



ELMERTOWN LABRADORS



EXCLUSIVE BREEDERS NO 106234

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The Gundog Breed Group

Dogs that were originally trained to find live game and/or to retrieve game that had been shot and wounded. This group is divided into four categories - Retrievers, Spaniels, Hunt/Point/Retrieve, Pointers and Setters - although many of the breeds are capable of doing the same work as the other sub-groups. They make good companions, their temperament making them ideal all-round family dogs.



The Labrador is one of the best all-round dogs in the world. Not only used for retrieving game, he has also made his mark in the world of assistance dogs and as a 'sniffer' dog for drug and arms detection. It is popularly thought that he originated on the coast of Newfoundland, where fishermen were seen to use a dog of similar appearance to retrieve fish.

An excellent water dog, his weather-resistant coat and unique tail, likened to that of an otter because of its shape, emphasise this trait. A real gentleman, the Labrador adores children and has a kind and loving nature and a confident air. The big city is not really his scene; a bit of a country squire at heart, he comes into his own in rural surroundings. Comparatively speaking, the Labrador is not a very old breed: its breed club was formed in 1916 and the Yellow Labrador Club founded in 1925. It was in field trialling that the Labrador found early fame, having been originally introduced to Great Britain in the late 1800s by Col Peter Hawker and the Earl of Malmesbury. It was a dog called Malmesbury Tramp that was described by Lorna, Countess Howe, as one of the 'tap roots' of the modern Labrador.




SOCIALISATION ADVICE

Socialisation is a term that is often used in dog training books, in dog magazines and by breeders and trainers. But what does it actually mean and how will it affect you as a new puppy owner?

Like human children, puppies are not born with the social skills that they require to live with their family, be that a canine family or a human one. The term "socialisation" in simple terms means the learning process that a puppy must undergo in order to learn key life skills to ensure that it is happy and confident in its environment, and can communicate effectively within its social group. We ask a huge amount from our dogs in their role as a companion animal, as not only do they need to understand humans and the human world, they also need to become fluent in the language of dog.


This involves having pleasant social interactions with adults, children, vets, adult dogs and other animals, as well as careful exposure to different situations in the environment like traffic, crowds, travelling in the car, vacuum cleaners and any sights and sounds it will have to cope with in life. It is so important that this is done thoroughly and correctly when your puppy is still young and he is young enough to happily accept new things.



Puppies that have been socialised effectively in these early weeks are far less likely to react negatively to new situations, noises, people, dogs and animals than their counterparts, who have not had these important early experiences. A well socialised puppy is far more likely to integrate easily into your life, therefore making your life together much more enjoyable and rewarding.

There are two parts to socialisation and both are equally important. The first is teaching the puppy to be social with people and other dogs, while the other (called habituation) is about teaching all the things we want the puppy to ignore and not be worried about (noises, traffic, household objects etc.).

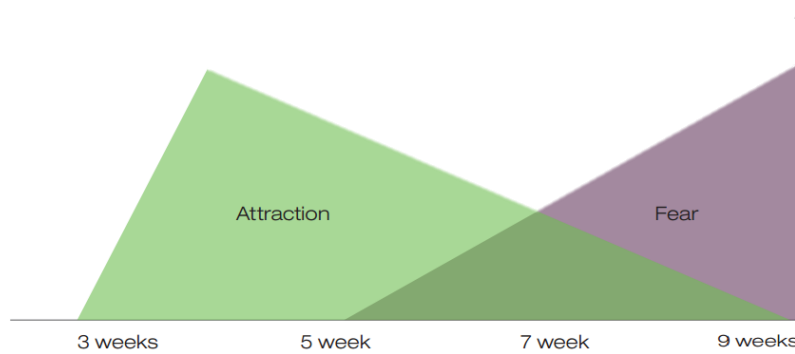
Being a companion is the hardest job we ever ask a dog to do as our expectations are so high. We want dogs to get on with everybody and everything, and to go everywhere with us when we want, but be happy to be left alone without complaint when we don't, to be accepting of loud noises, strangers, other dogs... The list is endless. It is a sad fact that one of the major causes of death in dogs under two years old is euthanasia, as a result of behaviour problems. Most of these behaviour problems arise from fear (fear of strange noises, fear of being left alone – and indeed aggression nearly always arises from fear – fear of strange dogs, fear of strange people or fear of strange situations). In addition, far too many dogs are ending up in rescue centres. Behaviourists and trainers up and down the country are seeing dogs with problems that could so easily have been prevented if the first 16 weeks of that dog's life had been properly managed, and they had been prepared for the life they were going to lead.



On the breeders' part, socialising their litter can start as early as when the puppies are a few days old. Gentle handling and checking the progress of the litter are all important steps in the first few days of a puppy's life. Over the course of the following weeks the breeder can introduce noises, different surfaces, different play items as well as different play and feeding locations around the house – all of this habituation and novelty contributes to the puppies' early development. The early ground work that the breeder puts into their litters' social and emotional wellbeing has a direct impact on their puppies' ability to be fit for function as a family dog.

It is imperative that the puppy's new owner continues this when their new puppy comes home. From around 5 weeks and continuing at the time the puppy goes to his or her new home, an important transition takes place in the puppy's ability to take in new situations as his natural fearfulness increases.





It is therefore so important that new owners don't miss this valuable window of opportunity for their puppy to experience new things – which will close at around 14-16 weeks. This time also coincides with the puppy's vaccinations, so a balance must be struck so not to miss out on this important learning opportunity. This can be achieved by taking your puppy out and about in your arms, while not allowing them to come into direct contact with other dogs until their vaccinations have taken place. Getting out and about with your puppy is key to them accepting everyday things, such as traffic and busy places, as part of normal life. It is important that you think about what life as part of your family will entail for a puppy – for instance, if you live in the inner city spending a significant amount of time socialising your puppy to farm animals will be counterproductive, as it is unlikely they will encounter them in their day to day life:

The same also goes for all the different people your puppy is likely to meet such as: people with beards, people wearing hats, people wearing high visibility clothing, babies, children, people with pushchairs/prams, elderly people, people with walking sticks and people in wheelchairs to name but a few, or anyone else you are likely to meet.



The Puppy Socialisation Plan

Until now there was no definitive plan for effectively socialising your puppy, which was resulting in rescue centres seeing increasing numbers of dogs coming to them with behavioural issues that could have been avoided with proper socialisation. In order to counteract this, the Kennel Club and Dogs Trust have jointly devised a socialisation plan for both breeders and new owners to follow as a step by step guide - it is called the Puppy Socialisation Plan. Both the Kennel Club and Dogs Trust recommend the Puppy Socialisation Plan as an effective plan for breeders and new owners to prepare their puppies as best they can for life as family pets. It is simple to complete, and can be tailored to suit you and your lifestyle, so it is highly recommended that novice breeders and new owners follow the Plan.

It is critical that this is done from birth up to 16 weeks of age, otherwise important learning and development phases have passed. The Plan covers everything from getting

used to household noises, to getting out and about and meeting new people and other dogs. Therefore, you need to plan and incorporate some extremely important life lessons during the early stages of your puppy's development, so that you end up with a well-balanced and sociable dog.

You can find The Puppy Socialisation Plan located at -

<http://www.thepuppyplan.com/>



EXERCISE ADVICE

Labradors are a high energy breed so an important part of its life is exercise and regular exercise to remain fit and prevent them from becoming overweight. Your puppy will grow to keenly anticipate exercise and feeding times as the most exciting part of the day. If they do not receive sufficient exercise they will become easily bored.



Introducing exercise to your puppy

Labrador puppies need much less exercise than when they are fully-grown and should be introduced gradually. You can quickly overtire a growing puppy, and more risk causing damage its developing joints, and the onset of arthritis. We recommend a ratio of five minutes exercise per month of age (up to twice a day), until the puppy is fully grown, for example 15 minutes when three months old and 30 minutes when six months old. Avoid long walks or asking your Labrador puppy to negotiate very steep or uneven surfaces.

Exercise Requirements

- When the Labrador is 0-12 weeks. Until a puppy has completed its full course of vaccinations, there is a risk of infection. Therefore, it is usually better that exercise is restricted to within the confines of your garden. Activity in the garden provides the perfect opportunity to start early training, and to get your puppy used to wearing a collar. Always accompany them in the garden and provide a number of safe toys allowing you to engage your puppy in suitable levels of activity, and start to reward good toileting behaviour. As Labradors are a highly social breed, familiarising with other dogs and people at an early age is a vital part of your it's development. At first this could include taking your puppy to other safe environments where there is no risk, and it is able to mix with other animals and people, such as private gardens where only vaccinated dogs have access.



Remember, time spent in the garden (however large) is no substitute for exploring new environments, and socialising with other dogs. When you go out, make sure your puppy is trained to recall, so that you are confident the puppy will return to you when called.

Never exercise your Labrador puppy on a full stomach as this may contribute to bloat or stomach dilation which can sometimes prove fatal.

In general as your Labrador grows, the duration and frequency of exercise should remain consistent and any increases should be gradual. Keep in mind that the Labrador's playful breed will enjoy play, whether with you or on its own, and so toys take an important part in a dog's life.

Remember, as your Labrador becomes older, exercise should be reduced and your dog should be allowed to walk at its own pace.

PUPPY TRAINING ADVICE



Bringing your puppy home for the first time is naturally a happy and exciting occasion, but it can be a little daunting too – there is so much for both you and your puppy to learn! The information contained in this leaflet should help you on your way to raising a happy and well trained dog right from the start.



Toilet training puppies the easy way

Toilet training is obviously a crucial part of your puppy's early learning. Getting it right is relatively simple, and will make those first weeks so much more enjoyable for you both. However, like all things, bad habits learnt early on can lead to problems that may take weeks or even months to resolve.

Initially, you will have to build your daily routine around your puppy's needs. Fortunately, these are quite predictable when they are very young, and with careful supervision you should quickly establish when it is the right time to go outside and minimise any accidents.

Like babies, puppies have poor bladder control, and need to go to the toilet several times an hour when they are awake. They will also usually need to be taken outside first thing in the morning, last thing at night, after each meal, waking from a nap, and after any exercise, play or excitement. You may find it useful to keep a record of when your puppy sleeps, eats and goes to the toilet so that you can identify any patterns that emerge. One tip is to use a food timer to remind you when it is time to take your puppy outside to relieve itself. If you find that your puppy needs to "go" every 20 minutes then set the alarm as soon as he has gone and take him outside the moment the alarm goes off

Always go with your puppy into the garden and establish a regular spot. Puppies are creatures of habit, so as long as you introduce the garden to the puppy as its toilet area early on, you should be able to avoid most accidents. Decide on a cue word or phrase to use when the puppy is actually going to the toilet, so that the puppy will start to associate the word with the action and should learn to go on command. By

accompanying your puppy into the garden each time, you will be there to attach cue words and praise to any successful actions.

If toilet training is not going quite as well as planned, some common reasons for why your puppy is struggling are as follows:

- **FEEDING**

- You are feeding the puppy too much
- The puppy food you are giving is unsuitable or you are giving too much variety for a puppy of their age
- You are not feeding at regular times
- You are feeding at the wrong times (which could mean your puppy needs to go to the toilet during the night)
- You are giving foods which are too salty, causing your puppy to drink more



- **TRAINING**

Punishing your puppy for accidents indoors may make it scared of going to the toilet in front of you – even outside

Expecting your puppy to tell you when it needs to go to the toilet is unrealistic. It is far better to go outside at regular intervals

Leaving the back door or outside access open for your puppy to come and go as it pleases can cause confusion – particularly when that access is closed

Do not leave your puppy too long on its own so that it is forced to go indoors

Leaving your puppy alone in the garden means that you are not there to praise and reward, or to reinforce the idea that the garden is the correct place to go

Try to avoid using the words “good boy/girl” when your puppy is going to the toilet - you don’t want your puppy going to the toilet every time it is praised

Puppies can exhibit submissive or excitable urination when greeting you on your return home. Toning down greetings can help prevent your puppy from becoming overexcited

Young puppies will not be able to go through the night without needing to go to the toilet. If they do wake you up, it really is worth getting up to let them out

- **ENVIRONMENT**

Being surrounded by lots of absorbent or grass-like surfaces, such as rugs and carpets, may confuse your puppy

Ammonia based cleaning products used around the house can smell like urine to your puppy, and lead to unwanted accidents



If your puppy does have an accident inside, the scent will still be apparent to the puppy for a long time afterwards, even if you have thoroughly disinfected the area. Specialist cleaning products specifically designed to mask the odour are available

Beyond the garden, many owners can be disappointed that their young puppy does not initially toilet when first venturing out on walks. Often, your puppy will only relieve itself the second you get home. This is because the puppy has not yet associated going out for a walk as an opportunity to go to the toilet, so will wait until they return home to their garden, which they know is a good place to go. To break this habit, get up a little earlier in the morning (when you have plenty of time) and take your puppy out on a walk before it has had a chance to visit its usual spot. Stay out with your puppy for a reasonable length of time until it has been to the toilet, and then give plenty of praise. If you are not successful, make sure the puppy is whisked into the garden to relieve itself or you will run the risk of a large puddle indoors!

Remember, patience and consistency is key. All puppies take different amounts of time to learn, so don't worry if your puppy seems to be taking longer to get the hang of things. Your patience will pay off and you will both get there in the end.

A trained dog is a happy dog

Housetraining aside, every puppy also needs to be taught good manners and have constructive lessons in basic control and social interaction. This includes:

- Responding to its name
- Learning how to greet and behave politely around other people and dogs
- To come back when called
- To walk nicely on the lead
- To sit down and stay on command
- To allow itself to be groomed and examined by you and your vet



Dog training classes

Most owners can benefit from attending good training classes, and training in the company of other dogs is very useful, because of the realistic distractions it involves. Ideally, you should start your classes as soon as your puppy's vaccinations are complete, but classes can be invaluable for older dogs too.

FUTURE TRAINING

House Training your Labrador Puppy & Adult Training

It is highly recommended that you seek further Labrador training classes after the initial settling in period. Your local council and vet should have a list of reputable socialisation training classes in your area.



DIET ADVICE

Labrador puppy ownership is a big responsibility and when you bring your new puppy home, it will require your help, support and attention. There are so many things to think about, including training, healthcare, exercise and, of course, diet. Feeding your puppy sensibly and correctly is vital to its health, development and general wellbeing. Below you will find details of your puppy's current diet:

Your Labrador Puppy's Current Diet and Current Quantities

Number of Meals (per day)	Current Meal Times	Type of Food Given	Quantity (per meal)

Feeding Times

Like all infants, puppies grow very rapidly (up to twenty times faster than an adult dog), and so require a specially formulated diet to aid their physical development.

A high energy growth food is recommended, little and often and needs to be fed at evenly spaced intervals to avoid over stretching your puppy's small stomach.



Meals should be split during the course of the day and ideally a young puppy should go at least 4 hours between meals.

It is better not to leave food down (so throw away any uneaten food after 20 minutes) and not to change your puppy's food regularly as this could cause havoc with its digestion and toilet training regime. However, make sure that water is always available to your puppy, so never take its water bowl away.

Quantities

The quantity of food should be approximately the same for each meal. Young puppies, particularly those of a large or fast growing breed, can sometimes need more food as puppies than they require as adults. Increases of food should always be gradual and a good idea is to increase the amount on a weekly basis from 8 weeks until the puppy is 16 weeks old. Typically, by the time a puppy reaches 16 weeks, it will need roughly the same amount as when it is an adult.

Puppies can be greedy or picky with their food so it can sometimes be difficult to gauge how much to give them. Care should be taken not to over or underfeed your puppy. Puppies can often appear 'chubby', particularly after they have eaten, but under normal circumstances they should have a defined 'waist'. If in any doubt about your puppy's weight or diet, consult your vet when you next visit for a puppy check-up.



Future Feeding Recommendations and Quantities

Age of Puppy	Number of Meals (per day)	Type of Food	Quantity (per meal)

WHEN TO REDUCE NUMBER OF MEALS

As a rule of thumb Labrador puppies fed on dry food require

- Four meals a day from eight weeks to three months
- Three meals a day from three months to six months
- Two meals a day thereafter

There are many varied feeding regimes to choose from: dry complete diets, semi-moist or pouch, tinned food (with or without biscuit mixer), raw food, and home-made food. Each food category has different qualities, and finding the right balance for your puppy is extremely important.

The most suitable diet should be easily digested and produce dark brown, firm, formed stools. If your puppy produces soft or light stools or has wind or diarrhoea, then the diet may not suit your puppy or it might have some kind of digestive problem or infection. If the condition persists for more than 2 days, consult your vet for advice.

Please remember that stability in the diet will help maintain good digestion. Any change in diet should be made very gradually over at least a week to avoid upset and you should try a new diet for at least 10 days before making any further changes.

YOU WILL BE GIVEN A 5 KILO BAG OF PUPPY FOOD TO TAKE HOME WITH YOU SO THAT YOU CAN KEEP TO THE DIET AND CHANGE GRADUALLY IF YOU DO SO WISH TO.

Dry complete foods

There is a wide range of dry complete foods on the market and the quality varies widely. To get the best out of your puppy's development choose a food specially designed for puppies. Some puppies are not accustomed to complete dry foods immediately after weaning but will normally grow to like them with time. If your puppy does not seem to like eating dry complete and this is what you wish to feed, you can try soaking the food in a little warm water to soften it, or mix in a little tinned puppy food, gradually reducing the quantity until your puppy is fully weaned and accepts dry complete.

Semi-moist, pouch, tinned and frozen foods

As with complete dry foods, semi-moist, pouch, tinned and frozen foods can vary in quality. Again, choose a good quality diet which is easily digestible, nutritionally complete and does not require additional foods to be added to it. As before it is best to avoid changes in your puppy's diet - so if you find a product that works for your puppy, stick to it.



Home-made food (raw fresh or frozen meat)

Before the advent of commercial dog foods, it was quite common to feed dogs raw or cooked fresh meat. Many people still consider that there is no substitute for feeding raw meat; these diets are sometimes referred to as BARF (Bones and raw food diet). Meat on its own however, is not enough, and dogs need other additives, such as biscuit, and supplements to maintain a completely balanced diet. Puppies in particular, need a balanced and nutritious diet whilst they are growing up, as even a slight imbalance may harm their development and growth. Additionally, home-made foods obviously necessitate a fair degree of pre-planning and preparation. For these reasons, many owners find it easier to feed a complete or mixed food which can remove some of the guesswork and ensure that their dog is getting all it needs.



Treats

Giving treats is a good way to reward your dog during training and encourage the behaviour you want. There are a wide variety of prepared and natural treats on the market which vary hugely in quality. Some commercial treats have lots of sugar, colourings, milk products and fat in them, so always check the ingredients label. Good quality prepared treats have been developed with dogs dietary needs in mind.

However, all treats should be given sparingly, and never comprise more than 15% of your puppy's total calorie intake. If you use treats regularly, reduce the amount of main meal food your dog is receiving in order to avoid obesity. Some chew treats have proven ability to help prevent dental diseases, but again check the label to ensure you are getting a genuine product.

Human chocolate is poisonous to dogs and can cause liver damage and even be fatal, so never give your dog any chocolate, or leave any lying around where it might be found and eaten. Be especially careful at Christmas and Easter time.

Avoid giving your puppy any sweet biscuits or sugary treats which are bad for its teeth as well as its waistline, and can cause sugar 'highs' and 'lows'. Stick to prepared which tend to be much more popular.

Always remember that table scraps contain calories so they should be taken into account as part of the daily diet. Better still; don't be tempted to feed table scraps at all.

Labrador Food sensitivities and intolerances

Like humans, some dogs are sensitive or intolerant to certain foods, and this can cause a variety of problems. In extreme cases, they may develop colitis (slime and blood in their stools). Always consult your vet if you notice your dog displaying any of the following symptoms:

- Lethargy
- Aggressive or hyperactive behaviour
- Chronic skin and ear problems
- Light to mid-brown loose bulky stools or diarrhoea
- Slime and jelly being passed with stools and flatulence
- Bloating and weight gain or loss



Labrador Feeding tips



- Clean fresh water should always be available. Dogs eating wet food (i.e. canned) will receive moisture through their food and therefore require less water than dogs eating dry food. However, extra water should always be made available.
- Do not refill half empty bowls, but ensure that fresh food is always provided at each meal time. This is particularly true in the hot weather when food left in bowls can attract flies and other insects.
- Half full cans of dog food should be kept covered in the fridge, but allowed to stand until the food is up to room temperature before feeding. There are two different types of dog food manufactured "complete" and "complementary", clearly marked on the label. A complete food can be fed as a sole source of nutrition and is available as both canned and dry food. A complementary food is designed to accompany the complete food and should not be used as the only source of daily nutrition.
- It is better to stick to one variety of complete puppy food, so you don't need to add anything to the diet. Always remember that over-supplementing can be harmful to your puppy.
- If your puppy does not eat all of its meal in one go, you may be offering it too much. Not all puppies eat the amount recommended by the pet food manufacturers. Puppies' appetites can vary enormously, with some eating much less than the recommended amounts, whilst others scoff their meal down as if it was their last!
- As long as your puppy is not showing any growth or digestive problems, resist the temptation to change its diet or offer it a range of foods, as you may turn your puppy into a fussy eater.
- Never change your puppy's diet abruptly (unless under the direction of your vet). If you want to change its diet, do it gradually over a period of a few days to a week or longer if necessary.

- Avoid feeding your puppy before travelling in the car, as this can encourage car sickness.
- Do not feed your puppy an hour before or after exercise or play, as this could lead to stomach dilation and torsion (also known as bloat), which is a life threatening condition requiring immediate veterinary intervention. For owners of breeds which are thought to be susceptible to this condition, you should seek advice from your breeder, vet and/or breed club on further precautionary measures.
- Leave your puppy in peace while it is eating from its bowl. Taking the bowl away while it is eating causes anxiety and this can lead to food aggression. If you want to be sure that your puppy is comfortable with you approaching it during mealtimes, add
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- Leave your puppy in peace while it is eating from its bowl. Taking the bowl away while it is eating causes anxiety and this can lead to food aggression. If you want to be sure that your puppy is comfortable with you approaching it during mealtimes, add a little food to the bowl while it is eating, so it sees you as an asset, rather than a threat.



- Never feed your dog from the table or your plate, as this encourages drooling and attention seeking behaviours, such as begging and barking.

Potential Toxins/Poisons (this list is by no means complete and always consult your vet if you puppy ingests anything it shouldn't)

- Alcohol
- Bones
- Chocolate
- Coffee/Caffeine
- Raw Egg
- Green parts of tomato plants
- Grapes/Raisins/
- Artificial sweeteners
- Human vitamins and supplements
- Liquorice
- Milk/Lactose
- Mouldy food
- Onions, chives and garlic
- Raw or undercooked meat
- Slug pellets
- Yeast



LABRADOR GROOMING ADVICE

Bringing your puppy home for the first time is naturally a happy and exciting occasion, but it can be a little daunting too – there is so much for both you and your puppy to learn! The information contained in this leaflet should help you on your way to raising a happy and well trained dog right from the start.

Grooming your Labrador puppy/dog

All dogs will benefit from regular grooming, whether they are a short haired breed or one with a long or fluffy coat.

Grooming your Labrador - Firm brushing with a bristle body brush will remove dried mud, sand and dust from your dog's coat and help distribute the oils through his fur. It may improve the shine, and the dog may enjoy the 'massaging' effect of the firm strokes going through its fur.

Grooming will encourage cleanliness – keeping your dog's coat clean by removing dirt and dead hair helps encourage new hair growth, and reduces the amount of hair deposited on household furniture.

Grooming helps to stimulate new coat growth, and prevents the formation of knots or matting which may lead to skin irritation



Care of a Labradors ears, nails and eyes

- Check your puppy's ears to see if they are clean. You can remove excess dirt from the inside of the ear flap with damp cotton wool. Never probe inside the ear as you may perforate the ear drum. Any odour is usually a sign there is something wrong and your puppy should be taken to a vet.
- If nails are excessively long remove the tip of the claw, taking care not to cut the quick or blood vessel.
- If needed clean the eyes with clean, damp cotton wool using a separate piece for each eye.
- Coat – Labradors have a dense and highly waterproof coat. To keep it clean you can rinse the dog in clean water or give it a dog shampoo. You can do this by standing the dog in the bath, or in fine weather, outside in the garden with a hose for rinsing. The waterproof quality of a Labrador's coat means a second shampoo will be easier as you have broken down the oils in the dog's coat. Work up into a good lather and rinse very thoroughly. It is not a good idea to shampoo your Labrador regularly unless you really need to. Especially in the winter. This is because the shampoo strips out the natural oils and reduces the waterproofing and cold repellent qualities of his double coat.
- Teeth – Clean your Labrador's teeth by slowly introducing the dog to the concept of having something alien in its mouth for just a few seconds and build up gradually, starting with just the easily accessible teeth at the front of the mouth. Aim to be able to reach all your dog's teeth after a couple of weeks of daily practice. Ask your vet about a dog toothbrush and dog specific toothpaste.



External Parasites

A parasite is something that lives on another animal (the host) and gets its nourishment from the host. If left unchecked, the parasite causes disease or even death. The most common external parasites found on dogs are fleas and ticks.

- Fleas are very small, brownish black, extremely agile creatures. Excessive scratching and self-biting can be symptoms of flea infestation the presence of shiny black specks like coal dust (flea excreta) is a sure indication of the presence of fleas (dab the specks with a damp piece of cotton wool and if it goes pink it confirms the presence of fleas; these are the remains of a digested blood meal from the host).

- Ticks are largish grey pea shaped parasites that can be 3 to 4mm in length. They attach themselves to other animals in order to have a blood meal. There is evidence that ticks are also a threat to human health as they can spread Lyme disease.

There is now a wide range of proprietary powders, sprays, 'spot-on' treatments and anti-flea and tick collars available. A dedicated pet care professional will be happy to advice on suitable products.



Other skin problems

- Ringworm is a fungal disease, affecting the skin, nails and hair. Circular lesions appear causing hair loss, which become scaly and crusty. Ringworm is contagious and is a zoonotic condition (transmissible to humans).
- Dermatitis causes irritation, hair loss and inflammation and is a result of sensitivity to the environment.

Alopecia can range from a thinning of hair to total hair loss and can be caused by a number of factors such as skin parasites, hormonal imbalance, infections, stress or poor nutrition. Seek veterinary advice for any skin problems. Even if no fleas are to be seen.

WORMING ADVICE

- Worming your dog throughout its lifetime is important, and you should talk to your vet about a suitable worming programme for your puppy at the earliest opportunity. Regular worming not only protects your dog's health, but helps to prevent the spread of infection and potentially hazardous health risks to other animals and humans too. Worm infections carried by your dog do not always display obvious symptoms, so an adequate treatment schedule is vital.



Some worming treatment has been carried out prior to you receiving your puppy and a record of this is provided in the chart below. It is strongly advised that you discuss this further with your own veterinary surgeon.



Date Wormed	Product Used	Amount Given
2 weeks old	Panacur	
4 weeks old	Panacur	
6 weeks old	Panacur	
8 weeks old	Panacur	
Date next treatment due:		

Signs aren't always obvious

Dogs can appear healthy even when they have worm infections. Detecting an infection can be tricky, particularly as worm eggs are too small to be easily visible in your pet's faeces. In addition, your dog may be more at risk from some worm infections than others depending on where you live. It is therefore extremely important to keep your dog's treatment regular and up-to-date.

Specific signs will be described for each worm, but remember that not all worm infections will be obvious in your dog, so some more general signs to look for include:

- The presence of visible worm segments that could stick to your dog's bottom and become itchy. This can cause dogs to "scoot", whereby they drag their bottoms along the ground with their back legs. Doing this also means that your dog will be rubbing its infected bottom on your floor or carpet, which is naturally unhygienic
- Weight loss
- Vomiting
- Diarrhoea
- A dull, lifeless coat
- A change in appetite (it may be either increased or decreased depending on the worms present)
- A lack of energy
- A pot-bellied appearance (most commonly seen in puppies)
- Breathing difficulties and coughing
- General changes in behaviour



You should seek advice from your vet if you see any of the above signs in your dog. Many of these symptoms may be indicative of other illnesses. Your vet will be able to investigate the problem and provide appropriate advice and treatment.



Worming Products

There are a wide variety of worming products available from a number of different sources. These products vary in activity spectrum (the worms they treat or prevent), how you administer the treatment (spot-on / injection / oral medication), dosage instructions and speed or duration of activity.

Always check with your vet before initiating a worming regime. This way you can be confident that you are using the most appropriate products, and following the best treatment for the needs of your dog and family.

How Often Should You Worm?

All animals are at risk from acquiring worm infections. However some animals will be at higher risk than others depending on factors such as their lifestyle and area in which you live. Children are at increased risk of disease from worms; if you have a young family or your dog often comes into contact with children, you should pay particular attention to



regular worming. Again, always consult with your vet with regard to the most appropriate treatment schedule.

Control Check List

As well as following a worming plan following consultation with your vet, there are also many other practical things you can do to help prevent the spread of worm infections among your pets and family. These are as follows:



- 'Poop scooping' - make sure you pick up your dog's faeces immediately on a walk and remove it from the lawn or surrounding outdoor environment daily - bag it, and put it in designated poop bins, burn it or flush it down the toilet
- Ensure you and your children wash your hands after handling / stroking your dog
- Wash all food including fruit and vegetables before eating them
- Don't allow children to put dirt in their mouths
- Throw away any food dropped on the floor / ground rather than eating it
- Cover children's sandpits when not in use



Travelling Pets

There are specific parasitic worms to which your pet may be exposed to on visiting countries outside the UK. Two notable worms are [Heartworm](#) (*Dirofilaria immitis*), transmitted by a mosquito bite, which could be fatal in your dog if not prevented, and one type of [Tapeworm](#) (*Echinococcus multilocularis*), which can cause serious and fatal disease in people.

If you are intending to travel with your dog, you should talk to your vet in plenty of time to establish the best worming regime to ensure the protection of both your dog's health and that of your family.

For further information about what you need to do before, during, and after travel abroad with your dog, refer to the [Pet Travel Scheme guidelines](http://www.defra.gov.uk/wildlife-pets/pets/travel) on the DEFRA website, www.defra.gov.uk/wildlife-pets/pets/travel.

Further reading and information

ESCCAP UK provides practical advice to dog owners to protect pets from parasitic infections and to minimise the risk of their transmission between animals and humans. To find out more, visit www.esccapuk.org.uk.

The Kennel Club aims to promote the health, happiness and general wellbeing of all dogs, and to provide you with an invaluable resource for every aspect of life with your dog.

To find out more, visit www.thekennelclub.org.uk



VACCINATION ADVICE

There are a number of common infectious diseases that dogs are susceptible to throughout their entire life. Some of these diseases are life threatening and young puppies are particularly vulnerable, so It is vitally important that your puppy is vaccinated against them at a young age. Further vaccination is essential to ensure that your puppy continues to be healthy and happy throughout its entire life.

It is reminded that NO VACCINATIONS HAVE BEEN CARRIED OUT and it is highly recommended that as soon as you leave with your Labrador puppy, you organise with a vet to discuss a full immunisation plan.



FIRST VACCINATIONS



Canine Distemper, Hepatitis, Parvovirus and Leptospirosis.

All of these diseases can be fatal so after its first course of vaccinations, your Labrador puppy will need booster vaccinations according to your vet's advice.

Once a puppy is vaccinated, the vet will issue a vaccination certificate showing a record of exactly when the puppy was vaccinated and which product was used. This should be kept safe as you may need to show them at boarding kennels, dog-training classes or if you take your dog abroad. It is also useful should you change your vet and he may recommend a slightly different regime, and it will be useful to see what vaccination your puppy has had in the past,

Until your puppy is fully vaccinated, you should not take it anywhere where it might come into contact with dogs or ground that may be infected. However, puppies are most receptive to new environments and situations at this age, so keeping them confined to your house and garden can be counterproductive. In order to continue your puppy's socialisation programme during these important first weeks at home, you should take your puppy out to different places in your arms or the car to get it used to different situations and noises, as well as letting it meet new people.

Further details on socialisation is available in the Kennel Club "Puppy Plan" which can be viewed at www.thepuppyplan.com

Further information on Vaccination



How does vaccination work?

The immune system is the body's defence mechanism against disease. The body recognises invading viruses and bacteria as 'foreign' and its reaction to these 'foreign

invaders' is called an immune response. The body produces antibodies which destroy or remove the foreign substances.

The essence of vaccination is that it makes use of the body's natural systems for fighting disease. This is done by introducing a substance to the body which mimics a disease but does not actually cause the disease. The body prepares its immune response, which then is activated if that disease is detected at some time in the future. The vaccine can be introduced by various methods – commonly either by injection or nasally.

In so many respects, vaccination is the ideal way to combat disease. Immune systems are continuously active in the defence against disease, and vaccination simply exploits this system.

How do diseases spread?

All living organisms share the genetic drive to make sure that their species continues to exist. This applies to viruses and bacteria as much as it applies to humans and animals. Disease-causing organisms therefore have built into their structure the ability to spread from one susceptible organism to another. They can be transferred from host to host by physical contact, contact with body fluids, by the consumption of diseased food, transferred by a 'third party' (i.e. mosquitoes, fleas, ticks or midges) or they can be airborne, requiring proximity, but no physical contact to jump from host to host. Some diseases are species specific, while others can infect, or are carried by, a range of species.



Does vaccination have any side effects?

Anybody who has ever been vaccinated knows that it can occasionally make you feel quite feverish and poorly for a short while. Whilst this effect is not pleasant, it is a sign that the vaccine is stimulating the body's disease defences. The perfect vaccine would not cause those effects, but not all vaccines are perfect, although safety is paramount in the licensing of vaccines. Exceptionally there can very occasionally be more severe side effects but they are so rare that the benefits obtained with vaccination far outweighs the risks. If you are concerned about any possible side effects, discuss this with your vet prior to the vaccine being administered to your puppy.

What are the different types of vaccines?

A vaccine must stimulate an immune reaction in the recipient, similar to the immune reaction that the real disease would produce, but the vaccine must not actually cause the harmful effects of that disease. The manner in which the vaccine component is processed in the laboratory is intended to make it safe but sufficiently similar to the disease so that the body recognises it. There are two broad techniques that are used:

- Live – a weak or 'attenuated' form of the disease is grown in the lab which, when injected into an animal, does not have the power to cause disease.
- Killed – the disease organism is killed and prepared into a vaccine, sufficiently similar to stimulate immunity but clearly incapable of causing disease.



Both techniques have their strengths and weaknesses. There are also new genetically modified vaccines coming onto the market. Such vaccines have the ability to better target the type of immunity required and will provide many new exciting possibilities in disease control.



How frequently should vaccines be used?

Vaccination plays a very important role in the control of infectious diseases. Whilst it is recognised that adverse reactions such as an allergic response or a lack of efficacy may occasionally occur, an analysis of the overall benefits and risks strongly supports the continued use of vaccination.

Vets should make a thorough assessment of the benefits and risks on an individual case basis and discuss them with clients when deciding the timing of vaccination and the use of particular vaccines. Such an assessment will need to be based on the Summary of Product Characteristics (SPC), often referred to as a data sheet in the UK, a publicly available document giving particulars of the data package submitted by the manufacturer and agreed by the licensing authority during the authorisation process (found as Product Information Database at www.vmd.defra.gov.uk). The SPC is unique for every vaccine and will provide precise information on the duration of the immunity that can be achieved when that product is administered. It is this information that the vet will use to decide the frequency of vaccination, along with scientific guidelines that are made available by professional bodies (Vaccine (Guidance at WSAVA website). Recent trends in data mean that many products now indicate a duration of immunity of 3-4 years for canine distemper, parvovirus and adenovirus after completing the primary vaccination schedule and the subsequent booster in minimum age puppies. However, some veterinary surgeons may also take into account the World Small Animal Veterinary Association (WSAVA) Guidelines by, for example, giving a full first annual booster before applying the extended duration of immunity claims, or by delaying the second vaccination until the animal is at least 12 weeks of age in some high risk areas or where levels of maternally derived antibodies are expected to be high. It is important for veterinary surgeons to understand that, when departing from the SPC, they do so under their own responsibility.



Vets should therefore use vaccines in accordance with the authorised stipulations and what they know of the prevailing disease trends in their area. If they deviate from the medicinal data available to them and/or use a vaccine not in accordance with the instructions on the label and the SPCs it must be done with good reason and informed client consent.

Some lobby groups have accused the veterinary profession of over-vaccinating – perhaps using vaccine yearly when there may well be a longer lasting immunity to disease. To challenge this view would involve further testing beyond the scientific evaluations already undertaken by the manufacturer to determine the duration of immunity as specified in the SPC.

What are the benefits of vaccinating dogs?

There is no doubt that the use of vaccination has been of huge benefit to our pets by bringing some very unpleasant diseases under control. The use of 'combination' or 'multivalent' vaccines (where several different vaccines are given together) has transformed the control of many diseases of dogs and cats. Virus diseases such as canine distemper, adenoviruses (viral hepatitis) and canine parvovirus used to be scourges. The development of vaccines and their widespread use has brought the diseases in question under control.



The way in which vaccines have been used in dogs is rather different to the way in which they have been used in farm animals. The difference is that whereas in farm animals the aim is to prevent the spread of disease and to protect the herd, in the dog and cat it is the individual animal that vaccine is being used to protect. However, the uptake of vaccination by responsible dog and cat owners who wish to prevent their pet from catching certain diseases has been so great that it has reduced the amount of such disease seen by vets. It has produced some 'herd immunity'. Prevention is better than cure, especially with diseases such as distemper and parvovirus where if the animal survives it is often left with permanent damage of some kind.

