

PUPPY 101



Inman Park
Animal Hospital

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PICKING THE DOG BREED THAT'S RIGHT FOR YOU

Choosing the right dog can be a difficult and often daunting task. Not only will your new companion require an investment of time and energy, but your dog will also be a permanent part of your family. That's why it's important to conduct thorough research before you make your choice.

A key factor in determining the right dog breed for you is your lifestyle and activity level. If you're up every morning at sunrise for a run, a breed that can be a running buddy might be the best option for you versus a breed that is happy relaxing at home curled up on the couch next to the fire.

Not sure what breed is right for you? Take our fun [seven-question quiz](#) to find the dog breed that's perfect for you.



FIND YOUR PERFECT COMPANION

Whether you are looking for a specific breed, a mutt, a puppy, an older dog, or even one that gets along with cats, adoption could be the right option for you. Shelters and rescue groups are full of healthy and happy puppies and dogs waiting for the right home.

The Benefits of Adoption Services

Rescue dogs make wonderful pets.

Dogs are typically not in shelters because they are unhealthy, poor companions, or exhibiting behavioral problems; they are usually in a shelter or rescue situation because of “people problems” and circumstances beyond their control (i.e., pet owners facing illness, relocation, or financial difficulties). In addition to screening for health problems, many shelters screen dogs for behavior tendencies to ensure compatibility between the adopting family and the pet.

Save a dog's life.

There are benefits to both adopting and choosing a breeder. The Humane Society estimates that 3-4 million adoptable dogs and cats are euthanized annually in the United States because of limited space in shelters.

Take a stand.

Adoption is the ethical alternative to puppy mills and pet stores.



YOUR DOG'S HEALTH

One of the most important things you can do for your dog's health is to have open and informative visits with your dog's veterinarian. Here are 8 questions every pet parent should ask their vet:

1. What is the proper weight for my pet?

Obesity rates in our companion animals are too high. Studies prove that a healthy weight leads to a longer life, and who doesn't want to spend more time with their pet? Your veterinarian can help you understand how to monitor your pets' Body Condition Scores at home, helping them maintain a healthy weight.

2. What should I feed my pet?

This varies from pet to pet, and finding the right food for your animal starts with your veterinarian. And, it's important to practice serving-size management.

PRO Tip: Instead of using a coffee cup to scoop out your pet's food, use a measuring cup that allows you to follow the feeding instructions provided by your veterinarian and/or pet food maker.



3. Should I be concerned about my pet's behavior change?

Changes in behavior — whether it is the amount the dog is drinking or if she's barking at the wall — can indicate underlying diseases. Make a list of concerns with concrete examples before going to the veterinarian. Taking a video of the behavior with your phone can also be helpful.

4. What parasites should I worry about?

External (fleas, ticks, mites, lice) and internal (heartworms, intestinal worms) parasites are a danger to your pet, even if they are indoors mostly. A mosquito can easily fly in a window or door and put your pet at risk. The only way to completely protect your pet is to ensure they receive preventative all 12 months of the year.

5. When should I schedule a dental cleaning?

Pets need more oral health care, both at home and in the veterinary hospital. By age 3, 70 to 80 percent of dogs and cats have oral disease. There are many Veterinary Oral Health Council Accepted products that your veterinarian can help you select from for home-care; scheduling a dental cleaning with your veterinarian can help as a preventative (just like your biannual dental prophylaxis at your dentist) and as a treatment for oral disease.

PRO Tip: Teaching your puppy to tolerate a toothbrush early in his life will make it easier on you and him in the future. Make sure to ask your veterinarian about the best products to use.



6. What vaccines are appropriate for my pet's lifestyle?

There are vaccines that a hunting dog in Alabama needs that would be inappropriate for a lap dog in Massachusetts. Make sure to discuss what your animal's day-to-day activities will include and where they'll be traveling.

7. Can I give this medication to my animal?

Always ask your veterinarian before using something that they have not given you. For example, a drug as benign as Tylenol can be fatal to cats. Ibuprofen is dangerous to give to dogs. Always ask!

8. Can you show me the best way to give my dog his medication?

Not everyone has a dog that will blindly eat whatever is put in front of its nose. If this is you, try a compounded liquid version that is specially flavored (ask your vet!). Most veterinarians are happy to demonstrate and teach owners how to use it.



TRAINING YOUR NEW PUPPY

Proper training and socialization are among your dog's basic needs. It's important to start training your dog as soon as possible. At first, dog training can seem overwhelming, especially if this is your first dog. If you take it step-by-step, you will find the task to be far less daunting.

Here is some information to help get you started:

Start early.

Puppies can begin very simple training starting as soon as they come home, usually around 8 weeks old.

Engage a professional.

Learn how to establish a foundation before you begin to train your dog.

Keep it positive.

There are many different ways to train a dog, but most dog professionals agree that the positive way is the best for both the dog and trainer.

