

# PET

# STUFF



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## **Adopting a dog – puppy or adult?**

Everyone is surely going to get excited when trying to adopt a dog. Truly a man's best friend, you can rely on your pet dog in giving you company, cuddling up together and some can even guard your house. You need to review your personal lifestyle and needs when adopting a dog. It is a major decision whether or not you would choose to have a puppy or an adult as a pet. Before deciding on which dog to adopt, here is some useful information that might help you decide.

### **On Puppies**

- \* Bringing up a puppy is an advantage because this means that you would guide its growth and well being. You would have the chance to raise it up according to what you want. This means you can ensure that it is properly nurtured with the right dog food, ensure that necessary dog shots are given and prevent heartworm at this early stage. Having your puppy personally trained is also a plus since you can teach him exactly what you want.
- \* You should adopt a puppy when it is at least 10 weeks old. Puppies need a lot of time to be cared for by their mothers. This is a crucial stage for them. They somehow gain a psychological advantage for both puppy and for the mother dog as well.
- \* A puppy can easily adjust to new surroundings as compared to an adult dog. Although most puppies may cause minimal to major damage to your personal stuff while they are in the stage of teething. They need to be housebroken and house training needs a lot of time, effort and patience from the owner.
- \* There is no assurance of what a puppy would look like when it gets old; especially if it is a mixed breed. Also, his temperament might change when he grows up.
- \* Most pet owners love how puppies can be entertaining. They are very cute and adorable pets that is a hit for both children and grown ups. Puppies can be easily regarded as one of the family.

### **On adult dog**

- \* You would have less of a fuss taking care of an adult dog. They already have this established behavior that you can easily adopt too. By being with the dog more often, you would have more or less an idea of what its temperament is.
- \* You need to get as much information that you can when adopting an adult dog. Take note of its habits and mood swings. You can acquire information from the previous owners of the dog. Some adult dogs may have some behavior issues. It is important to take note of them.
- \* It may take some time and effort for an adult dog to be completely comfortable with a new owner.
- \* Take note that you need to introduce an adult dog to your children and other household members. This would help the dog be familiar with them and helps them refrain from biting or barking thinking that they maybe strangers.
- \* Adult dogs may not need your full attention unlike puppies need and would require lesser trips to the veterinary.

\* For a fully grown dog physique and behavior is basically not a variable anymore. What you see is basically what you get.

\* Most dogs are housebroken already so they would cause lesser damage to your belongings and don't wake up at night like most puppies do. Usually, they have grown out of the impulse of chewing things.

\* An older dog can easily adapt to other pets, like other dogs or cats, if you have a group of them at your household.

Adopting a dog is not an easy task and choosing which one to adopt can be a little tricky too. Everyone loves sweet looking puppies, but not everyone can stand up to the tiresome house training. Though most would appreciate the bonding shared with them.

Adult dogs need no great amount of guidance but can still turn out to be a lovable pet. Whichever you think is the right pet for you, just keep in mind that taking care of them requires a lot of time and effort. In return, they would always keep you company and has ready smile with an excited wag of tail waiting for you everyday.

## **Does your pet dog suffer from heartworms?**

Dog heartworm is a common disease among canines in the United States. Discovered in 1856, the worms mainly live in your dog's heart and major blood vessels.

The worms, especially on worst cases, seriously impair the heart's operations. Worse, they could also clog your dog's blood vessels. These infections result in loss of body weight, chronic cough, dropsy, shortness of breath, chronic heart failure, vision disturbances, and ultimately, death.

Since the symptoms of heartworm disease vary among dogs, it would be best that a veterinarian check your dog to evaluate a final analysis. Early treatment is vital.

Most dogs show visible symptoms only when the disease has reached the point where it would be almost improbable to be cured by treatment. To help you see early symptoms and to hopefully save your dog, look out for these signs:

- Dogs that have been quite active usually tend to be tired easily.
- Dogs that would have been otherwise healthy usually gasp for breath.
- Coughing of your dog has suddenly become a common occurrence.
- Dogs bred for hunting could no longer keep up with rapid chases and usually fall from exhaustion.
- In some rare instances, the dog experiences convulsions, jaundice, and problems in the vision.
- Before it dies, the dog experiences emaciation. often precedes death.

Who gets infected by the heartworm infection?

Previously, it was thought that only dogs that were long-haired were more resistant to heartworms because of the high difficulty of mosquitoes (which bring the worms) to penetrate through the dogs' hair. Since then, it has been proven that this was not true.

Mosquitoes even have a hard time penetrating through short-haired dogs. Actually, mosquitoes feed on the abdominal region of the dog. That is why both long-haired and short-haired dogs are susceptible to an infection, since both types have little hair on this region. Some mosquitoes also feed on the muzzle area or the ears where the dog's hair is quite matted down.

Can heartworm infection be treated?

Heartworm infection can be treated through chemical therapy if diagnosed early. Most of the chemical treatments kill the worms over some period of time. Killing all the worms in one swoop is no better: If all the heartworms were killed in just one treatment, the dead bodies would deposit in the lungs and kill the dog.

Remember also that the chemicals used in treating the worms are also as dangerous to your dog as the worms. That is why treating the disease using chemical therapy should be used with utmost care and

should be handled by a veterinarian.

There are also cases when surgery is needed. In most cases, this can be a feasible option. Consult with the veterinarian about surgical correction or any other method that can cure the infection.

There are also drugs that could prevent your dog from getting heartworms. These drugs attack the parasite in its early stages and stop the worms from being full-blown adults later. This doesn't mean that your dog would be free from infection. This only means that dogs can still get infected during the season of mosquitoes and yet remain unscathed of heartworms.

Preventative medication using drugs, on the other hand, can cause serious complications if your dog already has heartworm infections in a higher level. That is why the use of drugs should be under the supervision of veterinarians. Taking drugs are also combined with regular blood tests. This has shown to be quite effective in saving many dogs with heartworm infection.

In order for your dog to avoid heartworm infection, protect your pet from mosquito bites especially if there is a high mosquito population in your area or if it is mosquito season. You might want to screen the sleeping quarters of your dogs to avoid repeated bites. Repellent sprays can also be used, but these only have limited effects.

You might also want to consult your vet for preventive medication. In addition, you might want regular blood tests on your dog to assess early symptoms of infection. This is quite tricky, especially if the symptoms of heartworm infection could not be seen immediately.

In short, your dog which looked healthy may be having early symptoms of heartworm infection. It would be best that you have him checked by your vet.

## **Vaccination and its Important Role in a Dog's Life**

Active immunization is the introduction into the body of killed or satisfied microorganisms or their products for the purpose of stimulating the body's defense mechanism. This concept is also applicable to other species like the dogs.

Historically the area of veterinary medicine had not yet realized the potential benefits of vaccinations. It hasn't been until recently, that veterinary experts formulated certain solutions so as to combat the alarming increase of death in dogs. Namely, most of the causes are viral infection.

With the inception of vaccinations, many dogs were saved from probable death brought about by many diseases like leptospirosis, hepatitis, upper respiratory infections, and parvovirus.

Like humans, dogs need vaccinations even at an early age. That is why it is important to immunize puppies so that they will survive until they are fully grown.

Basically, puppies get their immunity from their mother's milk, which is also the same as that of human beings. However, these immunities tend to lose their effects by the time the puppies are already 6 to 20 weeks old. It is during this time that they have to be immunized.

Hence, in order to protect the puppies against infectious diseases, it is best to give them their shots and they should be re-immunized after 3 to 4 weeks. In this way, the puppies will be able to endure any infectious disease that may come their way.

### **Rabies and Immunization**

Rabies is an acute and almost invariably fatal disease communicated to man through the saliva of a rabid animal, usually dogs, foxes, squirrels, and bats.

Dogs, fortunately, always present evidence of the disease before becoming infected. The etiologic agent is an ultramicroscopic virus present in the saliva and the central nervous system.

The course of rabies in dogs is characterized by an incubation period of 20 to 30 days. This is followed by a period of excitement, when the animal becomes vicious. The excitement stage may be evident at all or may be entirely absent. Paralysis then develops, first involving the hind legs and thereafter becoming general. Death occurs within 10 days following the first symptom.

Alternatively, the effects of rabies in human beings can be fatal as it is with dogs. Hence, in order to avoid these problems, it is best to have your dogs vaccinated with anti-rabies shots.

Rabies vaccines can be given during the 16th to the 26th week of the puppies. This requires a follow up shot one year after for total protection.

On the other hand, dog owners should take note that not all vaccinations will generate adverse effects on their dogs. So, it is best to always observe your dog after vaccination. When certain reactions occur like vomiting, facial swelling, or trembling, it is best to discuss these matters immediately with your veterinarian.

Moreover, certain precautions should also be made when the age of the dogs are taken into consideration. For some guides regarding this matter, here are some tips:

### 1. The age of puppies

It is best to consider the puppies age before subjecting them to their shots.

For puppies that are 4 to 20 weeks old, their first shots should be given during their 6th to 8th weeks of age. The last shots shall be given on the 14th to 16th week of age. These date apply to all primary vaccines.

For rabies, puppies should be 16 to 26 weeks old.

### 2. For dogs that are 20 weeks old up to 2 years old

During this age, dogs should have received their booster shots already. This is essential so as to lengthen the immunity of the vaccines in the dog's system. At this stage, additional vaccines are recommended for added protection such as vaccines against bordetella and other newer vaccines.

### 3. For dogs that are older than 2 years

By this time, the dogs should have been through with their booster shots. What comes next is the annual re-vaccination. These kinds of vaccines are still recommended so as to lengthen their protection against certain diseases.

The bottom line is that vaccinations are extremely important to your dog's life. Like the way it functions in human beings, vaccines are needed in order to protect the dogs from imminent risk of acquiring diseases brought about by viruses.

With dog vaccines, you can be assured that your dog will be at its peak of health for a longer period of time, free from any life-threatening diseases. Indeed, with vaccines every life is lengthened.

## **Taking care of your dog's teeth and gums**

Clean teeth and gums are very important to the overall health of your dog. Here is some information on the most common dental problems in dogs and ways of treating them.

### Common dental problems

#### - Periodontitis

It is very common among dogs to have gum disease. At the age of two or three, many dogs have either periodontitis or gingivitis.

The most common dental problem for canines is periodontitis, also known as periodontal disease. The disease is caused by various factors: plaque, food debris, cell mucus, and a mixture of bacteria. This results in a film characterized by milky-white on the dog's teeth as well as the gums. When this film gets combined with saliva, the plaque it causes becomes tartar, and very hard to remove.

#### - Gingivitis

Gingivitis, also known as gum disease, happens when gum tissue suffers from an inflammation. Without treatment, it can lead to periodontitis, teeth loosening, bone loss, and ultimately, loss of teeth.

#### - Tooth fractures

Tooth fractures occur when dogs chew hard substances, such as hard rocks and cow hooves. The fractures result to infection inside the broken tooth, which is known as the endodontic disease.

### How to prevent dental problems

Your dog can fight off these dental problems by removing the plaque before it actually develops as tartar. How to do it? The most effective way is by brushing the teeth of your dog in a mechanical fashion. The brushing would reduce much of the bacteria presence in the mouth, not to mention making your dog's breath smell sweeter. Make it a habit of brushing your dogs' teeth on a daily basis.

**Toothpaste.** There are toothpaste products made especially for dogs. Brush your pet's teeth using dog toothpaste. Human toothpaste is specifically designed for humans to spit the paste washings out. Dogs cannot do that, so pick a dog toothpaste that is safe enough for dogs to swallow.

**Toothbrush.** Using a toothbrush in its teeth will take some time for the dog to get used to. Let your dog be acquainted and get used to this is by putting some garlic salt, mix the salt with water, and dip the solution in an old toothbrush. Hold the old brush, and let your pet taste and chew it. Your dog will start to realize that chewing a toothbrush is and tastes good. Make it a habit a few times, until he feels comfortable brushing with it.

**Finger brush.** You could also use a finger brush instead of a toothbrush. A finger brush is a good alternative, although nothing could replace the good ol' toothbrush. The finger brush just fits onto one's fingertip and can let you brush the dog's teeth without the dog knowing it. Well, at least almost. The disadvantage of getting a finger brush to clean your dog's teeth is that its bristles are quite large for the

brush to go under the gumline's margin as effectively compared with regular toothbrush.

Professional cleaning. If you don't want to do the cleaning by yourself, you could take your dog to a veterinarian and have his teeth professionally cleaned. A good veterinarian will take additional measures in ensuring your dog's clean teeth by anesthetizing your dog, scraping the buildup of plaque from all over the gumline areas, and polishing the teeth for a sparkling finish.

Home checkup. Try to make it a regular habit of checking the teeth of your dog for any cracked or broken teeth. If you see some problematic teeth, check promptly with the veterinarian.

Home safety. Of course, cleaning your dog's teeth does not mean you should disregard other areas of concern. Tough substances, such as bones, rocks, hard nylon, or cow hooves should be removed from areas where your dog could see. Buy your dog chewing toys that are safer like rubber-made toys. You could also provide bones that are soft enough for your dog to chew.

Mouthwash. There are some products in the market that deal very well in helping to kill the bacteria in your dog's mouth and could actually help heal damaged gum tissues. Do not forget to ask your veterinarian on the best products in the market.

Dental problems do not only happen to humans. Dogs also have dental issues as well. It is up to the owners on how to help their pet dogs overcome their dental problems.

## How to fight fleas

The natural way:

- Vacuum your home frequently and seal vacuum bags before disposing.
- Wash the bedding of your dog weekly in warm soapy water. This is where fleas usually breed.
- Bathing your pet weekly with a mild dog shampoo prevents flea invasion.
- Use cedar shampoo for your dog, and put cedar oil in their sleeping mats. Cedar will repel fleas and other insects.
- Fleas are attracted to dry skin, so to avoid it, give your dog Linatone oil mixed with its food. Excessive shampooing should be avoided.
- A mixture of brewer's yeast and garlic, available in powder or tablet form can be given in small doses to your pet. This creates a certain odor in pets, and fleas are surely to avoid them.
- Fresh or dried pennyroyal leaves is a natural flea repellent. Use this in carpets to avoid the abundance of fleas in the home. Do not use it if you have small children around, as this could be toxic.
- A mixture of 60 ml of lavender oil with 2.8 liters of rock salt can also be placed in areas where dogs usually come in contact with and this solution could also be used to wash your dog.
- Planting marigolds in the yard is helpful too, it repels certain types of bugs as well as fleas.
- Boiled lemon or orange peel in water can be used as a dip for dogs and can be used too to soak in dog bedding for a few hours, then washed with warm soapy water.
- Lukewarm water with little shampoo and detergent is a good way to prevent fleas. A dog's body may be dipped into the solution for fifteen minutes and then rinsed. This only works if flea infestation is light.

The natural way of treating fleas is effective only if the level of flea infestation is average to very few. This method usually is recommended for prevention only.

Different commercially available products with chemical contents:

- Advantage. Active ingredient is imidacloprid. This is a flea poison, from Bayer. It is in a liquid form and applied to the skin, at the back of the dog, and works for about a month. This works by upsetting the nervous system of fleas when they come in contact with the liquid. This product is fast acting and is not absorbed into the internal organs and bloodstream of the dog.

Studies indicate that this product is highly toxic to fleas and other insects as well. A dog will be free from fleas in just a couple of days.

Ingredients are: imidacloprid -- a chloronicotinyl nitroguanidine integrated from the nitromethylene

class of a compound. This joins the nicotiny receptor sites of insects, thus upsetting normal nerve transmission which causes death.

A set of two vials costs 15-20 dollars.

- Frontline. This product is very similar to Advantage, but is not water soluble, so alcohol is needed to wash it off. This can safely be used in pups, dogs, cats and kittens.

Efficiency in repelling lasts up to four months.

Active ingredients include: Fipronil 5-amino -1- (2, 6-dichloro-4 [trifluoromethyl]phenyl) -4- (1,R,S)-(trifluoromethylsulfinyl) -1H-pyrazole-3-carbonitrile 0.29% inert ingredients 99.71%.

Fipronil works as a nervous transmission interruptor, which causes quick death to fleas and ticks. It is proven to kills 96% of fleas for the first two hours and 100% within 24 hours. Ticks die sooner than they attach themselves to the host. Fipronil is from the new phenylpyrazole class.

Very effective and can be considered safe, so long as dogs are not allergic to fipronil.

- Knockout. Performs like Frontline and is as effective, but can only be used in dogs. Active ingredients: Pyriproxyfen: 21[1-methyl-2-(phenoxyphenoxy)ethoxy] pyridine....0.05% cyclopropanecarboxylate 2.00% inert ingredients 97.95% Also has NYLAR, which is flea growth regulator.
- Biospot. This is for topical application and kills up to 75 percent of fleas, eggs, and ticks. It also is a good repellent of mosquitoes and works for about a month. Temporarily, at times, it turns white hair to yellow. This can not be used in cats and contains permethrins and IGR.
- Proban (cythioate) and Prospot (Fenthion). While not to be used in cats, they are widely used in dogs. This is absorbed by the bloodstream and fleas die due to the poison that is present in the blood. For it to work, it requires the biting of fleas. There are certain conditions to be considered though. You are injecting a small dose of poison into your dog's body and side effects are not known. Then this does not help if a dog has flea allergy, and can not risk to be bitten.

Generally fleas abound during the summer months, when it is their breeding season. These commercial products can greatly help in fighting heavy flea infestation and needed where severe invasion occurs. However, it is always best to consult with your veterinarian as the choice of flea control will greatly depend on your life style.

## **The Importance of Breeds of Dogs**

Dogs are considered as man's best friend. If one decides to get a dog for a pet, one can choose either a specific breed otherwise known as pure bred or choose one that is a mixed breed or a mutt. There is not that much difference between dogs that are pure or mixed. One simply came from parents of the same breed while the other came from a family of two different breeds.

Choosing a dog depends on many things. The size of your home, how much exercise is needed, does it shed often or if you want a gentle or playful companion.

Deciding to own one whether it is big or small involves a lot of responsibility. It is not just about feeding it but includes other chores such as grooming, watching its health and diet, cleaning up after it and most importantly, giving it some tender loving care. There are many places one can get a dog such as a kennel or the pet store but if one wants to get a pure bred animal, one must seek a reputable breeder to get the best results.

Breeding done in pure bred dogs is done carefully. The pair is tested for every possible disease which includes having all the information regarding the pair's ancestors and health records on file. Should there be no problem in the history of the pair, then the breeding can begin. If in testing, the pair is not compatible due to diseases that are common in a specific breed, another dog will be selected to match with the other dog.

Since the demand for the breeder's pure bred dogs are well sought after due to the selective nature of the breeding practices, the newborn pups will still have to be raised with the breeder and will only be released when a number of pre-screened homes have been found. This is done for the welfare of the select few of owners and to control population growth.

Reputable breeders have certain requirements that one must have before qualifying as a potential dog owner. These are usually in the form of written contracts or guarantees with a spay or neuter requirement that limits the registration of the puppies. The person who wants a dog must also have a secured backyard and attend certain classes such a puppy kindergarten to be familiar with the challenges one will face come the time the dog has been given. This shows that pure bred dogs are well taken cared off from pregnancy till after birth.

Mixed breeds on the other hand or mutts as people call them could have been done out of experimentation to produce a breed which could be better and stronger than the two breeds. Most likely, these were the results of accidents. This is the reason why dogs of mixed breeds just like pure breeds must be neutered since millions of dogs every year that are not wanted by people die in animal shelters.

Health wise, pure bred dogs that come from a line of strong parents won't have problems. This is because breeders screen the pair before the process happens. There have been instances that certain breeders especially those dealing with pure breeds do not practice the strict guidelines of proper breeding which produces inferior dogs and do this because these people are more concerned about financial gain rather than the welfare of the animal.

Mixed bred dogs on the other hand will fall somewhere in the middle since proper screening was poorly done or never carried out. Certain dogs carry varied deficiencies common to the breed and

mixing the two will just pass on to the mixed breed.

Some people prefer pure bred dogs than mixed bred ones. The primary reason is that it is easier to sell and carries a certain prestige with it. Mixed bred dogs are seen as inferior and since no one is interested, most of these are rounded up and die in an animal shelter.

Pure bred dogs are seen as a higher class which is why they are always featured at dog shows. Mixed dogs due to certain rules are not allowed to join. The reasoning given has not been that clear which is why it is still being contested by mixed breed owners.

## **Need A Little Help With Your Health? Get A Dog!**

Dogs are considered man's best friend. But did you know that having a dog gives you several health benefits?

In studies done by medical professionals, dog owners benefit from their pet's presence in several ways:

1) Improved cardiovascular health - Dog owners have been proven to have blood pressure and cholesterol lower than ordinary people. These factors reduce the chance for cardiovascular diseases. Stroking a pet has long been known to reduce blood pressure. A study from the New York State University found that these benefits continue even without the pet available. The study tested a group of stockbrokers with hypertension. They concluded that just being a pet-owner can lower blood pressure.

Dog owners also have blood cholesterol levels lower than normal. Five thousand four hundred people were tested by the Baker Medical Research Institute of Australia and with the results showing pet owners having not just lower blood pressure but also lower levels of blood triglycerides and cholesterol compared to people who didn't own any pets.

2) Faster recovery time and higher survival rates - Hospital studies have found that seniors and recently operated on patients responded better to treatment and got better quickly while they were in contact with dogs and other therapy animals. Just petting a dog can be relaxing and therapeutic for recovering patients.

Also, dog owners have a greater chance to survive after suffering from a serious illness. Several studies have discovered that pet owners who suffered from a heart attack were more likely to be alive a year after they were discharged from the hospital than those who did not own pets. Another New York study found that pet's affected their survival rate more even more than the presence or company of family members or friends.

3) Fewer visits to the doctor - Studies conducted at Cambridge and UCLA have found that owning a pet corresponds to overall improved health and less need for hospital visits. A Medicare study of its elderly patients also discovered that those who own dogs visit the doctor less than those who don't have a pet.

4) Mental Wellness - Patients who have dogs have also been known to have better emotional health than their counterparts. They offer unconditional love and affection; their presence alone helps reduce loneliness for sick people who have otherwise been isolated. Several studies of people with major illnesses have shown that the stress of fighting the disease is significantly reduced when they had a dog as company.

As you can see, having a dog is a great investment, for the joy that you get from owning one and the health benefits that you can receive. So go out and get a dog!

## **Dog Essentials**

People use accessories to accentuate the beauty of a certain thing. There are also times that they buy accessories in order to protect the product against harmful elements in the environment.

These concepts are also true when applied to taking care of dogs. Pet owners tend to pamper their dogs and many dog lovers even contend that buying dog accessories gives the same satisfaction as shopping for loved ones.

Today, there many dog accessories available on the market and choosing the best dog accessories can be challenging. Here are some tips on what to look for when buying accessories for your pet:

### **1. Dog collars**

There are varieties of dog collars available in the market today, ranging from plain to fancy. Whatever type or design one may prefer, the most important thing to consider is that it should properly fit the dog. It should never be too loose or too tight. Experts say that the ideal space between the dog's neck and the collar should be two fingers wide.

### **2. Dog leash**

It is always best to buy a good leash and not scrimp on the price. There are many types available. The most important factor to keep in mind is the size of the leash. Depending on the size of you dog, you want to make certain you buy one strong enough to hold him. If your dog is smaller, you don't want to buy a leash that is too large.

### **3. Food and water bowls**

It's important to purchase food ad water bowls that are not easily tipped over. Also, some people purchase those large watering systems that are similar to what some humans have bottled water delivered in. They are large and are supposed to keep your pet in drinking water for a longer period of time. Depending on the size of your dog, make certain that the water will be consumed fairly quickly. Water for your pet should be fresh and clean. Water that has been left standing isn't a good idea to feed your pet.

### **4. Dog toys**

Most dogs are fond of playing, so, it's best to give them toys to gnash, chew, or bite with. Having his own things will make him more behaved instead of chewing slippers or shoes. Again, make certain that the toys are appropriate for the size of the dog. Too small, and just like a child, they could choke. If the toy is too large for a smaller animal they won't be able to lift it.

### **5. Doghouses**

When placed outside, dogs should have their own place for shelter. This is to keep them away from direct sunlight or from the rain or snow. If your dog is left alone for long periods of time, make certain that his "home" is the right size and will protect him from the elements.

One last thought . . . never, never leave your dog in a locked vehicle. It can be a death sentence.

## **Tips in choosing the best dog breeders**

Dog breeders can be found anywhere. However, buying the best-looking puppy in the pet store does not necessarily guarantee that you bought a pet with a top breed.

What are the different types of breeders? Which of them provide the best dog breeds?

1) Look for reputable breeders. Well known breeders know specific details about their specialized breed. They examine genetic diseases that are known to have physical and emotional impact on that breed, perform veterinary maintenance and sustain breeding records.

A breeder of good reputation will provide you with both the good and bad points about the breed you prefer. They offer useful advice and assistance to new dog owners.

You can spot a reputable breeder by the way they maintain the dogs they personally own. They will let you observe the kind of care they give the dogs and allow you to see where the dogs live.

Most outstanding breeders are not just out to make money. They provide a written health guarantee with all the dogs they sell.

The majority of reputable dog breeders belong to local or national breed organizations and clubs.

2) Avoid backyard breeders, puppy mills and pet shops.

\* Backyard Breeders. These people have limited education about the breed standards. Commonly, backyard breeders do not maintain a regular check-up on the dog's health and genetic makeup. Usually, these people breed to make money and that is their focus.

\* Puppy Mills. This is a term commonly used to describe a business that produces large quantities of dogs. The majority of the puppies born and trained in puppy mills do not usually follow a regular veterinary care and appropriate feeding. Puppy mills do not sell directly to the public. They only allow sale to pet shops, brokers and dog auctions.

There is no generic breed testing conducted in puppy mills. The dogs born here have not been adequately socialized and trained. Most of the puppies are sold in large numbers at the age of 3 to 4 weeks and could later give the dogs emotional and health problems.

\* Pet shops. Many pet shops grant guarantees. However, these guarantees last for only a year while majority of genetic diseases found in dogs materialize when the animal is over a year old. Most pet shops buy their dogs from puppy mills at a very young age for a cheap price. Young puppies that are not suitably socialized could cause behavior problems and poor health.

Finding the best dog breeder means your pet could live a longer life. Find a reputable breeder now and spare yourself from possible heartache.

## **The Profile of a Wannabe Dog Breed**

Some dog lovers spend a great deal of time choosing the right dog breed before they decide to purchase a dog. For them, the dog's breed is one contributing factor to its value. That is why most families who decide to get a dog, they know that choosing the right breed is crucial.

Today, there are 70 million dogs in the United States but the American Kennel Club only recognizes 143 breeds of dogs. Still, with these numbers, choosing the right kind of dog breed for the family can be very tedious.

However, most pet shop owners contend that the reasons why the preference of the people in choosing their dogs may vary from one person to another is because each person has its own pre-conceived idea what he wants in a dog. It all depends on the physical attributes.

There are those who fancy the size, the shape of the face, the looks, or even the temper. But whatever preference an individual has regarding his choice for dogs, there are important factors that you must remember in choosing a particular dog breed.

Here's a list of the things that must be considered first:

### 1. The size of the house

Many people tend to forget this factor. The area of the house should be the primary factor to consider before buying the best dog breed available.

For example, if a future dog owner is living in an apartment, there's no sense in buying a large dog. Obviously, it's better to opt for those cute little canines that don't need too much space to raise them.

### 2. The children

If a future dog owner has children, it's best to consider the children rather than his own preference. Delicate dogs like Chihuahua are not advisable because they are too frail to let the children take care of them. Big dogs like Saint Bernard could also pose some risk on the children. The bottom line is to choose a breed of dog depending on the age of the children and how many there are in the house.

### 3. The nature of the job

For people who would love to have a dog but don't have time to devote to grooming, consider a dog that doesn't need a great deal of grooming like Terriers. Most Terriers have short hair and they don't need a lot of fuss on their hair.

Boiled down, the best dog breed is the one that fits the kind of life the future owner has. Compatibility is the key in this kind of situation.

## **Tips on Choosing the Best Dog Tracking System**

Dogs are man's best friend, and this is not an understatement. This is because man and dogs find things that they can both enjoy such as playing, wrestling, running, and even hunting.

There are people who bring their dogs along whenever they are out for a hunting activity. They do this because they find their dog's company during hunting a worthwhile inclusion.

Moreover, there are dogs that are also adept in hunting activities especially those that were trained for specific types of hunting activities.

It is for this reason that certain devices were created in order to help hunters monitor the activities of their dogs. An example of these devices is the dog tracking system.

Basically, a dog tracking system is a device that is used by hunters to track the activities of their dogs while they are out hunting. These tracking systems are typically used to monitor dogs on their location, their current activity, or to check whenever dogs have already gotten the prey.

For people who are not aware of how dog tracking systems work or why they are so important for some people, here's a list of some facts regarding this device:

1. Dog tracking systems are used mainly by hunters like coon hunters, upland bird hunters, hounds men, etc. They use this system in order to monitor their dogs while they are out in the field.
2. This particular tracking system is also used whenever the hunters can no longer see their dogs because of distance or terrain.
3. Dog tracking collars are great alternatives when hunters can no longer use their dog bells or their beeper collars.
4. With dog tracking collars, they can easily spot their dogs and call their attention. Best of all, dog tracking collars are also applicable in tracking numerous dogs in a certain hunting activity.
5. There are some dog tracking systems that allow the handler to verify or find out what the dog is doing. All they have to do is to use some performance systems that are included in the collar.

In this way, the handler can tell if the dog is currently walking, if it has stopped, if it is barking at something, or if it has already caught its prey.

Moreover, dog tracking systems are not only for hunting purposes. There are people who can make use of this device whenever their dogs are lost.

With a dog tracking system, hunting can be fun for both dogs and their handlers.

## **Enjoyable Activities with Your Dog**

A dog is more than just a pet. It is a friend one can always count on when things go wrong and no one seems to care. Having a dog for a pet is not just about feeding it and giving it a good home. It also takes maintenance to keep that dog strong and fit.

Spending time with man's best friend further deepens the relationship one has with a pet. It tells the dog that the owner loves being with it and by either playing or working together; it strengthens the communication, understanding and respect between man and animal.

There are many ways to teach a dog discipline and learn new tricks and by teaching it through games instead of the normal routine with a little imagination thrown in, it can both be fun for the dog and the owner.

One game is called follow the leader. This activity consists of a group of owners and the dogs. By placing objects such as cones or cans on the ground and making the group go around these objects, the dog will learn to follow when it is called. Further strengthening that could be by switching who the leader is and doing the entire process all over again.

Another game is hide and seek. Children play this game with other children but by teaching the dog to stay in one place then have the dog search for the person when the dog's name is called, it teaches the dog discipline and will make the dog learn to wait until being called.

One can modify this game by hiding a treat in a certain area and have the dog look for it. The animal will learn to use its keen sense of smell to search for things and be rewarded for it.

Waking up in the morning and taking the dog out for a jog is another good opportunity to spend time with the dog. This gives both the owner and pet a good exercise, keeping both physically active and in shape. Dogs like to play often and by changing the game with a little twist like catching the Frisbee or fetching the stick; it not only strengthens the limbs but also involves some thinking on the part of the dog to successfully catch the object.

Spending quality time with ones dog through a variety of activities is fun. It gives the animal an opportunity to learn good manners making it easier to live with and make the owner enjoy how wonderful the experience can be.

## **When your best friend gets lost: Tips in finding your dog**

“The dog is man’s best friend,” so the saying goes. Dogs have proven to be loving and loyal companions of people. From pit bulls to dachshunds to terriers, dogs are a part of daily life.

But what happens when your pet dog gets lost? What if, one day, while you are strolling across a park quite far from home with your Labrador and your pet suddenly gets lost? Do not resort to panic, as this will not help solve the situation.

The first rule when you’re going out with your pet dog is never letting it out of sight. In short, do not let your dog get lost. Sometimes there is no avoiding a situation like this. Even dogs that are properly trained will look for ways to be free to roam around. Here are some ways to find your dog if he is lost:

- Check the various animal shelters in town. If your dog has not been claimed by others or picked up, leave a complete description of your dog with the animal shelter staff. Include your name and contact information. If possible, show a recent photograph of you and your dog. This is also a reason why the license for your pet should be current and updated.
- Check all the pet shops and veterinarians in your vicinity. You could ask the staff or vet if somebody has reported a lost dog and if the dog shares the same characteristics of your lost dog.
- Post details of your dog along with your contact information in billboards or in areas where the dog might have gotten lost.
- If possible, place an ad in the local papers for your lost dog. Also check the “Lost and Found” classifieds. Check it daily. You’ll never know when somebody turns up to say that he or she found your dog.
- Check in your neighborhood. Your dog could be somewhere near. Dogs usually do not stray far from their own homes.
- It would be easier and faster to find the dog if it has complete identification details, such as a name tag, identifiable collar, among others.
- Be sure you have your dog’s current photo. Keep it at all times, just in case you need to show what your dog looks like.

Here is one last option to keep in mind. The latest thing in tracking your pet is to have an electronic chip placed just under the skin. The chip contains all the information about your dog and yourself so that the information can be scanned by a vet or a local animal shelter.

Taking care of your dog is like taking care of a dear friend. Show your concern to the dog, and it will return the favor.

## **What People Need to Know About Dog Behavior**

As the old adage goes, “Dogs are man’s best friend.” However, there are times when people just can’t understand why their beloved dogs behave in a different manner. Hence, it is extremely important to know the underlying reasons why dogs sometimes behave differently.

You can teach your dog appropriate behavior. Experts say that dog behaviors can be controlled through proper training.

Dog behaviors are actually responses that are mostly triggered by environmental and social factors. Hence, to control these responses, the owner should teach his dogs the proper way to respond to such elements. Let’s explore a few of the methods:

### **Dog Bite**

Statistics show that almost 5 million people in the U.S. are victims of dog bites annually. This is almost 2% of the total population in the U.S. What’s more, dog bites cases rank as second most common cause of emergencies in the hospitals.

So, the question is: Why dogs bite?

According to the experts, the main reasons why dogs may bite are the following:

#### **1. Excitement**

When somebody plays with his or her dog, the tendency of the dog is to get excited, and because dogs don’t have hands to use when playing, they use their mouth to grasp things. When this happens, there is the tendency that the dog might accidentally hurt people without intending to do anything harmful.

#### **2. Protection**

Dogs can be very possessive, so, whenever he wants to protect something that he owns, he will bite whoever threatens to take it away from him. Hence, when people get near the dog’s property, the dog’s tendency is to bite to make the person leave his property alone.

#### **3. Pain**

When the dog is not feeling well, he does not understand why he is feeling that way. Therefore, when a person, even if it’s his master, touches him, he may think that it’s the person who causes the pain and so his tendency is to fight back by biting.

#### **4. Fear**

Dogs are sometimes afraid just like humans. That is why when somebody startles him, the dog’s only known protection for itself is to bite back.

The best thing is to avoid these situations and leave the dog alone. The problem with so many people is that they want to always play around with their dog without learning how and when the dogs should be

left alone.

Like humans, dogs have feelings too. When these feelings are all mixed up, their only known protection for themselves is to bite because they cannot understand the situation logically. Therefore, people should know that in order to avoid such circumstances.

## **Dog Bite: Prevent or Deal with It**

Statistics show that 4.7 million people get bitten by dogs yearly. These bites range from minor nips to major attacks.

Dogs are man's best friend, not his worst enemy....With this thought in mind, here are some tips to prevent being bitten by a dog.

### **Bite Prevention:**

#### **1. Don't Approach a Strange Dog.**

Don't go near just any dog you find adorable, particularly when that dog is tied, fenced-in or in a car. A new or strange dog might think that you are threatening him or you are an intruder.

#### **2. Don't Pet a Strange Dog.**

It is not advisable for anyone to pet strange dogs, or even his or her own dog, without letting him sniff and recognize you first.

#### **3. Don't Turn Your Back and Run from a Dog.**

A dog's instinct will be to chase and catch you. So, running away is not a good option.

#### **4. Don't Disturb a Dog.**

When a dog is sleeping, chewing on anything, caring for her puppies or eating, it is bad idea to shock or disturb it.

### **Other Precautions to Prevent Dog Bites:**

1. Neuter or spay your dog to reduce its tendency to roam and fight with other dogs.

2. Make it socialize to lessen its being nervous when a lot of people are around.

3. Train your dog to not chase anyone even when it's just for fun.

4. License your dog and provide for its regular care and rabies vaccinations.

5. Never let your dog roam alone.

### **What To Do for Dog Bites:**

1. Never Panic.

This will only aggravate the situation. Stay calm and make sure that you make informed decisions.

2. Deal with the Wound Immediately.

Wash the wound thoroughly with soap and warm water. This should be done immediately. Then, contact your physician for more care and advice.

3. Tell the Animal Care and Control Agency in Your Location about the Bite.

Report to the animal control personnel all the information you can supply regarding the dog. If it is a stray dog, describe the dog, where you saw him, whether you are familiar with it and also the direction which he went.

## **Dogs during Labor**

Breeding dogs is an exciting experience. From the time a proper mate is found to the point that the puppies are born, it is crucial to take careful steps to make this successful.

Professional breeders do not breed frequently and will only do so when a pair is found to be healthy that will ensure the birth of healthy offspring.

The ideal breeder should have the pair of dogs tested for every possible disease as well as have all the information regarding the pair's ancestors and health records on file. Should a breeder find no problem in the history of the pair, then the process can begin.

Dogs normally come into heat twice a year which is every six months. Larger dogs can come into heat every eight or ten months which usually lasts about three weeks. Vaginal bleeding is a sure sign that the dog is in heat as well as swelling in the vulva. A dog's pregnancy or gestation period lasts between 60 to 67 days. Most dogs give birth after 63 days.

The only way to determine the stage of the dog's pregnancy is by keeping track of time from the day of the breeding. Keeping a record of this on file is advisable for reference purposes.

Exactly three weeks after breeding, the mother must be examined to confirm the pregnancy.

The dog must be given a formulated and premium brand of dog food for the duration of the pregnancy and throughout the nursing period preferably with a strong nutritional foundation.

During pregnancy, the mother's food consumption will almost double compared to the pre-pregnancy level so increased feeding must be given to ensure that there is enough for both the mother and the puppies.

Behavioral changes are to be expected during this time. The dog will demand far more affection or may experience a few days of vomiting.

Later on, the expectant mother will search for a secure place to deliver the puppies. Ensure that a proper place is ready when the time comes. An ideal place for an expecting mother is a box. Depending on the size of the dog, it must be spacious enough for the dog to move around and must have layers of newspaper inside it that will absorb birthing fluids. This should also have low sides for the mother to look outside and for the breeder to easily check if assistance is needed to make it easy to remove soiled papers without interrupting the mother and the newborn puppies.

Follow these steps and you should be able to count on a happy birthing process!

## The Naming Game

If “fashionistas” are obsessed with brand names, some dog lovers are hooked on dog breeds. This is because purebred dogs are expensive and belong to the higher level of this particular species.

Generally, dog breeds were incorporated to give distinctive characteristics to certain classifications, thus, resulting in a substantial number of varieties.

However, people who breed dogs often find it hard to detect the specific characteristic of the resulting species. There are times that offspring appear to be different from their “parents.”

In dog breeding, experts contend that the offspring should have the same characteristics as their parents, both physical attributes and behavior. For example, a breeding pair of Retrievers should produce the black puppies because purebred Retrievers have black coats.

However, there are instances that retrievers produce puppies that have yellow coats. Hence, cases like this are not considered by the known Kennel clubs. What happens next is that these yellow retrievers are sometimes “euthanized” by dog breeders based on the notion that they want to curb the probable re-occurrence of such species.

This particular issue has long been debated by many dog experts and scientists because of the fact that there are certain instances wherein genetic consequences may intervene.

In addition, studies show that dog breeds, like the human race, have no specific scientific origins and that their breeds cannot even be identified and proven even by DNA. So, the chances of getting a purebred dog are not that common.

However, because of the existence of dog breeds, Kennel clubs only consider pure dog breeds on their competitions.

Today, there are about 160 dog breeds being recognized by the club, but most people can only recognize a dozen or two. In fact, even those who are experts in dog breeding may still confuse a certain breed as a cross between two dog breeds.

Hence, dog breeds should not be considered as a basis on whether or not a certain dog will bite. Most people have this thinking that there are dog breeds that will not bite.

People should keep in mind that dog biting is based on behavior, in which certain environmental and social variables trigger the behavior. Hence, experts contend that there is no breed of dog that will attack somebody without any reason at all. This means that 99.9% of all dogs will not attack anyone as long as there are no viable reasons that will trigger the attack.

The bottom line is that dog breeds may still vary, depending on their genetic make-up. Hence, the foundation of classifying dogs according to their physical attributes and behavior may be affected by different factors.

It isn't any wonder why the issues about purebreds are endless!

## **Preventing your dog from catching diseases**

Like any other pet, dogs, if not properly cared for and maintained, can get diseases. Here are some parasites that cause dog diseases.

- Heartworm. Mosquito bites cause heartworm to exist in a dog and will reside in your pet's heart and nearby blood vessels. A dog infected by heartworms looks dull and may even have a chronic cough. If possible, ask your veterinarian if your dog could be given a heartworm medication when it is the season of mosquitoes.
- Hookworm. Hookworms can be given by the mother dog to a puppy during the nursing period or even before birth. Hookworms cause dog anemia and appetite loss.
- Roundworm. The transmittal of roundworms is very much like how hookworms get transmitted in a dog. An infected dog usually has a potbelly. Roundworms cause pneumonia, diarrhea, dehydration, stunted growth, and vomiting.
- Tapeworm. A dog gets tapeworms if it swallows fleas that are larvae-laden. Much of the symptoms that are obvious rarely show, but in the dog's feces, you could see deposits of a rice-like appearance.
- Whipworm. A dog infected with whipworms may have diarrhea and other ailments like, stool mucus, and serious bowel inflammation. Extreme weight loss is also a symptom caused by whipworms.
- Fleas. Fleas, the commonest among external parasites, cause the dog to continuously scratch various parts of the body. This results to fur loss. Ask your veterinarian on a good flea-control program, since fleas could become resistant to some products over time.
- Lice. Lice can infect less common compared with fleas. Plus, they can be controlled easier.
- Ticks. Ticks can pose more serious problems than fleas because diseases like Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever, or Lyme disease, can be contracted with ticks. Tweezers can be used to remove ticks one by one. If you do not know how to remove ticks properly and carefully, ask your vet first. If you do know how, ticks should be placed in a can with soap and water.

### Treating dog diseases

Some ways of treating dog diseases that your vet might use:

- Pills
- Liquid medicine
- Eye drops and ointment
- Ear drops and ointment

With proper care and prevention, your pet dog will be generally free and safe from various diseases. If you notice something's wrong with your dog or he is acting strangely, immediately consult with your

vet.

## Tips for buying dog food

It is not enough for dogs to have a full stomach after every meal. Besides a non-sedentary lifestyle, pets need proper nutrition in order to be healthy, happy and their coats soft and glossy. The cost of dog food and its brand is only important if dogs can read or pay for his meal. The easiest and best way to find out which food is best for man's best friend is to observe how their response is to the chow they take in.

The following are tips that one should remember in feeding dog any kibbles, nibbles or whatever kinds of treats.

- Chocolate is lethal to dogs.

Specifically, the dark chocolate kind. The major components methylxanthine alkaloids and theobromine in regular chocolate is digested & excreted by humans in as little as 3 hours but the same compounds when ingested by dogs stays inside them for 18 hours. This has been proven to be fatal. Symptoms of chocolate dog poisoning include vomiting, excessive urination, hyperactivity, diarrhea, followed by seizure, coma, and death.

- Read the label.

Dogs should have a diet rich in meat protein. When purchasing canned foods, look for chicken, turkey meat, pork or other animal by products as these keep the dog's coat smooth and healthy. Dogs prefer foods which contain high vegetable protein levels because these are easily digestible and are a great source of energy.

- Don't give a dog a bone!

Contrary to the popular nursery song, feeding bones to dogs is not a good idea. Small soft bones gnawed and eaten by dogs feel like splinters inside their throat causing them to choke. Remember, dogs have short digestive tracts. They also have no saliva amylase, an enzyme that is used to pre-digest starch.

- Dog food supplements are unnecessary...

...only if one is sure that their dog receives a regular intake of complete and balanced food nutrients. Good sources of carbohydrates include rice, corn, oatmeal, wheat. However, a highly specialized nutrition is only necessary if dogs do not get enough physical activity or are currently undergoing a stressful routine change.

- Raw fish and eggs are a no-no.

Consistent consumption of raw eggs make a dog's skin breakout. In canine terms - since eggs diminish the biotin available in their body – dermatitis and hair loss are its usual effects. Raw fish meanwhile results in thiamine-deficiency in a dog. Its effects usually are loss of appetite, abnormal posture, weakness and in some cases death.

Feed your dog a healthy diet and he will return the favor with a beautiful coat and many years of

companionship!

## **Grooming Man's Best friend**

Proper grooming for your dog does not only have aesthetic purposes but also adds to your pet's holistic growth – physical and psychological. Since dog hair can interlace due to dirt and grime in the coat forming mats and tangles, they would need to be groomed to keep proper hygiene. Plus grooming generates more bonding time with your pet, creating a stronger relationship.

It is best to train your dog to be groomed at an early age. But, an untrained dog can still be taught to accept all the attention. Train your pet to get used to his body parts being handled and brushed. You need not go to a professional groomer, but if you don't have the time or the interest to groom your dog, be sure to select a groomer that handles the animals gently.

### Things to Remember in Grooming your Dog

Make a daily examination of your pet's body parts. Look out for bumps, hot spots, inflammation, irritation, vegetative matter, and parasites like fleas and ticks in his coat. Get rid of fleas by using a fine-toothed comb while ticks can be tweezed off. Ears should be checked – droop ears are inclined to infection which can lead to permanent hearing loss. Examine your companion's pads – dirt, grime, pebbles, chemicals can get caught that can infect his paws.

Brushing doesn't only remove mats, it also takes away dead hair, thus eliminating animal odor. Tangles can also be very painful for your dog that may lead to skin inflammation. Grooming during shedding encourages growth of new coat, so brush especially after physical exercise.

Nails should be trimmed every month, especially if your dog has a hard time walking. Dental hygiene is maintained by using dog toothpaste and toothbrush with soft bristles twice a week. A damp cotton cloth is used to remove mucus from your dog's eyes and a coarse rag is appropriate in cleaning your pet's face.

When bathing your pet, make sure that you brush away dead hairs first to clear all the mats in his coat. Soak your pet in warm water. Apply a pet shampoo in small amounts. Target areas are the eyes, ears, rectum, toes and under the chin. Avoid getting soapy water in his eyes and ears. You also have an option to apply coat conditioner after bathing. Different breeds require varying bath frequency; consult the local pet grooming shop if you're not sure how many times you should bath your dog.

It is recommended that a dog owner has his own home grooming kit. A good kit includes a grooming brush, clippers for dog toenails, combs with varying teeth (fine, medium coarse), dog shampoo, coat conditioner, and a coarse rag.

## **Having Healthy Pups: A Few Tips on Keeping Your Dog Healthy**

The responsibility of a new pet is sometimes overwhelming. One of your new duties as a dog owner is to take care of your pet's health. Here are two pointers for you to follow in taking care of your pet.

### **- The Veterinarian Is our Friend**

Part of your duty as a dog owner is to know when to call for the vet. Don't take a "wait and see" attitude when it comes to your pet's health. Sometimes, that approach is fine but most often professional help is needed to treat your dog's sickness. Depending on the dog's condition, there are many ways a veterinarian may help.

There are several instances when it is essential that you call your veterinarian:

- a) Always call your vet when your dog has been in an accident. If your regular veterinarian is not available, look for the closest emergency vet clinic.
- b) Always call your vet when you suspect your dog has eaten something that may be poisonous or something inedible.
- c) Call your vet immediately when your pet is in obvious distress.
- d) Sudden weight gain or weight loss should be a warning sign for you to take your dog to the vet.
- e) If your dog is coughing, vomiting or having seizure, call the vet immediately.

### **- An Ounce of Prevention Is Better Than A Pound Of Cure**

Of course, going to the vet should be the last recourse. Preventing your dog from being hurt or getting sick is your primary responsibility.

Remember, that good food and exercise insures a long life for your pet. A balanced diet and a regimen of exercise helps prevent sickness and strengthens your pet. Monitor what your pets eat. Clean your dog's cage regularly to get rid of any disease-causing bacteria. Check your dog's water supply. Make sure it's clean and healthy for your pet.

Keep your dog on a leash. Running in front of a car is not very good for your dog's health and heaven knows where your pet may end up if you just let it wander around.

Give your dog a regular bath. Fleas and ticks can give your dog extreme discomfort and are often carriers of disease.

Of course, keeping your dog in tip-top shape goes beyond these pointers. It's always advisable to ask a veterinarian for additional health tips and as your experience with your pet grows, you'll think up of a couple more rules that are special to your beloved hound. Just remember that when your pet's health is in question, it's always better to be safe!

## **“Basic Principles in a Dog Lovers Club”**

There are lots of dog lovers clubs in the US that offer a lot more for both the dog lovers and their dogs. Here are some of them.

The American Kennel Club has a dog lovers section called “For the Love of the Purebred Dog”. This article is more than a canine purebred section. It is dedicated to living at home with dogs. This dog club gives informative and educational materials pertaining to pet care, training, nutrition and a lot more. It also includes funny stories, art, pet history and the more popular Companion Animal Recovery method. There are also more popular sites like the dog breeds and events page.

The American Mixed Breed Obedience Registration or (AMBOR) on the other hand was created in 1983 with the objective of taking into accounts the perseverance and accolades in obedience contests of mix breed dogs and handlers. This dog lovers club also gives support and inspiration to dog handlers.

Important Information for Members:

### 1. Mixed-breeds

Unlimited full membership is open to handlers and owners of mixed-breed dogs as long as the pet is spayed and nails are cut. There should be front and side photo shots of the dog that will be included in the application. This is the ticket to all the obedience and agility programs, automatic tabulation in the agility and obedience nationwide ranking system. This also includes a given eligibility for the annual awards.

This achievement will be given honor in AMBOR highlights (AMBOR’S newsletter) and on the website. The member will be eligible to any agility and obedience national competition in the future. Dogs with assigned numbers are marked as purebred and should be enlisted as a purebred. Also, dogs that are listed as mixed-breeds that are given a number based on the owner’s application causes its membership to be changed to a status of a purebred.

### 2. Purebreds

Purebred dogs can be listed with AMBOR with a rule that entry is limited to the AMBOR-supported agility program. All dogs that are purebred, listed with AMBOR and exhibits AMBOR-supported programs on agility will have competition points monitored and there will be an automatic issuance of certificates.

Dogs that are purebred and listed with AMBOR are not qualified to be a part of the agility and obedience scoring systems. They will also not be included in the website on highlights and not qualified for any mixed-breeds national competition in the future.

Handlers that register to the AMBOR-supported trials on agility should put their AMBOR number on the form at the club’s entrance so that competition points will be monitored.

## **Five Simple Tips To Get Your Dog Ready For Dog Shows**

Every truly avid dog owner wishes for the chance to show off his pet at the nearest dog show. It is both a way to validate your pride in owning your pet and a chance to see other beautiful dogs in action. For the first timer, however, entering the world of competitive dog shows can truly be a daunting experience.

Here are five simple tips to get your dog, and yourself, ready for the limelight:

1) Know The Field - Everybody has to start somewhere and entering dog shows requires that you know what to expect. Read literature on dog shows. Go to dog shows as a spectator and see what goes on. Get a good grasp of the jargon. Knowing the difference between all-breed dog shows and specialty shows can help a lot in determining what shows to join and how to get your pet ready.

2) Know Your Dog - Knowledge of your pet is essential when getting ready for a dog show. A little effort in researching your dog's breed and health history can pay off immensely. Getting familiar with your dog's quirks, habits and abilities is also a great way to bond with them and paves the way to a successful performance in the show ring.

3) Training, Lots of Training - Training for the show, for yourself and your dog is very important. It is advisable that you have the help of a trained handler when you're starting out. Training dogs also requires conditioning them physically so that they are in tip-top shape when they participate in the show. Remember, dog shows are like beauty pageants. A well-trained dog is both pleasant to look at and be with.

4) A Visit To The Vet - Every dog needs a visit to the vet when getting ready for a dog show. Having your pet inoculated is a standard procedure to protect your dog, and other dogs, from spreading diseases during the show. A check-up on your pet's physical condition would also help greatly in assuring that your pride and joy is ready for the show.

5) Ask Questions - Learning is a continual process. Asking questions from handlers and veterinarians on how you should treat or handle your dog can open up insights on caring for it.

These five simple tips are just the beginning. Like they say, experience is the best teacher, but with this advice you're well on your way to getting your dog ready for the show.

## **How to Make Your Dog Obey You?**

Most people contend that dogs are created to obey their masters. That is why they are considered a man's best friend. However, obedience is not an innate quality in dogs. That is why it is important to teach them how to obey commands in order for them to know in what manner they should behave.

In reality, obedience training is created to impose control over dogs. These canine friends should know who the master is and who the follower is.

However, the concept of training dogs how to obey may vary on styles, equipment being used, or on the principles being implemented. Nevertheless, all of these things are focused on making dogs obey their masters.

The question is: How do trainers or these concepts make the dogs obey their masters? What is the reason that lies beneath the idea considering the fact that dogs are not humans who can logically understand why they have to obey?

What people don't know is that there are only two keys in order to make their dogs obey them: consistency and compassion.

Consistency is extremely important in every training program. This is because as mentioned earlier, dogs are not logical thinkers. This means that they don't know and they don't understand why they have to obey or what does their master want from them. That is why it is important to let them know the things they should do and the things they shouldn't do.

In this way, people should be consistent on distinguishing the things that should be done and those that are not appreciated.

On the other hand, compassion is needed in teaching dogs to obey because they are not like humans who will immediately understand what is wrong or right. This means that people should be a little more patient when teaching dogs to obey in order for them to gain the dog's trust.

There are instances wherein trainers get impatient after repeating one command several times. In the end, they tend to hurt the dog. In turn, the dog gets hurt and may no longer trust his trainer.

The bottom line is that, dogs are not humans and they don't behave like humans. That is why training them to obey needs more time, more patience, and more understanding from people who know better.

## **Essential care tips for your dog**

Dogs are loving pets. But caring for them is a bit of hard work. Here are some tips to consider in taking care of your dog:

If you do not have a dog yet, consider the area where your dog can exercise. If you have a big yard where you could exercise or play with your dog, you might want to get a large dog such as a German Shepherd, Labrador, or Golden Retriever. If you have a smaller space, get a smaller dog like a Terrier or Dachshund. These types of dogs need little exercise compared with the larger dogs.

You also need to consider your dog if there are children in your house. Some dogs like Pit bulls and Dalmatians are sometimes temperamental.

It is important that you groom your dog. A regular groom is recommended. Dog's ears should be cleaned, with the wax and dirt removed every week. Ear cleaning also helps you detect presence of ear mites or infections. The dog should be bathed weekly with warm water and dog shampoo.

It is also recommended that you brush your dog at least once a week.

After grooming your pet, do take it to a veterinarian to get its anti-rabies shots and over-all checkup.

A diet that is balanced and nutritious is recommended for your dog. Contrary to what many people think, dogs do not just eat meat. They also need carbohydrates. A diet consisting of 50 percent of protein or meat and 50 percent of carbohydrates is the preferred diet for dogs.

As implied earlier, dogs need some amount exercise. Aside from their health, dogs exercising will prevent them from retrieving and chasing, digging, and chewing on various things. Exercises depend on your dog's sex, age, and health level. A dog likes to jog, fetch, and race-walk a lot. One warning however, start slow in exercising your dog. Unfortunately, some dogs enjoy themselves so much when they do these exercises. They do not know when to stop it.

Having a dog to last you for a long time does not end with just owning one. You have to take care of it. Although that may be hard work, it will also bring you fun and enjoyment when you see that your dog is healthy and loves you. Having a pet dog of your own is a pleasurable experience.

## Healing Hounds

Dogs are man's best friend. Always loyal and ever loving, this trait has made canines an integral and common part of what is fast becoming a common mode of therapy in many health care facilities. Not just dogs but animals in general have long been recognized as having a positive effect on the healing process. Dogs, especially, have a calming effect.

These dogs help people cope with emotional issues, offer physical contact, invoke pleasant memories and they divert a person's focus from the problems of the day. That's why they've been used to great success as helpers for those people who are in therapy. Dogs are specially trained for their jobs of helping to take care of the sick, the elderly or the infirm.

Currently there are three types of therapy dogs:

- a) Facility Therapy Dogs
- b) Animal-Assisted Therapy Dogs
- c) Therapeutic Visitation Dogs

The first two types assist physical therapists by meeting the requirements for a person's recovery. They are usually found in hospitals and are permanently assigned there. The most common type of therapeutic dog, however, is the third type.

Therapeutic visitation dogs are ordinary pets whose owners take to hospitals, nursing homes and rehabilitation facilities. These dogs help people who are away from home due to mental or physical illness. These people are usually in a highly stressful or depressing environment and a visit from a therapy dog can always brighten their day and help them deal with their problems.

Through their bright example, these dogs help the people they meet maintain a positive attitude. This positive outlook is important in good health, happiness and staying young. Pets also provide a chance for patients to touch and be touched. This gives the patients a chance to express their need for physical contact, a need that doctors have proven as a very important factor in a patient's psychological health.

This is integral in helping people maintain a better mental standing on their condition. This and the ever-loving nature of dogs make them perfect cures to depression that often plagues many patients and residents of nursing homes and hospitals.

It's very difficult to accurately measure how positive an effect these dogs have on patients. But all you have to do to see that they're doing their job is a happy smile on a patient's face when they're in the company of one of these amazing healing hounds.

## **Going places with your dog**

Dogs do like to travel well. Adventurous by nature, they want to check out new sights and sounds. They like to meet and see new people. But this does not mean that traveling with a dog is as easy as traveling with your clutch bag. Here are some tips on how to have a worry-free travel experience with your pet dog.

### **Hiring a pet sitter**

If you are traveling far away from home without your pet dog, you might want to hire a pet sitter who could take care of your dog full-time. A pet sitter could be a member of your family or a friend who could stay over in your house and watch over your dog. You could also ask your veterinarian who could recommend someone to do the pet-sitting.

### **Leaving the dog in a kennel**

If you choose to leave your pet in a kennel, shop around for recommendations for a good one from friends that own dogs or your vet. Go to the kennel before taking your dog and check if animals look well-cared for and the facilities comfortable and clean. Chat with the staff to make sure that your dog will be cared for properly.

### **Traveling with your dog**

Should you decide that you're bringing the dog along in your travel, ask the vet some tips on how to best travel with a dog, including problems on the transportation method. Ask if he or she could give your dog a certificate of clean health.

If you are flying via airplane, you should have a sturdy carrier for your pet. If not, the airline could ask you to buy a carrier from them. Some airlines allow your pet in the passenger compartment with you. Some put all the animals in the luggage compartment.

If you are riding in a car, the air conditioning should be kept on. Do not leave your dog unattended in a car that is parked. Do not park in direct sunlight even for a brief period of time, as it could drastically raise the heat temperature inside your car that might result in dehydration, heat stroke, or worse.

### **Foreign travel**

Traveling with a dog or any other pet in foreign countries can prove to be difficult. Check with your vet for some tips. You might also want to ask the local consulate of the country you are visiting what are their requirements for you to bring your pet along.

Going places with your dog may be a pleasant experience. But you should remember taking a dog, or any pet with you, anywhere could be a bit difficult.

## General history of dogs

There is no incongruity in the idea that in the very earliest period of man's habitation of this world he made a friend and companion of some sort of aboriginal representative of our modern dog, and that in return for its aid in protecting him from wilder animals, and in guarding his sheep and goats, he gave it a share of his food, a corner in his dwelling, and grew to trust it and care for it. Probably the animal was originally little else than an unusually gentle jackal, or an ailing wolf driven by its companions from the wild marauding pack to seek shelter in alien surroundings. One can well conceive the possibility of the partnership beginning in the circumstance of some helpless whelps being brought home by the early hunters to be tended and reared by the women and children. Dogs introduced into the home as playthings for the children would grow to regard themselves, and be regarded, as members of the family

In nearly all parts of the world traces of an indigenous dog family are found, the only exceptions being the West Indian Islands, Madagascar, the eastern islands of the Malayan Archipelago, New Zealand, and the Polynesian Islands, where there is no sign that any dog, wolf, or fox has existed as a true aboriginal animal. In the ancient Oriental lands, and generally among the early Mongolians, the dog remained savage and neglected for centuries, prowling in packs, gaunt and wolf-like, as it prowls today through the streets and under the walls of every Eastern city. No attempt was made to allure it into human companionship or to improve it into docility. It is not until we come to examine the records of the higher civilisations of Assyria and Egypt that we discover any distinct varieties of canine form.

The dog was not greatly appreciated in Palestine, and in both the Old and New Testaments it is commonly spoken of with scorn and contempt as an "unclean beast." Even the familiar reference to the Sheepdog in the Book of Job "But now they that are younger than I have me in derision, whose fathers I would have disdained to set with the dogs of my flock" is not without a suggestion of contempt, and it is significant that the only biblical allusion to the dog as a recognised companion of man occurs in the apocryphal Book of Tobit (v. 16), "So they went forth both, and the young man's dog with them."

The great multitude of different breeds of the dog and the vast differences in their size, points, and general appearance are facts which make it difficult to believe that they could have had a common ancestry. One thinks of the difference between the Mastiff and the Japanese Spaniel, the Deerhound and the fashionable Pomeranian, the St. Bernard and the Miniature Black and Tan Terrier, and is perplexed in contemplating the possibility of their having descended from a common progenitor. Yet the disparity is no greater than that between the Shire horse and the Shetland pony, the Shorthorn and the Kerry cattle, or the Patagonian and the Pygmy; and all dog breeders know how easy it is to produce a variety in type and size by studied selection.

In order properly to understand this question it is necessary first to consider the identity of structure in the wolf and the dog. This identity of structure may best be studied in a comparison of the osseous system, or skeletons, of the two animals, which so closely resemble each other that their transposition would not easily be detected.

The spine of the dog consists of seven vertebrae in the neck, thirteen in the back, seven in the loins, three sacral vertebrae, and twenty to twenty-two in the tail. In both the dog and the wolf there are thirteen pairs of ribs, nine true and four false. Each has forty-two teeth. They both have five front and four hind toes, while outwardly the common wolf has so much the appearance of a large, bare-boned dog, that a popular description of the one would serve for the other.

Nor are their habits different. The wolf's natural voice is a loud howl, but when confined with dogs he will learn to bark. Although he is carnivorous, he will also eat vegetables, and when sickly he will nibble grass. In the chase, a pack of wolves will divide into parties, one following the trail of the quarry, the other endeavouring to intercept its retreat, exercising a considerable amount of strategy, a trait which is exhibited by many of our sporting dogs and terriers when hunting in teams.

A further important point of resemblance between the *Canis lupus* and the *Canis familiaris* lies in the fact that the period of gestation in both species is sixty-three days. There are from three to nine cubs in a wolf's litter, and these are blind for twenty-one days. They are suckled for two months, but at the end of that time they are able to eat half-digested flesh disgorged for them by their dam or even their sire.

The native dogs of all regions approximate closely in size, coloration, form, and habit to the native wolf of those regions. Of this most important circumstance there are far too many instances to allow of its being looked upon as a mere coincidence. Sir John Richardson, writing in 1829, observed that "the resemblance between the North American wolves and the domestic dog of the Indians is so great that the size and strength of the wolf seems to be the only difference.

It has been suggested that the one incontrovertible argument against the lupine relationship of the dog is the fact that all domestic dogs bark, while all wild *Canidae* express their feelings only by howls. But the difficulty here is not so great as it seems, since we know that jackals, wild dogs, and wolf pups reared by bitches readily acquire the habit. On the other hand, domestic dogs allowed to run wild forget how to bark, while there are some which have not yet learned so to express themselves.

The presence or absence of the habit of barking cannot, then, be regarded as an argument in deciding the question concerning the origin of the dog. This stumbling block consequently disappears, leaving us in the position of agreeing with Darwin, whose final hypothesis was that "it is highly probable that the domestic dogs of the world have descended from two good species of wolf (*C. lupus* and *C. latrans*), and from two or three other doubtful species of wolves namely, the European, Indian, and North African forms; from at least one or two South American canine species; from several races or species of jackal; and perhaps from one or more extinct species"; and that the blood of these, in some cases mingled together, flows in the veins of our domestic breeds.

## **Best Selling Dog Books**

### **1. HOW TO RAISE A PUPPY YOU CAN LIVE WITH, 4TH EDITION**

by Clarice Rutherford & David Neil

This puppy book starts way back with your breeder and steps you through all the processes to make sure you can raise a puppy the right way. It touches on the subjects of selecting breeders, bonding with puppies, discipline, house training, tricks and simple commands.

### **RAW DOG FOOD: MAKE IT EASY FOR YOU AND YOUR DOG**

by Carina Beth MacDonald

This offbeat, light read received the Dog Writers of America Award for Best Book Under 100 pages for the year 2003. It is a funny, informative book on how raw diets can actually benefit dogs while being cost-efficient at the same time. This is a must-read book for those grappling with their dog's diet.

### **2. CAUTIOUS CANINE, 2ND EDITION**

by Patricia McConnell

This book is so handy it could even benefit people. Patricia McConnell walks the reader through training techniques such as counter conditioning and desensitization to deal with behavioral problems and phobias. It works with people too.

### **3. RALLY-O: THE STYLE OF RALLY OBEDIENCE, 3RD EDITION**

by Charles 'Bud' Kramer

Rally obedience advocates an exciting and fun approach to dog obedience. It's a surefire way for the dog and its owner to enjoy their training sessions. If one were to look for an effective, non-burdensome way to train dogs, this should be in their shelves.

### **ONE ON ONE - A DOG TRAINER'S GUIDE TO PRIVATE TRAINING**

by Nicole Wilde

An intimate training guide to those new to one-on-one training sessions. It is an easily understandable, yet comprehensive guide to private training and focuses on the intricacies of the training psyche and the dog's response to such.

### **POSITIVE PERSPECTIVES: LOVE YOUR DOG, TRAIN YOUR DOG**

by Pat Miller

Almost a book about children. This groundbreaking read will change the way you view pet behavior management and pet upbringing. This comprehensive course emphasizes the emotional aspect of training and behavior modification. Also in this book: vaccination, training with treats, and housetraining.

### **BRINGING LIGHT TO SHADOW - A DOG TRAINER'S DIARY**

by Pamela Dennison

An inspirational story of how one trainer refused to give up on an ill-tempered dog with behavioral problems. It is a diary of sorts that deals with the issues, frustrations, solutions, and the patience it takes for one to deal with such difficult dogs. It is a fascinating read that should inspire every dog trainer.

## **Conclusion**

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