15	12
2	24	24	24	22
3	28	28	28	31
4	32	32	32	38
5	36	36	36	45
6	40	42	45	49
7	44	47	50	56
8	48	51	55	64
9	52	56	61	71
10	56	60	66	79
11	60	65	72	86
12	64	69	77	93
13	68	74	82	100
14	72	78	88	107
15	76	83	93	114

pumpkin

The best treat is a healthy life.

Source: AKC, "Your Dog's Age In Human Years: A Conversion Chart."

www.pumpkin.care

How do dogs age?

As you can see in our dog age chart – aside from the giant category – small, medium, and large dogs age pretty similarly until they reach about six years of age. Then, larger dogs age much faster in comparison to their smaller and medium counterparts. By seven years old, a small dog, like a Dachshund, will be six human years younger than a large breed, like an Airedale Terrier. Why is this?

Ultimately, scientists aren't completely sure why smaller dogs age slower and live longer than larger ones. According to the American Kennel Club, some researchers hypothesize that it's because larger dogs are affected by age-related diseases more quickly.

Similarly, larger dogs progress from puppyhood to adulthood much faster, making abnormal cell growth, cancer, and other diseases more likely. It's for this reason that using the "one dog year equals seven human years" calculation isn't completely accurate.

While the newer method we've shared is more accurate, it's still difficult to place a general formula on the way dogs age – as this progression will not only depend on your dog's size, but their breed and individual genetics as well.

What are common signs of aging in dogs?

It can be helpful to look at physical and behavioral clues to determine the age of your canine companion. For example, your dog's teeth can be a particularly useful indicator of age. According to the Humane Society of the United States, by seven months, all of your dog's permanent teeth are in; by 1-2 years, they'll be duller and might have some yellowing; and by 5-10 years, they'll show wear and possibly signs of disease.

Other indicators of your dog's age, especially as they reach the senior stage, include:

- Graying hair
- Poor eyesight, cloudy eyes
- Trouble hearing
- Stiff muscles and joints, arthritis
- Lower activity level
- Behavioral changes such as increased anxiety, confusion, accidents in the house, irritability, etc.

Of course, you can always turn to your veterinarian for an accurate estimate of your dog's age if you're unsure. Your veterinarian will consider factors, including teeth, body shape, hair or fur, eyes, etc. to give the best estimate of their age.

Why is understanding my dog's age important?

Using a dog age chart to estimate your dog's age in human years is a fun and insightful way to learn more about them! It's important for other reasons, too. Namely, understanding how old your dog is and how they're aging allows you to properly care for them.

Keep in mind, if you have a larger dog, you'll want to start looking for signs of aging around five or six, whereas smaller dog owners might not see any real signs until their dog is seven or eight. In any case, once your dog reaches their senior years, you'll want to keep an extra close eye on their behavior, activity level, and eating habits.

In general, a healthy diet and weight, consistent mental stimulation and physical activity, and regular check-ups at the vet will all help improve your dog's quality of life.

<https://www.pumpkin.care/blog/dog-age-chart/>



What are the most common household toxins for pets?

As a pet owner, you want to keep your furry friend safe and healthy, but your pet's curious nature sometimes can get him into trouble. Animals investigate the world with their mouths and

they can ingest poisonous substances accidentally. The [American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals \(ASPCA\) Animal Poison Control Center](#) is open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, to advise pet owners about potential pet toxicities. To help you take precautions and ensure your pet stays safe, the ASPCA has compiled a list of the [most frequent offenders](#), many of which can be found in and around your home.

If you believe your pet may have ingested a toxin, or if you are unsure please call the ASPCA Pet poison helpline at [\(888\) 426-4435](tel:888-426-4435). The Veterinarians on staff will advise both you and your regular or emergency veterinarian (via case reference number) on the best treatment options for your pet, and help to organize follow-up care. There is a fee associated with this service, but the ASPCA Pet poison helpline staff have the best and most complete inventory of potential toxins, their risks and effects on the body, treatment plan, and treatment schedule.

[Pets and over-the-counter medications](#)

In 2018, the ASPCA received 213,773 calls, almost 20% of which were related to ingestion of over-the-counter medications, such as ibuprofen, naproxen, cold medications, and herbal supplements. Even a medication that does not require a prescription can be extremely dangerous to your pet. Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatories such as ibuprofen and naproxen can cause acute kidney failure and should never be given to pets. Do not try to treat your pet's medical problems without consulting with a veterinarian, and never give them medication that is not approved for veterinary use.

[Human prescription medications and pets](#)

ADHD medications, antidepressants, and heart medications were most commonly ingested by pets, although your pet can suffer significant side effects from any human medication he eats. Keep all medications, both prescription and over-the-counter, safely stored inside a medicine cabinet or cupboard or up high where your pet can't reach them and ask your visitors to do the same.

[What foods are toxic to pets?](#)

Many foods that are safe for people can be deadly to pets. Keep the following toxic foods away from your beloved companion:

- Chocolate
- Xylitol (often found in sugar-free gum)
- Macadamia nuts
- Grapes and raisins
- Onions
- Garlic
- Alcohol
- Caffeinated drinks
- Raw yeast dough
- Raw or undercooked meat

Never leave food where your pet can reach it and keep pets out of the kitchen when children are eating to prevent them from gobbling up dropped food.

[What about prescription veterinary products?](#)

Prescription animal medications often are flavored to increase palatability, so pets may mistake them for treats and eat more than prescribed. Inquisitive pets may even eat pills that aren't flavored, so keep all medications out of your pet's reach. Remember, animals can chew through plastic bottles, so child-proof may not mean pet-proof.

What other household items are dangerous to my pet?

Products such as paint, glue, and cleaning chemicals often are left out on the assumption that pets won't eat these bad-tasting substances. But sometimes pets lap up liquids because they feel good or have an interesting texture. Household products can contain dangerous chemicals and some household glues expand in the stomach, causing a life-threatening blockage.

Rodenticides

Products designed to kill rodents are particularly dangerous to pets, who may be tempted to eat the tasty bricks, granules, or pellets left out for mice and rats. Rodenticides kill rodents by causing internal bleeding, high calcium levels, brain swelling, or toxic gas production. Never put rat bait out where your pet can find it and keep your pet confined to your yard to prevent him from eating your neighbors' rodenticides.

Insecticides and pets

Ant baits, bug sprays, and foggers can be poisonous to your pet. Read labels to ensure proper use of these products and prevent pets from exposure during and after use. Store all insecticides on high shelves out of a pet's reach.

Plants toxic to pets

Plants found in flower beds, vegetable gardens, and indoor planters and arrangements can be toxic to pets. Cats, who particularly like to munch on greenery, are sensitive to many plant types, but dogs also can be at risk. A complete list of toxic and nontoxic plants can be found on [ASPCA's website](#), but the most common toxic plants include:

- Autumn crocus
- Azalea
- Cyclamen
- Daffodils
- Dieffenbachia
- Hyacinth
- Kalanchoe
- Lily of the valley
- Lilies
- Oleander
- Sago palm
- Tulips

If your pet eats leaves, flowers, or stems, immediately take him and a plant sample to your Veterinarian. Although toxicity signs may not be apparent, it is vital to remove poisonous material as soon as possible to prevent toxin absorption into the body.

Garden products and pets

Many products used on lawns, gardens, and flower beds can cause toxicity in pets. Fertilizers made from bone or blood meal are tempting to pets and can cause pancreatitis, or can clump in the intestines or stomach, causing a blockage. Other fertilizers and herbicides applied to lawns also may contain toxic chemicals.



Summer Safety Hot weather tips for your pet

When the temperature rises, we need to take extra precautions to make sure our pets are okay in the heat.

Here are some key tips to help keep your pet cool and safe.

[Keep them inside](#)

It might seem obvious, but pets get just as hot as you do outside. When the temperatures are high, carefully limit your dog's time outside and be sure to bring him inside to hang out where the AC can keep him cool. Overheating can happen quickly in dogs and has many detrimental effects on health, so it's better to be safe than sorry.

Do not leave your pet alone in the car on a hot day

Despite the warnings, every year, pets die after their owners leave them in a parked car that overheats. Within just a few minutes, a car can get extremely hot, stifling, and become deadly. Dr. Ernie Ward conducted an experiment on a warm summer's day in which he sat in a parked car with the windows cracked; he wanted to see just how hot it would get. Within 30 minutes it was 117 degrees inside the car.

Avoid walking your dog in the heat

During the summer months, it is best to take your companion(s) for a walk during the morning or evening hours when it's cooled down a bit.

Watch for hot surfaces

Do you know how much it hurts your bare feet to walk on scorching concrete? It can hurt your dogs' feet as well, so avoid walking them in the middle of the day or stick to grassy areas.

Protect your Dog's skin

Just like we protect our skin from the sun, our companions' skin needs protecting too. Please do not use human formulated sunscreen on your pet, instead, if they insist on sunbathing consider a dog sun shirt, dog skin protector spray or balm.

Dogs at the greatest risk of sunburn have:

- Sparse or thin coats, or no fur at all
- Light colored nose, eyelids, and ears
- Excessive shedding or hair loss
- Healing wounds or shaved surgery sites
- Chronic skin conditions like dermatitis, or existing sunburns
- White fur, light colored skin
- Existing sunburns

Cold Weather Tips for Pets

1. Never let your dog off the leash on snow or ice, especially during a snowstorm.
2. Thoroughly wipe off your dog's legs and stomach when they come in out of the rain, snow, or ice. Check their paw pads, which may bleed from snow or ice encrusted in them. Salt, antifreeze, or other chemicals could hurt your dog if they ingest them while licking her paws.
3. Keep your pet's nails trimmed, long nails can catch and break on the ice!
4. If you own a short-haired breed, consider getting a warm coat or sweater for your dog. Look for one with a high collar or turtleneck that covers your dog from the base of her tail

on top and to the belly underneath. While this may seem like a luxury, it is a necessity for many dogs.

5. Never leave your dog or cat alone in a car during cold weather.
6. If your dog is sensitive to the cold due to age, illness, or breed type, take him outdoors only long enough to relieve himself.
7. If your dog spends a lot of time engaged in outdoor activities, increase his supply of food, particularly protein, to keep his fur thick and healthy.
8. Antifreeze, even in small doses, can be lethal for dogs and cats. Unfortunately, dogs and cats find antifreeze quite tasty and will eagerly drink it up if given the chance. Be sure to clean up any spills from your vehicle. To prevent accidental poisonings, more and more people are using animal-friendly products that contain propylene glycol rather than the traditional products containing ethylene glycol. Call your veterinarian or the ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center if you suspect your animal has ingested poison.
9. Never shave your dog or cat down to the skin in winter. Leave the coat in a longer style, which provides more warmth. Remember that such a style will require more frequent brushing due to dry winter air and static electricity. When you bathe your dog, make sure they are completely dry before you take them out for a walk.
10. Make sure your companion animal has a warm place to sleep far away from all drafts and off the floor, such as in a dog or cat bed or basket with a warm blanket or pillow in it.