

SPCA of Wake County

Dog & Puppy Care Packet



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The SPCA of Wake County
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SPCA of Wake County Contacts

General Questions

Adoption Counselors

919-772-2326 ext. 2070

adoptstaff@spcawake.org

Animal Behavior Questions

Molly Stone, Animal Behaviorist

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Shopping List (Puppies and Dogs)

- ❖ Food
 - Feed your dog a dry, high quality, brand-name puppy or dog food (avoid generic brands). Choose a brand that has real meat (not by-products) as its #1 ingredient and has a natural brown color with no artificial dyes
 - Nutro, Eukanuba, Purina One and Purina Pro-Plan are good examples (but there are many food choices available)
 - Avoid brands with a high content of corn or “filler food” (most of this will end up in your backyard instead of providing nutrition for your pup; a low-quality food can make house training more difficult)
 - Choose food appropriate for your particular pet. Puppy formula, weight management, large breed, or senior food may be the type your dog needs depending on his/her age, size, and weight.
- ❖ Food/Water Bowls (stainless steel is recommended and you may need weighted bowls)
- ❖ Crate (choose one that is sturdy, safely locks, and is the correct size)
- ❖ Collar (you may also need a harness if the dog pulls, many different types are available)
- ❖ Leash (be careful with retractable leashes because they might break if your dog pulls)
- ❖ Identification Tag (always keep this info current; include cell phone numbers, etc.)
- ❖ Nail Clippers/Grooming Brush (you should also get styptic powder in case you clip too far)
- ❖ Dog Toothbrush (choose one that is the appropriate size for your dog or pup)
- ❖ Dog Toothpaste (toothpaste made for a dog is safe for them and can be chicken flavored!)
- ❖ Bath Wipes (bathing too often can over-dry skin; bath wipes remove dirt and odor without water)
- ❖ Heartgard & Frontline or other vet recommended brands (purchase this on your 1st vet visit)
- ❖ Toys/Treats (choose treats that promote chewing and aid in cleaning teeth)
 - > Nylabone
 - > Kong
 - > Training Treats
- ❖ Remember that toys need to be large enough so that your puppy cannot put them entirely into his mouth.
- ❖ Rawhides and toys that can be torn apart easily should only be given under supervision.
- ❖ Toys should be rotated frequently so they remain fascinating and fun!

Dog Toys and How to Use Them

For dogs and other animal companions, toys are not a luxury, but a necessity. Toys help fight boredom in dogs left alone, and toys can even help prevent some problem behaviors from developing.

Although cats can be pretty picky when it comes to enjoying particular toys – ignoring a \$10 catnip mouse and marveling over a piece of crumpled newsprint – dogs are often more than willing to play with any object they can get their paws on. That means you'll need to be particularly careful when monitoring your dog's playtime to prevent an "unscheduled" activity.

❖ "Safe" Toys

- Many factors contribute to the safety or danger of a toy, and a number of them depend upon your dog's size, activity level, and preferences. Another factor is the environment in which your dog spends his time. Although we can't guarantee your dog's enthusiasm or his safety with any specific toy, we can offer the following guidelines.

❖ Be Cautious

- The things that are usually most attractive to dogs are often the very things that are the most dangerous. Dog-proof your home by safely storing string, ribbon, rubber bands, children's toys, pantyhose, and anything else that could be ingested.
- Toys should be appropriate for your dog's size. Balls and other toys that are too small can easily be swallowed or become lodged in your dog's throat.
- Avoid or alter any toys that aren't "dog proof" by removing ribbons, strings, eyes, or other parts that could be chewed or ingested. Discard toys that start to break into pieces or have pieces torn off. You should also avoid "tug-of-war" games with dogs who have dominant personalities. (Such games between dogs are usually fine.)
- Ask your veterinarian which rawhide toys are safe and which aren't. Unless your veterinarian says otherwise, "chewies" like hooves, pig's ears, and rawhides should only be played with under your supervision. Very hard rubber toys are safe and last longer.
- Take note of any toy that contains a "squeaker" buried in its center. Your dog may feel that he must find and destroy the sources of the squeaking, and he could ingest it – in which case squeaking objects should also be used under your supervision.
- Check labels for child safety. Look for stuff toys that are labeled as safe for children less than three years of age and that don't contain any dangerous fillings. Problem fillings include things like nutshells and polystyrene beads, but even "safe" stuffings aren't truly digestible. Remember that soft toys are not indestructible, but some are sturdier than others. Soft toys should be machine washable.

❖ Recommended Toys

➤ **Active Toys**

Very hard rubber toys, such as Nylabone[®] - type products and Kong[®] - type products, are available in a variety of shapes and sizes and are fun for chewing and for carrying around.

“Rope” toys are usually available in “bone” shape with knotted ends.

Tennis balls make great dog toys, but keep an eye out for any that could be chewed through, and discard them.

➤ **Distraction Toys**

Kong-type toys, especially when filled with broken-up treats – or, even better, a mixture of broken-up treats and peanut butter – can keep a puppy or dog busy for hours. Only by chewing diligently can your dog get to the treats, and then only in small bits. Double-check with your veterinarian about whether or not you should give peanut butter to your dog. Be sure to choose a Kong-type toy of appropriate size for your dog.

“Kong Wobblers” toys are large rubber toys with hiding places for treats. Only by moving the toys around with his nose, mouth, and paws can your dog get to the goodies.

➤ **Comfort Toys**

Soft stuffed toys are good for several purposes but aren’t appropriate for all dogs. For some dogs, the stuffed toy should be small enough to carry around. For dogs who want to shake or “kill” the toy, the toy should be the size that “prey” would be for that size dog (mouse-size, rabbit-size, or duck-size).

Dirty laundry, such as an old t-shirt, pillowcase, towel, or blanket, can be very comforting to a dog, especially if the item smells like you! Be forewarned that the item could be destroyed by industrious fluffing, carrying, and nosing.

❖ Get the Most Out of Toys!

- Rotate your dog’s toys weekly by making only a few toys available at a time. Keep a variety of types easily accessible. If your dog has a favorite, like a soft “baby,” you may want to leave it out all the time.
- Provide toys that offer variety – at least one toy to carry, one to “kill,” one to roll, and one to “baby.”
- Hide-and-seek is a fun game for dogs. “Found” toys are often much more attractive than a toy which is obviously introduced. Making an interactive game out of finding toys or treats is a good

“rainy-day” activity for your dog, using up energy without the need for a lot of space.

- Many of your dog’s toys should be interactive. Interactive play is very important for your dog because he needs active “people time” - and such play also enhances the bond between you and your pet. By focusing on a specific task – such as repeatedly returning a ball, Kong, or Frisbee®, or playing hide-and-seek with treats or toys – your dog can expel pent-up mental and physical energy in a limited amount of time and space. This greatly reduces stress due to confinement, isolation, and boredom. For young, high-energy, and untrained dogs, interactive play also offers an opportunity for socialization and helps them learn about appropriate and inappropriate behavior, such as jumping up or being mouthy.

Resources for this section:

For complete tips and advice on pet behavior and other pet care topics visit www.petsforlife.org

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Top 10 Dog Training Tips

- ❖ Expect your dog to act like a dog. Don't take it personally when he exhibits typical canine behavior. He's not being "bad," he's just being a dog.
- ❖ No more free lunch. "Dogs are happiest when they're exercising their predator skills." Make them work for their food, like stuffing it inside chew toys, hiding it around the house, or teaching them tricks for food rewards."
- ❖ Start off "tight" and slack off later, rather than letting him run wild for the first few weeks and then clamping down when the behavior isn't so cute anymore.
- ❖ Don't wait for him to develop bad habits, like chewing the furniture or urinating on the carpet, before you intervene. Assume this behavior is likely to happen, and act preemptively to manage it before it develops.
- ❖ Supply your dog with acceptable outlets for his doggy behavior, rather than punishing it.
- ❖ Don't lay guilt trips on your dog. "Dogs are neither moral nor immoral," Donaldson says. "They're amoral, meaning that they respond to what they understand to be the consequences of their behavior. So manipulate those consequences."
- ❖ Get involved in organized dog sports or informal activities, such as agility, fly ball racing, tug-of-war, fetch, or a fun game of hide-and-seek.
- ❖ Provide a wide variety of social interactions every day. "What's the worst punishment a person can get in prison?" says Donaldson. "Solitary confinement. Dogs are social animals, too."
- ❖ If you have a puppy, handle him endlessly. And make it as pleasant an experience as possible, so he'll associate being handled with good feelings.
- ❖ Enroll in a good training course. There are local training courses offered at every level, at reasonable prices. Ask an SPCA Adoption Counselor for specific information.

Resources for this section:

Jean Donaldson, *The Culture Class and Dogs Are from Neptune*, directs The San Francisco SPCA's Academy for Dog Trainers. ©2001-2008 The SF/SPCA "Reprinted with Permission of the SF SPCA."

Positive Reinforcement

❖ Training Your Dog (or Cat!) with Treats and Praise

- We all like to be praised rather than punished. The same is true for your pet, and that's the theory behind positive reinforcement. Positive reinforcement means giving your pet something pleasant or rewarding immediately after she does something you want her to do. Because your praise or reward makes her more likely to repeat that behavior in the future, it is one of your most powerful tools for shaping or changing your pet's behavior.
 - Correct timing is essential when using positive reinforcement. The reward must occur immediately – within seconds – or your pet may not associate it with the proper action. For example, if you have your dog “sit” but reward her after she's already stood back up, she'll think she's being rewarded for standing up.
 - Consistency is also essential. Everyone in the family should use the same commands. It might help to post these where everyone can become familiar with them. The most commonly used commands for dogs are:
 - “Sit”
 - “Stay”
 - “Down” (which means “lie down”)
 - “Off” (which means “get off of me” or “get off the furniture”)
 - “Stand”
 - “Come”
 - “Heel” (or “let's go” or “with me”)
 - “Leave it”
 - “Settle”
 - “Watch me”
- Consistency means always rewarding the desired behavior and never rewarding undesired behavior.

❖ Using Positive Reinforcement

- For your pet, positive reinforcement may include food treats, praise, petting, or a favorite toy or game. Food treats work especially well for training your dog. A treat should be enticing and irresistible to your pet. It should be a very small, soft piece of food, so that she will immediately gulp it down and look to you for more. If you give her something she has to chew or that breaks into bits and falls on the floor, she'll be looking around the floor, not at you. Small pieces of soft commercial treats, hot dogs, cheese, or cooked chicken or beef have all proven successful. Experiment to see what works best for your pet. You can carry the treats in a pocket or fanny pack. Each time you use a food reward, you should couple it with a verbal reward (praise). Say something like, "Good dog," in a positive, happy tone of voice.
- Some pets may not be interested in food treats. For those pets, the reward could be in the form of a toy or brief play.
- When your pet is learning a new behavior, she should be rewarded every time she does the behavior, which means continuous reinforcement. It may be necessary to use a technique called "shaping" with your pet, which means reinforcing something close to the desired response and then gradually requiring more from your dog before she gets the treat. For example, if you're teaching your dog to "shake hands," you may initially reward her for lifting her paw off the ground, then for lifting it higher, then for touching your hand, then for letting you hold her paw, and finally, for actually "shaking hands" with you.
- Intermittent reinforcement can be used once your pet has reliably learned the behavior. At first, reward her with the treat three out of every four times she does the behavior. Then, over time, reward her about half the time, then about a third of the time, and so on, until you're only rewarding her occasionally with the treat. Continue to praise her every time – although once your dog has learned the behavior, your praise can be less effusive, such as a quiet, but positive, "Good dog." Use a variable schedule of reinforcement so that she doesn't catch on that she only has to respond every other time. Your pet will soon learn that if she keeps responding, eventually she'll get what she wants – your praise and an occasional treat.
- By understanding reinforcement, you'll see that you're not forever bound to carry a pocketful of goodies. Your dog will soon be working for your verbal praise, because she really does want to please you and knows that, occasionally, she'll get a treat, too. There are many small opportunities to reinforce her behavior. You may have her "sit" before letting her out the door (which helps prevent door-darting), before petting her (which helps prevent jumping up on people), or before feeding her. Give her a pat or a "Good dog" for lying quietly by your feet, or slip a treat into a Kong[®] - type toy when she's chewing it instead of your shoe.

❖ The Pros and Cons of Punishment

- Punishment can be verbal, postural, or physical, and it means giving your pet something unpleasant immediately after she does something you don't want her to do. The punishment makes it less likely that the behavior will occur again. To be effective, punishment must be delivered while your pet is engaged in the undesirable behavior – in other words, “caught in the act.” If the punishment is delivered too late, even seconds later, your pet will not associate the punishment with the undesired behavior.
- Punishment delivered by you may erode your dog's trust. That's why punishment is most effective when it does not come directly from you. For example, after your dog acts in an undesirable way, use a shake can, or keys – but don't draw attention to the fact that the noise comes from you. If your dog perceives her “environment,” instead of you, to be delivering the punishment, she'll be more likely to avoid the behavior even when you're not around.
- In addition, if you're too late in administering it, punishment will seem unpredictable to your dog. She's likely to become fearful, distrustful, or aggressive, which will only lead to more behavior problems. What we humans often interpret as “guilty” looks are actually submissive postures by our pets. Animals don't have a moral sense of right and wrong. Using punishment during house training may lead them to associate your presence, and the presence of a mess, with punishment, instead of teaching them the proper place to go.
- If you've tried punishment and it hasn't worked, you should stop using punishment and use only positive reinforcement. And never use physical punishment that involves some level of discomfort or pain, which may cause your pet to bite to defend herself. Holding the neck skin and shaking your dog or performing “alpha rolls” (forcing your dog onto her back and pinning her on the floor) are both likely to result in bites. A punishment might be associated with other stimuli, including people that are present at the time the punishment occurs. For example, a pet who is punished for getting too close to a small child may become fearful of, or aggressive toward, that child – or toward other children. That's why physical punishment is not only bad for your pet, but also bad for you and others.

Resources for this section:

Related topics at www.petsforlife.org.

Nothing in Life is Free: A Training Technique for Dogs

Positive Reinforcement – Training Your Cat

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Crate Training Your Dog

If you like nothing better than coming home from a hard day's work and finding that your dog decided to "go" on the couch or use your favorite slippers as a new chew toy, then crate training isn't for you. But if you're like most people, then using a crate to properly train your dog will be time well spent.

Crate training takes some time and effort, but it is a proven way to help train dogs who act inappropriately without knowing any better. If you have a new dog or puppy, you can use the crate to limit his access to the house until he learns all the house rules – like what he can and can't chew on and where he can and can't eliminate. A crate is also a safe way of transporting your dog in the car or taking him places where he may not be welcome to run freely. If you properly train your dog to use the crate, he'll think of it as his safe place and will be happy to spend time there when needed.

❖ Selecting a Crate

- Crates may be plastic (often called "flight kennels") or collapsible, metal pens. They come in different sizes and can be purchased at most pet supply stores. Your dog's crate should be just large enough for him to stand up and turn around in. If your dog is still growing, choose a crate that will accommodate his adult size. Block off the excess crate space so your dog can't eliminate at one end and retreat to the other.

❖ The Crate Training Process

- Crate training can take days or weeks, depending on your dog's age, temperament, and past experiences. It's important to keep two things in mind while crate training: The crate should always be associated with something pleasant, and training should take place in a series of small steps. Don't go too fast.

Step 1: Introducing Your Dog to the Crate

- ❖ Place the crate in an area of your house where the family spends a lot of time, such as the family room. Put a soft blanket or towel in the crate. Bring your dog over to the crate and talk to him in a happy tone of voice. Make sure the crate door is open and secured so that it won't hit your dog and frighten him.
- ❖ To encourage your dog to enter the crate, drop some small food treats nearby, then just inside the door, and finally, all the way inside the crate. If he refuses to go all the way in at first, that's okay; don't force him to enter. Continue tossing treats into the crate until your dog will walk calmly all the way into the crate to get the food. If he isn't interested in treats, try tossing a favorite toy in the crate. This step may take a few minutes or as long as several days.

Step 2: Feeding Your Dog His Meals in the Crate

- ❖ After introducing your dog to the crate, begin feeding him his regular meals near it. This will create a pleasant association with the crate. If your dog is readily entering the crate when you begin Step 2, place the food dish all the way at the back of the crate. If your dog remains reluctant to enter the crate, put the dish only as far inside as he will readily go without becoming fearful or anxious. Each time you feed him, please the dish a little further back in the crate.
- ❖ Once your dog is standing comfortably in the crate to eat his meal, you can close the door while he's eating. The first time you do this, open the door as soon as he finishes his meal. With each successive feeding, leave the door closed a few minutes longer, until he's staying in the crate for 10 minutes or so after eating. If he begins to whine to be let out, you may have increased the length of time too quickly. Next time, try leaving him in the crate for a shorter time period. If he does whine or cry in the crate, it's imperative that you not let him out until he stops. Otherwise, he'll learn that the way to get out of the crate is to whine, so he'll keep doing it.

Resources for this section:

For complete tips and advice on pet behavior and other pet care topics, visit www.petsforlife.org.

Housetraining Your Puppy

Contrary to popular belief, house training a puppy requires far more than a few stacks of old newspapers – it calls for vigilance, patience, and plenty of commitment. By following the procedures outlined below, you can minimize house soiling incidents, but virtually every puppy will have an accident in the house, and more likely, several. Expect this – it’s part of raising a puppy. The more consistent you are in following the basic housetraining procedures, however, the faster your puppy will learn acceptable behavior. It may take several weeks to housetrain your puppy, and with some of the smaller breeds, it might take longer.

❖ Establish a Routine

- Like babies, puppies do best on a regular schedule. Take your puppy outside frequently – at least every two hours – and immediately after he wakes up from a nap, after playing, and after eating or drinking.
- Praise your puppy lavishly every time he eliminates outdoors – you can even give him a treat – but remember to do so immediately after he’s finished eliminating, not after he comes back inside the house. This step is vital, because rewarding your dog for eliminating outdoors is the only way he’ll know what’s expected of him.
- Pick a bathroom spot near the door, and always take your puppy to that spot using a leash. Take him out for a longer walk or some playtime only after he has eliminated. If you clean up an accident in the house, take the soiled rags or paper towels and leave them in the bathroom spot. The smell will help your puppy recognize the area as the place he is supposed to eliminate. While your puppy is eliminating, use a word or phrase like “go potty” that you can eventually use before he eliminates to remind him what to do.
- Put your puppy on a regular feeding schedule and feed him a high-quality diet to make housetraining easier. Depending on their age, puppies usually need to be fed three or four times a day. Feeding your puppy at the same times each day will make it more likely that he’ll eliminate at consistent times as well, and that makes housetraining easier for both of you.

❖ Keep Your Eyes Peeled

- Don’t give your puppy an opportunity to soil in the house; keep an eye on him whenever he’s indoors. You can tether him to you with a six-foot leash, or use baby gates to keep him in the room when you are. Watch for signs that he needs to eliminate, like sniffing around or circling. When you see these signs, immediately grab the leash and take him outside to his bathroom spot. If he eliminates, praise him lavishly and reward him with a treat.

❖ Confinement

- When you're unable to watch your puppy at all times, he should be confined to an area small enough that he won't want to eliminate there. The space should be just big enough for him to comfortably stand, lie down, and turn around in. You can use a portion of a bathroom or laundry room blocked off with baby gates. Or you may want to crate train your puppy and use the crate to confine him. (Be sure to learn how to use a crate humanely as a method of confinement.) If your puppy has spent several hours in confinement, you'll need to take him directly to his bathroom spot as soon as you let him out, and praise him when he eliminates.

❖ Oops!

- Expect your puppy to have a few accidents in the house – it's a normal part of housetraining. Here's what to do when that happens:
- When you catch him in the act of eliminating in the house, do something to interrupt him, like make a noise to get his attention (be careful not to scare him). Immediately take him to his bathroom spot, praise him, and give him a treat if he finishes eliminating there.
- Don't punish your puppy for eliminating in the house. If you find a soiled area, it's too late to administer a correction. Just clean it up. Rubbing your puppy's nose on it, taking him to the spot and scolding him or any other punishment will only make him afraid of you or afraid to eliminate in your presence. In fact, punishment will often do more harm than good.
- Cleaning the soiled area is very important because puppies are highly motivated to continue soiling in areas that smell like urine or feces.
- It's extremely important that you use the supervision and confinement procedures outlined above to prevent the number of accidents. If you allow your puppy to eliminate frequently in the house, he'll get confused about where he's supposed to eliminate, which will prolong the housetraining process.

❖ Paper Training

- A puppy under six months of age cannot be expected to control his bladder for more than a few hours at a time. If you have to be away from home more than four or five hours a day, this may not be the best time for you to get a puppy; instead, you may want to consider an older dog, who can wait for your return.
- But if you're already committed to having a puppy and must be away for long periods of time, you'll need to make arrangements for someone, such as a responsible neighbor or a professional pet sitter, to take him outside to eliminate.
- Or you'll need to train him to eliminate in a specific place indoors. Be aware, however, that

doing so can prolong the process of housetraining. Teaching your puppy to eliminate on newspaper may create a lifelong surface preference, meaning that even as an adult he may eliminate on any newspaper lying around the living room.

- When your puppy must be left alone for long periods of time, confine him to an area with enough room for a sleeping space, a playing space, and a separate place to eliminate. In the area designed as the elimination area, use either newspapers or a sod box. To make a sod box, place sod in a container such as a child's small plastic swimming pool. You can also find dog litter products at a pet supply store. If you clean up an accident in the house, put the soiled rags or paper towels in the designated elimination area. The smell will help your puppy recognize his area as the place where he is supposed to eliminate.

❖ **Other Types of House Soiling Problems**

- If you've consistently followed the housetraining procedures and your puppy continues to eliminate in the house, there may be another reason for his behavior.
- **Medical Problems:** House soiling can often be caused by physical problems such as a urinary tract infection or a parasite infection. Check with your veterinarian to rule out any possibility of disease or illness.
- **Submissive/Excitement Urination:** Some dogs, especially young ones, temporarily lose control of their bladders when they become excited or feel threatened. This usually occurs during greetings or periods of intense play or when they're about to be punished.
- **Territorial Urine-Marking:** Dogs sometimes deposit small amounts of urine or feces to scent-mark their territory. Both male and female dogs do this, and it most often occurs when they believe their territory has been invaded.
- **Separation Anxiety:** Dogs who become anxious when they're left alone may house soil as a result. Usually, there are other symptoms as well, such as destructive behavior or vocalization.
- **Fears or Phobias:** When animals become frightened, they may lose control of their bladder or bowels. If your puppy is afraid of loud noises such as thunderstorms or fireworks, he may house soil when he's exposed to these sounds.

Resources for this section:

Related topics at www.petsforlife.org.

Crate Training Your Dog

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Removing Pet Stains and Odors

You know how it goes: The minute you turn your back, your pet decides that your new carpet is the perfect place to relieve himself. You clean and clean, but you can't get rid of that smell. What can you do?

Well, for starters, you need to find which areas are soiled and then retrain your pet to avoid eliminating in those areas. And to do that, you'll have to clean those areas, and clean them well. Here are the steps you'll need to take:

Find all soiled areas using your nose and eyes. A black light bulb will usually show even old urine stains. Turn out all lights in the room, use the black light to identify soiled areas, and lightly outline the areas with chalk. Black lights can be purchased at home supply stores.

- Clean the soiled areas appropriately to remove the odors.
- Rule out medical causes for the behavior by visiting your veterinarian.
- Figure out why your pet is urinating or defecating in inappropriate areas.
- Make the areas unattractive or unavailable.
- Make the appropriate "bathroom" area attractive.
- Teach your pet the appropriate place to eliminate by using positive reinforcement techniques.
- To be successful, you need to follow all these steps. If you fail to completely clean the area, your retraining efforts will be useless. As long as your pet can smell his personal scent, he'll continue to return to the "accident zone." Even if you can't smell traces of urine, your pet can. Your most important chore is to remove (neutralize) that odor with the following steps.

❖ To Clean Washable Items

- Machine wash as usual, adding a one-pound box of baking soda to your regular detergent. It's best to air dry these items if possible.
- If you can still see the stain or smell the urine, machine wash the item again and add an enzymatic cleaner (available at pet supply stores) that breaks down pet-waste odors. Be sure to follow the directions carefully.
- If your pet urinates or defecates on the sheets or blankets on a bed, cover the bed with a vinyl, flannel-backed tablecloth when you begin the retraining period. It's machine washable, inexpensive, and unattractive to your pet.

❖ To Clean Carpeted Areas and Upholstery

- For new stains, those that are still wet, soak up as much of the urine as possible with a combination of newspaper and paper towels. The more fresh urine you can remove before it dries, especially from carpet, the easier it will be to remove the odor. Place a thick layer of paper towels on the wet spot and cover that with a thick layer of newspaper. If possible, put newspaper under the soiled area as well. Stand on this padding for about a minute. Remove the padding and repeat the process until the area is barely damp.
- If possible, put the fresh, urine-soaked paper towel in the area where it belongs – your cat’s litter box or your dog’s designated outdoor “bathroom area.” This will help remind your pet that eliminating isn’t a “bad” behavior as long as it’s done in the right place.
- Rinse the “accident zone” thoroughly with clean, cool water. After rinsing, remove as much of the water as possible by blotting or by using a “wet vac.”

❖ For Stains That Have Already Set

- To remove all traces of heavy stains in carpeting, consider renting an extractor or wet vac from a local hardware store. This machine operates much like a vacuum cleaner and is efficient and economical. Extracting/wet vac machines do the best job of forcing clean water through your carpet and then forcing the dirty water back out again. When using these machines or cleaners, be sure to follow the instructions carefully. Don’t use any chemicals with these machines; they work much more effectively with plain water.
- Once the area is really clean, use a high-quality pet odor neutralizer available at pet supply stores. Be sure to read and follow the cleaner’s directions for use, including testing the cleaner on a small, hidden portion of fabric first to be sure it doesn’t stain.
- If the area still looks stained after it’s completely dry from extracting and neutralizing, try any good carpet stain remover.
- Avoid using steam cleaners to clean urine odors from carpet or upholstery. The heat will permanently set the stain and the odor by bonding the protein into any man-made fibers.
- Avoid using cleaning chemicals, especially those with strong odors such as ammonia or vinegar. From your pet’s perspective, these don’t effectively eliminate or cover the urine odor and may actually encourage your pet to reinforce the urine scent mark in that area.
- If you previously used cleaners or chemicals of any kind on the area, then neutralizing cleaners won’t be effective until you’ve rinsed every trace of the old cleaner from the carpet. Even if you haven’t used chemicals recently, any trace of a non-protein-based substance will weaken the effect of the enzymatic cleaner. The cleaner will use up its “energy” on the old cleaners instead of on the protein stains you want removed.

- If urine has soaked down into the padding underneath your carpet, your job will be more difficult. In some cases, you may need to take the drastic step of removing and replacing that portion of the carpet and padding.

❖ **To Clean Floors and Walls**

- If the wood on your furniture, walls, baseboard, or floor is discolored, the varnish or paint has reacted to the acid in the urine. You may need to remove and replace the layer or varnish or paint. If you do so, make sure the new product is safe for pets. Employees at your local hardware or home improvement store can help you identify and match your needs with appropriate removers and replacements. Washable enamel paints and some washable wallpapers may respond favorably to enzymatic cleaners. Read the instructions carefully before using these products and test them in an invisible area.

❖ **Retrain Your Pet**

- Finally, in conjunction with cleaning, be sure to teach your pet where you want him to eliminate. To do this, make the “accident zone” unattractive and the appropriate “bathroom” area attractive, and see our related tip sheets at www.petsforlife.org. The retraining period may take a week or more. Remember, it took time to build the bad habit, and it will take time to replace that habit with a new, more acceptable behavior. Treat your pet with patience and give him lots of encouragement!

Resources for this section:

Related topics at www.petsforlife.org.

Housetraining Your Puppy

Positive Reinforcement: Training Your Dog or Cat with Treats and Praise

Reducing Urine-Marking Behavior in Dogs and Cats

Solving Litter Box Problems

Using Aversives to Modify Your Cat’s Behavior

Using Aversives to Modify Your Dog’s Behavior

Adapted from material originally developed by applied animal behaviorists at the Dumb Friends League, Denver, Colorado. © 2000 Dumb Friends League and © 2003 the HSUS. All rights reserved.

The Social Nature of Dogs

Perhaps the biggest and most widely held misconception about dogs is the belief that they will be healthy and happy living only in the backyard. However, nothing could be further from the truth. Current studies in dog psychology show that dogs isolated in backyards are highly likely to develop serious behavior problems that often result in euthanasia for the animal.

What You Should Know:

❖ Dog Are Animals That Thrive On Companionship

- Much like their wolf ancestors, dogs are very social. In fact, dogs are more social than humans and need to be part of human families. When you own a dog, you become the dog's family and he wants to be with his family. Forcing a dog to live outside with little or no human companionship is one of the most psychological damaging things a pet owner can do to a dog.

❖ Dogs Are Also Den Animals

- This means they like to have a safe, quiet, and secure place to sleep, rest, and hang out, such as your house. Your dog has a wonderful ability to learn and therefore to be housetrained. A dog who resides more in your house than in the yard is a much happier, content animal because of the security of a den and your companionship.

❖ Backyard Dogs Have More Behavior Problems

- Since all of your dog's instincts are telling him it is not good to be left alone or isolated from his family, your dog can become very stressed or anxious. A dog exhibits stress by digging, barking, howling or whining, chewing, escaping, and exhibiting hyperactivity. The problems can become so troublesome that your neighbors may complain about the barking, howling, property destruction, or your dog escaping.

❖ Backyard Dogs Are Harder To Train

- Considering a backyard dog does not develop a strong bond toward your family, he is harder to train than a dog allowed to be in the house with your family. This also makes him less responsive to commands.

❖ Backyard Dogs Make Lousy Guard Dogs

- As a dog becomes naturally protective of where he lives (his territory or turf), he will only defend the place he lives in. If he is never allowed in the house, then the house will not become a place to protect. Most people keep their valuables inside their houses, so why wouldn't you want your dog to protect the inside of your house? Unless allowed to live inside, your dog will not develop that sense of territory. He will not sound the alarm when someone tries to invade

your house. It is not uncommon to hear stories of families being robbed while their backyard dog snoozed through the whole episode.

❖ **Backyard Dogs Have Higher Rates of Euthanasia**

- Backyard dogs are more often given up than house dogs because they were never looked upon as family. Sadly, that means they are easier to dispose of. Backyard dogs do not have the opportunity to become socialized to people and other dogs, and may become so fearful or even vicious that they may have to be euthanized.

What You Can Do

❖ **Keep Your Dog With You!**

- At a minimum, your dog should have access to your living space whenever you are home, including sleeping inside your house at night. You do not have to spend every waking moment actively playing and talking to your dog; just the fact that your dog can lay quietly at your feet while you watch TV, work at your computer or sleep is very important to his mental well-being.

❖ **Never Tie Or Chain Your Dog Up Outside**

- Dogs that are tied up or chained outside suffer extreme frustration which can result in hyperactivity and/or aggression against you, your family or friends. Dogs that are tied up cannot escape from other animals or people who mean to do them harm. They can also easily become entangled and do bodily harm to themselves. It has been a sad tale to hear of a dog tied outside because he was a fence jumper, only to hang himself while trying to do so! If you must keep your dog outside, provide a secure, high fence or an enclosed chain link dog run, with a top with shade, a dog house for rainy weather, items to chew on, and plenty of fresh water. A dog should always be exercised before being left for the day in an enclosed area. Weather conditions should always be considered before leaving a dog outside and housing adjustments should be made for inclement weather as needed.

❖ **Think About How Much Time You'll Devote To Your Dog**

- People who keep their dogs outside constantly rationalize it. They insist that they do spend time with their dogs, they do feed them, and they do walk them. Spending an hour a day with your dog is not enough for his mental welfare. Be realistic! What about when it is rainy, windy, cold, or just plain too hot? Are you still spending that hour daily with your dog no matter what? Making the backyard your dog's only home does not make him a real part of the family.

❖ **Do You Fit The Statistics?**

- Our lives have changed. It used to be that most people did spend a lot of time in the yard; playing, working, gardening, and socializing. Now with the age of computers, televisions, and

hectic schedules, we actually spend about 75% less time outdoors in our yards, and therefore less time with our devoted friend, the dog.

❖ **Train Your Dog**

- If your dog is untrained, take him to training class so you can develop better communication skills and teach him how to act appropriately in the house. If you have a young puppy, get him into a puppy training and socialization class as soon as he turns 12 weeks old. Don't wait until he is six months old and has already acquired a taste for tipping over the garbage can or chewing on your rug. If you acquire an older dog, training him as soon as possible will help him adjust to his new household and your family. The goal is to prevent unwanted behaviors. Don't wait until you have problems with your dog, which may lead to frustration and giving up.

❖ **Giving Your Dog A Chance To Be Your Best Friend!**

- Don't kick him out because you think he is untrainable, unruly, or because it is good for him to be outside. Instead, take the time to make him a part of your family.

Resources for this section:

Information from Humane Society Silicon Valley, www.hssv.org

Fence Guidelines for Dogs

- ❖ There are three excellent places for your dog to spend his time: Inside the house with his new family; out for an on-lead stroll with his owners; and exercising off-lead in a securely fenced area. If a fenced area is not available, your dog will need to spend 100% of his outdoor time on-lead. Although it's not at all unacceptable or inhumane to leash-walk your dog every time he leaves the house, access to an appropriately fenced area, at least some of the time, is preferable. A fenced yard provides a dog with a safe place to exercise, explore, and play – all of which are high on a dog's list of "Must Haves!" Fences are available in a variety of styles, one of which is bound to meet your family's needs as well as your dog's.
- ❖ It is important to remember, however, that no one type of fence is a perfect containment system for every dog. No matter what type of fence you choose, the keys to successful containment are training, management, supervision, and care. Fences should not be held responsible for "babysitting" your dog. An untrained and/or unsupervised dog is far more likely to experience any number of mishaps than a well-managed, consistently supervised dog, even in the presence of a "good fence."
- ❖ If possible, provide your dog with a fenced area in which to play off-lead. But please don't expect your fence to do your job for you. Unsupervised dogs can be stolen, or harassed by people or other animals. Regardless of the care you've taken in choosing the "right fence" for your dog, if not properly supervised he may be injured by the fence itself. Untrained dogs may dig, climb, or otherwise escape. Mismanaged dogs may annoy your neighbors with incessant barking or other vocalization. In order to avoid the tragedies that are frequently associated with the "failure" of any type of fence, please bear the following in mind:
 - Not all fences are right for every dog.
 - Fences are just objects – they should not be expected to provide your pet with care and supervision.
 - If you choose a containment system that proves to be wrong for your dog, the containment system should be replaced – not the dog himself.
 - Most of the unfortunate incidents that arise from "fence failure" can be avoided if proper training, management, supervision and care are provided.
 - A boring, lonely yard increases the likelihood that your dog will attempt to escape. Bored and lonely dogs are also more likely to become excessively vocal and/or destructive. On the other hand, dogs that are provided with adequate, interesting environment enrichment objects and activities within their fenced areas are generally happier and better behaved.
 - It is in a dog's very nature to be compelled to explore as much of the environment as he can. A

dog that escapes from a fenced area is not a “bad dog” at all. In fact, he’s more than likely a “smart dog” and his containment system should be chosen and modified accordingly.

- Chained or tied dogs are statistically more likely to become aggressive, to get injured, and to develop obsessive-compulsive disorders. Chaining your dog is neither humane nor safe. It should NOT be considered as a viable pet-containment option.

The SPCA’s goal is to help the animals in our charge find loving, happy, safe and above all, permanent homes. Help us help the animals by remembering that they don’t just need fences... they need you.

A Poison Safe Home

❖ Food to Avoid Feeding Your Pet

- Alcoholic beverages
- Apple seeds
- Apricot pits
- Avocados – toxic to birds, mice, rabbits, horses, cattle, and dairy goats
- Cherry pits
- Candy (particularly chocolate, which is toxic to dogs, cats, and ferrets, and any candy containing the sweetener Xylitol)
- Coffee (grounds, beans, chocolate covered espresso beans)
- Grapes
- Hops (used in home beer brewing)
- Macadamia nuts
- Moldy foods
- Mushroom plants
- Mustard seeds
- Onions and onion powder
- Peach pits
- Potato leaves and stems (green parts)
- Raisins
- Rhubarb leaves
- Salt
- Tea (caffeine)
- Tomato leaves and stems (green parts)
- Walnuts
- Yeast dough

❖ **Warm Weather Hazards**

- Animal toxins – toads, insects, spiders, snakes and scorpions
- Blue-green algae in ponds
- Citronella candles
- Cocoa mulch
- Compost piles fertilizers
- Flea products
- Outdoor plants and plant bulbs
- Swimming-pool treatment supplies
- Fly baits containing methomyl
- Slug and snail baits containing metaldehyde

❖ **Cold Weather Hazards**

- Antifreeze
- Liquid potpourri
- Ice melting products
- Rat and mouse bait

❖ **Medications**

Common examples of human medications that can be potentially lethal to pets, even in small doses, include:

- Pain killers including Acetaminophen
- Cold medicines
- Anti-cancer drugs
- Antidepressants
- Vitamins
- Diet pills

❖ **Common Household Hazards**

- Fabric softener sheets
- Mothballs
- Post – 1982 pennies (due to high concentration of zinc)

❖ **Holiday Hazards**

- Christmas tree water (may contain fertilizers & bacteria and can upset the stomach)
- Electrical cords
- Ribbons or tinsel (can become lodged in the intestines and cause intestinal obstruction – most often occurs with kittens!)
- Batteries
- Glass ornaments

❖ **Common Toxic Plants**

- Aloe
- Avocado
- Azalea
- Calla Lilly
- Castor Bean
- Cyclamen
- Daffodil
- English Ivy
- Hyacinth
- Iris
- Kalanchoe
- Lilies
- Marijuana
- Mistletoe

- Morning Glory
- Oleander
- Philodendron
- Rhododendron
- Sago Palm
- Tomato Plant
- Sago Palm
- Tomato Plant
- Tulip
- Yew
- Yucca

❖ **Non-Toxic Substances for Dogs and Cats**

The following substances are considered to be non-toxic, although they may cause mild gastrointestinal upset in some animals:

- Water-based paints
- Toilet bowl water
- Silica gel
- Poinsettia
- Cat litter
- Glue traps
- Glow jewelry

Resources for this section:

Please know that the information contained in the lists is not meant to be all-inclusive, but rather a compilation of the most frequently encountered items. Sources: ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center, The Toronto Humane Society, and St. John's Poison Resource Center

What You Should Know About Heartworm Disease

❖ What is heartworm disease and how is it transmitted?

- Canine heartworm disease is a serious and potentially fatal disease of dogs. Long white worms are the cause. Adult worms, which can reach a length of 6-14 inches, live in the right side of the heart. Adult female heartworms produce offspring called microfilariae that float freely in the blood of an infected dog. When a mosquito feeds on the blood of a heartworm infected dog, it ingests the microfilariae, now making it a carrier of heartworm disease. The adult heartworms if allowed to continue to develop and reproduce can cause extensive damage to the heart and lungs.

❖ Are all dogs at risk?

- Yes. All dogs are at risk of being infected with heartworms. North Carolina has a higher incidence of heartworm disease because the mosquito season is longer than in the northern states.

❖ What are some of the signs my dog may exhibit?

- Heartworm disease isn't immediately fatal; your dog may live for a number of years showing no outward signs of this disease. At the point when your dog exhibits outward signs of the disease, it has progressed to the moderate or severe stage of heartworm disease.
- The most common clinical signs include: coughing, exercise intolerance, difficulty breathing, weight loss, anorexia and depression.

❖ How was my dog diagnosed with heartworm disease?

- A blood sample was drawn from this dog and an occult test was run. This test detects the presence of antigens (proteins) produced by adult heartworms. Every dog over 6 months old at the SPCA Curtis Dail Pet Adoption Center is tested for heartworm disease.

❖ What treatment is available for a dog with heartworm disease?

- Most dogs can be successfully treated for heartworms. A thorough examination and pre-treatment evaluation by your veterinarian will determine if your dog is a candidate for treatment. Heartworm disease treatment is both expensive and distressing for your dog. Treatment involves killing the adult worms (adulticide) and killing the larval stages of heartworm (microfilaricide). The adulticide part of heartworm involves two injections in the muscle 24 hours apart. This treatment can be very hard on the dog and they must be kept extremely quiet for a period of several weeks to avoid post-treatment complications. The microfilaricide part of the treatment involves high doses of a medication given orally to kill the circulating microfilariae.

What You Should Know About Canine Parvovirus

❖ **How is canine parvovirus diagnosed and treated?**

Veterinarians diagnose canine parvovirus on the basis of clinical appearance and laboratory tests. No specific drug is available that will kill the virus in infected dogs. Treatment should be started immediately and consist primarily of efforts to combat dehydration by replacing electrolyte and fluid losses, controlling vomiting and diarrhea, and preventing secondary infections. Sick dogs should be kept warm, receive good nursing care, and be separated from other dogs. Proper cleaning and disinfection of contaminated kennels and other areas where infected dogs are housed is essential to control the spread of parvovirus.

❖ **How is parvovirus prevented?**

Vaccination and good hygiene are critical components of canine parvovirus prevention.

❖ **Vaccination:**

> Vaccination is important. Young puppies are very susceptible to infection, particularly because the natural immunity provided in their mothers' milk may wear off before the puppies' own immune systems are mature enough to fight off infection. If a puppy is exposed to canine parvovirus during this gap in protection, it may become ill. An additional concern is that immunity provided by a mother's milk may interfere with an effective response to vaccination. This means even vaccinated puppies may occasionally succumb to parvovirus. To narrow gaps in protection and provide optimal protection against parvovirus during the first few months of life, a series of puppy vaccinations are administered.

>To protect their adult dogs, pet owners should be sure that their dog's parvovirus vaccination is up-to-date. Ask your veterinarian about a recommended vaccination program for your canine companion.

❖ **Hygiene:**

> Until a puppy has received its complete series of vaccinations, pet owners should use caution when bringing their pet to places where young puppies congregate (e.g. pet shops, parks, puppy classes, obedience classes, doggy daycare, and grooming establishments). Reputable establishments and training programs reduce exposure risk by requiring vaccinations, health examinations, good hygiene, and isolation of ill puppies and dogs. Contact with known infected dogs and their premises should always be avoided.

> Finally, do not allow your puppy or dog to come into contact with the fecal waste of other dogs while walking or playing outdoors. Prompt and proper disposal of waste material is always advisable as a way to limit spread of canine parvovirus infection.

Resources for this section:

This information has been prepared as a service by the American Veterinary Medical Association.

What You Should Know About Canine Distemper

❖ What is Canine Distemper?

- Canine distemper is a highly contagious and serious disease caused by a virus that attacks the respiratory, gastrointestinal, and, often, the nervous systems of puppies and dogs. The virus also infects wild canids (e.g. foxes, wolves, and coyotes), raccoons, skunks, and ferrets.

❖ How is Canine Distemper virus spread?

- Puppies and dogs usually become infected through airborne exposure to the virus contained in respiratory secretions of an infected dog or wild animal. Outbreaks of distemper tend to be sporadic. Because canine distemper also affects wildlife populations, contact between wild and domestic canids may facilitate spread of the virus.

❖ What dogs are at risk?

- All dogs are at risk but puppies younger than four months old and dogs that have not been vaccinated against canine distemper are at increased risk of acquiring the disease.

❖ What are some signs of Canine Distemper?

- The first sign of distemper is eye discharge that may appear watery to pus-like. Subsequently, dogs develop fever, nasal discharge, coughing, lethargy, reduced appetite, vomiting, and diarrhea. In later stages, the virus may attack the nervous system, bringing about seizures, twitching, or partial or complete paralysis. Occasionally, the virus may cause footpads to harden. Distemper is often fatal. Even if a dog does not die from the disease, canine distemper virus can cause irreparable damage to a dog's nervous system. Distemper is so serious and the signs so varied that any sick dog should be taken to a veterinarian for an examination and diagnosis.

❖ How is Canine Distemper diagnosed and treated?

- Veterinarians diagnose canine distemper on the basis of clinical appearance and laboratory tests. No specific drug is available that will kill the virus in infected dogs. Treatment consists primarily of efforts to prevent secondary infections; control vomiting, diarrhea, or neurological symptoms; and combat dehydration through administration of fluids. Ill dogs should be kept warm, receive good nursing care, and be separated from other dogs.

❖ How is Canine Distemper prevented?

- Vaccination and avoiding contact with infected animals are key elements of canine distemper prevention.

- Vaccination is important. Young puppies are very susceptible to infection, particularly because the natural immunity provided in their mothers' milk may wear off before the puppies' own immune systems are mature enough to fight off infection. If a puppy is exposed to canine distemper virus during this gap in protection, it may become ill. An additional concern is that immunity provided by a mother's milk may interfere with an effective response to vaccination. This means even vaccinated puppies may occasionally succumb to distemper. To narrow gaps in protection and optimally defend against canine distemper during the first few months of life, a series of vaccinations is administered.
- Until a puppy has received its complete series of vaccinations, pet owners should use caution when taking their pet to places where young puppies congregate (e.g. pet shops, parks, puppy classes, obedience classes, doggy daycare, and grooming establishments). Reputable establishments and training programs reduce exposure risk by requiring vaccinations, health examinations, good hygiene, and isolation of ill puppies and dogs.
- To protect their adult dogs, pet owners should be sure that their dog's distemper vaccination is up-to-date. Ask your veterinarian about a recommended vaccination program for your canine companion.
- Contact with known infected dogs should always be avoided. Similarly, contact with raccoons, foxes, skunks, and other potentially infected wildlife should be discouraged.

Resources for this section:

This information has been prepared as a service by the American Veterinary Medical Association.

Pet Care Tips

❖ Pet Tip #1 – Cold Weather Pet Tips

Please follow these guidelines to protect your companion animal when the temperature drops.

- Never let your dog off the leash on snow or ice, especially during a snow storm. Dogs frequently lose their scent in snow and ice and easily become lost. They may panic in a snow storm and run away. More dogs are lost during the winter than any other season.
- Thoroughly wipe off your dog's legs and stomach when she comes in out of the rain, snow, or ice. Check her sensitive paw pads, which may bleed from snow or ice encrusted in them. Also, salt, antifreeze, or other chemicals could hurt your dog if she ingests them while licking her paws.
- 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 the tail on top and to the belly underneath. While this may seem like a luxury, it is a necessity for many dogs.
- Never leave your dog or cat alone in a car during cold weather. A car can act as a refrigerator in the winter, holding in the cold. Your companion animal could freeze to death.
- If your dog is sensitive to cold due to age, illness, or breed type, take him outdoors only long enough to relieve himself.
- Puppies do not tolerate the cold as well as adult dogs and may be difficult to housetrain during the winter. If necessary, paper train your puppy inside if he appears to be sensitive to the weather.
- 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.
- Always keep your cat inside. Outdoors, cats can freeze, become lost or stolen, or be injured or killed. Cats who are allowed to stray are exposed to fatal infectious diseases, including rabies.
- During the winter, outdoor cats sometimes choose to sleep under the hoods of cars where it is warmer. Then, when the motor is started, the cat can be injured or killed in the fan belt. To prevent this, bang loudly on the hood of your car and wait a few seconds before starting the engine to give the cat a chance to escape.
- Antifreeze, even in very tiny doses, is a lethal poison for dogs and cats. Because of its sweet taste, animals are attracted to it. Be sure to thoroughly 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 National Animal Poison Control Center (ASPCA/NAPCC) if you

suspect your animal has been poisoned.

- Never shave your dog 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 she is completely dry before you take her out for a walk.
- 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.

❖ **Pet Tip #2 – Living with Cats and Dogs**

- I'm not sure where the adage "fighting like cats and dogs" comes from, but in the vast majority of homes I'm acquainted with, dogs and cats share living quarters quite amiably. In fact, it is more difficult to introduce a second female cat or a second male dog to the household than it is a member of the other species.
- There are exceptions, of course. Trying to socialize stray cats that border on feral presents a serious health risk to resident dogs, even friendly ones. Dogs that have a strong prey drive (the desire to catch, shake, and kill) put the family cat in danger. To make a successful interspecies introduction in the average household, one needs little more than a dog who understands a few rudimentary commands and a sturdy baby gate. A canine that has learned to respond to a basic vocabulary that includes "leave it," "down," and "come" can most likely be controlled around a new cat indoors. Outdoors is another matter completely. Many otherwise cat-friendly dogs see outdoor cats as prey to be chased down and dispatched – a strong case for keeping cats indoors!
- If the dog lacks basic manners or is the newcomer to the household, a four-foot house leash and buckle collar can give the caretaker control over the situation. As the dog rushes past in a raucous game of "catch the cat," step on the end of the leash. When the leash becomes taut and the dog turns to look at you, utter your "sit" or "down" command. After the dog complies, don't forget to praise him. When the mere thought of chasing the passes through his mind, growl "leave it" at him and praise him once again when he looks away from the cat. The baby gate provides the cat with dog-free territory. A nervous feline can hop over the gate and find a safe haven. A food bowl left behind the gate will be left untouched by canine muzzles. A litter box left behind the gate will have cat feces right where they were left. Before crying, "Ugh, how tasteless!" anticipate the dog's response, "How tasty!" and prepare for it.
- For some, a gate will not be viable. In those cases, creative thinking will play a crucial role in household management. Is your bathtub tall and your dog small? If so, then a litter box at one end and a food dish at the other will meet your needs. A covered litter box prevents thievery in some cases. Beware! More than one dog has gotten his head caught in the box cover and then run around frantically in an attempt to get it off. In one unfortunate case, the cat was in the litter box when the dog got the cover stuck on his head. (If you were that cat, would you be

running to the litter box the next time nature called? I think not!)

- If you own your own home, there are more creative options open to you. Some folks cut cat-sized openings in linen closet doors or bathroom vanities as a way to keep Bowser out of the litter box and the box itself out of view.
- As for alternative feeding stations, countertops and wide window sills can provide out-of-reach dining spots for felines. Cat food and dog food are not interchangeable. Much research has gone into developing specialized foods for cats and dogs. Keeping your pets out of each other's bowls is even more crucial if any of them are on prescription foods for allergies, obesity, or health problems.
- With a little forethought, a home occupied by both dogs and cats is a joy, a living example of The Peaceable Kingdom.

❖ **Pet Tip #3 – Geriatric Care**

- Our companion animals rocket through infancy in six short months, struggle through adolescence, which may seem like forever but is actually only from 12 to 18 months of age, and then reach that plateau known as adulthood – ages 2 to 8. Before we know it, Mojo and Belle have reached their “golden years.”
- Not unlike their human caretakers, our geriatric pets slow down – in some cases way down – sleeping longer and sounder. They are harder to rouse out of bed in the morning and may become a bit snappish if startled out of slumber. A soft, orthopedic foam bed with a machine-washable pile cover (essential for cleaning up old age accidents) becomes indispensable for arthritic bones that seek warmth and comfort.
- Changes in metabolism are responsible for an animal's inability to regulate his body heat the way he once could. A thinning coat doesn't help matters. Older pets feel colder in the winter and hotter in the summer than they did when they were younger, so a winter sweater may be advisable, even for an animal that never needed one before. Summer walks may need to be of shorter duration or taken at the coolest times of the day.
- Four of the five senses diminish with age, leaving only the sense of touch as acute as it was in more youthful days. Hearing loss is noted by owners who feel their companion animal has tuned them out. Such a loss may help to explain why older animals seem to sleep sounder and react more aggressively to being woken up.
- Loss of sense of smell can be quite dismaying for owners who rely on their working dogs' noses to detect drugs, search and rescue, and track. However, I do know a few beagle and basset hound owners who are excitedly looking forward to the day that their dogs will be less scent-oriented when they go for strolls outdoors.

- A diminished sense of smell can be a more serious problem for cats than for dogs because cats rely on the aroma of food to stimulate their appetite. Some geriatric cats have been known to waste away as their sense of smell waned. This can be counteracted by making food more aromatic by heating it up or by purchasing more aromatic food.
- The sense of sight is diminished by cloudy lenses, cataracts, and eye diseases. Most companion animals compensate extremely well for their loss of vision and move about their abode with ease. Sometimes the owner is the last to know that his pet has gone blind and won't discover it until furniture is moved. A reluctance to leave the house by an animal that used to cherish his walks may have its roots in diminishing vision. If you suspect that your pet is having difficulty seeing, a trip to the veterinary ophthalmologist is in order.
- Like their human counterparts, many older animals gain too much weight. Obesity is due to reduced activity, overfeeding, and a lower metabolic rate. The additional weight stresses the heart and can exacerbate arthritis, resulting in an animal that is even less likely to exercise.
- How do you help a fat cat or a plump pooch? Diet and exercise. A number of foods found at both grocery stores and specialty shops are formulated for older animals. Prescription diets are available for cats and dogs with heart, liver, or kidney problems. Moderate play can keep muscles toned and blood circulation, and prevent constipation, which is a very serious problem, particularly in older cats.
- Mojo and Belle's senior years are a time that demands owner alertness. Weigh your pet every three months and bring weight swings in either direction to your veterinarian's attention. They can indicate a serious medical problem, such as diabetes. Frequent grooming sessions will keep you in touch with any physical changes. Keep your eyes open for tumors, lesions, lumps, discolorations, or bad breath and be sure to report these to your veterinarian as well. Early treatment can prolong your companion animal's life considerably.
- Behaviorally, your pet may become set in his ways and resist change. Slow introductions to new environments and activities are in order. Don't fall for the old saying, "You can't teach an old dog new tricks!" Of course you can - it just takes a little longer. *Old Dogs, Old Friends*, a book by Chris Walkowicz and Dr. Bonnie Wilcox, is filled with stories of dozens of canines who took up new activities in their golden years.
- Those who think bringing in a new, younger animal will put some life in the ol' boy or girl may be mistaken. If Mojo has been the "only child," a new addition may cause him to stop eating, become snappish and irritable, go into hiding, or even become more susceptible to disease. However, if your cat or dog has always been part of a multi-animal menagerie and is in relatively good health, a new household member may fit in with little fuss.
- Although geriatric cats and dogs are seldom the ideal new companion for a young child, they do quite well presiding over a full-time working household or sharing retirement with a senior

citizen. If you are interested in providing a few quality years for a feline or canine senior who has fallen on hard times, go to your local animal shelter or SPCA and make your wishes known to the adoption counselors. A geriatric companion is waiting to wash your face and warm your heart. Ah, the “tails” they can tell!

❖ **Pet Tip #4 – Grooming Tips**

Proper grooming is an important part of pet care. It not only makes a companion animal look better, but also contributes to his or her physiological and psychological health.

Coat

- Brush your pet thoroughly every day. This helps keep his or her hair in good condition by removing dirt, spreading the natural oils throughout his coat, preventing tangles from forming and keeping the skin free from irritation.
- It is best to start brushing your pet at an early age, but do not despair if he or she is an older animal. It is possible to train one to enjoy grooming. Proceed slowly, and be sure to use treats and plenty of praise to make the experience fun!

Nails

- Trim your pet’s nails about once per month. You’ll need a clipper designed specifically for the kind of companion animal you have. Either scissors or a guillotine-style clipper can be used. You should also purchase a small bottle of blood-clotting powder.

How to Cut Your Pet’s Nails

- Have your companion animal sit beside you. Then, place one of his or her paws in your hand and gently pull it forward. If your pet dislikes being handled this way, slowly accustom him or her to it by offering treats and praise.
- Gradually shorten one nail. Be sure to stop before you reach the quick, which is part of the nail that contains nerves and blood vessels. If you cannot see the quick clearly, stop cutting just behind the point at which the nail begins to curve downward.
- If you cut into the quick, do not panic. Put some clotting powder on a moist cotton swab and press it firmly against the nail for several seconds.
- Repeat the process until all of your companion animal’s nails have been trimmed.
- Do not forget to trim the dew claw, which is located on the inside of each front leg just above the paw.

Ears

- Ear care is an important part of grooming. Ear infections can not only be painful, but lead to permanent hearing loss. The signs of a problem with a companion animal's ears include redness, constant scratching, and head shaking, which are common signs of ear mites.

How to Clean Your Pet's Ears

- Check your companion animal's ears twice per month. The skin inside and on the flaps should be pale pink. If there is a foul odor and/or any red, brown, or black skin, have a veterinarian examine your pet's ears.
- Moisten a cotton ball with warm water or a little mineral oil and use it to clean the opening into the canal and the flaps. Do not probe deeply into the canal.

Teeth

- Companion animals can get cavities and develop periodontal disease, so their teeth should be cleaned with toothpaste at least twice per week. It is best to use a small toothbrush that has soft bristles. Cleaning performed by a veterinarian may also be required.

Bathing

- Bathe your companion animal once every two months or as often as needed. Be sure to brush him or her before each bath in order to get all of the mats out of his or her coat.

How to Bathe Your Pet

- Place a rubber mat in your bathtub or a towel in your sink for secure footing. Then, place a cotton ball in each of your companion animal's ears to prevent water from entering.
- Rinse your pet with warm water. Use a spray hose if one is available, but be sure to keep the nozzle very close to your companion animal's body. Never spray him or her in the face.
- Apply a shampoo designed especially for pets in small amounts, working from the head to the tail. Be sure to clean the rectum, between the toes, behind the ears, and under the chin. Try to avoid getting shampoo in your companion animal's eyes.
- Thoroughly rinse your pet with warm water.
- Dry your companion animal with a towel and or hair dryer.

❖ Pet Tip #5 – Holiday Tips

Independence Day

Many household pets get very nervous on Independence Day as streets and backyards ring out with firecrackers and M=80s. To put your pets at ease, please follow these guidelines:

- Keep your pets indoors with the windows closed and air conditioner and radio on. This will mask noises coming from outside.
- If your pets usually spend time in the backyard, watch out for neighborhood pranksters throwing firecrackers over your fence to frighten the animals.
- Allow your pets to seek refuge under the bed, behind the toilet, or in the closet. Don't drag them out and say, "It's okay." This well-meant, but misguided, attempt at reassurance can be the first step in creating a serious phobia.
- If your pets become stressed easily or your neighborhood is a particularly noisy one, you may wish to ask your veterinarian about the possibility of giving them a tranquilizer or homeopathic remedy such as rock rose or mimulus. In severe cases, you might want to consider sending your pets to a quiet, secluded boarding kennel.
- Don't bring your dog with you when you go to view fireworks. Instead, take him or her for a nice, quiet walk after the festivities have ended.

Holiday Season

As you celebrate the season, it's important to keep your companion animals safe and stress-free. Here are some helpful hints:

- Be careful with holiday decorations. Common yuletide plants such as poinsettias, mistletoe, ivy, and holly berries can be poisonous, possibly even fatal. Tree adornments and Christmas and Hanukkah candles can cause choking or severe intestinal problems if swallowed. Exposed wiring can electrocute a curious animal who chews on it. Dogs and cats can be allowed to romp through discarded wrapping paper and empty boxes, but be sure to dispose of all bows, yarn, and curling ribbons.
- Crowds of people and holiday festivities can frighten animals. If you plan to entertain, you must plan ahead on your pets' behalf. Make sure they have a "safe haven" where they can retreat. If you are a cat owner, note that a disruption such as the rearrangement of furniture around the house for the holidays may cause your feline to stop using the litter box.
- Pets are not garbage disposals for holiday leftovers. Do not over feed an animal. Poultry bones can splinter and cause blockages, chocolates are poisonous, and any sudden change of diet, even for just one meal, can give your dog or cat stomach pain and diarrhea. This is particularly true for older animals, whose digestive systems are often more delicate and nutritional

requirements more strict. Aluminum foil that has been wrapped around meat and disposable baking pans may be attractive to a pet, but do not let your companion near these – ingestion of aluminum foil may cause vomiting, intestinal blockage, or even more serious problems.

- A Christmas tree should stand in a flat, wide base. You might also want to anchor the tree with fishing line tied to drapery rods or the wall. Cats often see trees as fabulous climbing posts. If your feline shows a penchant for this activity, decorate with animal-safe items such as dried flowers, pinecones, or fabric and wood ornaments. You also might want to consider putting the tree in a room with doors that close. Tinsel and popcorn strands can be deadly to pets, and glass balls can shatter in an animal's mouth.
- Please remember that changes and activity over the holidays can cause an animal stress and anxiety. By taking proper precautions, you can help your pet enjoy the holiday season.

❖ **The SPCA's Stand on Pets as Gifts**

- The SPCA of Wake County does not approve of pets as gifts. Pets are not inanimate presents – they are members of the family. When holiday season comes around, people tend to forget that there is a 10-20-year commitment involved in caring for a companion animal. Before obtaining a pet, the entire family should be consulted.
- We allow animals to be adopted to families if the parents or heads of household visit our facilities and talk to our Animal Placement staff. However, we believe that Christmas, Kwanzaa, and the first night of Hanukkah are not appropriate times for introducing an animal to his or her new home. At these times, there is usually too much activity for an animal to feel comfortable.
- If someone wants to adopt an animal from the SPCA of Wake County as a gift, our Animal Placement staff will make two phone calls. The first will ensure that recipient does indeed want an animal, and the second will inform that person of the type of animal chosen. Because it is essential that the animal and the owner form a strong relationship, we recommend that potential owners come in to meet the animal before being presented with him or her.
- If you're shopping for someone who wants a pet, the SCA suggests a book about responsible ownership. If the person is interested in specific breeds or mixed-breeds, purchase a book that discusses different breeds. You can always give a gift certificate stating that you will purchase an animal of the person's choice for him or her after the holidays.

❖ **Pet Tip #6 – Hot Weather Pet Tips**

This information can help you care for your companion animal when the mercury rises.

- Overheating (heat prostration) can kill an animal. Never leave an animal alone in a vehicle, since even with the windows open, a parked car, truck, or van can quickly become a furnace. Parking in shade offers little protection, as the sun shifts during the day. When traveling, carry a gallon thermos filled with fresh, cold water.

- Don't force your animal to exercise after a meal in hot, humid weather. Always exercise him or her in the cool of the early morning or evening.
- In extremely hot weather, don't leave your dog standing on the street, and keep walks to a minimum. He's much closer to the hot asphalt and his body can heat up quickly. Hi paws can burn since they are not protected by shoes.
- Never take an animal to the beach unless you can provide a shaded spot and plenty of fresh water for her to drink. Rinse her off after she has been in salt water
- Always provide plenty of shade for an animal staying outside the house. A properly constructed doghouse serves best. Bring your dog or cat inside during the heat of the day and let her rest in a cool part of your house. Always provide plenty of cool, clean water for your animal.
- Please be sensitive to old and overweight animals in hot weather. Brachycephalic (snub-nosed) dogs (especially bulldogs, Pekingese, Boston terriers, Lhasa apsos and shih tzus) and those with heart or lung disease should be kept indoors in air conditioning as much as possible.
- Keep a current license and identification tag on your dog or cat and consider tattooing or microchipping as a means of permanent identification.
- Avoid walking your dog in areas that you suspect have been sprayed with insecticides or other chemicals, as poisonings increase during the summer when gardens, lawns, and trees are sprayed. These chemicals can sicken or kill an animal. Call your veterinarian or the ASPCA National Animal Poison Control Center (ASPCA/NAPCC) if you suspect your animal has been poisoned.
- Be alert for coolant leaking from your vehicle. Animals are attracted to the sweet taste of coolant and ingesting just a small amount can cause an animal's death. Consider using animal-friendly products that use propylene glycol rather than those containing ethylene glycol.
- A clean coat can help to prevent summer skin problems, so keep your dog or cat well groomed. If he has a heavy coat, shaving your dog's hair to a one-inch length will help prevent overheating. Don't shave a dog's hair down to the skin; this robs him of protection from the sun. A cat should be brushed frequently to keep his coat tangle-free.
- Take your companion animal to the veterinarian for a spring or early summer checkup, including a test for heartworm. Have the doctor recommend a safe, effective flea and tick control program.
- Never tie an animal outside in a correction collar. He can choke to death. If you must tether him, use a buckle collar with identification tags instead. (This applies to any season.)
- Never let your animal run loose. This is how an animal can contract a fatal disease, including rabies, or be injured, killed, or stolen. Be sure there are no open, unscreened windows or doors through which your animal can fall or jump.

Is It Too Hot For Spot?

Outdoor Temperature vs. Interior Automobile Temperature

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Outside Temperature: 85° Fahrenheit Light colored sedan

2 Windows open 1-1/2" each Cloudy day

Humidity: 53%

| <u>Time Elapsed</u> | <u>Interior Car Temperature (in °F)</u> |
|---------------------|---|
| 5 minutes | 95 |
| 10 minutes | 108 |
| 15 minutes | 113 |
| 20 minutes | 122 |
| 25 minutes | 127 |
| 30 minutes | 132 |
| 35 minutes | 135 |
| 40 minutes | 138 |
| 45 minutes | 145 |
| 50 minutes | 152 |
| 55 minutes | 156 |
| 60 minutes | 160 |

Introducing Your New Dog to Your Resident Dog

From the “leader of the pack” to “the top dog,” plenty of simplistic metaphors come from the canine world. But relationships between canines can be pretty complex, beginning with the very first meeting. Like most animals who live in groups, dogs establish their own social structure, sometimes called a dominance hierarchy. This dominance hierarchy serves to maintain order, reduce conflict, and promote cooperation among pack members. Dogs also establish territories, which they may defend against intruders or rivals. Obviously, dogs’ social and territorial nature affects their behavior whenever a new dog is introduced to the household.

Introduction Techniques

❖ Choose a Neutral Location

- Introduce the dogs in a neutral location so that your resident dog is less likely to view the newcomer as a territorial intruder. Each dog should be handled by a separate person. With both dogs on leashes, begin the introductions in an area unfamiliar to each, such as a park or a neighbor’s yard. If you frequently walk your resident dog in a nearby park, she may view that area as her territory, too, so choose a less familiar site. If you are adopting your dog from an animal shelter, you might even bring your resident dog to the local shelter and introduce the two there.

❖ Use Positive Reinforcement

- From the first meeting, help both dogs experience “good things” when they’re in each other’s presence. Let them sniff each other briefly, which is normal canine greeting behavior. As they do, talk to them in a happy, friendly tone of voice; never use a threatening tone. (Don’t allow them to investigate and sniff each other for too long, however, as this may escalate to an aggressive response.) After a short time, get the attention of both dogs and give each a treat in return for obeying a simple command, such as “sit” or “stay.” Take the dogs for a walk and let them sniff and investigate each other at intervals. Continue with the “happy talk,” food rewards, and simple commands.

❖ Be Aware of Body Postures

- One body posture that indicates things are going well is a “play-bow.” One dog will crouch with her front legs on the ground and her hind end in the air. This is an invitation to play, and a posture that usually elicits friendly behavior from the other dog. Watch carefully for body postures that indicate an aggressive response, including hair standing up on one dog’s back, teeth baring, deep growls, a stiff-legged gait, or a prolonged stare. If you see such postures, interrupt the interaction immediately by calmly getting each dog interested in something else. For example, both handlers can call their dogs to them, have them sit or lie down, and reward each with a treat. The dogs’ interest in the treats should prevent the situation from escalating into aggression. Try letting the dogs interact again, but this time for a shorter time period and/or at a greater distance from each other.

❖ **Take the Dogs Home**

- When the dogs seem to be tolerating each other's presence without fearful or aggressive responses and the investigative greeting behaviors have tapered off, you can take them home. Whether you choose to take them in the same vehicle will depend on their size, how well they ride in the car, how trouble-free the initial introduction has been, and how many dogs are involved.

❖ **Space Your Introductions**

- If you have more than one resident dog in your household, it may be best to introduce the resident dogs to the new dog one at a time. Two or more resident dogs may have a tendency to gang up on the newcomer.

❖ **Support the Top Dog**

- It is important to support the dominant dog in your household, even if that turns out to be the newcomer. This may mean, for example, allowing the dominant dog to claim a favored sleeping spot as his or to have access to a desirable toy. Trying to impose your preference for which dog should be dominant can confuse the dogs and create further problems.

❖ **Introducing Puppies to Adults Dogs**

- Puppies usually pester adult dogs unmercifully. Before the age of four months, puppies may not recognize subtle body postures from adult dogs signaling that they've had enough. Well-socialized adult dogs with good temperaments may set limits with puppies with a warning growl or snarl. These behaviors are normal and should be allowed. Adult dogs who aren't well socialized, or who have a history of fighting with other dogs, may attempt to set limits with more aggressive behaviors, such as biting, which could harm the puppy. For this reason, a puppy shouldn't be left alone with an adult dog until you're confident that puppy isn't in any danger. Be sure to give the adult dog some quiet time away from the puppy and some extra individual attention as well.

❖ **When to Get Help**

- If the introductions do not go smoothly, contact a professional animal behaviorist immediately. Dogs can be severely injured in fights, and the longer the problem continues, the harder it can be to resolve. Punishment won't work and could make things worse. Fortunately, most conflicts between dogs in the same family can be resolved with professional guidance.

Resources for this section:

For complete tips and advice on pet behavior and other pet care topics visit www.petsforlife.org
Adapted from material originally developed by applied animal behaviorists at the Dumb Friends League, Denver, Colorado. © 2000 Dumb Friends League and © 2003 the HSUS. All rights reserved.