

General Dog Care

Before you bring your dog home

You will need: dog food, a food dish and water bowl, interactive toys, brush, comb, collar or harness, ID tags, leash, dog crate and bedding.

Feeding

You should feed your dog a high-quality dog or puppy food appropriate for his or her life stage and breed; food should be offered one to four times a day as appropriate for your pet. Feeding your dog at the same regular times will help to establish a routine and will greatly facilitate house training, if your pet is not already so trained. Provide fresh, clean water at all times and be sure to wash and refill the water bowls daily.

Diarrhea is common in newly adopted pets. This can be the result of a variety of causes, including stress, diet change, parasites, or even viral or bacterial infections. It can be helpful to gradually change your pet's food over to the new diet you choose to feed over 5 to 7 days by mixing in small but increasing amounts of the new food. If you do notice that your pet is having diarrhea, please make an appointment to have him or her seen by your veterinarian for exam and, if needed, for testing to determine the underlying cause(s).

Grooming

Grooming requirements vary substantially from breed to breed and depend on your dog's coat and lifestyle. Most dogs should be bathed when they become dirty or on a regular basis a few times a year. Dogs with medium to longer length fur will require regular brushing and grooming, and certain breeds will need regular haircuts by a groomer. Frequent brushing in between bathing and grooming appointments helps keep your dog's coat clean and untangled, and can help to reduce shedding.

Housing

Dogs are social animals and need the company of others to be happy. Dogs should have a clean, dry comfortable place of their own in the house. Consider

providing your dog with a crate. Crates are a very helpful training tool and dogs consider crates to be a private, safe place of their own as they are naturally denning animals. Crates should never be used for punishment however, must be of an appropriate size for your pet, and should not be used to confine your pet for very long periods of time on a regular basis.

Training/Behavior Modification

When you first bring a new dog home, you are building a new relationship. Dogs need consistency and clear, regular rules to follow. A training program will help you and your dog learn how to communicate effectively with one another. It will also help you to teach your dog how to be a good citizen in your home. Consider joining a dog training class, and reading animal behavior and training books. All training should involve positive reinforcement techniques and avoid the use of punishment. You may also contact the Pets for Life program at (917) 468-2938, or visit us at www.nycacc.org for a list of our educational flyers.

Identification

All dogs are required by law to have a current dog license and to have a collar with a license tag around their necks whenever in public. In addition, it is very important that your pet also wear an identification tag with your contact information. This identification, along with a microchip, can help ensure your dog is returned to you if he or she ever becomes lost. For more information on dog licensing in NYC, please visit:

www.nyc.gov/html/doh/html/environmental/dog-license.shtml. Visit your city or town website for information on dog licensing outside of NYC.

House-training

Any dog can be house-trained with time and consistency. All dogs need to be on a regular "outside" schedule. Use positive reinforcement to praise your dog when he goes outside. Only correct your dog if you catch him in the act. Never hit or scream at your dog if he goes in the house, as this will only teach him

to be afraid of you. Use a dog crate and feed your dog on a regular set schedule to assist with your house-training program.

Exercise and Play

All dogs need regular exercise, although the amount, type, and frequency will vary depending on your dog's breed, age, and health. Regular exercise is critical for your pet's physical and emotional well-being. For most dogs, a short walk around the block or letting them out in the backyard is not enough. You should plan to spend one to two hours a day exercising your dog. This might include long leash walks or jogging with him, playing fetch, going to a dog park, or letting him swim. Many dogs enjoy playing with toys, people, and other dogs. Provide your dog with interactive toys and many opportunities to engage in the type of play he or she enjoys. Avoid rough play games, however, as these may teach your dog negative behaviors or even result in injury.

Health

Your dog should see a veterinarian at least once a year for an examination, and immediately if your dog is sick or injured. Your veterinarian will recommend which vaccines and other preventive medicines may be necessary for your dog.

Fleas and Ticks

Fleas and ticks are a problem that should be taken seriously. These tiny parasites feed off of your pets, transmit many diseases and irritate the skin. Carefully check your dog once a week for fleas or ticks. If there are fleas on your dog, there will be fleas and flea eggs in your house. Consult your veterinarian. There are several new methods of flea and tick control. You may need to use flea or tick bombs or premise control sprays, and will need to treat all animals in your house. Make sure that any sprays, powders or shampoos you use are safe for all dogs and that all products are compatible if used together.

Heartworm

Heartworm is an infectious disease of dogs spread by the bite of a mosquito. Adult heartworms are long, large worms that live in the blood vessels going to the lungs. Heartworm infections will result in progressive health problems, including coughing, exercise intolerance and fatigue and can ultimately progress to heart failure and death if not treated. Treatment is expensive and can result in significant complications. However, heartworm infection can easily be prevented with regular monthly administration of preventive pills.

Your dog can be screened for heartworm disease with a simple blood test which is offered at the time of adoption. If you elected to have this test performed at AC&C prior to taking your pet home, please be sure to follow up with your veterinarian to see if a second test is necessary and to get your pet started on monthly heartworm preventive. If you did not have this test performed, AC&C strongly recommends that you speak to your veterinarian and have your dog checked for this very serious infection.

Kennel Cough

Kennel cough, which is an upper respiratory infection, is common in dogs that have spent time with dogs in close quarters (such as at a boarding facility or an animal shelter). Like the common cold in people, most cases of kennel cough are mild and will resolve with treatment in a short period of time. There are many different viruses and bacteria that can cause the syndrome referred to as "kennel cough" and it is important to have your pet seen by your veterinarian if you notice any coughing, sneezing, nasal discharge, or red or runny eyes.



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of NYC**

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