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A Scout's Best Friend

The love and interdependence between humans and dogs has endured for thousands of years. Evidence suggests that dogs and humans started relying on each other thousands of years ago. Today, dogs are our coworkers and companions. They assist search-and-rescue teams, law enforcement officers, hunters, farmers, and people with disabilities. They also play with us and keep us company.

Evolution of the Dog

Although there are hundreds of breeds that look very different from each other, all dogs are members of the same species, *Canis familiaris*.

Scientists believe that today's dogs owe their existence to wolves tamed long ago. The wolf is the ancestor of the modern domestic dog; in fact, they are almost genetically identical. Wolves can breed with dogs and produce normal pups.



Scientists believe that domesticated dogs descended from the wolf.

The origin of dogs can be traced to an animal called *Miacis*, which looked more like a weasel than a dog. This small, flesh-eating creature had short legs, a long tail, five toes, and teeth like those of today's carnivores. The next important ancestor, called *Cynodictis* was the first to have doglike characteristics, such as a shortened fifth toe, 42 teeth, and longer legs for running. Then came a descendent of *Cynodictis*, called *Tomarctus*, which resembled today's dogs even more. This animal had short, erect ears, long legs and tail, and a dewclaw that had developed from the shortened fifth toe. Also, *Tomarctus* probably behaved much like today's dogs do.

All breeds of dogs and wolves evolved from *Tomarctus*. Scientists group them in a family called *Canidae*. Today, some scientists believe dogs may have evolved from the foxlike *Leptocyon*.

The earliest dogs probably resembled the present-day dingo, the wild dog of Australia.

Domestication

Dogs probably were the first animals to be domesticated. Evidence left in the camps and burial mounds of early humans show that people kept dogs as hunters, trackers, and watchdogs. Later, as humans began to raise sheep, cattle, and other livestock, their dogs learned to herd the flocks and watch over them. In temples and tombs of ancient civilizations, drawings and inscriptions show that the ancient Egyptians kept short-legged house dogs and tall spotted dogs that looked like Greyhounds. The Saluki also was kept; it is the oldest recognized breed. The Assyrians used a powerful Mastiff type of dog for hunting.

Many toy breeds originated in China. Asians brought them to Europe in the fourth century, which resulted in today's curly-coated European breeds.



When the first European explorers arrived in the Americas, they discovered that American Indians had domesticated dogs to serve as watchdogs, pets, and beasts of burden.

By the 1700s, breeds in Europe were being refined for hunting, retrieving, and companionship. The first dog show, held in England in 1859, proved that people had started to appreciate different breeds of dogs for their unique characteristics. Today, only an expert could recognize all the breeds of dogs.

We know humans have long respected the strength and power of dogs because they often appear as gods or mythological creatures in early art. For example, the Egyptian god of death had the head of a dog. In Greek mythology, a ferocious three-headed dog named Cerberus guarded the entrance to the underworld.



Dog Breeds and Characteristics

The wide range of shape, size, color, and personality of purebred dogs is the result of controlled breeding and selection. Some dogs were bred to hunt, some to serve as guard or sled dogs, and some to be herders. Others were kept as pets, companions, and guides.

In the late 1800s, at the same time that dog shows were gaining popularity, a system was developed for classifying breeds according to how they are used. In the United States, the American Kennel Club has maintained a registry of breeds since 1884. Recognized groups are sporting dogs, hounds, working dogs, terriers, toys, nonsporting dogs, and herding dogs. Within these seven groups, the AKC recognizes 202 breeds (as of 2022, with new breeds being recognized every year). See Appendix on page 80 for a complete list of breeds and the year they were recognized.

To create breeds, dog owners intentionally mate purebred dogs and certify and register the pups.

A purebred dog has a “traceable” family line. Its father (sire) and mother (dam) are of the same breed and are registered. A purebred dog can trace its ancestry back to the time its breed was established. Mixed-breed dogs are not eligible for registry. Nevertheless, for many owners a mixed-breed dog makes a wonderful pet.

In the United States, the number of dogs—purebred and mixed breed—is estimated at 90 million.

The groups, and many of the breeds within these groups, recognized by the AKC are as follows.

SPORTING DOGS

These are dogs that “scent” and either track, point, or flush (reveal a bird’s location and cause it to fly), and retrieve game birds on land or in water.

Sporting dogs and their country of origin include:

American Water Spaniel (United States)	Gordon Setter (Scotland)
Boykin Spaniel (United States)	Irish Red and White Setter (Ireland)
Brittany (France)	Irish Setter (Ireland)
Chesapeake Bay Retriever (United States)	Irish Water Spaniel (Ireland)
Clumber Spaniel (France)	Labrador Retriever (Canada)
Cocker Spaniel (England)	Lagotto Romagnolo (Italy)
Curly-Coated Retriever (England)	Nederlandse Kooikerhondje (Netherlands)
English Cocker Spaniel (England)	Nova Scotia Duck Tolling Retriever (Canada)
English Setter (England)	Pointer (England)
English Springer Spaniel (England)	Spinone Italiano (Italy)
Field Spaniel (England)	Sussex Spaniel (England)
Flat-Coated Retriever (England)	Vizsla (Hungary)
German Shorthaired Pointer (Germany)	Weimaraner (Germany)
German Wirehaired Pointer (Germany)	Welsh Springer Spaniel (Wales)
Golden Retriever (Scotland)	Wirehaired Pointing Griffon (Netherlands)
	Wirehaired Vizsla (Hungary)

HOUNDS

Hounds hunt all game except birds. Hounds were bred not just to find or flush out game for human hunters to shoot, but to track their prey by scent or sight and to catch it. Some hounds, such as Bloodhounds, track by scent. Other hounds, such as the Afghan and Whippet, track by sight.

Hounds and their country of origin include:

Afghan Hound (Afghanistan)	Harrier (England)
American English Coonhound (United States)	Ibizan Hound (Egypt)
American Foxhound (United States)	Irish Wolfhound (Ireland)
Azawakh (Burkina Faso/ Mali/Niger)	Norwegian Elkhound (Norway)
Basenji (Egypt)	Otterhound (England)
Basset Hound (France)	Petit Basset Griffon Vendéen (France)
Beagle (England)	Pharaoh Hound (Egypt)
Black and Tan Coonhound (United States)	Plott (United States)
Bloodhound (Italy)	Portuguese Podengo Pequeno (Portugal)
Bluetick Coonhound (United States)	Redbone Coonhound (United States)
Borzoi (Russia)	Rhodesian Ridgeback (South Africa)
Cimeco dell'Etna (Italy)	Saluki (Egypt)
Dachshund (Germany)	Scottish Deerhound (Scotland)
English Foxhound (England)	Sloughi (North Africa)
Grand Basset Griffon Vendéen (France)	Treeing Walker Coonhound (United States)
Greyhound (Egypt)	Whippet (England)

WORKING DOGS

Working dogs were bred to do specific jobs. These breeds guard livestock, serve as watchdogs, pull carts, tug sleds, perform mountain and water rescues, and serve as watchdogs. Some of them also serve in the military.

Working dogs and their country of origin include:

Akita (Japan)	Great Pyrenees (France)
Alaskan Malamute (United States)	Greater Swiss Mountain Dog (Switzerland)
Anatolian Shepherd Dog (Turkey)	Komondor (Hungary)
Bernese Mountain Dog (Switzerland)	Kuvasz (Tibet)
Black Russian Terrier (Russia)	Leonberger (Germany)
Boerboel (South Africa)	Mastiff (England)
Boxer (Germany)	Neapolitan Mastiff (Italy)
Bullmastiff (England)	Newfoundland (Canada)
Cane Corso (Italy)	Portuguese Water Dog (Portugal)
Chinook (United States)	Rottweiler (Germany)
Doberman Pinscher (Germany)	Saint Bernard (Switzerland)
Dogue de Bordeaux (France)	Samoyed (Siberia)
German Pinscher (Germany)	Siberian Husky (Northeastern Asia)
Giant Schnauzer (Germany)	Standard Schnauzer (Germany)
Great Dane (Germany)	Tibetan Mastiff (Tibet)

TERRIERS

Terriers originally were bred to kill rats and to force foxes and otters out of their dens. The name “terrier” comes from the Latin *terra firma*, meaning earth.

Terriers and their country of origin include:

Airedale Terrier (England)	Miniature Schnauzer (Germany)
American Hairless Terrier (United States)	Norfolk Terrier (England)
American Staffordshire Terrier (England)	Norwich Terrier (England)
Australian Terrier (Australia)	Parson Russell Terrier (England)
Bedlington Terrier (England)	Rat Terrier (United States)
Border Terrier (England)	Russell Terrier (England)
Bull Terrier (England)	Scottish Terrier (Scotland)
Cairn Terrier (Scotland)	Sealyham Terrier (Wales)
Cesky Terrier (Czech Republic)	Skye Terrier (Scotland)
Dandie Dinmont Terrier (England)	Smooth Fox Terrier (British Isles)
Glen of Imaal Terrier (Ireland)	Soft Coated Wheaten Terrier (Ireland)
Irish Terrier (Ireland)	Staffordshire Bull Terrier (England)
Kerry Blue Terrier (Ireland)	Welsh Terrier (Wales)
Lakeland Terrier (England)	West Highland White Terrier (Scotland)
Manchester Terrier (England)	Wire Fox Terrier (British Isles)
Miniature Bull Terrier (England)	

NONSPORTING DOGS

This category is for those breeds that do not fit in other AKC categories.

Nonsporting dogs and their country of origin include:

American Eskimo Dog (United States)	Keeshond (Netherlands)
Bichon Frise (Spain)	Lhasa Apso (Tibet)
Boston Terrier (United States)	Löwchen (Germany)
Bulldog (England)	Norwegian Lundehund (Norway)
Chinese Shar-Pei (China)	Poodle (France)
Chow Chow (China)	Schipperke (Belgium)
Coton de Tulear (Madagascar)	Shiba Inu (Japan)
Dalmatian (Croatia)	Tibetan Spaniel (Tibet)
Finnish Spitz (Finland)	Tibetan Terrier (Tibet)
French Bulldog (France)	Xoloitzcuintli (Mexico)

TOYS

Toy dogs were bred to be tiny companions.

Toys and their country of origin include:

Affenpinscher (Germany)	Manchester Terrier (England)
Brussels Griffon (Belgium)	Miniature Pinscher (Germany)
Cavalier King Charles Spaniel (England)	Papillon (Spain)
Chihuahua (Mexico)	Pekingese (China)
Chinese Crested (China)	Pomeranian (Germany/Poland)
English Toy Spaniel (England)	Poodle (France)
Havanese (Cuba)	Pug (China)
Italian Greyhound (Greece/Turkey)	Shih Tzu (China)
Japanese Chin (Japan)	Silky Terrier (Australia)
Maltese (Malta)	Toy Fox Terrier (United States)
	Yorkshire Terrier (England)

HERDING DOGS

Herding dogs were bred to herd sheep or cattle. You can especially see them in action in Australia, Scotland, England, and Wales.

Herding dogs and their country of origin include:

Australian Cattle Dog (Australia)	Finnish Lapphund (Finland)
Australian Shepherd (United States)	German Shepherd Dog (Germany)
Bearded Collie (Scotland)	Icelandic Sheepdog (Iceland)
Beauceron (France)	Miniature American Shepherd (United States)
Belgian Malinois (Belgium)	Norwegian Buhund (Norway)
Belgian Sheepdog (Belgium)	Old English Sheepdog (England)
Belgian Tervuren (Belgium)	Pembroke Welsh Corgi (Wales)
Bergamasco Sheepdog (Italy)	Polish Lowland Sheepdog (Poland)
Berger Picard (France)	Puli (Hungary)
Border Collie (England/Scotland)	Pumi (Hungary)
Bouvier des Flandres (Belgium)	Pyrenean Shepherd (France)
Briard (France)	Shetland Sheepdog (Scotland)
Canaan Dog (Israel)	Spanish Water Dog (Spain)
Cardigan Welsh Corgi (Wales)	Swedish Vallhund (Sweden)
Collie (England/Scotland)	
Entlebucher Mountain Dog (Switzerland)	

Here are some of the most popular breeds of dogs along with some of their characteristics.

American Cocker Spaniel.

Height: 14 $\frac{1}{2}$ to 15 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches, females an inch shorter; weight: 24 to 28 pounds; coat: silky; color: solid buff, black, parti-color (a predominant color with patches of one or more other colors), tricolor, and others; ears hang down. This cheerful and gentle sporting dog is playful and does well in confined spaces if given plenty of exercise.



Irish Setter. Height: 26 to 28 inches, females two inches shorter; weight: 60 to 70 pounds; coat: silky with longer chest hair; color: mahogany or rich chestnut brown; ears hang down. This popular and regal sporting dog ranges in personality from clownish to reserved.



Labrador Retriever. Height: 21 $\frac{1}{2}$ to 24 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches; weight: 55 to 75 pounds; coat: straight and dense; color: golden to black; ears hang down. One of the finest family dogs in the world, this good-natured, adaptable sporting dog does fine in the city and country provided it gets plenty of exercise. Labs are strong swimmers.



Afghan Hound. Height: 26 to 28 inches; weight: 50 to 60 pounds; coat: long, straight, thick, and silky hair, fine in texture, with short hair on face; color: black, cream, silver, brindle (brownish with black stripes and flecks); ears hang down. This dog ranges in personality from nervous to clownish to dignified. Requires extra grooming.



Beagle (13-inch and 15-inch).

Height: 10 to 13 inches (13-inch), 13 to 15 inches (15-inch); weight: 18 to 20 pounds (13-inch), 20 to 30 pounds (15-inch); coat: hard; color: combination of black, white, and tan; ears hang down. This good-natured and cheerful dog is very adaptable.



Dachshund (Standard Smooth).

Height: 9 inches; weight: 10 to 20 pounds; coat: hard; color: black-and-tan or a solid, reddish brown; ears hang down. This very curious hound loves companionship but avoids long walks. A good indoor pet.



Alaskan Malamute. Height: 23 to 25 inches; weight: 75 to 110 pounds; coat: coarse; color: black or shades of gray with a lighter face and underbody; ears prick up. This working dog can range from playful to quietly dignified. If left isolated, the dog can become aggressive. Often used to pull sleds in northern climates. May require extra grooming.





Boxer. Height: 21 to 25 inches; weight: 60 to 75 pounds; coat: hard; color: light tan, reddish brown, often with white markings on the face, neck, and feet; ears are sometimes cropped for show or are left hanging; tail docked. This working dog is often good-natured with an expressive face.



Golden Retriever. Height: 21½ to 24 inches; weight: 55 to 75 pounds; coat: thick, repels water, can be wavy or straight, with feathers on the neck, underbody, and back of the forelegs; color: golden tan in a variety of shades, from light to dark; ears are short and fall close to the cheek; its thick tail curves slightly upward. This friendly, active dog makes an ideal family pet.



Airedale Terrier. Height: 22 to 23 inches; weight: 45 to 60 pounds; coat: hard and wiry; color: tan head, legs, and chest with blackish back and sides; ears fold forward. This dog is very playful as a puppy and matures into a very dignified adult.

Fox Terrier (Smooth and Wire).

Height: 14 $\frac{1}{2}$ to 15 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches; weight: 15 to 19 pounds; coat: short and wiry; color: mostly white with black and tan or tan patches; ears fold forward. This dog is one of the most bold and wildly energetic breeds. You can have a lot of fun playing fetch with this dog.



Irish Terrier. Height: 18 inches; weight: 25 to 27 pounds; coat: short and wiry; color: reddish or golden red, sometimes lighter; ears fold forward. This terrier has a lot of spirit and is fearless and full of spunk.



Chihuahua (Smooth and Longhaired). Height: 5 inches; weight: 2 to 6 pounds; coat: soft; color: white, blonde, tan, black and tan, patched, and other variations; ears prick up. This toy dog is made for indoors. While some are bold, others are timid and nervous.



Pekingese. Height: 8 to 9 inches; weight: 14 pounds; coat: coarse with a thick ruff; color: red, tan, black, white, black-and-tan, patched, brownish, or brindle; ears hang down. This toy dog seems big for its britches but is a favorite indoor dog. Requires extra grooming.





Yorkshire Terrier. Height: 7 to 9 inches; weight: 3 to 7 pounds; coat: straight and silky with long hair hanging down from the ears and muzzle; color: dark gray with rich tan markings; ears prick up. Some people like to pamper this toy dog. Others see the dog as a ball of energy. Requires extra grooming.



Bulldog. Height: 14 to 15 inches; weight: 40 to 55 pounds; coat: glossy; color: brindle, white, reddish, tan, or patched; distinctive protruding lower jaw. This nonsporting dog, once a fierce fighter, can be very sweet and lovable. A mature bulldog is dignified and doesn't like to walk much.



Dalmatian. Height: 19 to 24 inches; weight: 46 to 65 pounds; coat: hard; color: white with black or brown spots; ears hang down. This nonsporting dog is the famous fire dog. It is playful and needs plenty of exercise.



Poodle (Miniature). Height: 10 to 15 inches; weight: 14 to 17 pounds; coat: curly and dense; color: black, white, gray, blue, silver, cream, reddish, dark or pale brown; ears hang down. This dog is one of the most famous show dogs. Originated in France, the Miniature Poodle can be bouncy and lively but also nervous and excitable. Requires extra grooming.

Collie (Rough). Height: 24 to 26 inches, females 2 inches shorter; weight: 50 to 75 pounds; coat: matted and thick with longer hair underneath; color: gold to brown or black with white markings; ears three-quarters prick with the top quarter tipping forward. Lassie, the proud and gentle television star, was a Collie. This herding dog requires extra grooming.



German Shepherd. Height: 24 to 26 inches, females 2 inches shorter; weight: 65 to 100 pounds; coat: thick, hard, and straight with a dense undercoat; color: black and tan, black with tan points, golden tan, steel or silver gray, and black; ears prick up. Recognized as a police dog, this herding dog is very responsive to firm obedience training.



Shetland Sheepdog. Height: 13 to 16 inches; weight: 20 to 30 pounds; coat: outer coat long, straight, harsh hair, with short, furry, and dense undercoat; color: black, bluish, or golden, marked with varying amounts of white or tan; ears small and three-quarters erect, tips breaking forward. This is a gentle and sensitive dog and very trainable. Requires extra grooming.





Getting to Know Your Dog

Dogs are remarkable animals. It's hard to imagine that a Great Dane and a Toy Poodle are the same species, but they are genetically identical, have the same anatomy, and grow up the same way.

Newborn puppies have closed eyes and ear canals and no teeth. They also cannot walk. But they do have fully functional senses of smell and taste, which they use to find their mother. Immediately after *whelping* (birth), a puppy can drag itself to its mother's belly, where it can feed on her milk and find comfort.

By the third week, puppies can see, hear, and crawl. They also begin to teethe. By the sixth week, incisors and canine teeth have come in. These are puppy teeth and they are temporary. The first of the permanent teeth begin to come in by the third month, and by the seventh month the puppy has a full set of teeth in place.

Puppies can run by week five, and so begins a particularly active social and learning period. Their brains are rushing toward full development, so this is a good time to begin socializing and training.

Most puppies are sexually mature and can mate when they are 10 months old. Female dogs go into heat every six or seven months for about a three-week period. If she becomes pregnant, a dog will give birth to a litter in about 63 days. This means that most dogs can whelp two litters a year.

Until it is *weaned*, or introduced to solid food, the only nourishment a puppy needs comes from its mother's milk. Most mother dogs wean their litters when they are three to five weeks old.

Male dogs are particularly territorial and will mark their territory with urine, feces, and the scent from their anal glands.

A puppy is considered mature at its first birthday, but it might take longer than a year for it to reach full size. And its personality might continue to be puppylike for much longer.

Small and medium-sized dogs live about 15 years; a large dog might live only nine to 12 years. As dogs age, their senses begin to fail: They lose their sight and become hard of hearing, and their senses of smell and taste diminish.

Parts of a Dog

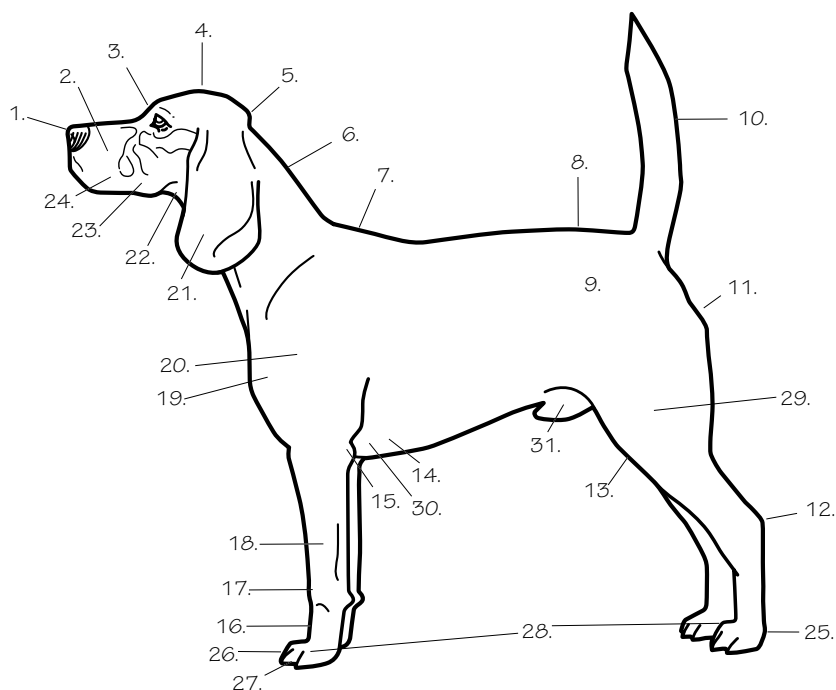
Every dog has a head, body, and legs. Each of these body parts differs among breeds as do other features such as the dog's size and its hair color.

THE HEAD

A variety in head shape and size is one reason dogs look so different from each other. The skull can be wide and flat, like a bulldog's, or narrow and long, like a collie's. Many breeds have skulls shaped somewhere in between. But all dogs have a stop, which is a small indentation in the forehead. Of course, some dogs have a pronounced stop, while on others the stop is hardly noticeable.

Dogs have a remarkable sense of smell. A dog's nostrils have many nerve endings, which pick up minute odors. When a dog sniffs, it is sizing up its environment. Scientific studies have found that dogs' noses are 20 to 40 times more sensitive than those of humans.

On the outside, dogs' ears come in many shapes and sizes. They can be short or long, folded or upright, or droopy. But dogs' middle and inner ears—the parts that do the hearing—are the same for all breeds. The design of dogs' ears gives them a keen sense of hearing that allows them to hear sounds that humans can't. This is why dogs are sometimes the first to notice a person's arrival.



The illustration shows parts of the dog. Many of these terms will be familiar to you, and others will be new. They are the terms used by judges in dog shows and are known to all experts.

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Nose | 12. Ankles, or hock | 23. Lips, or flews |
| 2. Muzzle | 13. Stifle, or knee | 24. Cheek |
| 3. Stop | 14. Chest | 25. Hind foot |
| 4. Skull | 15. Elbow | 26. Forefoot |
| 5. Occiput | 16. Pastern, or metacarpus | 27. Toes, or digits |
| 6. Arch, or crest | 17. Wrist, or carpus | 28. Dewclaws |
| 7. Withers, or top of shoulders | 18. Forearm | 29. Thigh |
| 8. Loin | 19. Point of shoulder | 30. Brisket |
| 9. Hip | 20. Shoulder | 31. Sheath (male) |
| 10. Tail | 21. Ear, or leather | |
| 11. Rump | 22. Dewlap | |

Because dogs are predators, their eyes are positioned close together and facing forward on the head, and their vision is suited for both day and night. This allows dogs to detect a lot of detail and movement. In addition to the two eyelids that open and close the eye, dogs also have a third eyelid, called the *haw* or *nictitating membrane*, which helps protect and clean the eyes. It is hard to see the haw because it is hidden in the inner corner of the eye when the eye is open.

Besides being long, pink, and slimy, a dog's tongue is an important part of its cooling system. Moisture evaporating from a panting dog's tongue helps keep the dog cool on a warm, sunny day.

Most adult dogs have 42 permanent teeth. In the front part of the mouth, these include 12 incisors and four canines for biting and tearing food. In the rear part of the mouth, there are 16 premolars and 10 molars for chewing.

Vocal folds, located in the neck, determine a dog's bark, growl, and whimper. The size of the vocal folds differs among breeds. This difference is how a Labrador Retriever gets its deep, loud bark and a Yorkshire Terrier its piercing, high-pitched one. Interestingly, the Basenji breed does not bark.

THE BODY AND LEGS

One of the most distinctive features of a dog's body is its hair, or coat (although there are a few hairless breeds). Whether long or short, single- or multicolored, thin or thick, or straight or curly, dogs are covered with it. What's more, it moves! When a dog is afraid, the hair on its hackles (its shoulders and back) stands up straight.

Sometimes a dog's hair is so thick and long that it is difficult to determine the dog's actual size or to see its body shape. But under all that hair is a wide, deep chest and a thin abdomen. A large chest indicates a formidable heart and lungs. These organs give a conditioned dog the endurance to run long distances without stopping. Dogs have 13 pairs of ribs and 27 vertebrae.

Most dogs have four toes on the rear feet. However, a fifth toe, or dewclaw, is often found on the inside leg above the paw on the forearms, hind legs, or both. The dewclaw is left over from the dog's early days and has no use today. Sometimes owners have the dewclaws removed.

Dog legs and paws are built for seeking and stalking prey. Muscles of the fore- and hindquarters give endurance, and bone length promotes movement. The pads on the bottom of the paws cushion the impact of running and muffle noise.

Tails vary in length and shape. Tail length is determined by the number of tailbones a dog has. The shape of the tail depends on the tail length and the breed. For example, the Siberian Husky has a sickle tail that is carried in an arc over its back. The Dalmation has a whip tail—it sticks out straight like an arrow. The English Bulldog has a short, stubby fused tail that twists like a corkscrew.



Being a Responsible Dog Owner

Acquiring a dog is a major decision. Before you get a dog, you should understand the kinds of responsibilities you will have to care for the dog its entire life. You will need to feed it properly, groom it regularly, and tend to its medical needs. A dog requires proper training, and it should never be treated improperly.

Selecting Your Dog

Whether you live in the city, in the suburbs, or in the country, there is a dog that can fit your personality, location, and lifestyle. The climate where you live might determine the type of dog you should select. Dog owners in the far north might choose breeds with a thick coat. If you live in the city or in an apartment, you probably should choose a breed of dog that is small to medium in size. Large dogs need plenty of room to exercise.

To select your dog, first figure out why you want one. Most people want a dog for companionship. If you live on a farm, your dog might become a working animal; if you live in the city, you might want a watchdog. Some dogs, such as the Labrador Retriever, do better



Keep in mind that some breeds are better suited than others for families with small children. Certain breeds are more aggressive, stubborn, reactive, or hyperactive; more likely to bite people; or harder to train. Ask a veterinarian to help you select the best pet for your family and to make sure it is healthy.

around children than more aggressive breeds. Some people choose a dog because of its special traits, such as one that doesn't shed.

Next consider the type of dog you want. Some people want a purebred because they like its appearance or personality, and they know what the dog will look like when it grows up. Others find that a mixed breed will do just as well and is less expensive. You can find a mixed-breed dog at an animal shelter, through a humane society or rescue group, or advertised in your local newspaper.

If you want to buy a purebred dog, find out everything you can about the breed so you can ask the breeder questions. Some purebred dogs may be more prone to certain medical problems; good breeders will alert you. Mixed-breed dogs also may develop medical problems, but there is no way to anticipate the type of problems.

Healthy Choice

When you are evaluating a puppy or an adult dog, the dog should appear friendly and outgoing. Puppies should be playful, not shy or anxious. Make sure the dog's eyes are bright and shiny and have no discharge. The inner eyelids should be smooth and pink. Check the dog's ears for debris. The skin should feel warm and dry to the touch. The dog's coat ought to be clean and sweet smelling. The dog should be in good form and build, not extremely fat or extremely thin.

Knowing Dog Ordinances

You need to be aware of dog ordinances in your area. Check with your veterinarian, animal control center, or local police to learn the laws and regulations you must follow. Ask your librarian to help you look up "dogs" or "animals" in your city or county code. Some cities have pamphlets outlining your obligations. Pay attention to the law.

The types of laws regulating dogs include:

- **Leash laws.** Many communities require that a dog be on a leash in all public areas unless otherwise designated.
- **Pooper-scooper laws.** These laws require owners to pick up and properly dispose of their pet's feces. Violators may have to pay a fine.
- **Licensing laws.** Not only will a license help your community keep track of dogs, it will also help people know whom to call if your dog is lost.
- **Rabies vaccination laws.** These exist in every state.
- **Nuisance laws.** Common nuisance violations are excessive barking, howling, or whining.
- **Dangerous or vicious dog laws.** If your dog has injured a person or pet or damages property, you may be required to confine or muzzle it, and you may have to insure your dog. In some cases, it may have to be destroyed. Also, some household insurance policies will not cover damage or liabilities caused by certain breeds. Have your parent or guardian check their insurance policy for this.
- **Breed-specific laws.** These laws are controversial, but generally they single out breeds such as Pit Bulls, Rottweilers, Doberman Pinschers, Chow Chows, and others for specific regulations. Some believe these laws are discriminatory while others believe that certain breeds require additional regulations.
- **Spaying and neutering laws.** Some communities have ordinances regulating the breeding of dogs.





Training Your Dog

From performing in the circus to rounding up herds of sheep, dogs of all ages can be trained to do a variety of tasks. Some dogs receive special training to help people who are deaf. Law enforcement agencies might rely on dogs to find smuggled currency. And dogs can be trained to aid police with the apprehension of criminals.

Your dog probably won't learn such complicated behaviors as those described above, but your training goal is very important: to help your dog live in the human world. This means that your dog will fit in with you, your family's activities, and society.

Know the difference between house-training (learning to be a good member of the family), socialization (adjusting to the environment), and obedience training (learning to understand commands).

House-Training

The first step in training your dog is house-training, or getting your dog to urinate and defecate outside. This can begin when a puppy is six weeks old.

Puppies generally need to go to the bathroom after they eat, when they wake up from a nap, and after playing hard. A puppy will learn to develop a preference for the type of surface it uses. The trick in house-training is to teach the puppy that your yard is the surface it prefers.

Go easy on the puppy when you first bring it home. It will take a couple of days for the young dog to begin to get used to its new home. During this time, the puppy probably won't respond well to a sudden training regimen. Accidents will happen, but remember not to scold the little dog. Be patient.

Begin house-training the first time you feed your puppy in the morning. Offer food to the puppy for only 10 minutes. Then pick up any uneaten food and take the puppy outside. Take a small portion of the puppy's food with you for a reward. Put the puppy on the ground. When the puppy begins to squat, say "Go potty, go potty." When the puppy finally goes to the bathroom, praise it lavishly, say "Good potty, good potty," and give the food reward. Used together, the vocal and food rewards will reinforce what you want the puppy to do.

Take the puppy outside after every meal, after every nap, during hard play sessions, and any other time you think the puppy might need to go. Take the puppy to the same door, repeating the question, “Do you want to go out?” Follow the same route each time you go out.

Take along a “pooper-scooper” or an ordinary plastic bag, to help you clean up after your dog. Put the bag over your hand like a mitten, pick up the dog’s mess with your covered hand, turn the bag inside out, close it, and throw it away.

If you find the puppy has had an accident, simply clean it up. If you try to correct your dog after the accident, it won’t understand why it is being scolded. If you see the puppy going to the bathroom in the house, gently correct it with a sharp but quiet “No!” and take it outside to its regular spot. While out there, praise your puppy for going outside.

Crates for Pups

It is a good idea to get a crate in which to confine a puppy. Crates might seem small, but dogs like cozy places of their own. Think of a crate as an indoor doghouse. Crates also help house-training because dogs won’t go to the bathroom in the same area in which they eat or sleep.

Buy a crate that is just big enough to allow your dog to easily stand up, turn around, lie down, and stretch out. You can buy a crate large enough to fit your dog when it is fully grown, but pad the inside to make the space the right size for your puppy. If you don’t, the space might be large enough that your puppy will use one end as a bathroom.

Until your dog is house-trained, you might want to keep it in the crate whenever you are not handling it. This will make the house-training easier. Later, you can let the dog out unsupervised for longer periods. But leave the door open so your dog can return to the crate to rest.

The important thing to remember is that the crate is your dog’s safe place. Make it comfortable with soft bedding, and never confine your dog there as punishment.



Be consistent and keep a regular schedule. Praise your puppy every step of the way. When the puppy gets the idea, which might take weeks, it will go to the door when it wants to be let out.

Clean up an accident immediately and thoroughly. Any odor left behind will make that area an attractive bathroom location. You can clear away the odor with a vinegar and water mixture or a pet odor remover (available at pet stores). Other cleaning products won't get rid of the odor and might even encourage the puppy to use that area again.

Socialization

Socializing a puppy with other people and dogs is an important part of helping your pet become well-adjusted to its environment. In nature, litters of wolf puppies and other wild canines interact with other members of their pack. By doing this, they learn how to accept the presence of other animals. Our pets need this same socialization period in their lives. Many times people just leave their dog out in the backyard or remove it from the house when company arrives. Never having the opportunity to be in the presence of people can then make your dog nervous and fearful of people later in life.

Obedience Training

Basic obedience training is like teaching a child good manners. The commands for dogs are "sit," "stay," and "come," followed by "down" and "heel." Teaching a dog basic obedience makes sense because our pets do not naturally know what is expected of them in the human world. We have to teach them.

Learning how to respond to basic obedience commands can literally save a dog's life in today's world of busy streets and fast automobiles. Obedience training can begin when dogs are four to six months old and continue throughout a dog's lifetime. Obedience-trained



Try to introduce your new puppy to as many of your friends and family members as possible as often as possible. Do not allow anyone to roughhouse, tease, or torment your puppy. Instead, let visitors hold the dog, pet it, give it food treats, and talk gently and softly to it. Remember, good behavior on the part of people will help ensure good behavior in your puppy.

dogs make better pets, have fewer behavioral problems, and generally bond more closely with their owners. Certain breeds of dogs are more trainable than others; sporting and working breeds generally are the easiest to train.

There are many training methods, some more effective than others. Make sure that the method you choose fits both you and your dog. If your dog is strong-willed, choose a training method that can make the best of this tendency. If your dog is submissive, you may need a training method that will boost its confidence.

Some owners elect to take their dogs to obedience classes. If you decide to do this, don't wait. Enroll your dog once it's had all of its vaccinations. Classes may range from basic puppy kindergarten, to obedience for an older dog, to advanced training. To pick the right one for your dog's abilities, ask your veterinarian for help.

Whatever training program you pick, make sure you stick to it. In some cases, if you apply a little of this program and a little of that one, you can confuse your pet and weaken the effectiveness of the training.

A good trainer can help you figure out what works best with your dog. This can be an excellent way to train your pet and to improve your own skills in handling it.

Advanced training for hunting, herding, search and rescue, police attack, or assisting people who are blind may come after the basics are learned. These types of advanced trainings are usually handled under the guidance of a professional trainer. Most dogs are not suited to this type of training.

The most important part of training your dog is consistency and fairness. By properly house-training, socializing, and obedience training your dog, you will help make it a responsible and joyful member of your family.



Helping Your Dog Learn

Help your dog learn by praising the dog when it does what you want it to do and correcting it when it acts inappropriately. Using these two actions, dogs can be taught to do many things.

The trick is to be fast because dogs have short memories. You must see the behavior and follow it immediately with praise or correction. If you wait a few minutes to give praise or correction, you probably are reinforcing a behavior other than the one you intended. A classic example is calling a dog to you to correct an inappropriate behavior. The dog will think you are correcting it for coming to you and will likely stop responding when you say “come.”



A pet supplier can help you find the right training collar for your dog. Remember to use training collars only during training time.

Be sure to praise only when the dog performs a desired behavior and to praise as often as possible. The American Kennel Club recommends following a correction immediately with praise. You can do this by giving the correction for the inappropriate behavior and then asking the dog to do something it already knows how to do. When the dog performs the behavior, give lots of praise. Pet your dog, say “good dog,” and feed it a snack. This will help keep your dog happy. Remember, your dog only wants to please you.

Make corrections firm but kind. You want the dog to feel the weight of the correction without becoming afraid. When your dog makes a mistake, use the word “no!” sharply but not loudly, and it will learn the meaning.

Give commands just once and use the same command each time. If you use different words, the dog will become confused and training will take a lot longer. Also, the dog will learn better if only one person does the training in the beginning. Later on, the whole family can join in, but it is important that everyone use the same commands.

You can use a training collar to help train your dog. Also called “slip” or choke collars, these collars allow you to exert as much or as little control as you need. You can get your dog’s attention and encourage proper behavior by giving a light, quick pull on the leash. This tightens the collar around the neck but only for a moment, then it will loosen.

Let a puppy examine and smell a collar and leash before you use them. Then let the puppy try out the collar for a day before you begin training. After the dog is used to the collar, snap on the leash and let the dog drag it around for a while, watching that the leash doesn’t get tangled on something.



The Star Dog of the World Trade Center

The brightest star in the sky is Sirius, the Dog Star. It shines more than 20 times brighter than the sun.

Another kind of dog star shined brightly on September 11, 2001, at the World Trade Center in New York. Sirius, a bomb-sniffing Labrador Retriever, and his handler, police officer David Lim, were on duty there. Their work was suddenly interrupted by a massive explosion. "One must have gotten by us," Lim said as he locked Sirius in his crate and raced up the tower steps to help.

Terrorists had purposefully piloted an airplane into the building. Officer Lim was frantically helping people down the North Tower's fire stairs to safety when it began to fall. Miraculously, they survived.

Four months later, in the wreckage of the buildings, Sirius was discovered dead in his damaged crate. When officer Lim was notified, he rushed to Ground Zero. The dog had been killed instantly when the building collapsed. As Lim carried his friend's broken body to a New York Police Department truck, excavators stopped their engines. New York police officers saluted and firefighters stood at attention.

On April 24, 2002, a memorial service for Sirius was held. More than 200 people and K-9 units from across the country gathered to honor brave Sirius. Officer Lim was presented with Sirius' metal water bowl, which had been pulled from Lim's damaged car. Lim broke down after receiving the bowl, which had been engraved with Sirius' shield number and these words:



"I gave my life so that you may save others."

After the dog is used to the leash, take up your end of it and walk around with your pet, applying little or no pressure. Gradually, over a short period, increase your control until your dog is completely comfortable being on the leash.

Multiple, short periods of training are most effective. Four or five sessions a day, five to 10 minutes each, works well for puppies. Older dogs can tolerate sessions of up to 20 minutes long.

Canine Good Citizen

The American Kennel Club's Canine Good Citizen® certification program rewards dogs that have good manners at home and in the community. The program stresses responsible pet ownership and basic good manners for dogs. For more information, contact the AKC (see the resources section at the end of this pamphlet).

Basic Training

It's important for every dog to know these five basic commands. Teach one command at a time, and reinforce those already learned before moving on to a new one.

"Sit." Have your dog on the leash to your left. Say "Sit" and, at the same time, press the dog's rump into a sitting position. When your dog is seated to your satisfaction, give a bit of food and lots of praise. Repeat the lesson until your dog sits on its own.

"Stay." Now have your dog sit. Tell it to "stay" and drop the leash. Raise your palm in front of its nose and then back away. If your dog tries to follow, say "No" and hold your raised palm toward it. Have your dog sit and then repeat the exercise until it stays on command.

"Come." Walk with your dog heeling beside you. Then step backward, pulling the dog with you and saying "Come." Pet and feed your dog a little. Repeat, using the leash less and less, until your dog comes to you to be petted and rewarded.

"Down." First, get your dog to sit. Then say "Down" and press its shoulders down while pulling its front feet forward. Your dog will lie down. Repeat until your dog lies down when you give the command.

"Heel." The goal is to have your dog walk at your left side at an even pace. Hold the end of the leash in your right hand with the training collar above the dog's neck in your left hand. Your dog's chest should be kept next to your left leg. Gently but firmly pull the dog into the proper place with your left hand as you walk along, giving the command "Heel!" Praise your dog as soon as it is in the right position. Teach your dog to stop when you stop and walk when you walk.

Caring for Your Dog

Your dog needs what you need: food, shelter, love, and companionship. It relies on you, so treat your dog with care and respect.

Dogs have their origins in the wild canines of prehistoric times. These social pack animals were carnivores (meat eaters) and ate what they could hunt and kill or scavenge. They wasted nothing. The carnivores ate the muscles, bones, and organs as well as the stomach and intestinal contents of their prey. The parts supplied protein, carbohydrates, fat, minerals, vitamins, and fiber—just what the canines needed to live.

Today, wolves, foxes, coyotes, and jackals hunt for food, but they can't always find a balanced meal. Our pet dogs have an advantage over their relatives in the wild. They only have to hunt for their feeding bowls to find a healthy serving of commercially manufactured dog food.



Feeding Your Dog

Just as infants, toddlers, children, and adults require different amounts of liquids and food during their lifetime, so do dogs. There are different diets for different stages of your pet's life. A newborn puppy up to the age of three or four weeks depends wholly on its mother's milk. When it is weaned, you should introduce your dog to a "puppy" diet, which usually contains higher levels of protein and carbohydrates than the mother's milk as well as a balanced mineral content.

A general rule of thumb is to feed a puppy on the basis of one cup (8 ounces) of dry food per 20 pounds of body weight, three times a day. For example, feed a 5-pound puppy only one-quarter cup of dry food three times daily; feed a 10-pound puppy one-half cup three times a day.

Feeding canned food to your puppy may be necessary at first because of the lack of tooth development. However, try to soak dry food in water to soften it and feed it to your dog as soon as possible. Canned foods are more flavorful, but they are mostly water. Pound for pound, they do not provide as much nutrition for a puppy as dry kibble.

When your dog reaches bone growth maturity (which varies with each breed), it's time to switch to an "adult dog" diet. Adjust the amount of food you give it based on its weight and breed. Reduce the number of meals from three times a day to two times. If you continue to feed your pet three meals a day—or keep the dog food bowl filled during the day—your dog may become obese.

Be sure to keep plenty of fresh, clean water available for your dog at all times. If you have an outside dog, place the water bowl in the shade. Check often and refill the bowl regularly. Keep the water bowl clean and free of debris by washing it as needed.

Dog Feeding Don'ts

Don't feed a dog pork bones, chicken bones, chop bones, T-bones, or other bones that can splinter. They can cause serious injury. You may give your dog a knucklebone, which does not splinter, or a dog toy that is solid enough that your pet can't chew it up and swallow it.

As dogs age, their diet requirements will vary according to their existing health problems and levels of activity. If your older dog is healthy, feed your pet a "senior" or "lite" diet once or twice a day. However, if your dog has certain medical problems (such as kidney disease, arthritis or joint issues, or heart problems), ask your veterinarian to recommend a diet specifically modified for your pet's condition. That diet will not only help to manage your dog's medical problems but also may improve the quality of your pet's life and help lengthen its lifespan.

The rate of aging varies among the different breeds of dogs. “Toy” and small breeds may live to be over 15 years old, while “giant” breeds may be considered very old at 9 or 10 years of age.

Your dog’s level of activity will affect how much food the dog needs to eat. Working dogs (such as herding breeds and police dogs) require more protein and carbohydrates but not a proportional increase of fat in their diet. However, dogs in cold climates require—in addition to extra protein and carbohydrates—a much higher amount of fat in their diet. Dogs recovering from certain injuries or illness may need special dietary supplements. A “sit-in-your-lap” dog with little activity should have a controlled diet that keeps it from becoming obese.

Housing Your Dog

Though many dogs live indoors with their owners, others spend most of their lives outside. Dogs that live outdoors need shelter. How you house your dog depends on the climate, the type of dog you have, and where you live.

All dogs are not necessarily outdoor dogs. A Great Dane, for example, is a big dog but has a short coat and could freeze outside in winter temperatures. Pug-nosed small breeds, like English Bulldogs, do very poorly outdoors in hot climates where they have a hard time panting to keep their bodies cool. Most small and shorthaired dogs are best kept inside when it gets cold.

Like wolves, dogs develop a winter coat. However, they won’t properly develop that coat if kept indoors during the winter. For that reason, don’t keep a dog indoors during the day in winter and then send it out into the cold at night. Dogs do get frostbite and can freeze to death in very cold climates. An outside dog should be outside all the time except when temperatures fall below zero.



In 2012 the United States Postal Service issued the “Dogs at Work” stamps to celebrate how dogs partner with people to help and protect us.



A dog that is kept outdoors should have access to adequate food, water, and shelter at all times.

If you plan to house your dog outdoors, start when the dog is a puppy. An older dog that is used to being kept indoors will have a hard time adapting to outside living. If you buy an adult dog, find out if it was raised as an outdoor dog before leaving it outside. In extreme weather conditions—hot or cold—bring the dog inside.

An outdoor dog needs a dry, elevated doghouse with clean, dry bedding, and a flap over the entrance in wintertime to keep out drafts. It should be small enough to allow the dog's body heat to keep the space warm. Dogs need protection from wet cold. If you have a garage, consider adding a dog door to the garage and put a soft cushion in the warmest corner.

If you live in the north, you will need to give your pet extra care in the winter. Check outdoor water bowls often when the temperature is below freezing. When necessary break the ice or refill the bowl with warm water. In winter, outdoor dogs also need more calories, so increase the amount you feed your pet. On the other hand, indoor dogs may get less exercise when it is cold, so feed them less to avoid weight gain.

Dogs kept in extremely hot or humid environments need air circulation, plenty of clean, fresh water, and daylong shade. In summertime, be sure to change the water at least twice daily to keep it clean and fresh and free of algae. Be aware that dogs can suffer from heat exhaustion and die of heatstroke.

Exercising Your Dog

Dogs don't like being cooped up inside or out. Even if you have a large yard for your dog, that does not mean it is getting enough exercise. A dog in need of exercise is both bored and unruly. Exercise provides both physical and mental stimulation. Exercise gives a dog an outlet for energy and builds strong bodies and good muscle tone.

How do you decide how much exercise your dog needs? It depends on the age, weight, health, and breed of the dog. Ask yourself these questions before you start exercising your dog: Is your dog eating all the time? Is your dog bored? Is your dog a hunter or working dog that likes to run? A Great Dane might need a long hike each day to stay in shape. Do you have a small breed that stations itself on the couch? A walk around the block might be enough to keep a toy dog fit.

Pay attention to your dog's health as you begin an exercise program.

- Bring water if you plan to be out for a long time; give your dog only small portions of water before and immediately after exercise.
- Exercise during the cooler parts of the day to keep your dog from overheating.
- Give your dog time to digest food before exercising.
- Avoid extreme heat or cold; hot or frozen surfaces can hurt your dog's paws.
- Avoid surfaces covered with chemicals such as oil, anti-freeze, and chemical de-icers used in winter; these can burn the pads on the bottom of the paws or might make your dog sick if it licks off these chemicals.
- After exercise in the summer, check your dog all over for ticks and burrs.





Puppies have soft pads and should start off on softer surfaces, such as grass or dirt, until their pads toughen. Any dog not used to exercise should start out with several short walks a day. This is true for puppies, however energetic they may be, and dogs that are out of shape and overweight. Older dogs might not be able to handle much more than a gentle walk. If you have any concerns about how to start an exercise program for your dog, consult your veterinarian.



Dogs with thin or short hair might need a coat or sweater in cold weather.

When walking your dog, be sure to use a leash and collar. This will help keep your dog safe. Besides, most cities have laws that require dogs to be on a leash. Some parks have leash-free areas where dogs can run free, but they are best for well-trained dogs. If your dog is young or not used to being around a lot of other dogs and people, it is not a good idea to enter a leash-free area.

Remember: Pooper-scooper laws require owners to clean up after their pets.

As your dog's fitness level increases, you can pick up the pace. Dogs love to fetch—some breeds can fetch balls, sticks, or other fun toys for hours without becoming tired. If both you and your dog are in good shape, you can try jogging or swimming together. Exercise makes tired dogs and Scouts happy dogs and Scouts.

If your dog has a history of medical problems, ask your veterinarian about an appropriate exercise program. Remember, whatever exercise program you pursue, your dog loves to spend time with you, and you can make that time special!



Grooming Your Dog

Just like you, dogs benefit from having their hair brushed daily. Throughout the day, dirt, bugs, dead skin, and shedding hair collect in the dog's coat and the hair can become matted. A quick daily brushing cleans the hair and prevents tangles. It also stimulates blood circulation in the skin and distributes the skin's natural oils. All of this helps keep your dog's coat shiny.

If you have a short-haired dog, or a puppy, give it a rub-down with a soft cloth or a piece of chamois. You can also use a stiff, short-bristled brush on short-haired adult dogs. Long-haired dogs will require a wide-toothed comb and a brush with long bristles. Work out burrs on long-haired dogs with your thumb and forefinger, or with a metal grooming comb.

Spread a newspaper on the floor to catch the combings. Place your dog on the paper, and pet and talk to your dog in a soothing voice until the dog relaxes. Begin working from head to tail. If your dog is not used to being groomed, keep the session short. You can gradually increase the time as the dog becomes more comfortable with grooming.

If you work gently and give a lot of praise, grooming will be an enjoyable experience for your dog.

Bathing Your Dog

Unless your dog gets really dirty running around outside, it should only need a bath about once a month. More frequent bathing can dry out a dog's skin. Puppies younger than three months generally should not be bathed.

When you do give your dog a bath, use warm—never hot or cold—water. Talk gently to your dog, giving praise for sitting still. Begin washing from the tail up.



Long-haired dogs often have matted or tangled hair that may be hard to brush out. The trick is to hold the hair above the matted part and gently work at the bottom of the tangle with a brush or comb. If you cannot brush it out, the matted part will have to be cut out. Unless someone in your household has experience with this, have a groomer or a veterinarian remove the tangle.

Examine ears for redness, discharge, and parasites as you clean. Or, if you see your dog shaking its head a lot or pawing at its ears, take a closer look. These symptoms might indicate an infection or other problem that needs treatment by a veterinarian.

Your dog's head should be the last thing you wash because once it gets wet, your dog will want to shake itself. When you wash the head, keep soap and water out of your dog's ears and eyes. Rinse thoroughly with lukewarm water, more than once if necessary, so that no soap is left on the dog's skin.

Dogs can easily catch cold, so dry your dog after each bath. This is particularly important for long-haired dogs whose thick coats can take a long time to air dry. You can use a hair dryer to dry your dog, but make sure the heat and power are set to low. Otherwise, use heavy towels and keep your dog warm and away from drafts until completely dry.



Good grooming tools for your pet, including a brush and comb, nail clippers, and dog shampoo, are available from your pet supplier.

Never use shampoo made for people on a dog. It is too strong and will dry out your dog's skin. Use shampoo made just for dogs.

Cleaning Ears and Eyes

Inspect your dog's ears weekly to see if they need cleaning. If they do, use cotton balls (not swabs) with an ear cleansing solution for dogs. Wipe all the nooks and crannies you can see, taking care not to push wax and dirt into the ear canal. Be very gentle; a dog's ears are tender. Your dog's ears probably will need to be cleaned only once or twice a month.

Eye care is important for breeds with protruding eyes, such as Cocker Spaniels, Lhasa Apsos, and Pekingese. If the dog is prone to an eye discharge, wipe it off daily with water-soaked cotton. Heavy eye discharge might be a sign of disease and should be checked by your veterinarian.

Trimming Nails

Running and walking outside might keep your dog's nails from getting too long, but it probably won't keep them short enough. Dewclaws never get worn and will grow quite long. Overgrown nails are painful for your dog. Check your dog's nails regularly and trim as needed, probably every couple of weeks.

You can help your dog get used to the idea of nail trimming by regularly handling its feet while grooming.

Small puppies can be gradually introduced to nail trimming with the use of a stiff emery board. Do one foot every day. Food treats may be helpful to get a wiggly puppy to accept this method of grooming the nails.

On older dogs, use only nail clippers designed for dogs. Trim only a small bit of the clear part of the nail at a time. This part is no longer attached to nerves or blood vessels. The clear part of the nail is sometimes hard to see, and this makes trimming a little tricky. If you are unsure how to trim your dog's nails, ask your veterinarian to show you how.

Dental Care

To prevent dental problems, brush your dog's teeth daily with toothpaste and a toothbrush made specifically for dogs. This will help prevent plaque and tartar buildup. Rawhide chew toys and hard foods, such as biscuits, also help keep the teeth clean. Your veterinarian will take care of the rest with regular teeth cleaning as part of your dog's annual checkup.

A dog with a healthy mouth has pink gums that fit snugly around white teeth. And a healthy dog's breath should not smell bad. If you notice bad breath, yellow teeth, or red and swollen gums, have your dog's teeth checked right away. These symptoms are signs of gum disease, which can lead to tooth loss when left untreated.

Dogs should be given their own toys to chew and taught not to chew on other items around the house.



Puppy teeth should fall out as the permanent teeth come in. If you notice a permanent tooth coming in around a puppy tooth that isn't loose, take your puppy to the veterinarian to have the puppy tooth removed.



Keeping Your Dog Healthy

Soon after you get your dog, have a veterinarian give it a thorough checkup. A veterinarian will assess your dog's overall health by examining its pulse, breathing, urine, stool, ears, eyes, nose, skin, and coat. The veterinarian can tell you whether your dog needs deworming or vaccinations.

Vaccinations will protect your dog from highly contagious diseases that can endanger its life. Your dog should be vaccinated against distemper, hepatitis, leptospirosis, parainfluenza ("kennel cough"), and parvovirus. These five vaccinations usually are given as one shot. A puppy six to eight weeks old should be taken to the veterinarian to receive its first shot, with the vaccination program to continue every three to four weeks thereafter until the dog is 12 to 16 weeks old. At three to four months of age, the dog should have a rabies shot, with yearly boosters thereafter.

Puppies need frequent checkups. This is in part because of their vaccination schedule, but also because the little dogs are changing so rapidly. These visits allow the veterinarian to get a better idea of the puppy's health as it grows.

Adult dogs should be seen annually. During these visits the veterinarian examines the dog thoroughly for any changes that might indicate illness. Your dog's health condition will gradually change as your dog ages. The veterinarian can note these changes and make recommendations for diet and exercise routines to keep your dog healthy.

Visits will allow you to ask questions about raising and training your dog. Don't forget that your veterinarian deals with dog owners all day, every day, so there is a good chance the veterinarian will have a ready answer to almost any question.

Rabies vaccination laws vary from state to state. Your pet's veterinarian can tell you what the law is in your state.

Spaying and Neutering

In the wild, animals produce offspring to ensure the continuation and survival of the species. Wolves, coyotes, and dingoes produce large litters of pups to compensate for the high death rate in their litters from disease and predators. Domesticated dogs have the potential to produce large litters as often as twice a year but without the natural controls of disease and predation. Without some other means of population control, the pet dog population could quickly become an overwhelming problem worldwide.

The spaying (or *ovariohysterectomy*) of a female dog and neutering (also called *castration*) of a male dog are two surgical methods to help control dog populations. Besides eliminating the overpopulation of unwanted puppies, these surgical procedures provide many other benefits to an animal's health.

Spaying a female helps reduce the likelihood of her developing infections or cancer in the reproductive tract and milk glands. Neutering a male dog reduces his tendency to roam, fight, and develop problems in his reproductive tract. Spaying and neutering are a part of being a responsible pet owner. Helping control pet overpopulation is everyone's responsibility.

According to Spay Oklahoma (spayok.com), 70,000 puppies and kittens are born each day in the United States. Millions of unwanted dogs, cats, kittens, and puppies are destroyed by animal control agencies each year. Many thousands more are abandoned. Check this out: If an unspayed female dog, her mate, and all of their puppies and the offspring of those puppies were not spayed or neutered, that would add up to:

1 year: 16 puppies	4 years: 2,048 puppies
2 years: 128 puppies	5 years: 12,288 puppies
3 years: 512 puppies	6 years: 67,000 puppies

Be a responsible pet owner and spay or neuter your dog or cat.

An Ounce of Prevention

You probably will know when your dog is sick because of changes in its behavior. Your active dog might be listless or your relaxed one restless. The dog's coat and eyes might lose their shine. Your dog might stop eating or start drinking a lot more water than usual. Its gums and tongue might turn pale. Bowel movements and feces might become irregular.

If you think your dog is sick, take a closer look. Is the dog's heart rate elevated? You can check a dog's pulse on the inside of the hind leg, high on the inner thigh near where the leg meets the belly. Normal pulse rates vary among different types of dogs. Smaller breeds and toy breeds can have heart rates that exceed 120 beats per minute. The heart rates of larger breeds are between 70 and 90 beats per minute.

If your dog has a fever or a prolonged, elevated heart rate, it needs to be taken to a veterinarian.

Common Dog Diseases and Vaccinations

Like humans, dogs are susceptible to all kinds of infections from fleas, ticks, and worms to viruses and bacterial infections. Being familiar with some common dog diseases can help you keep your dog healthy.

WORMS

Worms are parasites that live inside your dog. Hookworms, roundworms, tapeworms, and whipworms live in the intestines. Heartworms are found in the bloodstream.

If you got your dog as a puppy, there is a good chance the puppy had worms when you brought it home. Many puppies are infected with certain worms from birth. They are transmitted to the puppy from its mother. Worms can prevent your pup from gaining weight and can cause intestinal upsets. Roundworms are a common type of worms found in puppies and also can infect humans during certain stages.

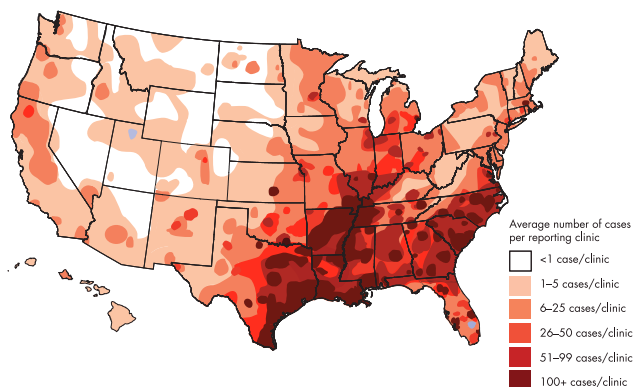
When you first get your puppy, it needs to be dewormed. To see what kind of worms your puppy might have, take a sample of the puppy's stool to the veterinarian. Tests will determine what type of parasite your puppy may have and the medication that should be used for treatment. (A stool sample also can be taken at the veterinarian's office.)

2022 HEARTWORM INCIDENCE



AMERICAN
HEARTWORM
SOCIETY
EST. 1994

© American Heartworm Society. The severity of heartworm incidence as shown in this map is based on the average number of cases per reporting clinic. Some remote regions of the United States lack veterinary clinics, therefore we have no reported cases from these areas.



heartwormsociety.org

Heartworm disease can affect dogs in every state.

In adult dogs most intestinal parasites are picked up from the stool of an infected dog (except tapeworms, which are spread by fleas). Because this can easily happen when dogs are sniffing around outside, adult dogs should also have a stool check a couple of times a year to screen for parasitic disease. Remember, most internal parasites are not visible to the naked eye, so don't assume they are not a problem just because you don't see them.

Dogs can get heartworms through the bite of a mosquito that carries the parasite. A dog might be infected for a long time before you know about it because it takes awhile for the worms to cause damage to the dog's heart. Symptoms of heartworms could include sluggishness and coughing. These can progress to heart failure, which can cause death.

Do not administer medicines to your dog without first consulting your veterinarian.



It's a Pill, but Someone Has to Do the Dirty Work!

To give your pup a pill, gently grasp its muzzle as shown in 1. Apply some pressure just behind the canine teeth, squeezing the lips against the teeth (2); open the mouth wide. Using your free hand, place the pill as far back on the tongue as you can (3). Gently close the muzzle and hold it shut until your dog swallows. Massage the throat using a downward motion to encourage swallowing (4). Once your dog has swallowed the pill, pet it and give it lots of praise.

You may be able to fool your pet by disguising the pill in a favorite treat such as cheese or peanut butter. Be sure you check with your veterinarian first because some medications should not be given with food.

Dogs can be tested for heartworms when they are six months old. Annual screening and preventive medication can help protect your dog from heartworms.

Treatment for heartworms takes a long time and is hard on the dog. It is better to prevent the infection. Most dogs are prescribed preventive treatments for heartworms during mosquito season. If you live in an area of the country where mosquitoes are a problem throughout the year, your dog probably will receive preventive treatments year-round.

VIRUSES

Some of the common viral diseases that can infect your dog are canine distemper, canine parvovirus, and rabies.

Canine distemper is a respiratory viral disease. The virus is spread from dog to dog through the air and via saliva. Symptoms of canine distemper include snotty nose and eyes, coughing, and pneumonia. Later stages may involve the skin, digestive tract, and nervous system. Canine distemper has a high fatality rate and in some areas is the number one killer of dogs. Treatment for canine distemper is often futile and primarily aimed at supportive care.

Canine distemper is prevented by vaccinations. Puppies normally receive a series of distemper vaccinations while older dogs receive annual booster vaccinations.

Canine parvovirus is a digestive disease. It is spread through the vomit and diarrhea of a sick dog by flies, and through contaminated shoes, hands, and other objects. The virus can live outside of the dog and remain infective for a long period of time. Symptoms of canine parvovirus are vomiting and diarrhea that are sometimes bloody, leading to dehydration, shock, and death.



You can't license your dog without a rabies vaccination, which the law says must be administered by your dog's veterinarian.

Canine parvovirus is a highly contagious disease. With supportive treatment, however, an infected dog can survive. Treatment may be expensive so vaccinations are highly recommended. As with canine distemper, a series of vaccinations are given to puppies while adult dogs receive annual boosters.

Probably the most feared dog disease is **rabies**, partly because it can affect humans through a dog bite. Because rabies infects the brain, it causes extreme personality changes, such as viciousness and excessive salivation, often described as "foaming at the mouth." Biting at inanimate objects and the inability to swallow also are symptoms of rabies.

If you find your dog sleeping or lying in an unusual place, such as a closet or under a bed, your dog might be wounded or sick. When animals don't feel well, they often retreat to small, cozy places where they feel safe.

Because there is no treatment for this disease (it is always fatal to dogs!) and it can be passed to humans, rabies vaccinations for dogs are required by law in all states. Thanks to these strict vaccination programs and licensing laws, rabies has been effectively controlled in our domestic animal population.

OTHER DISEASES

There are other diseases besides canine distemper and canine parvovirus that are prevented by vaccination. They include canine infectious hepatitis, leptospirosis, parainfluenza (kennel cough), bordetella, Lyme disease, and coronavirus (not to be confused with the human COVID disease). Bordetella is an upper respiratory infection. Vaccination for this disease is oftentimes required by boarding and grooming facilities and for pets attending puppy or adult dog training classes.

Lyme disease is transmitted by ticks carrying an organism named *Borellia burgdorferi*. When an infected tick bites your dog, the *Borellia* organism passes through the tick's saliva into the open wound. Symptoms include fever, joint pain, fatigue, swollen lymph nodes, and lameness. Prevention is by vaccination.

Check with your veterinarian on the accepted schedules for vaccinating your new puppy or older dog for all of these diseases.

FLEAS AND TICKS

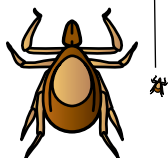
Fleas will make your dog itch and can infest the inside of your house as well as your yard. They may also bite people. Fleas also are the source of tapeworms in your dog.

Fleas spend virtually their entire life on the dog. They will initiate feeding and breeding within eight hours of finding a dog. They do leave the dog to jump onto another animal, so treatment must be directed at the dog as well as the house and yard and anywhere your dog hangs out.

There are many forms of flea control products. Flea collars, sprays, dips, powders, and topical "spot-

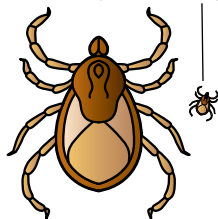
Humans also can contract Lyme disease but not from an infected dog. People get it from the bite of an infected tick just as a dog does.

(ACTUAL SIZE)



Adult male tick

(ACTUAL SIZE)



Adult female tick



Ironically, the most predominant flea species associated with dogs in the United States is *Ctenocephalides felis*, which means cat flea (shown here)—not *Ctenocephalides canis*, which is the dog flea.

ons” are but a few examples of the numerous choices you have to control fleas. Be sure to read the warning labels and instructions for any product you intend to use to make sure it is safe for your breed of dog. Some pets may be sensitive to certain products, so ask your veterinarian which products work best in your area and what is the best type for your pet.

Ticks carry a variety of diseases that infect animals and humans, such as Lyme disease. Infected dogs can pass Lyme disease to humans (by “sharing” ticks), so it is very important to check your dog for ticks after it has been outside, if you live in or visit an area where ticks are common. Check between the pads of your dog’s feet, too. To be on the safe side, protect your dog with tick spray before you go out.

Ticks bury their head in the dog’s skin to feed on blood. They are most commonly found around the ears, head, neck, and paws. If you see one, spray the tick with tick spray and then remove it using tweezers. Make sure that the entire tick is removed, including its mouth. Don’t twist or jerk the tick. Never use a hot match or similar object to burn a tick off a dog’s skin.

There are many products available for tick control, many of which do a good job on fleas as well. Consult your veterinarian about the best approach for controlling these pests.

Avoid handling ticks with bare hands. Use tweezers or protect the hands with latex gloves or a tissue. Always wash your hands thoroughly and disinfect the bite site on the dog after removing the tick.

In some areas of the country, a Lyme disease vaccination for your dog may be recommended.



Dog Emergencies

Preventive care can protect your dog from many accidents. Start by checking your home to be sure that household chemicals, automotive supplies, paints, garden pesticides and fertilizers, and similar threats are out of your dog's reach. When you are away from home, unplug electrical cords in your dog's confinement area and make sure there is no danger to your pet from items that are sharp or small enough to be swallowed. Never let your dog run free or chase cars; build a fence around the yard and walk your dog only on a leash.

When an accident does happen, knowing basic first aid can help you act quickly, calmly, and sensibly. Keep telephone numbers for the veterinarian, pet emergency center, and poison control center by the phone and in your wallet. You might need to call a professional for advice.

Handling a Hurt Dog

So what do you do if your dog is injured? Maybe your dog has swallowed something poisonous, fell, or was hit by a car. If you know how to react to such a situation, you will be prepared to act quickly and get your dog the medical help it needs.

Approach your dog slowly and quietly, speaking in a comforting tone. A seriously injured dog is frightened and in pain and might act unpredictably, even biting its owner. So, before you begin first aid, muzzle the dog. If you do not have a muzzle, you can improvise one with a long strip of gauze, a necktie, belt, two handkerchiefs, or a soft rope.

Never leave your dog in the car when the weather is warm.

The Dog First-Aid Kit

A good way to prepare for a dog emergency is to put together a dog first-aid kit. Much of what you will need is already in your home medicine cabinet. Items to have handy include the following:

- Gauze sponges to protect wounds and burns and to control bleeding
- Elastic bandage, for wrapping wounds and muzzling an injured dog
- Sterile, nonadhesive pads
- Self-adhesive athletic bandage, to temporarily support or secure limbs
- Adhesive tape, for securing bandages
- Gauze sponges, for cleaning wounds
- Rubbing alcohol, a disinfectant
- Hydrogen peroxide (3 percent solution), to clean wounds and induce vomiting
- Antibiotic ointment, for dressing wounds
- Cortisone cream, for minor allergic reactions and itching
- Activated charcoal, to absorb poison
- Rectal thermometer
- Petroleum jelly, to lubricate thermometer
- Eyewash, to flush out eyes
- Nail clippers, to trim cracked or broken nails
- Bandage scissors
- Tweezers
- Blanket
- Resealable plastic bags

Also keep all of your dog's health records and veterinary emergency telephone numbers handy.

Over-the-counter medicines for humans should only be administered to a dog under the care and watchful eye of an adult and with the approval of a veterinarian. A good way to proceed is to ask a parent or guardian to phone your veterinarian before giving any medication to your pet. Because veterinarians may recommend them, it is a good idea to keep these medicines in your dog's first-aid kit:

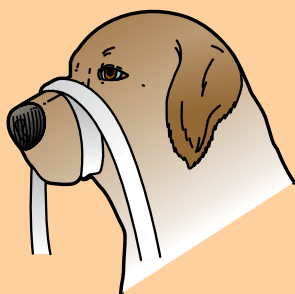
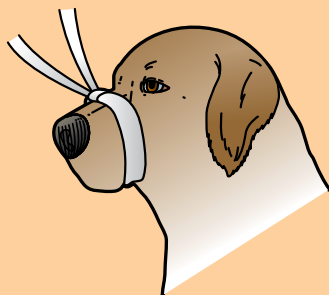
- Syrup of ipecac, to induce vomiting
- Milk of magnesia, a laxative
- Pepto-Bismol or Kaopectate tablets, for diarrhea
- Buffered baby aspirin (not ibuprofen or acetaminophen), to reduce fever and relieve pain
- Benadryl capsules, for allergies and allergic reactions

Treating Wounds

If your dog is wounded, it is important not to panic, but it is also important to act quickly. What you do depends on what kind of wound the dog has received. Remember to muzzle the dog before you start.

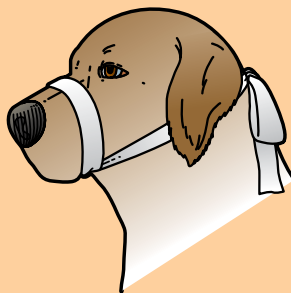
If you don't have a muzzle, you can make an emergency one. Use 3 feet of 2-inch gauze.

Make a loose circle of gauze around the dog's nose and tie with a half-knot on the bridge of the nose.



Loop the ends back under the jaw and tie another half-knot.

Take the long ends under and behind the ears and secure with a bow.



To move an injured dog, you can use an ironing board, blanket, jacket, or car floormat as a stretcher. Have someone help you gently lift the dog onto the material you are using and then lift the stretcher, with each of you holding it at the corners. (Be careful that the dog does not try to jump off the stretcher.)

In the event of a serious wound, always get your pet to a veterinarian as soon as possible.



If your dog is bleeding, apply a pressure bandage to the wound. Place sterile gauze pads over the wound and apply constant direct pressure with your hand. Use gauze strips to wrap the wound tightly, and tie or tape the ends. Be careful not to tie the bandage too tight because it could cut off circulation. If the area below the bandage begins to swell, loosen the bandage until the swelling subsides. If bandaging is not available, place a neckerchief or T-shirt on the wound and press it firmly. Hold it in place until help arrives.

A tourniquet should be applied only if the dog's life is in danger, and should only be applied by a knowledgeable adult. To make a tourniquet, wrap gauze, fabric, or rope twice around the wounded leg (or the tail), between the heart and the wound, and knot it. Do not make the tourniquet too tight. Get the dog to a veterinarian immediately.

A tourniquet can cause the loss of the leg or nerve damage if left in place too long. If medical help is more than 15 or 20 minutes away, loosen the tourniquet every 30 minutes for a couple of minutes at a time so that blood flow is not completely shut off from the limb.

The most common injuries you will treat probably will be small cuts and bite wounds. These superficial cuts and wounds should be treated like more serious ones, because in some cases you won't be able to tell how deep they are. Clean them with water and antibiotic ointment, and bandage with clean gauze, if needed. Once a scab has developed, hydrogen peroxide can be used to clean the wound. Change the gauze and reapply antibiotic ointment frequently to prevent infection.

Bandaging

Bandaging helps stop bleeding and protects the wound from infection and from a dog's licking and chewing. A bandage of some kind should be applied to all but the smallest cuts and abrasions.

To bandage a dog's foot, cover the wound with gauze padding. Put cotton balls between each pair of toes, including the space between the dewclaw and the leg. Wrap the foot in gauze and wrap tape around that. Do not wrap the bandage too tight as it will constrict the circulation.

To bandage a dog's leg, cover the wound with gauze padding and secure with adhesive tape. Wrap tape all the way around the leg, covering the wound completely. Do not wrap the bandage too tight. If the dog can't flex its leg, or if its nails lose color or toes become cold, loosen the bandage.

To bandage the chest and abdomen, make a many-tailed bandage. Cut three or four slits into two sides of a square or rectangular piece of linen to make "tails." Tie the tails over the dog's back to hold the bandage in place. This emergency bandage allows for a snug fit along the curve of the dog's chest and abdomen. It is useful for keeping gauze pads in

place over a belly or chest wound and for preventing a dog from scratching at or chewing on the pads.



**Many-tailed
bandage**

Always wash
your hands
before *and* after
handling a wound
or changing
a dressing.

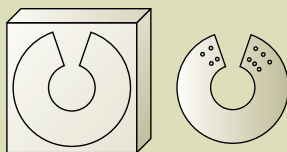
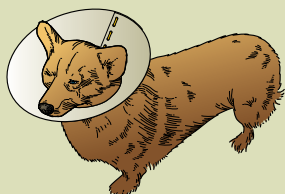
The Elizabethan Collar

Dogs tend to chew on their bandages. An Elizabethan collar can protect the wound from the dog and help the healing process. The collar looks silly and awkward, but a dog can get used to wearing one.

You can purchase a plastic Elizabethan collar, or you can make one out of cardboard or lightweight plastic wastebaskets and buckets. Make sure the collar fits around the dog's neck and reaches outward far enough to prevent the dog's mouth from reaching the wound. It should be short enough to let the dog eat and drink. However, it can be removed during mealtimes.

To make a cardboard collar, cut out a large circle with a hole in the middle. Then make a pie-shaped cut in the side. It should look something like a doughnut with a bite taken out of the side. Overlap the ends. Punch holes in the ends so you can lace string or a shoestring to secure the collar.

To make a "bucket" collar from lightweight plastic wastebaskets or buckets, cut just enough out of the bottom to let the dog's head slip through. Fasten the device to the dog's collar with strings passed through holes punched in the sides of the plastic.



Dog Bite

Dogs fight. If another dog bites yours, treat the wound as you would any puncture wound and consult your veterinarian. Alert your parents or guardian. Be aware of the potential of disease. In some areas of the country rabies is a concern. If your dog is properly vaccinated, it is protected, but the dog that bit yours could bite other dogs or a person. Do you know which dog bit yours? If not, you may need to find out. Ask around, but be cautious; a biting dog is dangerous.

If you can determine which dog bit yours, alert the owner and, if the damage to your dog was serious, alert police and animal control officials.

FIRST AID FOR A DOG BITE TO A DOG

Consider all bite wounds to be contaminated with dirt or bacteria.

- Clean the wound with absorbent cotton soaked in hydrogen peroxide.
- Apply a tincture of iodine.
- If the wound is still bleeding, apply a cotton gauze pad and pressure to try to stop bleeding.
- Bandage over the gauze pad with an elastic bandage firmly but not too firmly.

FIRST AID FOR A DOG BITE TO A PERSON

Again, consider all bite wounds to be contaminated.

- Wash the area with soapy water then flush with lukewarm water for five minutes.
- Apply pressure with a clean towel to the injured part to stop the bleeding.
- Keep the injury elevated above the level of the heart to slow swelling and bleeding and to help prevent infection.
- Dry and cover the injury with a sterile dressing.
- Consult a physician. This is important.
- If the bite is severe, call an ambulance.
- Report the incident to the police or animal control.

While many bite wounds appear to be superficial, there can be considerable damage below the surface of the skin. Take your dog to your veterinarian.

Naughty Nibbles

Though most dogs are trusted and loyal pets, sometimes in defense even good dogs bite people. In fact, in a given year millions of Americans are bitten. Since dog owners are responsible for their dog's behavior, you should do everything you can to prevent a dog bite before it happens. Keep your dog on a leash or under your watchful eye at all times. Abide by state and local laws in restraining your pet.

Train your dog, and keep an especially close eye if a young child approaches your dog. Your dog may not understand the child's intentions, and the child may not properly judge your dog's temperament. And don't forget that your dog's head and the child's face may be at about the same height, making dog bites especially nasty for kids.

If your dog bites someone, notify your parents or guardian at once and do everything you can to assist the injured person.

A Scout's Best Ol' Friend

By now you know what it takes to be a caring and responsible dog owner. As your puppy matures and grows older, its physical needs and abilities will change, too. It's important that you be attentive to your dog's needs not only in puppyhood, but also through the years when it becomes a "senior citizen" and, later on, geriatric. Regular veterinary checkups will help you accomplish this responsibility to your pet.

Like many other pet owners who consider their dog an important part of their family, you will want to make sure your dog is happy, healthy, and content. Always pay attention to subtle changes in eating habits, weight, and day-to-day patterns. As your dog ages, you may notice a change in its behavior, as well.

Paying close attention to your pet—whatever its age—and keeping your pet healthy will help ensure you enjoy many happy years together.



If you are looking for an older purebred dog or want to rescue a homeless animal, visit the American Kennel Club's website at akc.org. Most of the AKC's national breed clubs have a breed rescue function to help connect homeless pets with loving homes.

Age Analogy Chart*

The chart shown here will help you determine your pet's relative age in human years.

Pet's Age	Animal Size (in pounds)			
	0-20	21-50	51-90	+90
1	7	7	8	9
2	15	16	17	18
3	22	23	25	26
4	29	30	32	34
5	36	37	40	42
6	40	41	45	49
7	44	47	50	56
8	48	51	55	64
9	52	56	61	71
10	56	60	66	78
11	60	65	72	86
12	64	69	77	93
13	68	74	82	101
14	72	78	88	108
15	76	83	93	115
16	80	87	99	123
17	84	92	104	
18	88	96	109	
19	92	101	115	Senior
20	96	105	120	Geriatric

*This information is reproduced here with permission from the Belmont Veterinary Center, Lincoln, Nebraska.



Careers Working With Dogs

Many dogs have jobs. Because of their intelligence, trainability, adaptability, and highly developed sense of smell and sight, dogs of different breeds and mixed breeds can be cross-trained to perform various tasks. For every job a dog has, there is a job for a person. Training is the basis of these interrelated dog and human careers.

A trainer trains a dog. A handler handles a dog. As a dog owner, you can be the trainer and the handler. Depending on what you want your dog to do, you may hire someone to take charge of your dog.

Professional dog trainers train dogs to respond to commands and instruct people to train and handle their dogs. A trainer loves and owns dogs and has lots of experience teaching them. A trainer should be very patient and have the ability to communicate with dogs and with their owners or handlers. Many trainers are self-educated. No formal education is necessary to learn how to train. Some find experienced trainers to guide them, or they learn to work with a variety of dogs by volunteering in a shelter, animal hospital, kennel, or pet store. Others get their training at a dog obedience school.

A trainer who is accomplished at basic and advanced obedience training may choose to specialize in a certain area, such as training dogs to detect drugs or bombs, locate endangered wildlife, or perform on TV. The trainer also teaches the handler how to train the dog because the two must work as a team. The professional masters this special training and should be licensed or certified by a credible national organization.

There are many positions available to people who love dogs and are committed to working with them daily.

Assistance/Service

Guide or Seeing Eye dog trainers train a dog to assist a blind or visually impaired person. After the dog has learned basic obedience and socialization skills, the trainer teaches the dog to navigate around obstacles in its path, to stop at street curbs, and to be cautious near traffic. Once a dog is matched with an individual, the trainer trains the dog and its handler to work together as a team to ensure their safety. When training is complete, the team is certified and the guide dog is allowed to accompany its handler in all public areas.

Hearing dog trainers train a dog to assist a deaf or hearing-impaired individual.

Service dog trainers train a dog to assist a person who has a disability other than a visual or hearing impairment.

Therapy dog trainers help train dogs to provide affection and comfort to people in hospitals, retirement homes, nursing homes, schools, hospice, and disaster areas, as well as to patients with conditions such as depression, autism, and the effects of post-traumatic stress disorder.

Dog Care

Dog groomers take care of the appearance of a dog. The groomer must be familiar with breed profile guidelines and proficient in grooming and scissoring skills. Certification is voluntary, but may be important to the client. Groomers style dogs for dog shows, appearances, photographs, and comfort. The groomer also can identify skin diseases and parasites.

Many groomers are self-employed, working from home, their shop, or a mobile grooming vehicle.

Veterinarians are doctors who treat dogs as well as other kinds of animals. Some of the tasks of a veterinarian include spaying and neutering, vaccinating, performing surgery, diagnosing illnesses, and, sadly, euthanizing a pet. If you want to be a veterinarian, you must complete four years of college (with an emphasis on biology and chemistry) plus four more years of full-time study at an accredited veterinary school to earn a doctor of veterinary medicine (DVM) degree.

Entertainment and Performance

Dog actor/entertainer trainers train dogs to perform reliably in front of a camera or live audience. The trainer teaches advanced commands (such as “go to your mark” or “speak”) and trains the dog to jump through hoops to succeed at the casting call. The trainer prepares the dog to pose for photographs, act in commercials, movies, and television shows, or perform tricks in circuses and state fairs.

Security and Law Enforcement

K-9 officers work with a trained detection dog to find illegal drugs, bombs and explosives, concealed weapons, contraband, and smuggled people. Police K-9 officers also use trained dogs to apprehend criminals who attempt to flee. Military K-9 handlers use these detection dogs in the same way that police officers do, but also for patrol and security sweeps and as sentry dogs in a war zone. K-9 officers come from the ranks of regular police officers or military security forces. A military K-9 handler must go through basic training and Security Forces Tech School. The handler cross-trains with the military working dog (MWD) program.

U. S. Customs and Border Protection canine handlers work as a team with a dog trained to detect concealed persons and controlled substances in order to deter illegal activity at our nation’s borders. The detection team searches for smuggled currency, people, narcotics, firearms, and agricultural products that must be quarantined. A detection dog is required to retire at 9 years old. Handlers often take their retired partners home as pets.

K-9 units are trained by professionals.

Then the K-9 officer must pass an examination before taking over the responsibility for the dog.

A musher's goal is to race across Alaska in the Iditarod, a 1,000-mile test of human and dog endurance.

Sport

Dog sled mushers run a team of sled dogs. Mushers often breed, raise, and train their dogs to work together as a team. Many mushers own kennels because they have to care for five or more dogs year-round. Dog sledding used to be a common form of transportation, but it is now generally a racing sport. The best way to learn how to mush is to work as a handler or guide for an experienced musher.

Hunting dog trainers train dogs to help hunters locate and retrieve shot birds or game. Certain breeds track by scent (hunting); others hunt by sight (coursing). Some breeds are natural flushers, pointers, or retrievers. The trainer teaches the hunting dog to track and trail, to point to indicate the presence of the hunting target, to mark or spot the target when shot, and to retrieve. To learn how to train hunting dogs, learn about what breeds are best for the task. Work with an experienced trainer, observe other hunters in action with their experienced dogs, and train your own hunting dogs.

Work

Conservation dog handlers work with a dog trained to detect specific scents in the wild in order to locate endangered species, track a new pack of predators, or identify invasive plants. The handler and dog team are called in to help wildlife game managers, biologists, and ecologists manage the populations of certain feral animals that threaten humans or livestock, find rare plants and small animals, and control weeds that may overwhelm the natural habitat.

Herding dog trainers train dogs to move livestock efficiently with the least possible stress. The trainer works with a dog to develop its natural herding instincts and abilities to its full potential. The trainer works regularly with stock (such as sheep or cattle) and knows how to anticipate intended movement when a dog is rounding up the animals. The trainer gives commands to the dog by voice and whistle. To learn how to train, attend training clinics as a spectator, watch trainers at herding trials, and observe how livestock is moved on a farm or ranch.

Search and rescue dog handlers train a handler and a dog as a team to find living victims. The handler is often matched with a dog qualified for this task. The handler must be committed to training constantly with the dog and be willing to learn. The dog must have a high drive and a good nose, and be obedient and agile. The dog should be certified to attest to its advanced level of proficiency. Professional trainers will prepare the handler and the dog for specialized search and rescue tasks. In the event of a disaster—when buildings collapse because of an earthquake, hurricane, or explosion—search and rescue dog teams are called to the site to locate people buried under the rubble. Other search and rescue missions involve finding someone missing in the wilderness, in a body of water, or under snow.

You can have a career with dogs—no matter what your interests are. Besides the ones mentioned above, you can pursue other fields and tailor them to include dogs. Write about dogs. Photograph dogs. Invent medical devices for dogs. Or you can just simply enjoy your own pet.

Dog Care Resources

Scouting Literature

Animal Science, Bird Study, Fish and Wildlife Management, Horsemanship, Mammal Study, Pets, Reptile and Amphibian Study, and Veterinary Medicine merit badge pamphlets

With your parent or guardian's permission, visit Scouting America's official retail site, **scoutshop.org**, for a complete list of merit badge pamphlets and other helpful Scouting materials and supplies.

Books

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Organizations and Websites

American Humane

1400 16th Street NW, Suite 360
Washington, DC 20036
800-227-4645
americanhumane.org

The American Kennel Club

212-696-8200
akc.org

American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals

424 East 92nd St.
New York, NY 10128-6804
212-876-7700
aspca.org

Dog Breed Info Center

dogbreedinfo.com

Dog Owner's Guide

canismajor.com/dog

The Kennel Club

thekennelclub.org.uk

Pet of the Day

petoftheday.com

Spay Oklahoma

227 East Apache St.
Tulsa, OK 74106
918-728-3144
spayok.com

SPAY/USA

25 Davis Ave.
Port Washington, NY 11050
800-248-7729
spayusa.org

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dog*), 49, 51 (*brushing teeth*), 52, 57
(*giving dog a pill*), 59, 62, 66, 67,
and 70

Through 2022, the American Kennel Club had registered 200 dog breeds, with more recognized nearly every year. This chart lists all AKC recognized breeds and the year they first became registrable with the AKC.

1878

Pointer
Retriever (Chesapeake Bay)
Spaniel (Clumber)
Spaniel (Cocker)
Setter (English)
Setter (Gordon)
Setter (Irish)
Spaniel (Irish Water)
Spaniel (Sussex)

1885

Basset Hound
Beagle
Bloodhound
Bull Terrier
Collie
Dachshund
Fox Terrier
Greyhound
Harrier
Irish Terrier
Mastiff
Pug
Saint Bernard
Scottish Terrier
Yorkshire Terrier

1886

Bedlington Terrier
Bulldog
Dandie Dinmont Terrier
English Toy Spaniel
Foxhound (American)
Italian Greyhound
Manchester Terrier (Toy)
Newfoundland
Scottish Deerhound

1887

Great Dane
Manchester Terrier (Standard)
Poodle
Skye Terrier
Wirehaired Pointing Griffon

1888

Airedale Terrier
Dalmatian
Japanese Chin
Maltese
Old English Sheepdog
Pomeranian
Welsh Terrier
Whippet

1891

Borzoi

1893

Boston Terrier

1894

Spaniel (Field)

1897

Irish Wolfhound

1898

French Bulldog

1903

Chow Chow

1904

Boxer

Chihuahua

Schipperke

Standard Schnauzer

1906

Pekingese

Samoyed

1908

Doberman Pinscher

German Shepherd Dog

West Highland White Terrier

1909

Foxhound (English)

Otterhound

1910

Brussels Griffon

Spaniel (English Springer)

1911

Sealyham Terrier

Shetland Sheepdog

1912

Belgian Sheepdog

1913

Cairn Terrier

Norwegian Elkhound

1914

Spaniel (Welsh Springer)

1915

Papillon

Retriever (Flat-Coated)

1917

Retriever (Labrador)

1922

Kerry Blue Terrier

1924

Retriever (Curly-Coated)

1925

Miniature Pinscher

Retriever (Golden)

1926

Afghan Hound

Miniature Schnauzer

1927

Saluki

1928

Briard

1930

Border Terrier

Giant Schnauzer

Keeshond

Pointer (German Shorthaired)

Siberian Husky

1931

Bouvier des Flandres

Kuvasz

Rottweiler

1933

Great Pyrenees

1934

Brittany

Bullmastiff

Lakeland Terrier

Welsh Corgi (Pembroke)

1935

Alaskan Malamute

Lhasa Apso

Welsh Corgi (Cardigan)

1936

Affenpinscher

American Staffordshire Terrier

Norwich Terrier

Puli

1937

Bernese Mountain Dog

Komondor

1940

Spaniel (American Water)

1943

Weimaraner

1944

Basenji

1945

Black and Tan Coonhound

1946

Spaniel (English Cocker)

1955

Rhodesian Ridgeback

1959

Belgian Malinois

Belgian Tervuren

Pointer (German Wirehaired)

Silky Terrier

1960

Australian Terrier

Vizsla

1969

Shih Tzu

1972

Akita

Bichon Frise

1973

Soft Coated Wheaten Terrier

Tibetan Terrier

1974

Staffordshire Bull Terrier

1976

Bearded Collie

1978

Ibizan Hound

1979

Norfolk Terrier

1980

Australian Cattle Dog

1983

Pharaoh Hound

Portuguese Water Dog

Tibetan Spaniel

1990

Petit Basset Griffon Vendéen

1991

Australian Shepherd

Chinese Crested

Finnish Spitz

Miniature Bull Terrier

1992

Chinese Shar-Pei

1992

Shiba Inu

1994

American Eskimo Dog

1995

Border Collie

Cavalier King Charles Spaniel

Greater Swiss Mountain Dog

1996

Anatolian Shepherd

Havanese

Löwchen

1997

Canaan Dog

1997

Parson Russell Terrier

2000

Spinone Italiano

2001

Polish Lowland Sheepdog

2003

German Pinscher

Nova Scotia Duck Trolling
Retriever

Toy Fox Terrier

2004

Black Russian Terrier

Glen of Imaal Terrier

Neapolitan Mastiff

2006

Plott

Tibetan Mastiff

2007

Beauceron

Swedish Vallhund

2008

Dogue de Bordeaux

2009

Bluetick Coonhound

Boykin Spaniel

Irish Red & White Setter

Norwegian Buhund

Pyrenean Shepherd

Redbone Coonhound

2010

Cane Corso

Icelandic Sheepdog

Leonberger

2011

American English Coonhound

Cesky Terrier

Entlebucher Mountain Dog

Finnish Lapphund

Norwegian Lundehund

Xoloitzcuintli

2012

Russell Terrier

Treeing Walker Coonhound

2013

Chinook

Portuguese Podengo Pequeno

Rat Terrier

2014

Coton de Tulear

Wirehaired Vizsla

2015

Bergamasco

Berger Picard

Boerboel

Cirneco dell'Etna

Lagotto Romagnolo

Miniature American Shepherd

Spanish Water Dog

2016

American Hairless Terrier

Pumi

Sloughi

2018

Grand Basset Griffon Vendéen

Nederlandse Kooikerhondje

2019

Azawakh

2020

Barbet

Dogo Argentino

Belgian Laekenois

2021

Biewer Terrier

2022

Bracco Italiano

Mudi

Russian Toy