

OPERATOR'S MANUAL



Australian
Association
of Pet Dog
Breeders

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PREVENTATIVE HEALTH

VACCINATION

Your pup will have received at the minimum a “3 in 1” vaccine at 6-8 weeks, the vaccination program will be outlined on his vaccination sheet and your veterinarian will advise you of further vaccinations needed

The conventional veterinary advice is that you should keep your pup isolated from other dogs until 10 days after his final 12-14 week vaccination. If you live in a middle-class urban area you will have a ‘free ride’ because all the dogs around, you are likely to be vaccinated and the incidence of any of these infectious diseases is likely to be very low.

You need to be aware of the risk of poor socialization (discussed in the section on Socialization) which is a serious, lifelong risk in pups who are isolated until 14-18 weeks of age and be aware that following a ‘zero-risk’ policy with regard to parvovirus risks endangering your dog’s mental health throughout his life.

Puppies should be exposed to a range of experiences, people and other dogs, from 8-12 weeks old in order to develop normal social skills as adult dogs. ‘Puppy Preschool’ can provide essential socialization and you should avoid high-risk areas like dog parks, but getting out and meeting other

(vaccinated) dogs and people in a safe environment is very important for your puppy between 8 and 12 weeks.

Please feel free to take this booklet to your vet for discussion if you meet with contradictory advice. There is no right answer to this issue and the final decision on this will be up to you.

PARASITES

Roundworm and Tapeworm. Pups should be treated for roundworm every 2 weeks from birth until they are 12 weeks of age, and for tapeworm at 8 weeks. From 12 weeks of age they should be treated for tapeworm and roundworm every month until they are 6 months old. As adults it is recommended that they be treated routinely every 3 months; however, the risk of worms causing health problems in adult dogs is most unlikely.

Children and puppies carry different parasites and there is no need to worm the whole family when you worm your puppy. If you are on a farm your dog will need to be treated every 3 months with a product that contains praziquantel, a chemical that kills hydatid tapeworm.

Heartworm. Heartworm is a mosquito-borne blood parasite of dogs, which can cause severe illness and death. This parasite is now prevalent throughout eastern Australia. You should be aware of the disease and should use a preventative drug regularly. Options range from relatively cheap monthly tablets available at the supermarket – monthly ‘spot-on’ products and tablets, which control internal parasites as well as heartworm – to annual injections. You should discuss which approach will suit you best with your vet at your puppy’s 12-week visit.

Fleas. Fleas are a common problem in summer. There is

evidence that dogs who are kept flea-free for the first 12 months of their lives are unlikely to develop flea allergy. If flea allergy does develop then even one flea can start a nasty cycle of itching, which persists long after the flea has had its feed and dropped off. Fleas can severely exacerbate any other itchy skin problem your pup might develop.

An important feature of flea control is to remember that every flea you see represents 5% or less of the flea population in your environment. The majority of the population will be eggs and larvae in the ground, bedding, carpet or elsewhere in your dog's environment. Flea control must include treating the environment as well as the dog.

Your puppy will be treated for fleas and you should discuss flea control with your vet at your routine vaccination visit

Which combination of parasite and flea control to use?

There is a myriad of products available. The cheapest effective combination for adult dogs – if you are not in a tick area – appears to be an all wormer, used quarterly for intestinal worms; and **Advocate®**, used monthly for heartworm and flea control.

Ticks. The coastal paralysis tick can kill puppies. It is essential that you use preventative measures and check your dog daily if you live in a tick area.

You should discuss tick control with your local vet ***as soon as your pup arrives, if not before*** in order to determine the seriousness of the risk in your area and so that you are aware of the appropriate preventative measures. The Northern Beaches is a particularly dangerous paralysis tick area and the Pittwater Animal Hospital has an excellent review of ticks on their website at the following link:

<http://www.pittwateranimalhospital.com.au/ticks.html>.

FEEDING AND HOUSING

FEEDING

Good-quality commercial pet food offers a perfectly balanced diet in every meal. Your pup has been raised on the food you have been given at departure. He is also used to eating in company and to having food available for a nibble whenever he feels like a snack. Because of this the puppy may find commercial pet food boring, do no more than nibble the occasional pellet and prefer to eat almost anything else that is offered.

Please, for the first week DO NOT SUDDENLY CHANGE YOUR PUP'S DIET. You will be given some food with your puppy – start to mix this with the food of your choice until he has completely changed over to that food. Once he has settled onto the new dry product, and his motions are regular and firm, you may begin to introduce other foods.

Your puppy has been through considerable stress and change in the last few days and this will predispose him to diarrhea – a sudden change of diet at this stage may result in gastric upset and this will lead to problems with toilet training.

For ease and simplicity we suggest you feed your puppy fed a base diet of top-quality dry puppy food until about 4 months - premium products are available in pet shops, vet

surgeries and good supermarkets.

When using any dry food you need to be aware that:

- Quality is usually related to price.
- The feeding guides on the back of the packet are based on research done on *kenneled* dogs – pet dogs do not need as much to eat and so you are likely to overfeed your pup if you feed the recommended amount.
- The feeding guide will assume that your dog is not eating anything else.

Canned dog food smells horrible to most humans, but dogs love it and it usually contains more fat than dry food, which is a good thing for dogs. It is also mostly water, which makes it an expensive way of feeding your dog. I like to use canned food to mix with cooked (more digestible and palatable) chopped green veggies, so they'll eat their greens. Canned food is usually not as highly processed as dry food,

Commercial dry dog foods are 'convenience foods. They are ultra-processed

(http://www.wphna.org/htdocs/2011_nov_wn4_cam11.htm)

and while they are undeniably balanced and well researched they are nonetheless higher in carbohydrate than dogs will eat by preference, and do not contain the myriad of antioxidants found in real food. The incidence of obesity, diabetes, arthritis and allergic skin conditions in dogs is increasing in all western countries and clearly parallels the rise of these diseases in 'First World' humans. We blame food for the problem in the human population.

There are hundreds of homemade dog food diets – raw or cooked – available on the internet if you want to feed your dog real food. These are based on meat, fish, bone, vegetables, eggs, cheese, yoghurt, i.e. real food.

Remember that dog nutrition is not 'rocket science' and that every meal, every day, does not need to be perfectly balanced. Leftover veggies or vegetable offcuts chopped and thrown in the microwave, then mixed with a bit of canned food or cheese (or both) and an egg, is a fine meal for a dog. Variety is the key, as it is in the human diet.

Omega-3 fatty acids are one component of a healthy diet, with which many quality dog foods are conscientiously supplemented.

Your puppy and her mother may have been given fish-oil supplements because research shows that this improves learning ability in young puppies. Fish-oil supplementation has also been shown to be beneficial in dogs with allergic skin problems and can help older dogs suffering from arthritis. You can provide adequate omega-3 supplementation by giving your dog cheap canned sardines or salmon in water (not in vegetable oil) a couple of times a week. Or you can give them a fish-oil capsule daily.

Should you feed bones to your dog?

On the downside, dogs can break teeth on hard marrowbones. Short-sawn bones (like chop bones) can cause gut obstructions. Cooked bones can be indigestible, can cause constipation and can splinter, causing obstructions. Short, hard bones can also get stuck in the roof of your dog's mouth. These are all factors you need to consider when feeding bones to your dog and the decision to feed bones or not is yours to make.

But dogs love bones, which provide entertainment and help to keep teeth and gums healthy.

Dogs can spend happy hours gnawing on a marrowbone and will demolish rib and brisket bones in no time. So I feed all my dogs bones at least once a week and my pet dogs get bones daily.

Bones should be raw, lean and from young animals – veal, lamb or chicken. The bones should be soft – rib and brisket (chest) bones or chicken bones (remember: chickens are killed at 12 weeks old these days and their bones are soft and full of blood vessels). Raw bones are a good source of calcium and vitamins and keep teeth in good condition.

Your puppy will love chicken bones and if the pieces are small will swallow them whole (usually with no ill effects). It is better to give larger pieces that do need to be chewed up: necks and wings are great for young puppies; whole chicken carcasses and turkey necks for older dogs.

But do remember that cooked bones are poorly digested, may splinter and shouldn't be fed. Cooked chop bones can be very dangerous as the shape and rough-cut surface of the bone can lodge in the intestines and cause a blockage. NEVER let your dog have access to bins or compost containing corn cobs – these are the most common cause of life-threatening intestinal blockages.

If you feed bones or table scraps reduce the amount of dry food, you give your dog. Please remember that **obesity is the most common health problem facing pet dogs today.**

To avoid overfeeding remember:

- Lean is healthy – we all know this and most of us are obsessed with trying to maintain a healthy weight, while at the same time we overfeed our pets!
- You should be able to feel your dog's ribs but not see them – if you can't feel them easily, your dog is too fat. Look at the puppy not the plate.
- Never leave food out for your dog to snack on throughout the day.
- Many dogs are always hungry and some dogs (particularly Labradors and their crosses) seem unable to control their appetites. If your dog is 'highly food driven', accept that you will never feed your dog enough to make him perfectly satisfied and feed only a healthy amount.
- If feeding dry food alone, don't follow the feeding guide – err on the side of under- rather than overfeeding. Don't forget that scraps and tidbits are food

- **Don't use food to show your affection.**

Tidbits should only be used as rewards for appropriate behavior in training - the best treat you can give your dog is your attention and company.

You should feed your pup three times a day until it is 3-4 months old, twice daily until about 5 months and then once daily after that.

HOUSING

Whether your adult dog sleeps indoors or out, is a matter for you to decide, as long as his sleeping place is cosy and draught free. There are many outdoor kennel options these days but a kennel with a closing door, so that your dog doesn't have the opportunity to chase possums in the middle of the night, is worth considering.

For dogs sleeping indoors, a plastic airline crate with a wire front door is great because you will know where your dog is while you are asleep, and you will value the fact that when you travel with your dog, the 'kennel' can travel with you.

These crates are an excellent aid in toilet training puppies and also provide a secure den for them to sleep in. Puppies resist soiling their beds and so will rapidly learn to hold on overnight, and the cage will allow you to take your puppy to where you want him to poo every morning, with the reasonable expectation that he will indeed go.

If using a crate, you take your pup out last thing at night before you go to bed, then put him to bed in his crate. First thing in the morning you take the puppy out to his toilet area again.

You may need to put a cardboard box inside the crate for a

few weeks to reduce the internal size of the crate – otherwise the puppy may soil one end of the box.

Your pup may cry for a few nights – a ticking clock or a radio playing softly can be a comfort. Resist comforting the pup yourself – you are only rewarding him for crying (Dr Christopher Green's controlled crying method will work if you can't bring yourself to ignore a crying pup).

The calming pheromone **Adaptil** may be useful to spray inside your puppy's cage and some breeders will provide a small bottle of it with your puppy. It is a pheromone derived from the skin secretions of lactating bitches.

Remember to start as you mean to go on – only let the puppy onto your bed if you think that this is a reasonable place for an adult dog to sleep.

DOG BEHAVIOUR

INTRODUCTION

Dogs are highly social animals, which is why they fit in so well with human society

– they have adapted to cope with a complex set of relationships. The relationship between dogs and humans is remarkable. This association has been going on for a minimum of 123000 years – some mitochondrial DNA evidence suggests before we were truly modern humans. Some scientists suggest that dogs have affected human evolution just as we have quite clearly affected theirs.

Dogs aren't wolves even though they evolved from them. Your pup's instincts have been overlaid by thousands of years of selection by humans for friendly, puppy-like behavior. It is no longer fashionable to talk of dominance in dog training, but dogs and families have a social hierarchy of some sort. There are many painless ways to ensure that your dog understands the hierarchy of your family and fits in appropriately.

A dog's behavior is a combination of instinct and acquired or learned behavior, and dogs go through developmental stages just as people do. They progress through the socialization period (equivalent to human childhood), through adolescence and into adulthood, and at each stage you can

have different expectations of your dog's behavior.

Dogs mostly learn by trial and error. They try something: if the outcome is rewarding, they are more likely to do it again; if the outcome is unpleasant, they are less likely to do it again. The more often they have a pleasant outcome from a behavior, the more rapidly they will learn to perform that behavior.

SOCIALISATION PERIOD (5-16 weeks of age)

During this fairly brief period your pup progresses from the equivalent of a human toddler – about 4 years old, needing security and reassurance and prone to tantrums – to a 13-year-old ready to explore the world. Like most toddlers they need naps – in fact they sleep most of the time for the first few weeks – and dogs in general spend a lot more time sleeping than we humans do. Your pup is healthy if he is playful while he is awake.

This is the most important time in any dog's life. It is the time when a pup learns what it means to be a dog, who his family is and where he fits in the family hierarchy. It is a time when one bad experience can permanently affect his personality – phobias of things like travel, shopping centers or vacuum cleaners can develop at this stage.

During this period your pup should be exposed to as many different non- threatening experiences as possible. You should avoid any punishment that might frighten your pup. Remember that no matter how irritating he may be, he is only a baby (how long would you leave your toddler in a preschool where children were smacked if they were disobedient?). Punishment is usually an ineffective training tool and this is discussed further in the section on training.

This is also the period during which many vets

recommend that your pup is isolated from any unvaccinated dogs in order to prevent infection (particularly with parvovirus) – this is a zero-risk policy.

If we did this to our children, we would not send them to school until they were 13 years old and had finished their final childhood vaccinations. Some children might cope with this and adjust once their isolation period was over, but most would be excessively shy, anxious or aggressive because they had never learnt how to play properly with their peers. We realize the importance of socialization in our children and so are prepared to risk exposing them to potentially life-threatening

viruses before their final vaccinations at the end of primary school. Isolating pups would have exactly the same adverse consequences.

In most suburbs the risk of parvovirus is very low (on the Sydney North Shore most vets haven't seen a case in 10 years). Dog parks should be avoided due to the risk of disease and because this environment is too uncontrolled and potentially terrifying for a young puppy. But puppies should be taken driving, visiting, shopping (or at least being carried about in busy streets), to school for show-and-tell – anywhere they can meet friendly people in a non-threatening environment during their first 12 weeks, because the risk of infection lasts until 14 weeks whereas the effects of poor socialization last a lifetime.

ADOLESCENCE (4-18 months – later in large breeds)

The best thing that can be said about adolescent dogs is that they grow out of it! This is the time when your dog discovers the joy of digging and chewing. It's the time when it's fatal to leave shoes at the door, toys in the sandpit, garden shed doors open, hoses lying on the lawn or rubbish-bin lids off. It is also a good time to put your gardening plans on hold.

Adolescence is the age when many people change their minds about owning a dog and when a lot of pups end up being put down in pounds and animal shelters. Patience,

good humor and a bit of planning are needed to get through this period relatively unscathed. Keep reminding yourself that you should have a good 10-12 years of companionship once this stage is over.

Remember that when your pup is left on his own, he will be excited to see you, and the more time he spends alone the more excitable he will be. **If you find the dog is too boisterous and put him outside alone, he will continue to be boisterous and excitable inside the house. Instead you must train your pup to behave calmly inside and only allow rough play and excitement outside.** When young dogs are returned for 'behavioral reasons' invariably the aforementioned pattern of behavior by the puppy's owner is a common factor in these cases. Equally invariably these puppies will settle down and make good pets once appropriately trained.

ADULTHOOD (18 months to 2 years onwards)

Your dog has almost certainly been desexed prior to puberty and so will not mature fully in many ways. He is likely to remain more playful and submissive in his approach to your family and to other dogs than he would if he was sexually active. Fortunately however, you can expect your dog to stop chewing and digging. Your dog is likely to be less active at this stage and will need less food than during adolescence.

TEACHING GOOD MANNERS

Teaching your dog good manners is what you are doing when you establish dominance and create a family hierarchy, because manners – like the hierarchical behavior of the dog pack – are the social lubricant that ensures that friction is minimized in social situations. In a dog pack the dominant dogs will set the rules; in the family pack a dog with good manners is a dog that accepts that you and your family have rules and that these rules are decided on by you.

A polite person will wait for others to enter before barging through the front door, and a polite dog who knows and understands the family hierarchy must be taught to do the same.

Just as you teach your children to wait until everyone is seated, you should teach your dog patience at the food bowl. A dominant dog in a pack always demands first go at the food. Feed your dog only after the family have eaten, never feed your dog from your plate or he will beg for food whenever you are eating. From an early age and throughout adolescence encourage your children – under supervision – to feed your pup from their hand once the pup is sitting politely. This tells your dog that your children are the source of good food and therefore very important, and that they must obey them to get what they want. It also ensures that your dog won't snatch food from people or beg at the table.

Dogs and children who constantly demand attention are annoying. Dominant dogs are the initiators of play, demanding attention when it suits them. Play with your dog when you want to and if you don't feel like playing, ignore your pup's overtures and make him settle down. If he becomes excessively exuberant then put him in 'time out' (the laundry perhaps - not his sleeping crate) until he settles.

If you have small children and you have to intervene because your child is too rough with your pup, don't comfort the pup. He will get the impression that you are on his side and this will reinforce any feeling of dominance towards your child. This may go against human notions of fair play but you must always be seen to support your child rather than the pup, no matter how naughty your child may have been – you can speak to them about it later.

If you need to discipline your pup, a low growl accompanied by a severe stare can be very effective, or you can hold the pup firmly and say 'no'; however, the best way to stop naughty behavior is to ignore it completely. Puppies are just like toddlers with their endless cries of 'look at me, mum!'. Withdrawal of any contact, such as folding your arms while standing up and looking away as if the pup isn't there at all, is a very effective tool for controlling pups. If necessary, banish him to the time out zone.

Most importantly of all, start obedience-training your puppy from the first day at home – the principles of training are covered in the next section.

TRAINING

As mentioned earlier, dog behavior is largely formed by trial-and-error learning. The exception to this is toilet training, which is largely shaped by habit. Apart from toilet training, the other important thing your pup must start to learn early is that sometimes he will be left alone – this is discussed in the problem behavior section under ‘Nuisance barking’.

HOUSE TRAINING

Pups become house-trained by developing a habit. It usually takes about 2-4 weeks of constant vigilance. You need to know a few basic facts about elimination behavior:

- ❑ Pups are most likely to poo or wee after sleep, a meal or exercise.
- ❑ When they are about to poo, they will sniff the ground and may walk in circles; there may be little warning before they were.
- ❑ They will try very hard not to wee or poo in their own beds unless they are confined for too long.
- ❑ Once they have started using one place, they are likely to keep using it because of the smell.
- ❑ Pups develop a preference for weeing and pooing on certain surfaces, which is why they will often seek out a particular carpet.

As soon as you get home on your first day, take your pup to the designated place in your garden and wait there patiently until he wees. This way his first experience is correct. From then on take your pup outside, to the place you have chosen, as soon as he wakes up in the morning, after a sleep, after a meal, whenever he begins to walk around sniffing the ground, and at least every hour throughout the day. If he wees or poos praise him or give him a reward then go straight back inside. Go with the puppy and reward him immediately rather than standing at the door and calling him back to reward him – he needs to know that he's being rewarded for the act rather than for coming inside!

Don't use newspaper, 'pee pads' or anything that encourages your puppy to poo or pee in the house – the rule he must learn is **'don't use the inside of the house as a toilet – ever'** and anything that encourages breaking this rule will be confusing and may extend the toilet-training period.

Teach your puppy to go to the door if he wants to go outside. As soon as he walks anywhere near the door, open it and go out with him, give him a treat and (if he doesn't want to poo) go back in again. This way he learns that walking to the door will result in it being opened

If you catch your pup in the act inside the house say 'no' firmly, pick him up and take him to the place you have chosen for him to use. If you are too late, clean up the mess without comment. Use soap and water and then an enzymatic cleaner to get rid of the smell. Never use ammonia-based cleaners – they smell like urine to dogs.

It will be easier if you keep the pup in one room with the doors closed and have a carry box or cage for him to sleep in. A freight cage – a plastic shell with a wire front door – is an invaluable tool to toilet training. Your pup will hold on as long as possible rather than poo in his bed and a couple of nights should be enough to train him to sleep through. Take him out last thing at night and first thing in the morning and you will have control over his elimination behavior at least once each morning. If you hate the idea of keeping your puppy in a cage, think of it as a cot, which is after all nothing more than a cage to keep your baby safe. It doesn't seem so mean when you think of it that way!

If you work on a computer at home, a puppy pen enclosing you both is very useful – that way the puppy can sit on your foot (as they love to do) but can't wander off if you are distracted and not watching him closely.

Children are no help whatsoever in toilet training. On the contrary, with their limited attention span and inability to remember to close doors, they are more of a disadvantage to toilet training: whatever they promise, they soon forget to watch the pup and will leave doors open so that the pup can sneak out and poo on your best rug. Don't leave toilet training to the kids!

If the pup makes a mess inside, don't punish your pup – it won't understand and may turn into a 'sneaky pooer' (a highly scientific term that should be self-explanatory).

Often puppies will 'act guilty' when they have made a mess – people frequently tell me that their pup knows he has been naughty. All the pup knows is that if there is dog poo on the rug when you come in, you are going to go berserk. He can't understand that he has caused you to get angry, nor can he work out that if he changed his behavior you would not get angry.

Never rub his nose in it – the pup will have no idea whatsoever why you are doing this and will not learn from the experience.

If you are very careful and never let your pup make a mistake (perhaps not a realistic expectation) he should be house-trained in about two weeks.

OBEDIENCE TRAINING

Trial and error shapes most of the learned behaviors of dogs and like people, they begin to learn as soon as they are born. In order to train your dog to sit, stay or jump through hoops you need to understand the keys to effective training. They are simple principles and apply whether you are training a puppy or a circus elephant:

- **TIMING.** A behavior must be followed immediately by an outcome if the dog is to learn from the experience. You have about two seconds to reward (or punish) a behavior before the dog will no longer connect the outcome to that behavior.
- **REINFORCEMENT.** The outcome of a behavior reinforces a particular behavior. Positive reinforcement, like food treats, rewards desirable behavior, making it more likely to happen again. This is usually more effective and enjoyable for all concerned than negative reinforcement, which uses an unpleasant reinforcer to reduce the likelihood of a behavior happening (The choker chain is a classic example of negative reinforcement – dogs learn to avoid being choked). The most effective reinforcer for pups is food, and a slightly hungry pup will work hard for a tiny piece of cabanossi or a dried liver treat. Combine food rewards with praise and they will soon learn to recognize 'Good dog' alone as sufficient reward.

□ **PUNISHMENT.** Punishment is an unpleasant outcome to a behavior, which makes the behavior less likely to occur. Punishment is usually less effective than positive reinforcement and if delivered by you, may lead the pup to fear you or simply to get very good at ducking out of the way. The place for punishment is when you want your pup to stop attacking inanimate objects like your washing, and the best way to do this is to make the object punish the pup.

□ **EXTINGUISHMENT.** Behavior that is not reinforced will eventually be extinguished – there’s no point in whining at the door if it never opens.

Extinguishment is a very effective way of eliminating undesirable behavior.

COMMANDS (Conditioned Stimuli). A command is a stimulus your dog learns to associate with a particular response. You need to be consistent in your commands. ‘Sit’, ‘Come’, ‘Heel’, ‘Behind’ – it doesn’t matter what you say as long as you always say the same thing.

SHAPING. Complex behavior is usually ‘shaped’ – you can’t expect the pup to get it right the first time. The trick is to set your pup up so that he is likely to perform the behavior you want. Give the command and immediately reward an approximation of the behavior. Once your pup starts to make the connection, get tougher until you only reward him for doing exactly what you want.

- **INTERMITTENT REINFORCEMENT.** Once a ‘trick’ has been learnt reasonably reliably, the best method to ensure it is not forgotten is to decrease the frequency of rewards until the behavior is only rewarded every now and again. Your dog will work harder if he never quite knows when the next treat is coming.

Training can start immediately – no dog is too young or too old to learn new tricks. Training specific behavior is easier to demonstrate than to describe but I’ll try:

HERE or COME. Easy: as the puppy is walking towards you, go down on your haunches and call ‘Here’. As soon as he gets to you give him a tidbit and say, ‘Good dog’.

SIT. Standing in front of a slightly hungry pup with a small piece of cheese or cabanossi (or a liver treat) held just above his nose, say ‘Sit’ and move your hand back towards the puppy’s tail – he will go back on his haunches. As soon as he looks like sitting, give him the tidbit and say, ‘Good dog’. Soon he will get the idea and you then only reward a proper sitting response.

STAY. Once your pup can sit reliably, stand directly in front of the sitting pup, say 'Stay' and take two steps backwards. If the puppy doesn't follow you immediately go back, reward him immediately and say 'Good dog. If he does, say 'No', put him back where you placed him originally and start again. Gradually, move further away.

The principle involved in each case is to put the pup in the position where he is likely to do the behavior anyway, then associate the behavior with a word command and immediately reward the correct response. As the penny drops, which it will do very quickly, you can make the conditions tougher before a reward is elicited. Once the response is reliable, begin to reward only every now and again.

Finally, remember that puppies get bored easily – 5 minutes of training at a time is enough until the pup is 4-5 months old. Owning a well-trained dog is very rewarding for both you and your dog, and if your youngest child can successfully tell your dog to lie down, you have a bombproof pet. Many vet practices run Puppy Preschools, and these are an excellent place to start training

Most people are happy just to have a well-mannered dog who comes when he is called and sits on command, and this is really all that you need in order to live happily with your dog. Some people are bitten by the bug when they find out how easy it really is to train their dog. The Australian Association of Pet Dog Trainers is an organization that promotes positive training techniques – they have a website at www.apdt.com.au and can direct you to obedience and agility courses in your area. Be warned that there are still some traditional obedience trainers who frown on food rewards as positive reinforcement and insist on the use of choker chains, which are very old-fashioned tools that can cause pain if not used properly. If you have been finding the approach outlined here effective, you might check on the trainer's attitude before you sign up for obedience lessons.

PREVENTING PROBLEM BEHAVIOURS

The following 'problem' behaviours are normal dog behaviours that people tend to find annoying. All dogs will do these things if given the opportunity and if not trained to behave more acceptably:

- □ **Nuisance barking.** Most dogs will bark at strangers, and territorial barking may start at maturity. This can be mildly annoying but is rarely a problem. Dogs that bark repetitively are often anxious and distressed because they are alone – solitary confinement is boring, but it is also very stressful. You need to teach your young puppy to enjoy being in the back yard and to be comfortable with his own company.

As soon as you can, start teaching your puppy that outside is a good place to be and that you'll be back soon.

Give your puppy his breakfast outside as a matter of routine and try to make it last as long as possible. Kong toys stuffed with dog food, Buster food cubes and other toys that dispense food slowly and require effort will keep the puppy busy for some time. At first let him back in as soon as he's stopped showing interest and then gradually increase the time he spends out there. Keep coming back **before** he gets anxious. As he grows you can hide bones around the garden as well as using the food dispensing toys, so that getting that first meal of the day takes an hour or so, by which time the pup will be ready for a nap. Try to make your backyard the place where all the fun happens and make inside the place where you demand calm, sensible and obedient behavior (just as – in an ideal world – Rollerblades and soccer balls are not allowed in the house).

You also need to be sure that your dog is not being left alone for excessive periods.

- □ **Pulling on the lead.** Dogs who pull on the lead can be annoying to walk with. You should first teach your puppy to walk on a lead in your backyard where there are few distractions. Say 'Heel' (or 'Radishes' – it

doesn't matter what you say as long as you and everyone else in the house say the same thing!) and reward the puppy when he comes alongside you on the correct side. Walk off and reward if he stays in that position. Once you're getting there put the lead on and repeat.

Once outside don't let your dog make **any** progress forward if he pulls on the lead – he has to learn that the only way to get anywhere is if the lead is slack. Stand like a rock – otherwise he will believe that the best way forward is to pull you along. As soon as the lead is loose move forward so that he learns that progress is only made with a loose lead. Don't take your dog out 'for a walk' until he knows how to be led – before that, you are taking the dog out for a training session.

If you have problems with training your dog to walk without pulling, then a **Gentle Leader®** is a great solution instead of a collar for walking. This is not a muzzle but is an alternative means of controlling your dog to the more conventional collar and lead.

Your pup may object to wearing the head collar at first, but if you persist your pup will become accustomed to it – particularly if it is associated with

going for a walk. Puppies usually don't like conventional collars either but if they are left on, they soon become accustomed to them.

The **Gentle Leader®** will give you control over your puppy's head and if you use it you will never have a dog who pulls on his lead. If you find your pup is misbehaving in the house – jumping on smaller children for example

– you can leave the **Gentle Leader®** on with a light string attached. You can then discipline from a distance by saying 'No' and gently pulling the pup around so that he is looking at you. That way, 'No' becomes a meaningful command rather than just background noise for an exuberant pup. The **Gentle Leader®** also has an instructional video available, which is very useful.

- **Jumping up.** Immature and submissive dogs will try to ingratiate themselves with their superiors by jumping and licking them about the mouth – this can become a bad habit that terrifies young children. It starts as a baby puppy. **Don't let your baby pup jump up** – always reach down or kneel to pat him and make sure he has all four feet on the ground when you do. If your pup jumps up then turn away from him and ignore him

until he has all four feet on the ground: don't look at him or speak to him until he is no longer jumping, especially when you come home, and the pup is excited. If your dog only jumps on strangers the solution may be to train him to come when called and sit on command. The **Gentle Leader®** on a light string may be helpful in training your dog in this situation.

- **Chewing pot plants and other vulnerable objects.** Don't leave toys, shoes, hoses or anything chewable lying around. A modified mousetrap that gives a nasty fright without pain can train pups to leave pot plants alone. Some treasured items can be protected by painting them with Tabasco Sauce.

These can be effective 'punishers.

Give your pup his own chewable toys. When caught chewing something prohibited, take it away with a firm 'No' and give him a permitted chew toy or bone. There are many toys available that provide hours of occupation and chewing for dogs left alone

- **Chewing the Washing.** Chewing the washing on the line is really good fun. To make it less enjoyable, hang pillowslips or stockings on the line with chili powder or even a cactus plant in them! Provide an alternative

hanging toy – a knotted rope hanging from a branch can provide hours of fun.

- ❑ **Scratching at doors, jumping on tables.** An unexpected squirt of water in the face can be an excellent deterrent for ‘naughty’ behavior – so can a loud noise like a chain thrown against a rubbish-bin lid or a drink can full of stones or a well-aimed wet dish cloth. NEVER open the door to a dog scratching or barking at it – unless that is what you want your dog to do when he wants to come inside.

- ❑ **Digging and garden reconstruction.** If your garden is large enough, create an area in your garden where your pup CAN dig. Bury treats and toys there – put up a trellis in front of it. Old sand pits are perfect.

You can bury balloons in digging holes and sometimes an exploding balloon will deter a pup from digging again – but a robust puppy may well regard that as part of the fun. Burying poo in the top of the hole will usually deter the dog from digging there again.

An enclosed run may be the answer for small gardens while you are away from the house. Train your dog to enjoy that place by giving him treats and toys there and gradually increase the time spent there. Try to position it so that your dog can see a bit of the world going by

during the day and remember that he will be very excited when you first let him out – greet him calmly, don't respond until all four feet are on the ground and give him time to settle down. Don't leave him in there while you are at home and don't use the pen as punishment – only as a place to stay and sleep.

□□ **In General.** To train your dog to stop doing something annoying, work out the benefit to the dog from that behavior and make sure that he doesn't get the benefit/reward/positive reinforcer. Punishment can be used in particular circumstances, in which case you need to set up the situation so that the behavior is likely to occur and then position yourself so that you can immediately deliver a prompt deterrent. Associate this with a loud growl or 'Bah', delivered in a deep voice and soon 'Bah' alone will be enough to stop the naughty behavior. BUT:

1. Wherever possible remember that most of the behavior that bothers you is normal, and that you should try to provide an acceptable alternative way for the dog to express himself.
2. Try to ensure that bad behavior is not rewarded – try to think like your dog and work out what reward he is getting from the annoying

behavior. If there is nothing to be gained from a behavior it will eventually stop.

3. Be aware that a bored dog is an active, agitated and energetic dog – a contented dog will lie about happily for most of the day. Give your dog as much company as possible and make sure that there is something to do each day and that he has a view of the world going by – the walls of your garden may be attractive, but they are very boring if you have nothing else to look at.

Your pup should give you and your family happiness and loyal companionship for about 14 years. You are most welcome to contact your AAPDB Breeder any time in the life of your dog if you have any problems at all – whether health or behavior related. AAPDB Breeders accept that they have a lifetime responsibility towards the dogs they breed and will welcome ongoing contact.

Good Luck