

COEDWIG CARDIGANS

HELPFUL HINTS FOR YOUR NEW PUPPY

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FEEDING: We advise using premium quality dry kibble as your base food. The Whole Dog Journal is a very good resource with very strict criteria that includes using companies that disclose origin of manufacture, use high quality animal based proteins, and have an active QA processes. The protein content of your kibble should be no less than 28%. A good rule of thumb is to use kibble in which the first two or three ingredients are meat, and meat-meal.

To the kibble, we add cooked meat: ground chicken, turkey, beef, lamb, or any other meat your dog enjoys. Meat to kibble ratio is about 50/50. We then add a tablespoon of yogurt or cottage cheese, a teaspoon of flax oil, and puppy vitamins (Missing Link or Vetline or any general multi-vitamin for puppies).

When you first get your puppy, he/she has been eating 3 meals a day. Start by giving the puppy more than you think he can consume. Let your puppy eat in a quiet area for 15-20 minutes, then take up the leftover food and refrigerate the leftovers until the next meal. You can do this for 3 feedings, then discard the remaining uneaten food. Once the puppy is ~4 months old, go to two feedings per day. An excellent book on feeding dogs: **Give Your Dog a Bone**. You can buy designer meats for dogs, but we have found these to be as expensive as steak for the most part... Hamburger works fine, and so does ground chicken and turkey at your grocery store.

GOOD KIBBLE: Blue Wilderness from PetSmart, Nature's Domain from Costco, Taste of the Wild, Orijen, Karma, California Natural, NutriSource, Natural Balance Ultra, Chicken Soup for the Pet Lover's Soul, Canidae All Life Stage Formula. There are more, just be sure you get what you pay for! Watch out for fillers such as corn, corn meal, beet pulp, etc. Costco's main Kirkland brand dog food ingredient list reads well, but we have noticed that the bulk of the stools produced on this food almost doubled, which makes us wonder about fillers or grains as opposed to their Nature's Domain variety which is grain free.

SOCIALIZATION: While your puppy lived with us, we spent a great deal of time socializing him/her. On average we have about 50 people, including children come to visit and handle the puppies. Since they were 2 weeks old, we have played CD's for puppy habituation. We even play dog show tapes for those puppies destined to be on stage. These recordings have various sounds like firecrackers, explosions, children screaming, airplanes, blow dryers, objects falling, etc. We take each puppy on at least one car ride in a crate before they go to their new homes. They have each had their nails trimmed several times, including a Dremmel nail grinder and have had at least one bath. You can bathe your dog as often as you like, and you can use your own shampoo and conditioner. You do not need to buy designer dog soaps.

GOALS FOR THE NEXT SEVERAL WEEKS: Continue to expand your new puppy's horizons! ***The critical period for socializing a puppy is between 8-16 weeks, and we do mean critical!*** Time invested in socializing your puppy during this period will pay off for the rest of the puppy's life. These are the critical formative weeks. Take your puppy to as many places as possible -- the bank, the mall, the park, your friends, the lake, the ball game, etc. Be sure to make these experiences positive and give lots of treats! Just be sure to allow quiet uninterrupted sleep times so that your puppy gets enough rest. Meeting new dogs should be safe, be sure the other dog is known to be very friendly with other dogs before allowing your puppy too close. They need to meet other dogs -- *very important* -- just keep it safe.

TRAINING: In addition to reading "The Art of Raising a Puppy," take your puppy to classes! Even PetSmart offers puppy classes, and anything that gets you and the puppy into a training/socializing environment is a good idea. Kindergarten Puppy Training is the best kind of class for a young puppy. If you live in the Portland or Vancouver area, you are in luck! Call Julie at 360-901-1053 for KPT classes, and check out the training center at www.dogdayssnw.com.

EAR TAPING: This is a highly individual situation in this breed. Some puppies have their ears up as early as 8 weeks old. Other puppies may not have their ears up until 5 months old! If the puppy is 10-12 weeks old and the ears are not up, we then recommend taping them. Please call us for further instructions if needed.

CRATES AND CRATE TRAINING: The proper size crate for a Cardigan is a #300. The approximate measurements are" L32", W22", H23". Bigger is better when it comes to crates. Wire crates allow for better air circulation. If you fly with your dog, you will need a solid plastic crate. We have both and only use the solid crates when we are flying with our dogs. Your Coedwig puppy was raised with access to an open crate at all times, and this is her start with crate training. Refer to the "Art of Raising a Puppy" for crate training information.

FEEDING YOUR CARDIGAN PUPPY

Coedwig strongly believes in feeding Cardigans a diet rich in animal proteins. This concept is more widely accepted than a few years ago when many dog food companies taught that too much protein was a bad thing. These companies sponsored “canine nutrition” courses for many veterinarians. The general implications were that feeding a diet rich in animal protein was bad, i.e. too expensive and harder to make a profit.

Coedwig Cardigans have been fed a rich and nutritious diet and have enjoyed superior health and long lives. This outline is meant only to be a guide. Each owner can modify this basic concept to fit his or her lifestyle.

Your puppy has been eating the following mixture of dry kibble:

Nature’s Domain (Costco – grain free)

Blue Wilderness (PetSmart)

Other good kibbles we like:

Natural Balance

Taste of the Wild

Soak about a ½ - 1 cup or so of kibble in warm water to soften, and then add an equal amount of boiled ground meat – chicken, beef, turkey (not pork as dogs often do not like pork).

To this meat/kibble mixture, we add (per puppy): a tablespoon or two of live culture yogurt or cottage cheese, a teaspoon of Flax oil or cod liver oil, and a teaspoon of Missing Link (multi-vitamin). You can use ground turkey, chicken, hamburger, or whatever you have. We often grind our own meats. Leo is a hunter... so, your puppy has had all of the above, plus venison, duck and goose.

As far as amount goes, the general rule of thumb is that Cardi puppies will NOT overeat. Do NOT restrict their access to food or amounts if they appear hungry. Give them 20 minutes to finish what they want and then pick up the left overs and put it in the fridge for the next meal. If your puppy finishes fast and is looking for more, give him/her more. We generally recommend giving your puppy access to 3 meals per day. If you will be gone for any length of time, a bowl of dry food or chicken jerky will help tied them over. You will get a feel for your puppy in a few weeks, and of course he/she is growing! Cooked eggs are also good, but not all dogs are crazy about eggs.

Once your dog has reached adult size, then you may need to limit their food depending on their weight and eating habits (some dogs never get fat, some do :-). If you limit their food before they finish growing, they may never reach their full potential. This goes against some of the traditional “teachings” although it may be true of food hogs like labs!

Feel free to ask us questions about diet at any time!

IT TAKES A PACK TO RAISE A PUPPY

by Suzanne Clothier

Note: This article originally appeared in the newsletter of the Siberian Husky Club of America.

Not too long ago, I read about a study that showed that when recorded birdsong was played to plants, it served to prepare the plants for morning and the coming light. Hearing the birdsong, the plants underwent specific changes that allowed them to make good use of the sunlight. The point of the article was that greenhouse operators using artificial lighting would be wise to use this simple approach to help plants use the light as effectively as physiologically possible.

When we raise puppies, it would be nice to know that there was something as simple as recorded birdsong to help trigger our puppies' minds so that our interactions with them would have the best possible effects. But puppies aren't plants - they're complex creatures zooming along at an astounding pace on their developmental timetable. Compounding it all is the reality that while we are well meaning, we are still just humans trying to raise a baby dog. Hilary Clinton may or may not be right that it takes a village to raise a child; it definitely does take a pack to raise a puppy. In taking a puppy to raise, we become a substitute canine family. This is no easy task.

By the time the puppy is 7 weeks old, Nature has prepared the puppy to form deep bonds - in the world, with the pack around him; as a domestic dog, to form bonds with us, his substitute family. This bond is heartwarming and charming - what is more adorable than a little puppy trustingly chugging along behind you? It is also absolutely practical: this behavior is what will keep the puppy alive, fed, protected and educated. From 7-12 weeks of age, the puppy is amazingly open to (even eager for) relationships - relationships with almost anyone who will allow it. It is at this stage that flock guardian breeds are placed with the sheep; the poor misguided dears grow up feeling quite fond toward their woolly family and as impressive adult dogs will protect the flock with passion and skill. Given that a puppy can be convinced that a relationship with a sheep is a good thing, it is small wonder that puppies are just as willing to look at the average human being and think, "There is a God - and my, what big shoes God has. . ."

But possible problems are already germinating, even at this tender age. Even though a puppy is quite willing to develop relationships with all and sundry (even sheep), he does come to the table with some expectations. He can't help it. These expectations are hard-wired into his canine brain. He also has needs, ones that are typically met in a "natural" setting.

The puppy expects that there are rules in the world. His mother had them and reinforced them according to her personal mothering style. Even his siblings had some rudimentary rules, which were enforced through clumsy but oddly effective ways. (Fat puppies learn quickly that you can get much of what you want by simply sitting on a less hefty puppy. Biting hard on a rival's ear or lip can also be very effective.) Even at the tender age of 7 weeks old, the puppy is watching you, trying to figure out what the rules are. Where he sees uncertainty or inconsistency, his canine mind cannot help but make note of this. As he grows, he may feel the need to test the weak areas in order to clarify what the rules may or may not be. We expect this at some level - after all,

human teenagers routinely "test" their parents to find out where the boundaries may be. What we don't expect (or don't know or simply forget) is how quickly puppies move from the early stage of congenial agreement into the testing phase in just a matter of weeks, not the years like a human child.

The dog - like all social beings - is born with an understanding that there is power equal to, greater than and less than his own. He is (eternally) interested in seeing where you, the neighbors, the cat next door and the Poodle he just met fall on the power scale. Though he cannot articulate the concept, your puppy expects that leadership will be provided for him, or lacking that, he may have to be in charge as he matures. Like all social beings, he'd prefer that his leader(s) be calm, consistent, and clear while also being benevolent, protective and aware. And being a dog in all his waking moments, he assumes that you are a leader for him in your every waking moment.

A puppy (or even an adult dog) cannot understand that your life is not devoted to being a "leader among dogs" 24 hours a day or that you play many roles as spouse/parent/child/worker/friend. Though dog leader/puppy raiser/trainer may be only a part-time job for YOU, it does not change the fact that your puppy is a puppy 24 hours a day. Gaps in the leadership you provide for him will impact on the long-term relationship between you and your puppy. Depending on the individual dog, the breed and the situation, a lack of good leadership can lead to annoying and bratty behaviors, or it can lead to very serious consequences with the dog on a one-way trip to the Big Kennel in the Sky. Loving a puppy is not enough; he expects and deserves clear, consistent leadership. Being a dog leader means setting the rules for what is and is not acceptable behavior in your pack (with consideration to your rules being in line with the realities of dog behavior, culture and what constitutes reasonable expectations.)

Lacking the companionship and endless play his littermates would have provided, the puppy needs you to be his playmate. No excuses are truly satisfactory for a puppy who wants to play, play, play but has no one with whom to play. In a natural setting, a puppy wouldn't have to pester anyone or eat the linoleum out of boredom or bark in the backyard as a way to amuse himself. His littermates would be there, just as eager to play as he, littermates with which to chase, bite, wrestle, explore, etc. Although raising puppies together is NOT a good idea if you want a companion animal who is bonded to human beings and not to his puppy pals, it is a humbling moment when you watch puppies playing and realize that this is what you are going to replace in this puppy's life. Think of this the next time you find yourself exasperated with the puppy who won't stop pestering your other dogs to play, or who drops a toy invitingly at your feet for the millionth time, or who dances just out of your reach, reluctant to have a game end. Think of your puppy multiplied by 4 or 6 or 8 and what fun that many puppies would be having together. Then remember - you volunteered to be the substitute for that.

The puppy needs to learn to inhibit his impulses - in other words, to develop some self-control. One of my males, Banni, was a master at teaching puppies this critical social skill. Making a big show of a toy or delicious bone, Banni would lay down, placing his treasure in a precise spot calculated for a specific puppy and the specific lesson. Initially, the puppy would rush toward the bone and Banni would pick it up quickly while growling then walk away. With just one or two repetitions, the puppy learned to stop whenever Banni growled. Soon, he didn't have to growl at

all, but merely give the puppy "the look." You could see the puppy really wanted the bone, but was learning that wanting something and acting on that desire were quite different.

When dogs teach puppies to control themselves, they do not make excuses for the puppy: "Well, I was trying to teach him to leave my bone alone but he got so excited and I suppose it did smell pretty good, so I just let him have it." Humans make excuses for dogs, forgetting that among all social animals, self control is a learned skill that must be taught. We learned self-control because our parents taught us. For puppies to be welcome and enjoyable members of our substitute families, we need to teach them a great deal of self-control. Puppies do learn self control from other dogs but only concerning matters that are of interest to other dogs. A dog would not bother to teach a puppy that he should not get up on the sofa or steal food from the kitchen counter. These things don't matter much to dogs. But an older dog WILL teach a puppy that you should not steal another dog's meal or simply take a direct line of travel over another dog's body - much more polite to go around!

When teaching self-control, dogs are careful to make the lessons appropriate for the puppy's age. Before the puppy reaches 16-18 weeks of age, normal dogs are amazingly tolerant of puppy behavior. The careful observer will note a slow, subtle increase in what older dogs begin expecting from the puppy, but the overall impression is that a puppy can get away with almost anything. And the truth is, he can, thanks to the invisible (at least to humans!) but very real "puppy permit." What the puppy doesn't yet know is this: there's an expiration date on that puppy permit. When it expires, the rules can change quite quickly. Behavior that was acceptable one day may be completely unacceptable the next. With my own dogs, I've seen a puppy's permit expire over the course of a single morning. Just before breakfast, a four-month-old puppy galloped over one of my older dogs - nothing more than a dirty look and a grunt was what she got for this behavior. Later that day, the puppy did the same thing and was shocked when the adult dog leaped up fiercely snarling and barking in displeasure. After a few repetitions over the next few days, the puppy learned to politely walk around - not over! - other dogs.

The expiration date is usually at 16-20 weeks of age, and corresponds with hormonal shifts in the puppy's body. Once the hormonal shift occurs, the puppy will find much less tolerance from the dogs around him, and increasingly, he will be expected to act in a more mature fashion. Smart puppy owners keep an eye on the calendar too, allowing puppies to be puppies under some broad but consistent guidelines. Very slowly - almost imperceptibly, you begin to ask for a little more self control, a little more respect, a little more responsibility from the puppy but never losing sight of the fact that the puppy permit is still in force. Once the permit has expired, the wise handler can act just like a wise dog, and begin to push a little harder and expect more from the puppy.

From the best puppy raising dogs I've known, here are a few pointers for humans trying to raise a puppy:

- Tolerate puppies - they know not what they do
- Teach puppies - they know not what to do
- Be consistent with puppies - they forget things quickly
- Keep lessons short - puppies are easily distracted

- Puppies need to play - that why puppies are born in litters
- Good social skills & manners are made, not born
- Remember that puppy permits have expiration dates
- Don't wait till the puppy has stolen your bone to teach him about manners
- Be careful what you teach a puppy - someday, he might be in charge
- Tired puppies are always good puppies

House-training Your New Puppy

Goodpuppy™ Social Club

It takes time, and it takes patience, but we sincerely hope you will put your best efforts into teaching your pet good toilet habits since he will be sharing your house for the next 12-14 years! This handout outlines a humane housetraining program based on praise and prevention, not punishment. If followed carefully, the results will be a happy, well-trained dog.

The key principles in successful housetraining are:

- **Prevention**

Limit puppy's opportunities to eliminate in the wrong places by keeping her confined when you can't keep a constant watch on what puppy is doing.

- **Routine**

Set up a regular routine. Feed puppy regular meals (a measured amount three times a day) and take him outside to eliminate at the same times each day.

- **Anticipation**

Take puppy out at times she is likely to have to eliminate. This includes after sleeping or resting, after being confined, after playing and shortly after eating. Walking around in a circle and sniffing the floor are signs puppy may be about to eliminate, so take her outside immediately!

- **Praise**

Softly praise puppy while he is eliminating in the location you've selected for him. When he has finished, lavish on the attention - petting, verbal praise and don't forget a small tasty treat!

We encourage you to train your puppy to go to the bathroom outside from the beginning rather than paper training. Your aim from the first day is to **catch your puppy being successful** and give her the praise she deserves for doing it right. Your puppy really does want to please you and get some loving attention, and she will catch on very quickly that you seem truly thrilled with her when she eliminates behind the old lilac bush. If you do catch your puppy eliminating in the house, **DO NOT PUNISH** puppy - NO Hitting - NO SHAKING - NO RUBBING PUPPY'S NOSE IN THE MESS! These things not only **DON'T** help, they can make your puppy fearful and training that much harder. When you catch puppy eliminating indoors, just scoop her up and take her outside at once. And that's all!

One of the basic rules of housetraining is that if you don't see him do it, don't scold him about it. When he's caught in the act and is taken outside, he makes the connection that wetting on the Oriental rug was not a great idea. But if you drag him to a damp spot on the carpet hours (or even minutes) after the fact, he simply can't make the connection. He may learn to anticipate being punished when there is a mess on the carpet, but puppies do not make the extra connection that they need to stop eliminating in the house to prevent being punished the next time. When you find a spot after the fact, don't make a fuss and rush the dog outside; just accept that you lost that round, clean it up and forget it. For cleaning up accidents, use one of the enzymatic cleaners available at your veterinary office or most pet supply stores, or use diluted white vinegar in the last rinse to remove odors which might tempt him to use the same spot again.

Since your aim is to praise your puppy for being successful, it's important that you give her the chance to earn praise by anticipating her need to go outside. There are certain times when you can be almost certain your puppy will need to eliminate - take her out after eating, when she wakes up in the morning or after a nap, and after a playing session. Some puppies want to eliminate immediately after such activities, other some minutes later; you will soon learn your puppy's pattern. If you watch your puppy closely to learn what signals she gives before eliminating (sniffing, restlessness, circling), you will be able to get her outside soon enough to prevent accidents at other times as well.

This program of prevention and praise requires you to keep an eye on your puppy. Some accidents are inevitable, but you just can't give him the run of the house and let him get used to making mistakes. Use a baby gate or a ten-foot lead to keep puppy with you in the kitchen or family room where you can watch him. Some people have also taken the step of tying the puppy's leash to their belt, so puppy can't wander off on his own and get into trouble.

The use of a crate in housetraining a puppy can be a useful tool. But it can also be misused. A sleeping size crate takes advantage of a dog's natural instinct not to soil his "den" or sleeping quarters, a trait held over from his wolf ancestors. Since no one can watch a puppy every minute, a crate is useful for confining a small puppy for a short time while you run to the store or take a shower. A crate could also be properly used as a good sleeping place for an older puppy who is almost at the stage of making it through the night without a trip outdoors (The crate will encourage him to wait, but place it in or near your bedroom so he can wake you if he really needs to be taken out). However, placing a puppy in a sleeping size crate for hours at a time is unfair. He cannot control his bowels and bladder for very long and is forced to dirty his bed and himself. If a small puppy must be left for more than brief periods, a far more humane practice is to prepare a pen (partition off part of a room or use an old baby playpen) with a sleeping area, a playing area and a papered area where it is OK for him to eliminate.

You probably have noticed that we used the phrase "take your puppy out" throughout this handout. Even if you have a fenced yard, it is important to take your puppy out to go to the bathroom. If you just shove him out the door, you won't know if he has eliminated and you're skipping that essential part of training: praise. In addition, he's going to get into the bad habit of eliminating just outside the door. It's best (for both your puppy and your lawn) to take him to a selected spot each time so that he gets used to the idea that he is expected to eliminate there. Some experts also advocate consistent use of a brief phrase like "do your business" to help your puppy understand you brought him out at 2:00 a.m. in your pajamas because you thought he had to go the bathroom, not because you wanted to play.

If your puppy continues to have accidents at a favorite spot even though you have cleaned it thoroughly, make that spot unappealing by such methods as covering with a plastic runner (use the point side up) or laying down a section of double-side tape.

Please don't expect too much too soon. A 3 or 4 month old puppy cannot really be considered housetrained. He may know what you want, but his immature body will cause him to make mistakes. These will decrease as his system matures, but it is not unusual for a puppy to still have an occasional slip at 8 or 9 months, especially if you are gone longer than normal.

THINGS TO REMEMBER IN CARING FOR YOUR CARDIGAN WELSH CORGI

***Never** use your dog's name to scold him. What you are doing when you do this is teaching him that his name brings unpleasant things. Instead, when you **catch** him in the act of chewing, house soiling, etc., growl "Agh!" He understands this. Use his name to call him, ask him to do something, or to praise him.

***Never** scold him if you find something he has chewed, that he has wet in the house, etc. You have to catch him in the act! Prevention is key, and dogs live in the moment, not moments ago.

***Never** call him to you if you are going to clip his nails, give him a bath or anything he doesn't like. Go get him calmly and take him to the area. Otherwise he will never want to come to you for fear you may be about to do something he dislikes.

***Always** clip his nails once a week. Look into his ears and mouth daily. Brush or massage him daily while he is on a down stay. This exercise reminds him that **you** are the "alpha" dog and there can be no exception to this.

***Always** praise your puppy for positive interaction with new people, places and animals. After his second shot at 8-9 weeks, take him with you to meet your friends and other dogs/cats/birds as often as possible. The more you do this between the critical socialization period (8-16 weeks) the better adjusted he will be. Let him play with other dogs, as this helps him establish normal responses to other animals.

***Never** allow your puppy to shy away from friendly animals. If he acts shy or backs off from a friendly dog, **make** him sit and hold still while they sniff noses and rears. Don't scoop him up and tell him everything is okay. This reaction will be interpreted as praise for a very negative behavior.

***Always** have your puppy sleep inside a crate in your bedroom if possible, but never in your bed. This helps him form a strong bond to you. He is sleeping in your "den". If you allow him in bed with you, he may become possessive or think his pack status is higher than it is...

***Always** practice social exercises daily. Twice a day put your puppy on a down stay, then roll him onto his back. Make him stay. Rub his tummy, feet and tail while looking gently into his eyes. This exercise will have wonderful results throughout his life! This is a *critical* exercise- especially for males.

For further information on raising your puppy, read "**The Art of Raising A Puppy**", and "**Before and After Getting Your Puppy**" by Dr. Ian Dunbar, the worlds foremost expert on canine behavior!

SOCIALIZING AND TRAINING

We believe that there are no bad dogs, only dogs who didn't receive the proper training and socialization early in their lives. Please train your puppy! Take him or her to an early puppy obedience class, preferably a kindergarten puppy class. The puppies are allowed to start these classes when they are 9 weeks old. Your puppy has had two vaccinations at that age and is safe to go. TRAIN, TRAIN, and TRAIN! Another great exercise in training and socialization is to take the puppy for walks twice a day. And Train...

Tips and resources:

Watch Cesar Milan on National Geographic channel. He really IS the dog whisperer. By watching him solve behavior problems, you also learn how to prevent them. Prevention is key!

Take your puppy everywhere you can safely take him/her. The more you do with the puppy early in its life, the better adjusted it will be. If you train your Cardigan, almost all of your friends will welcome your buddy into their homes as well :-).

Ask questions! We are here to help.

Portland and Vancouver training centers partial list:

Play and Chase Dog Care 7660 SW Barbur Blvd. Portland. 503-246-3647. Puppy training.

Happy Go Lucky Dog www.happygoluckydog.com NE Portland, Oregon 97232
For info and registration: (503) 731-8774. 601 NE 28th Ave. (1 block north of Glisan)

Pup a Razzi www.pup-a-razzi.com/Puppy_Preschool.htm Beaverton

Dog Days Dog Training www.dogdaysnw.com Vancouver. This is where we take our puppies for training. Julie Wilcox: 360-901-1053. 7206 NE 37th Ave. Vancouver, WA 98665

Interested in herding with your Cardigan? My trainer is Dave Vicklund who trains a Brigands Hideout in Battle Ground. He is awesome! 360-666-9755 www.topstockdogs.com

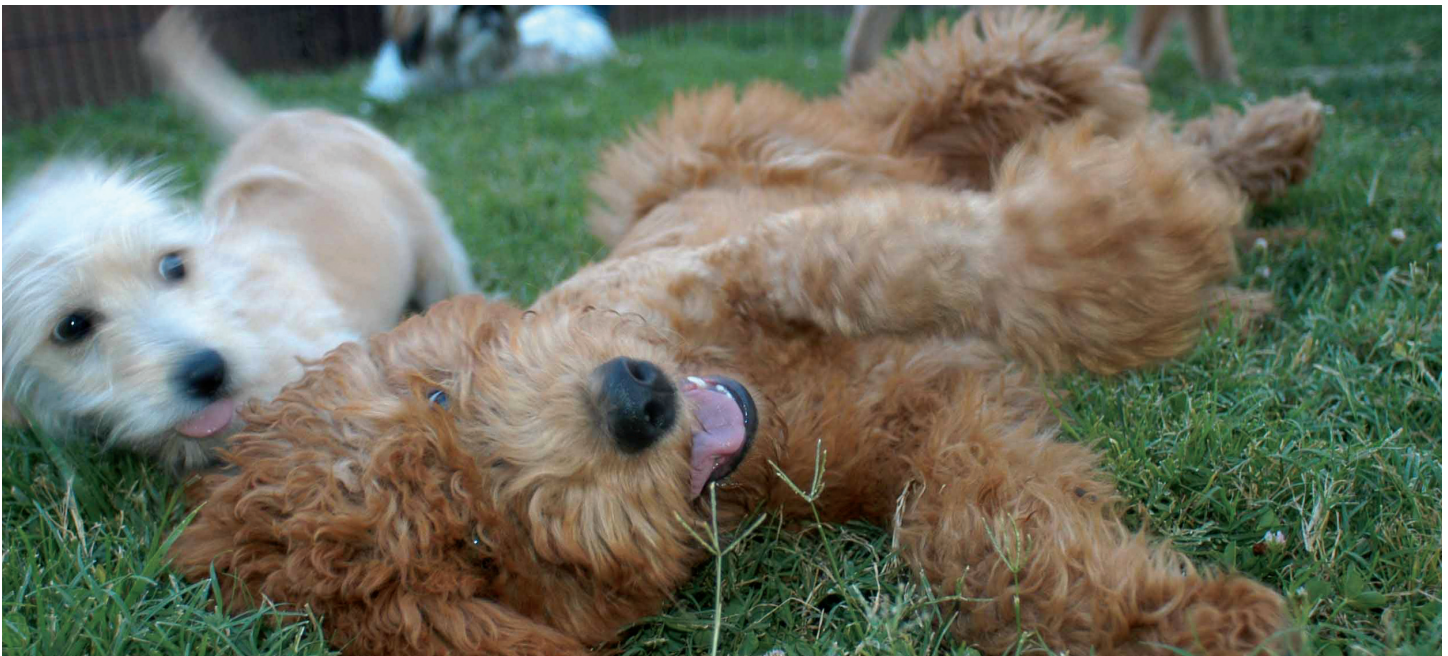


AVSAB Position Statement On Puppy Socialization



American Veterinary Society
of Animal Behavior

www.AVSABonline.org



THE PRIMARY AND MOST IMPORTANT time for puppy socialization is the first three months of life.^{1,2} During this time puppies should be exposed to as many new people, animals, stimuli and environments as can be achieved safely and without causing over-stimulation manifested as excessive fear, withdrawal or avoidance behavior. For this reason, the American Veterinary Society of Animal Behavior believes that it should be the standard of care for puppies to receive such socialization before they are fully vaccinated.

Because the first three months are the period when sociability outweighs fear, this is the primary window of opportunity for puppies to adapt to new people,

animals, and experiences. Incomplete or improper socialization during this important time can increase the risk of behavioral problems later in life including fear, avoidance, and/or aggression. Behavioral problems are the greatest threat to the owner-dog bond. In fact, behavioral problems are the number one cause of relinquishment to shelters.³ Behavioral issues, not infectious diseases, are the number one cause of death for dogs under three years of age.

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While puppies' immune systems are still developing during these early months, the combination of maternal immunity, primary vaccination, and appropriate care makes the risk of infection relatively small compared to the chance of death from a behavior problem.

Veterinarians specializing in behavior recommend that owners take advantage of every safe opportunity to expose young puppies to the great variety of stimuli that they will experience in their lives. Enrolling in puppy classes prior to three months of age can be an excellent means of improving training, strengthening the human-animal bond, and socializing puppies in an environment where risk of illness can be minimized.

In general, puppies can start puppy socialization classes as early as 7-8 weeks of age. Puppies should receive a minimum of one set of vaccines at least 7 days prior to the first class and a first deworming. They should be kept up-to-date on vaccines throughout the class.



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The Process of Socialization:

Puppies should be handled from birth, learning to accept manipulation of all body parts. Every effort should be made to expose them to as many different people, well-socialized animals, situations, places, etc. as possible. Puppies should be encouraged to explore, investigate, and manipulate their environments. Interactive toys and games, a variety of surfaces, tunnels, steps, chutes, and other stimuli can enrich the puppy's environment. Puppies should accompany their breeders/owners on as many car trips as possible. These exposures should continue into adulthood to maintain an outgoing and sociable dog.

Puppy socialization classes can offer a safe and organized means of socializing puppies and more quickly improve their responsiveness to commands.⁴ Each puppy should have up-to-date vaccinations and be disease and parasite free before entering the class. Where possible, classes should be held on surfaces that are easily cleaned and disinfected (e.g. indoor environments). Visits to dog parks or other areas that are not sanitized and/or are highly trafficked by dogs of unknown vaccination or disease status should be avoided.

Classes and at-home training should be based on positive reinforcement with frequent rewards praise, petting, play and/or treats. Positive and consistent training is associated with fewer behavioral problems and greater obedience than methods that involve punishment and/or encourage human dominance.^{4,5,6}

Time must be scheduled for puppies to play alone with their favorite toys (such as stuffed food toys) or take naps in safe places such as crates or puppy pens. This teaches puppies to amuse themselves, and may help to prevent problems of over attachment to the owners. Continuing to offer dogs a wide variety of experiences during their first year of life is also helpful in preventing separation-related behavior.⁷

Proper confinement training using pens or crates helps to ensure that puppies have safe and secure places for rest and confinement. Puppies that are used to being crated will be less stressed if they must be hospitalized or be confined for travel by plane or car. Crates should serve as comfort or play areas.

Early and adequate socialization and programs of positive training can go a long way to preventing behavior problems and improving bonding between humans and dogs. While the first three months is the most important socialization period in a puppy's life, owners of puppies that have passed this milestone are strongly encouraged to continue to socialize their puppies to as many people, pets, and locations as is practical. However, owners of puppies displaying fear should seek veterinary guidance.

PREMIER®
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Super-Socialized

How to create a reliably social, friendly, confident dog.

BY PAT MILLER

There was once a time when you rarely encountered the word "socialization" in dog circles. Today it's the new training buzzword: if you haven't heard it at least three dozen times by the time your dog is a dozen weeks old, you and your puppy must be living in a cave.

A half-century ago, no one talked about canine socialization because they didn't need to. For the most part dogs wandered freely in their neighborhoods, accompanied kids to the school bus stop, hung out with canine pals all day, and became naturally socialized to their world and the people, dogs, and things they encountered in their daily travels. Sure, they got into occasional scuffles amongst themselves, but they sorted it out. Yes, a kid was bitten every now and then, but it was no big deal.



We'd all like to have a friendly, social, confident dog. To create one, deliberately and thoroughly socialize your puppy as early as possible.

Dogs got hit by cars from time to time, but that was part of life – sad, but one could always find another dog, preferably one who would be smart enough to stay out of the road.

Today a large segment of our pet-owning population is made up of more responsible canine guardians and caretakers. A nationwide paradigm shift has changed our attitudes about our dogs. No longer just "pets," many of our beloved four-legged family members are kept inside our homes and in safely fenced yards, supervised closely when around children, and only encounter other dogs under controlled conditions – at training class, maybe during a brief on-leash greeting, during scheduled play dates, and perhaps at the dog park. The thought of our beloved dogs running free in the streets gives us heart palpitations, and we grieve terribly whenever we lose one.

On the plus side, this means our dogs live longer, physically healthier lives. On the minus side, it means they no longer benefit from the natural socialization process that occurred when they were allowed to explore their world and figure out how things work on their own. As a result, we've spawned a whole new behavior problem: undersocialization.

Building a social dog

Socialization is really *classical conditioning* – creating an association between two stimuli. Behavioral scientists have identified the period from 4 to 14 weeks as the most important window of time for a puppy's social development. After the age of 14 weeks that window starts to close, and it closes pretty quickly. If a pup is super-socialized during this important developmental period he'll most likely believe the world is a safe and happy place. If he's not well-socialized, he's likely to be *neophobic*, which means fearful of new things. This is a common condition in dogs rescued from puppy mills and hoarder situa-

What you can do . . .

- Make a commitment to super-socialize your puppy, and then do it – early. Don't procrastinate; you don't have much time!
- Stay aware of your pup's body language and help him out of trouble if he looks stressed. Be prepared to take prompt remedial action if your pup has a negative experience during your socialization program.
- Sign up – as soon as possible – for a well-run positive puppy class, where both of you can socialize and have a good time.



tions. It is challenging to own and train a dog who is afraid of everything new he encounters; worse, the neophobic canine is also a strong candidate for developing fear-related aggression. (For more about fearful dogs, see "Fear Itself," WDJ April 2007.)

Lack of exposure to new things is one cause of undersocialization; *inappropriate* exposure is another. If you're not careful during your socialization efforts you may inadvertently set your pup up to create *negative* associations with parts of the world around him. In that case you can actually *sensitize* your pup to the things you're introducing him to – that is, you can make him afraid of them – the exact opposite outcome of the one you want.

Think of the well-meaning soccer mom who takes the family's brand-new nine-week old pup to watch her son's team practice. The entire team suddenly spies

the adorable fluffball and charges toward the pup to oogle over him. The terrified puppy screams, pees, and tries to run away when he sees a dozen giant human creatures coming toward him at a dead run. He can't escape; he's trapped by the leash, which panics him even more.

Mom sees the pup flailing at the end of the leash and scoops him up in her arms to calm him so the boys can pet him. Now he's even *more* trapped! One boy reaches to pat him on the head, and the pup, thinking he may be about to die, as a last resort snaps at the lowering hand that appears poised to grab him. The boy yanks his hand away, and mom smacks the puppy for being "bad."

How much worse could it get? This puppy now has an extreme fear of children, especially boys, thanks to at least three negative classical associations in rapid succession:

1. Boys children are scary: they run toward you in large packs.
2. Boys children are scary: they try to grab your head.
3. Boys children make bad things happen when they are nearby, mom becomes violent.

The pup may also have developed negative associations with the collar and leash, wide open fields, being picked up, and mom. In addition, he learned one important *operant* lesson—snapping is a successful behavioral strategy for making scary hands go away. None of these things are the lessons we want a young pup to learn! And now the puppy is labeled as "not good with children" and a "fear-biter."

We often talk about how long it can take dogs to generalize operantly conditioned behaviors (if I do "x" I can make "y" happen). In contrast, dogs tend to form classically conditioned associations, especially those that produce strong emotions, *very* quickly.

The good news is that at nine weeks this pup's socialization window is still wide open, and if his owner is smart she has time to repair the damage. Unfortunately, most owners don't realize the importance of taking immediate steps to change a pup's association if he has a bad experience at a young age.

Socialization is the process of giving a puppy *positive* associations with the

Places NOT to Take Your Pup

As important as socialization is, it's equally important to avoid places where there's a high risk of endangering your baby dog's health or safety, or giving him a negative association with his world. Here are just a few of the places you *shouldn't* try to socialize your pup:

- Off-leash dog parks, until he is fully vaccinated.
- Any place where he is likely to encounter stray dogs.
- Any place where he is likely to encounter sick dogs.
- Any place where he is likely to encounter aggressive dogs.
- Any place where he is likely to encounter aggressive/rowdy/drunken humans.
- Places where there is an accumulation of feces from unknown dogs.
- Any place he is not welcome.
- Any place where he would have to be left unattended, or in a hot car (no tying up outside the grocery store!).
- Any place where he will be uncomfortable or frightened (sitting in the full sun while you watch your son's Little League game, at a July 4th fireworks display, at a motorcycle rally, etc.).
- Any place where you won't be able to devote enough attention to him to ensure his safety, security, and well-being.



How about a bike race? This pup is increasingly anxious about the bicyclists whizzing past and the cheering, cowbell-ringing spectators – and her owner's lack of attention.

people, places, and things in his world. You need to be sure he's having a great time, playing fun games, getting good stuff, and protected from scary stuff while you're teaching him that the world is a safe and happy place.

Early days

If you bring your new pup home when he's 8 weeks old, 4 of his 10 prime socialization weeks are already gone. Since a quarter to a half or more of a pup's most important socialization time has passed by the time he leaves his mother and moves into his forever home, it's vitally important that breeders invest time and energy into socializing their litters.

This includes having the pups walk and play on different substrates (grass, gravel, concrete, carpeting, and vinyl); inviting lots of different kinds of people over to

play with and handle the pups; exposing them to household objects and sounds (microwave, telephone, television, vacuum cleaner); and making sure the baby dogs have *positive* associations with all these things.

Sadly, a small minority of breeders do a really good job of it, which contributes significantly to the population of under-socialized dogs in our world. If the breeder of your pup did her part, then your pup is already well-started on his super-socialization program. Now it's your responsibility to keep it up.

If your pup comes to you from a socially impoverished environment, you'll already see the signs of neophobia. You have no time to lose, and you may never be able to make up all the ground he's lost, but you can make him better than he'd be otherwise. Trainers talk about giving pups

"100 new (positive) exposures in the first 100 days." If your pup is already showing signs of timidity or fear, triple that to 300 exposures in 100 days. And get busy!

Puppy classes

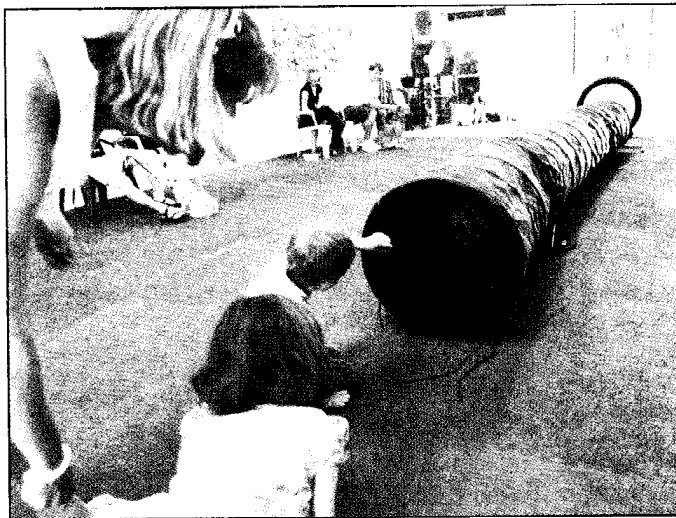
A well-run puppy class is one of the best places to find lots of positive socialization opportunities. Unfortunately, because of their fear of disease transmission, some veterinarians still caution their clients with puppies to keep their young canines safely at home until fully vaccinated, or at the very least until they have received a minimum of two shots, usually by the age of 12 weeks. Twelve weeks leaves only two weeks of critical socialization time—assuming there's a class starting up immediately after the pup receives his second shot. Not good enough!

We asked longtime positive trainer Gail Fisher of All Dogs Gym & Inn, located in Manchester, New Hampshire, to share her experiences with and thoughts on puppy classes. Here's her response:

"Regarding the question of puppy socialization versus risk of illness: We have been running puppy classes and play sessions for puppies as young as eight weeks since 1976 (which, incidentally, was before parvo!) In all this time, we have had a total of three puppies in our classes who were diagnosed with parvo (or anything worse than canine cough—a mild upper respiratory infection similar to the common cold).

"The first was a five-month-old Rottweiler (a breed known for having immunological issues—and beyond the age of a typical 'puppy' class). The second was a puppy from a breeder that had been in its new home for two weeks and who had received two shots, and the third was a pet shop puppy who had been purchased two days before starting class.

"More importantly, however, is the fact that *no other* puppies in any of those classes got sick. As soon as we heard from the owners of the sick puppies, we immediately contacted every other puppy owner to tell them to check with their veterinarian for advice on whether to have an additional inoculation. Some did, some didn't—but no one else got sick.



In a well-run puppy class, puppies learn how to focus on their owners in a distracting environment, and gain confidence in leaps and bounds.

"So if you're looking for 'odds'—in 33 years, figure (conservatively) 100 puppies a year, more than 3,000 puppies—the odds of a puppy getting sick from a well-run training class is virtually nil (less than 1/100th percent). The risks of illness are, in my opinion, negligible, while on the other hand, the advantages to socialization are unmeasurable.

"I hope this helps in your decision to take your puppy to training class!"

Playing in the gene pool

Of course, your dog's genetics also influence his behavior and social tendencies. Behavior is *always* a combination of genetics and environment. Nature *and* nurture. Always.

Genes dictate how easily reinforced a dog is for the things the environment tosses at him during his lifetime. Hence a dog who is genetically programmed to be reinforced by chasing things that move becomes a good herding dog, fox hound, or ratter. The difference is the herding dog is (hopefully) not programmed to be reinforced by killing the things he chases, while the hound and the terrier are.

Pups who are genetically programmed to be reinforced for the consequences of acting behaviorally bold are naturally easier to socialize, even if their first few weeks lacked stimulation, than ones who are genetically programmed to be reinforced for the results of acting timid or fearful. How do you know which behavioral genes your pup has for social behavior? You really don't.

It's useful to see your pup's parents

—at least the mother, if at all possible. If Mom is timid or aggressive there's a good chance her pups will be, too. The pups' behavior still can't be attributed solely to genes: pups can *learn* fearful or aggressive behavior by *watching* their mother's response to humans and other environmental stimuli, a behavioral phenomenon known as *social facilitation*. If you've been paying attention you'll remember that genes and environment *both* play a role in behavior—always.

Don't despair if you adopted your pup from a shelter or rescue group. It's true that if you never see Mom or Dad, you won't get any hints about their

behavior. So how do you know how much socialization your pup needs to overcome any genetic weakness in temperament? You don't. But you don't need to. The answer to the genetic mystery is to super-socialize every single puppy, regardless of what you think you know, or don't know, about his genetics. If you do that, you're guaranteed to help your pup be everything he can be, socially speaking.

There's no such thing as overkill when it comes to properly done socialization. You can't do too much. Pups who are super-socialized tend to assume that new things they meet later in life are safe and good until proven otherwise. Dogs who are very well-socialized as pups are least likely to develop aggressive behaviors in their lifetimes. Pups who aren't well-socialized tend to be suspicious and fearful of new things they meet throughout their lives, and are most likely to eventually bite someone. You'd better get out there and get started! 🐾

Pat Miller, CPDT, is WDJ's Training Editor. Miller lives in Hagerstown, Maryland, site of her Peaceable Paws training center. Pat is also author of The Power of Positive Dog Training; Positive Perspectives: Love Your Dog, Train Your Dog; Positive Perspectives II: Know Your Dog, Train Your Dog; and Play with Your Dog. See page 24 for contact and/or book purchasing information.

Gail Fisher is the owner of All Dogs Gym & Inn in Manchester, New Hampshire. See page 24 for contact information.

100 Positive Exposures in 100 Days

BY NANCY KERNS

WDJ's Training Editor Pat Miller has long advocated the concept of engineering 100 positive, novel experiences for a puppy in his first 100 days with his owner. The idea is to consciously, deliberately expose him to all sorts of sights, sounds, smells, and other beings in such a way that he comes away from each experience thinking, "That was cool!"

But given the uncontrollable nature of the real world, it's no small task to devise these encounters so that they can't *help* but have a positive outcome. Fire trucks may suddenly appear with sirens wailing. A passing dog may suddenly explode into a fit of barking and barely controlled aggression. And *people* are unpredictable! You never know when someone will take it upon themselves to do something stupid or scary to your dog, like grab his cheeks and pull him close for what is meant to be an affectionate kiss (but which terrifies your shy puppy).

While it's clearly impossible to control *every* aspect of your outings, a certain amount of planning will prevent many overwhelming experiences. Avoid taking your sound-sensitive youngster to neighborhoods that are home to a fire station or hospital. If you see, coming toward you and your pup down the sidewalk, a dog straining at the end of his leash, or appearing to be overly alert, eyes fixed on your puppy, do a snappy about-face. Jog away with your pup with a cheerful, "Yay! Let's go!" and cross the street as soon as you can.

Most important, though, is to communicate proactively with the people that you allow to approach or pet your dog. You can usually tell when a person might be interested in meeting your dog, and when they don't care for dogs. If a person makes eye contact with me in a friendly fashion, or is looking at my dog and smiling, I always say, "Hello, how are you?" If it appears that she would like to pet or greet my dog, I try



Be alert for situations that could frighten or hurt your dog – or cause him to bite someone in a panic. In this case, the owner should be leading his dog away, or stepping gently between the dog and the toddler, who appears ready to grab two handfuls of fur, or even fall on the dog.

to subtly prevent her from actually touching my dog (by slowing my pace, or stepping slightly between my dog and the person) until I can say, "He's a little shy; would you mind giving him a treat?" and I hand her a treat. Given that information, most people will move slowly and greet the dog gently.

(Note: Miller recommends that owners *not* allow strangers to feed treats to a shy dog until the owner has done a ton of counter-conditioning to the sight of strangers. That way, the dog already has a positive emotional response to strangers, and will accept treats from a stranger safely, with minimal stress.)

No matter how well or poorly they follow instructions, though, I always praise my dog and give him a treat or pet him right after the encounter. When I got him at the age of seven months, he was shy with strangers; now his tail starts wagging in anticipation whenever he sees someone coming toward us. The sight of a stranger has become a predictable indicator that praise and a treat are on the way.

Start close to home and branch out

You'll find many opportunities in your own neighborhood for 100 new, positive exposures, including the mail delivery person, FedEx driver, kids on bikes, a skateboarding teenager, a passing bus, and an elderly neighbor. Go out of your way to approach people who appear unique (to your pup) in some way: their size (extra large, extra small); skin color; mode of transportation (wheelchair, crutches, skateboard, bicycle); and manner of dress (trench coat, hat, beard, backpack, skirt, shorts, pants).

You'll also want to get into the habit of taking your pup with you to as many other *safe* places as possible, where he'll have more opportunities to enhance his socialization. In a local park, for example, he might have further opportunities to encounter baby strollers, kites, flying Frisbees, and people enjoying picnics. A cafe with tables on the sidewalk might offer a great place for your dog to meet a high volume of people with disparate appearances.

As your pup gains experience and confidence, you can start taking him with you when you run errands at businesses that allow dogs (hardware store, pet supply store, copy shop) or offer walk-up service (bank ATM, post office, or ice cream stand).

Miller suggests that dog owners keep an actual written list of their pup's socialization exposures, to help ensure that they attain (and, we hope, exceed) the goal of a minimum of one new exposure per day in the first 100 days they spend together. If you put a little effort into it, we're betting that you'll get there well before 100 days are up – more likely in half that time!



Don't be afraid to give people direction. Ask if they would give your dog a treat, and hand them one. Praise your dog – and thank the person!



Crate Training Your Dog

Crate training your dog may take some time and effort, but can be useful in a variety of situations. 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, such as what he can and can't chew and where he can and can't eliminate. A crate is also a safe way of transporting your dog in the car, as well as a way of taking him places where he may not be welcome to run freely. If you properly train your dog to use the crate, he will think of it as his safe place and will be happy to spend time there when needed. Always provide water for your dog anytime he is in the crate. Spill proof bowls or bowls that attach to the kennel gate work best.

Selecting A Crate

Crates may be plastic (often called "flight kennels") or collapsible, metal pens. Collapsible fabric kennels are designed for use when the owner is present and may not contain a dog for long periods while unsupervised. Crates come in different sizes and can be purchased at most pet supply stores. Your dog's crate should be large enough for him to stand up and turn around in.

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; one, the crate should always be associated with something pleasant; and two, training should take place in a series of small steps – don't go too fast.

Step 1: Introducing Your Dog To The Crate

- Put 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 securely fastened open so it won't hit your dog and frighten him.
- To encourage your dog to enter the crate, drop small food treats near it, 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 the crate. This will create a pleasant association with the crate. If your dog is readily entering the crate when you begin Step 2, put the food dish all the way at the back of the crate. If your dog is still 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, place 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. At first, 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 and he'll keep doing it.

Step 3: Conditioning Your Dog To The Crate For Longer Time Periods

- After your dog is eating his regular meals in the crate with no sign of fear or anxiety, you can confine him there for short time periods while you're home. Call him over to the crate and give him a treat. Give him a command to enter, such as, "kennel up." Encourage him by pointing to the inside of the crate with a treat in your hand. After your dog enters the crate, praise him, give him the treat and close the door. Sit quietly near the crate for five to 10 minutes and then go into another room for a few minutes. Return, sit quietly again for a short time, then let him out of the crate.

- Repeat this process several times a day. With each repetition, gradually increase the length of time you leave him in the crate and the length of time you're out of his sight. Once your dog will stay quietly in the crate for about 30 minutes with you out of sight the majority of the time, you can begin leaving him crated when you're gone for short time periods and/or letting him sleep there at night. This may take several days or several weeks.

Step 4:

Part A – Crating Your Dog When Left Alone

After your dog is spending about 30 minutes in the crate without becoming anxious or afraid, you can begin leaving him crated for short periods when you leave the house. Put him in the crate using your regular command and a treat. You might also want to leave him with a few safe toys in the crate (see our handout, "Dog Toys and How to Use Them"). You'll want to vary at what point in your "getting ready to leave" routine you put your dog in the crate. Although he shouldn't be crated for a long time before you leave, you can crate him anywhere from five to 20 minutes prior to leaving.

Don't make your departures emotional and prolonged, but matter-of-fact. Praise your dog briefly, give him a treat for entering the crate and then leave quietly. When you return home, don't reward your dog for excited behavior by responding to him in an excited, enthusiastic way. Keep arrivals low key. Continue to crate your dog for short periods from time to time when you're home so he doesn't associate crating with being left alone.

Part B – Crating Your Dog At Night

Put your dog in the crate using your regular command and a treat. Initially, it may be a good idea to put the crate in your bedroom or nearby in a hallway, especially if you have a puppy. Puppies often need to go outside to eliminate during the night, and you'll want to be able to hear your puppy when he whines to be let outside. Older dogs, too, should initially be kept nearby so that crating doesn't become associated with social isolation. Once your dog is sleeping comfortably through the night with his crate near you, you can begin to gradually move it to the location you prefer. Puppies that are healthy can have their water taken from them a few hours before bedtime to help decrease the frequency of potty trips they need to make during the night.

Potential Problems

Too Much Time In The Crate

A crate isn't a magical solution. If not used correctly, a dog can feel trapped and frustrated. For example, if your dog is crated all day while you're at work and then crated again all night, he's spending too much time in too small a space. Other arrangements should be made to accommodate his physical and emotional needs. Also, remember that puppies under 6 months of age shouldn't stay in a crate for more than three or four hours at a time. They can't control their bladders and bowels for longer periods.

Whining

If your dog whines or cries while in the crate at night, it may be difficult to decide whether he's whining to be let out of the crate, or whether he needs to be let outside to eliminate. If you followed the training procedures outlined above, your dog hasn't been rewarded for whining in the past by being released from his crate. Try to ignore the whining. If your dog is just testing you, he'll probably stop whining soon. Yelling at him or pounding on the crate will only make things worse. If the whining continues after you've ignored him for several minutes, use the phrase he associates with going outside to eliminate. If he responds and becomes excited, take him outside. This should be a trip with a purpose, not play time. If you're convinced that your dog doesn't need to eliminate, the best response is to ignore him until he stops whining. Do not give in, otherwise you'll teach your dog to whine loud and long to get what he wants. If you've progressed gradually through the training steps and haven't done too much too fast, you will be less likely to encounter this problem. If the problem becomes unmanageable, you may need to start the crate training process over again.

Separation Anxiety

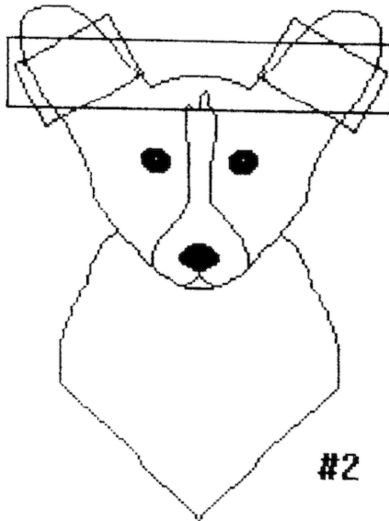
Attempting to use the crate as a remedy for separation anxiety will not solve the problem. A crate may prevent your dog from being destructive, but he may injure himself in an attempt to escape from the crate. Separation anxiety problems can only be resolved with counter-conditioning and desensitization procedures (see our handout, "Separation Anxiety").

EAR TAPING TIPS FOR CARDIGAN WELSH CORGIS



Taping is used to enhance circulation through the entire ear by eliminating the fold. This encourages cartilage formation at an early age. Corgi ears should never be “rolled” or “racked” like a Dobermans where $\frac{3}{4}$ of the ear has been cut away. Rolling such a large ear would actually decrease circulation. Taping as illustrated here does not hurt in any way. Your puppy won’t like holding still for the process and will probably try to roll, scratch, or shake off the tape. However, they soon forget the tape is there. You can leave the tape on for up to a week by reinforcing it with more tape as needed. ***Do not*** allow another puppy to pull or chew on the tape. When you remove the tape give the ears a few hours to adjust, then decide if they need to be retaped.

- Start the taping process at nine weeks if your puppy’s ears are not standing up naturally by this time.

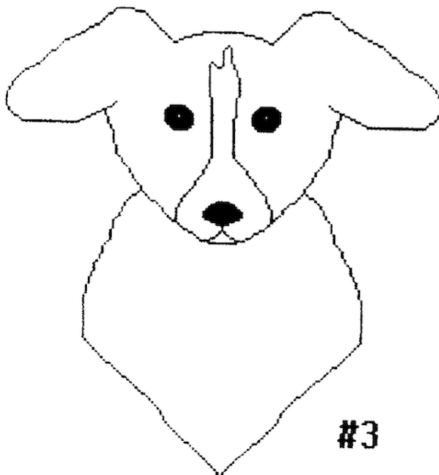


- It is best if one person holds the puppy while another tapes. It can be managed single-handedly if necessary, but you’ll need lots of patience.

- Use 2-inch wide masking tape. No other size will do. 2-inch white fabric medical tape or duct tape can be used if the masking tape is not sticking to the ears.

- First use a band of tape to encircle each ear. (See illustration #1) Next put a long band of tape in front and in back to connect the ears. (See illustration #2) Add tape where needed to add strength to the construction.

- Make sure there are no folds in the ear when taping is completed.



- Distract the puppy until it becomes used to the tape. This usually takes 15 minutes or less. Use toys, food, or play as distractions. Be sure to tell them how good they are!

- Some puppies’ ears will stand after the first taping. Others take longer. Retape if your puppy looks like the flying nun! (See Illustration #3)

Do the Dew(claws)?

M. Christine Zink DVM, PhD, DACVSMR

I work exclusively with canine athletes, developing rehabilitation programs for injured dogs or dogs that required surgery as a result of performance-related injuries. I have seen many dogs now, especially field trial/hunt test and agility dogs, that have had chronic carpal arthritis, frequently so severe that they have to be retired or at least carefully managed for the rest of their careers. Of the over 30 dogs I have seen with carpal arthritis, only one has had dewclaws.

If you look at an anatomy book (Miller's Guide to the Anatomy of Dogs is an excellent one – see Figure 1 below) you will see that there are 5 tendons attached to the dewclaw. Of course, at the other end of a tendon is a muscle, and that means that if you cut off the dew claws, there are 5 muscle bundles that will become atrophied from disuse.

Those muscles indicate that the dewclaws have a function. That function is to prevent torque on the leg. Each time the foot lands on the ground, particularly when the dog is cantering or galloping (see Figure 2), the dewclaw is in touch with the ground. If the dog then needs to turn, the dewclaw digs into the ground to support the lower leg and prevent torque. If the dog doesn't have a dewclaw, the leg twists. A lifetime of that and the result can be carpal arthritis, or perhaps injuries to other joints, such as the elbow, shoulder and toes. Remember: the dog is doing the activity regardless, and the pressures on the leg have to go somewhere.

Perhaps you are thinking, "None of my dogs have ever had carpal pain or arthritis." Well, we need to remember that dogs, by their very nature, do not tell us about mild to moderate pain. If a dog was to be asked by an emergency room nurse to give the level of his pain on a scale from 0 to 10, with 10 being the worst, their scale would be 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10. Most of our dogs, especially if they deal with pain that is of gradual onset, just deal with it and don't complain unless it is excruciating. But when I palpate the carpal joints of older dogs without dewclaws, I frequently can elicit pain with relatively minimal manipulation.

As to the possibility of injuries to dew claws. Most veterinarians will say that such injuries actually are not very common at all. And if they do occur, then they are dealt with like any other injury. In my opinion, it is far better to deal with an injury than to cut the dew claws off of all dogs "just in case."

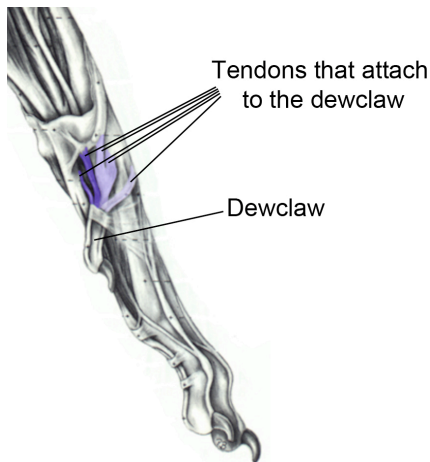


Figure 1. Anatomical diagram viewing the medial side of a dog's left front leg demonstrating the five tendons that attach to the dewclaw.

--from *Miller's Guide to the Dissection of the Dog*



Figure 2. In this galloping dog, the dewclaw is in touch with the ground. If the dog then needs to turn to the right, the dewclaw digs into the ground to support the lower leg and prevent torque.



When to Neuter

An evidence-based look at the pros and cons of early sterilization

Now that your new puppy is settling nicely into his new home, you'll probably be checking your list of puppy needs for the near future. If your pup isn't already neutered or spayed, you must decide whether he'll be sterilized. Once you decide, you'll likely wonder when the best time would be to have the procedure done.

There's probably no better subject for our first column on evidence-based canine health care than the benefits and risks of early-age sterilization. Evidence-based medicine for dogs, as well as people, involves making health decisions based on the best, most up-to-date scientific research in addition to their doctor's opinions and experiences. There's a wealth of expert *opinions*, but research into the health effects of early-age sterilization is harder to come by.

Spaying (the surgical removal of a female's uterus and ovaries) and castration (the removal of a male dog's testicles) are necessary for decreasing the population of unwanted animals in shelters and rescues. Neutering, however, deprives dogs of sex hormones that have many effects on their health, some beneficial and some not.

Weighing Benefits Against Risks

Veterinarians know a lot more now about the health benefits and risks of neutering than they did a decade ago. They used to think removing a dog's testicles could help protect him from prostate cancer. We now know it doesn't.

In fact, neutered dogs are two to four times more likely to develop the usually fatal cancer than intact dogs. Castration does eliminate the risk of testicular cancer and other prostate problems, but these are not as deadly as prostate cancer. Although spaying prevents uterine infections and ovarian cancer, it increases the risk of urinary incontinence.

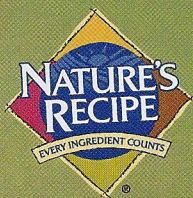
Because early-age neutering has only recently become widespread, we have few studies to show us its risks and benefits. These studies show neutering at an earlier age reduces surgical complications as well as the dog's recovery time from anesthesia and surgery. And they confirm that spaying a female before she is sexually mature substantially lowers her risk for mammary cancer—the most common, often fatal cancer in dogs. They also show neutering dogs before they mature may increase certain risks.

For example, depriving growing dogs of sex hormones can allow some bones to grow longer than they normally would. This can place unhealthy stress on parts of their skeleton, especially in larger breeds. Dogs neutered before maturity are at increased risk of hip dysplasia, of rupturing the anterior cruciate ligaments (ACL) in their knees, and some other skeletal problems, which can lead to disability, chronic pain, and large veterinary bills. And they are at greater risk for bone cancer.

People often cite the benefits of neutering on dog behavior as another reason to neuter early, but studies show the effects of neutering on aggression varies so greatly among breeds that no generalization can be made at this time.



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BENEFITS

Male and Female:

Surgery and anesthesia times are shorter
Faster recovery from anesthesia and healing
Fewer surgical complications

Female:

Reduces risk of mammary cancer, especially when spayed before second heat cycle

RISKS

Male and Female:

3–4 times higher risk of bone cancer if sterilized before maturity (dog finished growing)
Greater risk of hip dysplasia if sterilized before 5 months
Greater risk of ACL ruptures if sterilized before maturity
Risk of uneven bone growth that may lead to altered conformation and increased stress on bones and joints if sterilized before maturity

Female:

2–5 times greater risk of blood-vessel cancer of heart or spleen (hemangiosarcoma)
Greater risk of urinary-tract infections caused by immature genitalia
Greater risk of urinary incontinence, especially if spayed before 3 months

Male:

Nearly doubles risk of blood-vessel cancer of heart (hemangiosarcoma)

Risks and benefits come from summaries of published research provided by the American College of Theriogenologists, the National Animal Interest Alliance, the *Third International Symposium on Non-Surgical Contraceptive Methods for Control*, the *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association*, and the Association of Animal Behavior Professionals.

Making a Decision

The risks and benefits of neutering are not the same for all dogs, which is why most experts agree that a dog's sex, age, breed, health condition, temperament, and activities must be considered when deciding to neuter.

Humane organizations neuter puppies before offering them for adoption to reduce the need to euthanize unwanted animals. But when deciding on neutering an individual pet, population control should be a less important concern than the health of that animal, the American College of Theriogenologists says.

Neutering has health benefits and risks, and both should be considered, Herris Maxwell, DVM, says. Maxwell is a diplomate of the college, which

provides board certification for veterinary reproduction specialists. "There is no totally correct answer to the question about the optimum age for the procedure," he says. "Owner concerns, breed predisposition, and specific situations related to each case and patient can all be weighed in making that judgment."

To make the best decisions for the pets they love, owners should ask their veterinarians to explain the evidence for benefits and risks regarding all treatment options. 🐾

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