

# PUPPY GUIDE



## Vaccination

Vaccinations protect your puppy from serious and potentially fatal infectious diseases. The main diseases vaccinated for include:

- Canine Distemper Virus
- Infectious Canine Hepatitis
- Canine Parvovirus
- Leptospirosis

Puppies can start their first vaccinations at 8 weeks of age with another dose 2 to 4 weeks later. Until they are fully vaccinated it is important not to take your puppy anywhere where it might come into contact with other dogs or areas that may be infected. During this time they should be carried or taken out in the car to experience different places and situations.

Many vaccinations will require a yearly booster, this date will be on your vaccination card and we will send you a reminder near to this time.



## Worms, Fleas, Ticks & Mites



Puppies can become infected with worms at any time so regular worming is essential. Especially if they catch and eat prey. A heavy infestation can cause vomiting, diarrhoea, loss of appetite and weight loss. Some worms can also be passed to humans, especially young children. Therefore, hygiene measures, such as regular removal of faeces from the environment and hand washing, are important in reducing infection risk.

The main types of worm are:

- Roundworms are the most common and look like strands of fine spaghetti in the faeces.
- Tapeworms are made of segments which resemble grains of rice and may be found around their bottom.
- Lungworms can be picked up if your cat eats slugs, snails or from the trails they leave behind. Some cats do not show any symptoms while others may have a cough.

We recommend that puppies are wormed monthly until they are 6 months of age. From this time they should either be wormed monthly or every three months but we can discuss this with you to make the right choice for your dog.





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Most puppies pick up fleas at some time. Regular treatment as advised during your visits to us should help to prevent an infestation which can be costly and take a while to get back under control.

- Fleas are dark brown and able to jump! They can cause very intense itching, especially if your pet is allergic to their saliva. They can also transmit tapeworms and severe infestations in small puppies can cause anaemia.
- Lice are often pale brown and resemble fleas but much smaller and can also be very irritating.
- Mites burrow under the skin making them difficult to see and can cause intense irritation.
- Ticks have a small head and large round body which can swell significantly once attached. They often do not cause irritation but can transmit a number of diseases such as Lyme disease.

If you see anything you are worried about, please let us know and we can have a look for you.



### Feeding

Your puppy should be fully weaned when they arrive. Always ask the breeder what they have been feeding the puppy to avoid a sudden change in diet which may upset their stomach. After a few days you can introduce a new food by gradually mixing an increasing proportion of it over a week.

The aim of feeding your puppy is to provide complete nutrition for healthy development and growth. Puppies should grow steadily and feeding too much encourages rapid growth which can increase the risk of skeletal abnormalities. Large and giant breed puppies (over 25kg when fully grown) should be fed a food that contains the correct amount of energy and calcium to decrease the risk of developmental orthopaedic diseases. Complete puppy foods are formulated to provide for the nutritional needs of your puppy so you should follow the guidelines on the packaging or ask a member of staff for advice if unsure.

Initially your puppy will need 3 to 4 small meals per day which can be reduced to fewer meals each day as they get older. Depending on their breed and expected size, many puppies are able to move on to adult food when they are about 10–12 months old.

Remember that fresh, clean water must be available at all times!

Treats are useful in reward based training but should not make up more than 10% of their daily allowance to maintain a balanced diet and healthy weight.





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### Chewing

It is normal for puppies and young dogs to chew objects in their environment, but this needs to be safe and controlled. If you catch them chewing something they shouldn't, distract them with a toy or call them away and always praise for good behaviour. Provision of suitable chews and toys, such as those supplied in the practice, will help to avoid chewing of unsuitable items and may improve dental health. Supervise your puppy playing with toys and chews and remove them before they become damaged to prevent small pieces being swallowed and potentially becoming stuck.

### Grooming and Dental Care

Establishing a grooming routine soon after you bring your puppy home reinforces the bond between you and provides an opportunity to check for any abnormalities. Grooming sessions also give you the chance to examine your puppy's coat, paws, eyes, ears and mouth for anything that might require a trip to the vet in the future. Make grooming sessions short at first as puppies soon become bored.

Inevitably there will be times when your puppy will need a bath. However, frequent unnecessary washing can strip away the oils which help to keep their skin and coat in the best condition.

Deciduous puppy teeth appear at around 4–6 weeks of age and are replaced by the adult teeth by 6–7 months. If any deciduous teeth do not fall out naturally, they may need to be removed to prevent the adult teeth from coming through crooked. Your puppy will need

your help to keep their teeth in good condition. Ideally this is best started when they are young and using a child sized or finger toothbrush and a special dog specific toothpaste.



### Socialisation

The first few months of life are the most important for social development. A well socialised puppy will be able to cope with the many situations they could encounter in later life and reduce the chance of them becoming shy or fearful adults.

During the early weeks and months, you should aim to introduce your puppy to a wide variety of sights, sounds, people and experiences. Be aware of situations that might make them wary or scared and introduce them to these gradually and with lots of positive encouragement.

### House Training

House training is one of the most important tasks you need to teach your puppy. The goal is to teach them when and where it is appropriate to toilet. It is important to establish a routine for best results. Take them to a particular spot in the garden immediately once woken up, after eating and at regular intervals during the day. Wait until they have finished and then praise them, some people find it helpful to combine this action with a command. If accidents occur, do not use punishment and clean the area with biological





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washing powder to remove the smell and prevent them returning to this area.



Providing your puppy with a crate in which to sleep and use for short periods can help to keep them safe and out of trouble. It also provides them with a safe space to retreat to when they want time alone. Introduction to a crate should be gradual by providing food and toys in it before closing the door for short times.

### Neutering

Neutering involves the removal of the reproductive organs, this prevents accidental breeding and may improve certain aspects of health.

It is carried out when your puppy is over 6 months of age and under a general anaesthetic. In females this is known as 'spaying' and in males it is 'castration'. The decision whether to neuter your pet and the timing of the operation will be discussed with the vet taking into account their individual breed and health status alongside any questions or queries you may have.

### Pet Insurance

You may wish to consider taking out pet insurance in event that your puppy may be involved in an accident or becomes ill. In this instance, insurance can provide peace of mind by covering any unexpected veterinary fees. It is important to look at the level of cover required and what the limitations of each policy are alongside whether they cover for any complementary or behavioural treatments.

