

# Think twice!

A new puppy can make a fantastic pet. They have their own unique personalities and are famously loyal. If raised properly you'll have a friend for life, and, more importantly a new member of the family!

Buying and owning a dog can bring many rewards into your life, but caring for and playing with one can be very time consuming.

**If you are not 100% sure** that you or your children will be able to give your pet the attention that it needs then please **think twice**.

## Are you puppy prepared?

**Is your home suitable for a puppy?** It needs space to move about, local exercise areas or parks, and secure safe areas for play.

**Are you able to spend time playing with and walking your puppy?** If you will be out of the house for long periods of time nearly every day, your puppy may become lonely and mischievous. Dogs need human companionship too. Regular walks are essential for your dog's continuing health, and they'll help to keep you fit too!

**Can you afford a puppy?** Not only do you have to set aside around £30 a month for food etc., there's also bedding, training aids, flea and worm controls as well as kennel fees to account for throughout the year! Vet's bills can easily exceed £100 in times of trouble, and even regular health checks and vaccinations soon add up.

## Choosing your puppy

**There are many things to consider before selecting your puppy. The main considerations are listed below.**

**Pedigree or cross-breed?** Think of adult size, temperament, grooming requirements, hereditary illnesses or ability to train or work. Some breeds are more energetic than others and need much more exercise. Try not to choose on looks alone!

**Male or female?** Bitches come into season up to 3 times a year, and must be kept away from males to prevent unwanted pregnancies. Males may stray or become agitated if they are in the vicinity of a bitch in season.

**Just 1?** Consider whether you could commit yourself to more than one puppy - not only financially, but also with time and care, training just one is hard enough! It is easier to acquire another puppy at a later date, than to rehome one or return it to the breeder or charity.

**Cat & dog?** There is no reason why canine and feline cannot live together, as long as they are introduced sensibly and there is no preference shown towards either.

**Spay or neuter?** It is possible to sterilise your pet to prevent unwanted pregnancies. The operation will not affect the temperament or behaviour of your pet, neither will it gain weight if proper feeding and exercise are maintained.

**Pet insurance?** You may find that pet insurance is the best option to cover those more expensive vet's bills and treatments, although it will not cover the cost of annual vaccinations or any treatment costing under £30. If your dog is involved in a road accident you're liable for damage to the car, insurance will cover this too.

**Puppy training classes?** Pets Corner may have one of our **Sit!** training classes in your area. These are a fun and effective way of improving your puppy's behaviour, as well as a great means by which you can build an even stronger relationship with your pet. All of our trainers are Association of Pet Dog Trainers qualified. **If you're interested, ask a member of staff for details.**

**Vaccinations?** It is recommended that your puppy is vaccinated from the age of about 8 weeks against Distemper, Hepatitis, Leptospirosis and Parovirus. These diseases, although rare, are virtually incurable, so initial vaccinations and annual boosters are a must. Register with a vet as soon as possible for a health check and advice about your puppy.

## Walkies!

When your puppy is fully inoculated you can start taking it for walks. Initially these will need to be short, building up to at least an hour a day by the time your pup has grown up. Some breeds require more exercise than others.

## Feeding time

Your puppy should be fed a specific 'Puppy' or 'Growth' lifestage food for the first 1-2 years of its life depending on its adult size. These types of foods will have been specially formulated by leading nutritionists to benefit every aspect of your growing puppy. Diets without such modifications can lead to poor bone development, bad teeth and stunted growth!

Pets Corner specialises in nutrition. **Our staff are trained in all of our food related products to offer you the best advice on feeding to suit your pet, both in complete foods and treats.** We stock foods to cater for all ages and pet lifestyles - active, average or lazy; puppy, large breed, adult or senior. Not only can we select the healthiest, most natural diet for your pet, but **we could also save you around £350 a year!\***

Depending on the recommended daily feeding quantity for your puppy, divide the amount into several small meals throughout the day: Up to 12 weeks - 4 small equal meals, up to 6 months - 3 meals - lunch smaller, over 6 months - 2 meals - larger in the morning. Always supply plenty of fresh drinking water.

**Purchase animal-safe treats only, especially avoid feeding human chocolate as this can be toxic to dogs.** Try treating with premium treats that do not contain excess sugar rather than human food or sweets.

## Worming

Puppies can contract worms through the umbilical cord before they are born! It is often difficult to detect worms as the signs are not clearly visible. Puppies should be routinely treated for roundworm and tapeworm - Treat for roundworm every 2 weeks until 3 months old and then every 4 weeks until 6 months old. After the age of 6 months treat for roundworm and tapeworm every 3 months for the rest of your dog's life.

## Playtime and toys

These should be used for entertainment and rewards. A puppy will respond well to you if you have its favourite toy in your hand. Playtime is an ideal opportunity to teach your puppy the basic commands you wish to use - but always make it short and enjoyable or your puppy will lose interest very quickly.

## Grooming and bathtime

Make all experiences a pleasure for your puppy! Use these sessions for handling and getting it used to you touching it all over. Try to avoid keeping your puppy still for too long. How it is handled the first few times can affect its behaviour in future situations - ie. during health checks, when at the vets or kennel/grooming parlour etc.

## Flea Control

It would be impossible to isolate your puppy from the risk of getting fleas. If you wait until you see the fleas it is likely that your puppy (and your house) has lots of them. There are flea tablets, drops and collars that ▶

prevent and kill fleas, just make sure you pick one that's suitable for your puppy's age. Treat your house at the same time and your home and your puppy will be flea free.

## Teeth and teething

**Your puppy will have a complete set of sharp teeth when you get it home - as you will soon find out. As it loses its baby teeth from 12 weeks to 6 months old, it may need toys and teething aids to satisfy its chewing urges. Try to obtain several indestructible toys for constant chewing - and hide your shoes and slippers, as pups can't tell the difference between what they should chew and what they shouldn't! It's important to control what your puppy is in contact with for its own safety.**

## Health checks

It is very important to keep a close eye on your puppy, as small changes can lead to bigger problems. Every time you groom or bath your puppy, check him for cuts, sores and lumps. If it is regularly checked, you will be able to spot a potential problem early on. **In particular look out for any lumps and bumps.**

Watch for scratching and check the coat for fleas or other problems, which could reflect a medical or dietary problem. Skin disorders can often be remedied by a change of diet.

Check that your pets urinate regularly and that their stools are firm, as any change could indicate a developing health problem. Changes in behaviour and feeding can be used as indicators of trouble, particularly if your puppy is lethargic or hunched over.

**If you have any doubts about the most suitable products to use for training, feeding or general care, please ask a member of Pets Corner staff or contact your vet.**

The information in this leaflet is intended as a guide only, as animals have individual requirements and temperaments.

## Important Contacts

Pets Corner

or call us freephone on **0800 1696098**

Vets

Breeder

# Puppy Checklist

- **Bed or basket** should be comfortable and secure, washable is best in case of accidents, although plastic beds are chewable!
- **Food and water bowls**, to suit its size now. Too big a bowl could cause him to accidentally walk or fall into his food or water. Ceramic or stainless steel are best.
- **Complete food.** Try to stick with what the breeder feeds for the first few weeks to avoid distressing the puppy.
- **Brush and comb.** Grooming time helps to build a trusting relationship between puppy and owner, and keeps the skin and coat healthy. Regular grooming can also highlight any skin problems or growths.
- **Worming tablets or cream** suitable for its age - always check the label.
- **Flea sprays, drops or tablets** suitable for your puppy's age and a **flea comb** if necessary.
- **Various toys** for training - and more importantly, teething! A mixture of textures is good and don't play rough games until adult teeth are properly developed.
- **Lightweight collar and lead**, or harness etc. Although not needed immediately, it is good to get your puppy used to wearing them.
- **Nail clippers** for keeping its claws at a sensible length for walking.
- **Toilet training aids** and **petsafe disinfectants** for cleaning up 'accidents'. Puppy pads absorb much more than newspaper and are scented to encourage puppy to use them.
- **Petsafe repellants** or **anti-chew sprays** to keep puppy away from unsafe areas or your best furniture!
- **Puppy crate** to secure puppy if it needs to be left alone at home. Best used with the puppy's bed to give him a den to hide in for peace and quiet.
- **Car crate, transporter, car divider** or **car harness** for safe travelling for puppy.
- **Puppy books** - We stock breed-specific books on training, behaviour and general care. It is best to learn as much as possible about your new pet!



Find out all about us at:  
**petscorner.co.uk**

If you have any questions about your pet or any points made in this leaflet, please contact us and we will be happy to help.

\*Feeding one 20kg dog 150g of Nutro Lamb & Rice per day (as recommended) from a 15kg bag costs £180.28 per year. Feeding the same dog 2.75 x 400g Pedigree Chum cans per day (as recommended) costs £447.12. Prices correct on 28th March 2006.