

# Important Contacts

## Veterinary Services

Consultations and surgeries are by appointment only - please call your nearest clinic for more details.

### Hong Kong Hospital

5, Wan Shing St, Wan Chai, Hong Kong  
Tel : 2802 0501

### Kowloon Clinic

105, Princess Margaret Rd, Kowloon  
Tel: 2713 9104

### Sai Kung Clinic

7, Sha Tsui Path, Sai Kung, NT  
Tel: 2792 1535

### Hang Hau Clinic

Flat B, 2/F, Block 5, Hang Hau Village, Tseung Kwan O, NT  
Tel : 2243 0080

### Cheung Chau Clinic

Tung Wan, Cheung Chau  
Tel : 2981 4176

### Mui Wo Clinic

Shop 14, Mui Wo Centre, Mui Wo, Lantau Island  
Tel : 2984 0060

## Mobile Clinic

An appointment booking service is now in operation. Please call our hotline on 2713 9104 or any of our centres.

### Shatin Mobile Clinic

Wo Che St, Opposite Wo Che Police HQ, Shatin

**Monday 9:30AM-12:30PM  
2:00PM-3:30PM**

### Yuen Long Mobile Clinic

The junction of Kam Pok Rd and Ha San Wai Rd, Yuen Long

**Tuesday 10:00AM-12:00NN**

### Tuen Mun Mobile Clinic

Tat Yun Square, San Hui, Tuen Mun

**Tuesday 2:00PM-4:30PM**

### Tsuen Wan Mobile Clinic

Junction of Yeung UK Rd & Kwu Hang Rd, Tsuen Wan

**Thursday 9:30AM-12:00NN**

### Tung Chung Mobile Clinic

Outside Tower 12, Caribbean Coast, Man Tung Rd, Tung Chung

**Thursday 2:00PM-4:30PM**

## Behaviour Services

Please contact our Behaviour and Training department on 2232 5567.

## Training Classes

We strongly recommend you enroll your new dog in a training class. Please contact our staff on 2232 5567 for enquiries regarding class times and enrollment.

## Grooming Services

Please call 2232 5532 to make an appointment for grooming.

## Boarding Services

We provide a quality boarding service for dogs and cats at our Hong Kong Centre. Please call 2802 0501 for more details.

## Retail Services

A wide range of products are available at our Hong Kong, Kowloon, Sai Kung, Mui Wo, Hang Hau, Mong Kok Adopt-a-Pet and DOG x GOD Centres.

## Volunteer Programme

If you would like to help the SPCA find loving homes for animals, perhaps you could consider becoming a volunteer. Various positions are available. Please contact our Volunteer coordinator at 2802 0501.

## Adoption

For enquiries, please contact a member of our Homing Staff on:  
2232 5529 (Hong Kong Centre)  
2713 9104 (Kowloon Centre)  
2714 1000 (Mongkok Adopt-a-Pet Centre)  
2792 1535 (Sai Kung Centre)  
2232 5599 (DOG x GOD Adoption Centre)

or visit our website:

[www.sPCA.org.hk](http://www.sPCA.org.hk)



# First Day Home



We feed and recommend Hill's pet food



# Congratulations!

By adopting a dog from the SPCA, you have not only given him a well deserved second chance but also have created the opportunity to build a life-long, loving and rewarding relationship with your special friend.

You are no doubt excited about getting your dog home and starting to learn about each other. Before you do so, please take a little time to read the first few pages of this booklet particularly the sections about settling your new dog in and the first night in his new home. You may be glad that you did!

If you have any questions regarding your new dog's health or behaviour, please contact our Homing staff on



Hong Kong Centre	2232 5529
Kowloon Centre	2713 9104
Mongkok Adopt-a-pet Centre	2714 1000
Sai Kung Centre	2792 1535
DOG x GOD Adoption Centre	2232 5599

Our clinics are by appointment only. Please take a note of the times of the clinics nearest you.

Co-ordinated by Homing Dept. - SPCA(HK)

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# BEING PREPARED

## BEING PREPARED

Make sure you are well prepared for your new pet's arrival at home. You can purchase all the items you need from the SPCA. These include:

Good quality dog food - our homing staff will be able to assist you in choosing one suitable for your new dog.



Two dishes which do not tip over - one for food and one for water



A dog bed with washable cover, or a suitable alternative, such as a folded blanket



A collar with an identification tag. Buckle and snap collars are more suitable for puppies than chain collars. We recommend gentle leader collars for training.

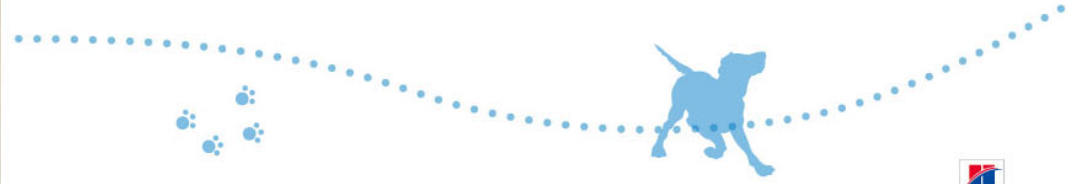
A variety of toys - ask our homing staff which types are suitable for your dog



A leather or nylon lead

Work out your house rules and dog care regime in advance with all members of the household. Decide in advance where his new bed will be - ideally in a place where it is quiet and he can feel secure. If your new dog is a puppy, take steps to make his environment safer by preventing access to things he might chew such as cleaning agents, pesticides, poisonous plants, rubbish, and electrical wires.

Designate one family member to be in charge of looking after your dog's needs - in all the excitement, it is easy to assume that other people are taking care of them.





### ARRIVING HOME; THE FIRST FEW HOURS AND NIGHT

After the excitement of the journey home, your dog will probably want to relieve himself. If you allow him straight into the house, and he makes a mess, he may then identify this area as his toilet!

Take your dog to the garden or exercise area you intend using, and encourage him to sniff the ground.

When he goes to the toilet, make a big fuss of him and give him lots of praise, so that he understands that this is where the toilet is.

Watch out for signs of him wanting to go out in the future, such as pacing or standing at the door.

#### The first few hours

- ★ Your dog may behave differently than how he did when you first saw him. He will be excited, nervous and maybe tired after the trip to your house.
- ★ When inside the house, allow your dog to wander around the house, having a good sniff and look at everything.
- ★ Show him where the important things are, such as his bed and his water bowl.
- ★ Try to leave him alone as much as possible at this stage until he feels more secure in his new surroundings. There will be plenty of time for cuddles and games later on.



### The first night

- ★ It is important to decide where your new dog will sleep at night. Until his new bathroom habits have been established, restrict him to non-carpeted areas of the house where it will be easier to clean up after him if he has an accident.
- ★ Puppies may be used to cuddling up to other puppies at night, so make lumps under blankets that he can snuggle against. A ticking clock or a hot water bottle under the blanket can make the puppy feel more secure and less lonely. Place newspaper around the puppy's bed area to help with overnight accidents until he is housetrained.
- ★ Your dog will not settle down to sleep if there is still a lot of activity going on in the house. Put him to bed just before you go to bed yourself.
- ★ Don't make a big deal about leaving him for the night. Give him a small treat, and then leave the room. Ignore him if he scratches at the door, whines or barks. If you respond to it, he will learn that he only needs to repeat this behaviour to get your attention.
- ★ Next morning, only enter your dog's sleeping area when he is not making any noise. Again, don't make a fuss of him, but give him a calm welcome when his excitement has died down.





## INTRODUCTIONS

Your new dog will have to be introduced to your family, friends and other people, and of course, other animals. Pets enjoy each others company, but sometimes it takes a while for them to realise the wonderful advantages they're about to enjoy!

### Introducing a new dog to your resident dog:

Most canines view the arrival of another dog as an invasion of their territory. The following tips may make things run more smoothly.

- 🐾 Introductions with your existing dog are best made on neutral territory, away from your house and garden.
- 🐾 Each dog should be handled by a separate person and should be on a loose lead. Let the dogs sniff each other for a short time, and talk to them in a happy friendly tone of voice. Take them for a short walk, and let them sniff and investigate each other at intervals. Never force them towards each other.
- 🐾 When going back into the house, remove any dog toys, blankets and beds to minimise any possible friction between the dogs over possession or sleeping areas. As they become more familiar with each other, put down one or two toys, saving the favourites until last.
- 🐾 When you're not at home, keep the dogs in separate rooms for the first few days until they are comfortable with one another.
- 🐾 Be careful, in your excitement over the new dog not to neglect your old friend. Make sure he gets as much or more attention than the new dog. If your new dog is a puppy, he may require several meals a day. To avoid jealousy from the resident dog, cut down his food a little, so that you can give him a treat when your new dog is fed these extra meals.



### Introducing a new dog to your cat:

Dogs and cats are not natural enemies. A puppy and a kitten will make a wonderful match, and any combination of a young animal with an adult animal will usually work out well. Older dogs and cats will usually become friends, but it will take time and patience in most cases.

- 🐾 Make sure your cat is well out of the way when you first bring your dog home. If your cat comes to greet you at the door and instead meets an excited dog, it will upset your cat and make introductions very difficult!
- 🐾 When you are ready to introduce them, put the cat in a basket so he's safe and secure, and then bring your dog into the room on a lead, close enough to sniff. If the dog growls or tries to lunge at the cat, take him out of the room and try again later.
- 🐾 If the meeting is peaceful, reward both animals with praise and petting. The next step, at a later meeting is to let the cat loose while keeping the dog on a lead, and watch the dog's reaction when the cat is moving. Don't allow the dog to become aggressive. If your cat swipes at his nose when he gets too close don't get too worried - it's just your cat's way of telling him that he won't stand for any nonsense!
- 🐾 Take it very slowly, and don't leave them alone unsupervised until you are certain they are both completely comfortable with each other.
- 🐾 Be aware that while puppies respond to training, it is often difficult to train adult dogs to lose their aggression towards cats once they've developed that behaviour. If the aggression continues, the new dog may not work out as a family member.



### Introducing your new dog to family and friends:

While you might be anxious to show off your new pet to all your friends and neighbours, remember that the first few days in a new home is a huge period of adjustment for your dog, and too many new faces may confuse him or even make him nervous. Try to limit introductions to family members only at first, then gradually get him used to other people.

Always allow your new dog to approach people rather than allowing people to approach him. This allows him to build up trust and confidence. If he appears shy, give each person a treat or dog toy and then encourage the dog to approach. The more pleasant encounters your dog has, the better he will be around new people.

Try to read your dog's body language. Confident dogs will move positively with their ears and tail up. If he is nervous, his ears will be back, his tail down or even between his legs, and his body held low to the ground.

If he appears nervous, make sure the person he is approaching is to the side, and not directly in front of him, and ask them to crouch down and not look him directly in the eye. Praise him when he's being brave or good, but don't give him reassurance when he's being anxious.

Never force attention on him. This applies especially to children. Allow him plenty of time to get to know everyone.

**REMEMBER** – children and dogs should always be supervised when together.



### ESTABLISHING THE RULES

The previous history of many older dogs is unknown, and it can be tempting for owners to dwell on their pet's past, imagining incidents that may explain or excuse their dog's behaviour. However, this is your dog, and his future is in your hands. Try to think of him as a blank slate - what you choose to write on it will make or mar your future relationship. So from the start, establish basic family rules and make sure everyone sticks to them, so that your new dog will understand what's expected of him.

Dogs are creatures of habit, and routine translates into security for them. They like to know what they can and cannot do - what their boundaries are. Most badly behaved dogs are simply confused - Dad lets him sit on the sofa one day, while Mum shouts at him the next. Over-compensating for what might have happened in the past in the first few weeks, then changing the rules later on is simply not fair. Being kind, but firm from the start will give your dog the security he needs now.

### A VITAL TIP

Some well intentioned owners take some days off work to settle the dog in; consequently the dog becomes accustomed to having company all the time. When the owner goes back to work, the dog is upset by the change in routine, which can result in him soiling or becoming destructive. Therefore keep to your normal routine from day one.









## HONEYMOON PERIOD

For the first two weeks in a new home, the dog will be on his best behaviour, while learning the family routines and simply appreciating the security. After the "honeymoon period", many dogs start to test how strong your rules and routines are. Some dogs will pester for attention, while others may challenge over toys or food. Many will bond so closely to their owner that they could be described as over dependant.

Initially it feels rather flattering to think your dog wants to be with you continually. However, discovering you can't go out and leave your dog, even for a few minutes, may well change your mind. Dogs that are over dependant on their owners may howl, bark, become destructive, or even mess in the house when left home alone.

Practice these 4 simple steps to provide love, attention and security and prevent overdependence.

-  Try not to allow your dog to become "addicted" to you in the first couple of weeks. Give affection and attention when you decide, not on demand.
-  Don't allow the dog to follow you from room to room. Shut doors between you and him as part of your daily routine, and try not to allow constant contact while you're together.
-  Practice trial separations. Encourage your dog to go to his resting place, give him a chew toy, and then leave. Repeat this for short periods through-out the day. This is particularly important if this is the school holidays or if you have taken time off work to settle your dog in, as it will be too much of a shock when he is suddenly left alone. Keep arrivals and departures low key.
-  Leave your dog with toys that are really fun and rewarding to play with. Kong toys can be filled with food so that the dog has to work to get it out. Safe chews and other toys such as Activity Balls or Buster Cubes also work well. To keep the novelty value of these toys, save them, and give them only when you're going out.



## FEEDING

Your new dog will already be eating a food of some description. Ask what kind of food he has been eating, and initially feed that same food to avoid stomach upsets. It might be wise to check with your vet that the food is a suitable one for your dog. If you wish to change the diet in the long term, make the change gradually, feeding very small amounts of the new food added to the old one, and increasing it in small stages.

Don't worry if your dog does not want to eat much in the first day or two - he is probably unsettled by the move. As long as he has a constant supply of water, and is offered his food regularly, he will be fine. Don't fall into the trap of offering special foods to tempt him - otherwise you may end up having to hand feed him chicken fillets for the rest of his life!

A regular feeding schedule will make timely bathroom breaks easier for you and make your dog more secure. The amount to feed your dog varies according to the dog's weight and activity level - refer to the charts printed on the food bags as a guide, and ask our staff for specific recommendations for your dog.

Recommended feeding schedules: Puppies

8wks - 12wks	4 times daily
3mths - 6mths	3 times daily
6mths - 12mths	2 times daily

Adult dogs (12 months+) can be fed once or twice daily, depending on your preference. Adult dogs do not need as much energy as growing puppies, so you may need to reduce his food intake to prevent him becoming overweight. In general, if you can see your dog's ribs, he is probably too thin; if you can't feel his ribs at all, he is probably too fat.

Never give your dog bones of any kind - they can splinter and injure your dog's mouth or internal organs, and often cause constipation. Chew toys and semi-hard nylon "bones" are much safer, but not always safe unsupervised. Never give table scraps to your dog as it may discourage him from eating the more nutritious pet foods and may encourage him to develop undesirable behavioural traits especially if fed directly from the table.

Commercial diets are fully balanced for your dog's nutritional needs - never add extra calcium or vitamins unless instructed by a veterinary surgeon - you may do more harm than good.



## GROOMING

Although most dogs like having contact with humans, some need to be taught to trust people, especially when being touched. It is therefore important that you have a regular pattern of handling and grooming your dog. This will not only benefit his coat and general health, it will allow you to spot any abnormalities, and will increase your bond with him.

Examine your dog all over every day, and your vet will love you! It should only take a few minutes.

If he seems nervous about having a particular area touched, don't force him to accept being handled there, but work on the area gradually to build up his confidence.

Check that his eyes and nose are clear and free from discharge. A healthy dog's nose may be cool and moist or warm and dry - it changes during the day.

Playfully scratch your dog behind the ears and gently hold the ear for just a second. If he doesn't object, praise him and give him a small food treat. Try holding the ear for two seconds, then three and so on before he is given a treat. Then try to fold back the ear and look inside. In time he should allow you to clean his ear, using a commercial ear cleaner and some cotton wool (never cotton buds). Weekly ear cleaning is sufficient for most dogs. If you notice excessive amounts of ear discharge, a foul smell, or if your dog seems painful when you touch his ears, make an appointment to see your vet.

Gently slide a thumb under his upper lip to expose his teeth. Then try opening his mouth, first for a second, then for a couple of seconds. Praise him profusely and offer him a small treat. Work slowly, day by day, until he is confident about having his mouth handled. You should now try brushing his teeth with a soft toothbrush. Dental disease is a common and serious condition in older pets, and the only effective way to prevent this is through regular brushing. Puppies lose their last baby teeth when they are around five months old, but you should not lose the opportunity to get them used to toothbrushes at an early age. Another useful tool in dental care is special dental diets please ask your vet for details.



## GROOMING

Run your hands slowly down the neck and along the back and tummy, and then do it in the opposite direction, looking out for any lumps or bumps, parasites and signs of skin infection.

Starting from the shoulder, gently run your hand down along a front leg and hold the paw for a second before letting go. Using praise and treats increase the amount of time the paw can be held. Training him to shake paws often helps because it makes a game out of the exercise. Gently spread the toes and feel the spaces in between, checking for dirt, matted hair and even parasites such as ticks. This will help your dog with nail trimming, although dogs that are exercised rarely need manicures! Remember to repeat this exercise on all four legs.

Lift the tail and examine the area closely for matted hair and other abnormalities. You may need another family member to help you with this, as many dogs are "bottom shy".

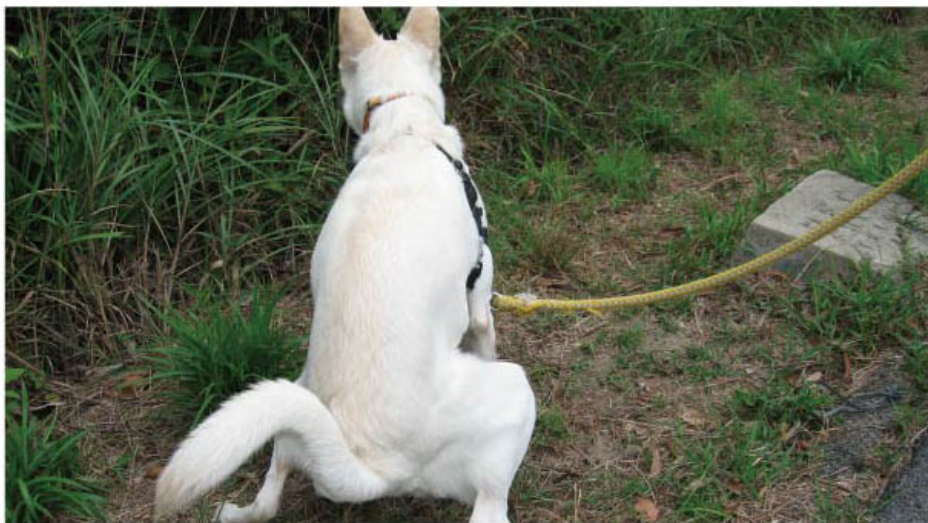
Groom him gently all over with a soft brush. Distract him with a toy or tit-bit if he wriggles, or tries to bite the brush. If he really objects to one place being touched, build up gradually to being able to groom these by practicing little and often. Grooming and handling should be pleasurable experiences for both of you - not a battle.

Shampoo your dog only when he is dirty. Bathing him too frequently removes the natural oils from his coat, and may lead to skin problems. Use a dog shampoo, and be sure to rinse his coat well. If you are using your own bath tub for this, a rubber bath mat will prevent him from slipping, and help him feel more secure.

During the hot summer months in Hong Kong, long haired dogs may benefit from having their coats clipped or thinned out to make them feel cooler, and to help prevent heat stroke.







## TOILET TRAINING

Housetraining a puppy requires time, patience and commitment. Unless you are extremely vigilant, you can expect a few accidents. Puppies under six months of age cannot be expected to control their bladders for more than a few hours at a time.

With adult dogs, a long stay in kennels or a change to their routine can mean they experience a lapse in house training, but your dog's natural instincts can be used for quick, simple and stress free house training.

**6 steps** to stress free toilet training:

**1** Learn to predict when your dog will need to go to the toilet. This is usually after he has eaten, woken up, after a play session or after any exciting event, such as people coming home from work. Puppies should be taken out every one to two hours initially, and then the interval between outings can be increased as they get older and learn what's expected of them. Most dogs will do a number of things before they leave a puddle (or something worse!). They may sniff on the floor, begin to circle or squat, and appear to be distracted.

**2** When you suspect your dog needs to go to the toilet, encourage him to go to the place you have chosen as the toilet spot. If you clean up after an accident in the house, take the soiled rags or paper towels, and leave them in the toilet spot. The smell will help your dog recognize the area as the place he is supposed to eliminate. You can give him a simple command such as "Hurry up" if you choose. Wait with your dog, encouraging him all the time. If he goes to the toilet, praise him gently while he is going, and then give him

lots of enthusiastic praise, a food treat or a game as soon as he is finished.

**3** If after a few minutes your dog is showing no signs of relieving himself, take him back indoors. At this stage you know he is likely to go in the near future, so supervise him constantly to make sure there are no chances for mistakes. If your dog begins to sniff around or circle, clap your hands or call out to interrupt the behaviour, and take him back to the toilet spot.

**4** There are times when you will not be able to supervise your dog constantly. At such times, or during the night, it is important to confine him to an area where you won't mind if he makes a mess.

**5** Never punish your dog if you have allowed him to make a mistake. Punishing a dog during or after he has been to the toilet in the wrong place is not likely to make him realise he did the wrong thing, but is likely to make him fearful. This can lead to the dog trying to hide his mess from you, either in concealed areas, such as behind the sofa, or by eating the evidence. Other dogs, which have been punished in the act, simply learn never to go to the toilet in front of their owners, making toilet training practically impossible. Owners who state that their dog "knows he's done wrong" or "looks guilty" are misinterpreting their dog's body language. The dog is really showing fear and anxiety at their owner's sudden and irrational display of anger. A further consequence is that dogs worried about their owner's reaction are likely to need to go to the toilet more, not less.

**6** To prevent your dog returning to previously soiled areas, clean up using an odour-neutralising product. Prevent access to these areas by closing doors to rooms or moving furniture over the soiled areas. As most dogs will not eliminate in areas where they eat or play, feeding, or placing bedding and toys in these areas may discourage him from using it as a toilet area in the future.

## HOW TO HAVE A HAPPY DOG

Ensuring your dog is healthy requires taking care of his mental, as well as his physical requirements. Spending time with your dog exercising him, playing games and doing training exercises will not only strengthen the bond between you, but will make him a happier and less stressed dog.





## HEALTH

Unfortunately, despite our best efforts, diseases can occasionally go home with adopted animals. It is important to ensure that all your pets at home are in good health and have had all relevant vaccinations before taking home your new dog.

### Vaccinations

Every adult dog adopted from the SPCA is vaccinated against distemper, hepatitis, parvovirus, parainfluenza virus, and leptospirosis. All dogs require yearly "booster" shots to maintain their immunity. A vaccination card should be provided by the vet with every vaccination given recorded. It should also indicate when the next vaccination is due. SPCA provides this initial course of vaccination free of charge.

In addition, all dogs should be vaccinated against rabies, microchip implanted and licensed, in accordance with Hong Kong law. Rabies booster shots are required every three years.

### Worms

We recommend that you deworm your pet every three months as a routine measure. Young puppies may require worm pills every 2 weeks until they are 12 weeks old.

### Fleas and ticks



Fleas not only cause itching and discomfort for your pet, but can also cause anaemia, hairloss, allergic reactions and tapeworm infestations. Effective flea control must include environmental treatment for eggs and larvae, as well as the fleas on your pet. A variety of products are available. Always read labels carefully and follow directions exactly.



Ticks can transmit some potentially fatal diseases to your dog, so preventing your dog from acquiring these parasites is very important.

For more detailed information on fleas and ticks, see our separate SPCA information leaflet or ask your vet.



### Heartworm disease

This is transmitted by mosquitoes, who inject the larvae into your dog's bloodstream when they bite. The symptoms of heartworm disease may not be noticed until serious, irreversible damage has been done to internal organs.

All adult dogs adopted from the SPCA have been tested, and found to be free of heartworm. We recommend that you prevent your dog from getting infected by giving him monthly preventative pills. These are available from your vet, or the SPCA.

### Desexing

Desexing will usually be done before an animal leaves the centre but the operation may be delayed in some cases. It is thoroughly recommended and not only prevents you from being stressed by the unwanted litters of puppies, but also provides important health benefits for your pet. Meanwhile, it prevents your dog from the threat of cancer and infections of the reproductive organs - common diseases which can prove fatal in older dogs. Desexed animals are more content, and are less likely to stray from home. It is a myth that desexed animals get fat - dogs who don't get sufficient exercise or who are over fed become overweight.

### Insurance

Pet Insurance is strongly recommended by the SPCA. This ensures peace of mind and is invaluable in the event of unforeseen illness or injury to your pet.



## OBEDIENCE TRAINING

Prevent your dog from pulling on the lead from day one. If there is tension on the lead - stop! Taking even one more step will reward the pulling.

For dogs that persistently pull on the lead, a head collar e.g. gentle leader may be the answer. Ask our staff for advice.

All dogs should wear a collar and ID tag with your name, address and telephone number, while in public. He should also wear a tag indicating that he has been vaccinated against rabies. All dogs over 20kg must be on a lead while in public places. Always bring newspaper with you to clean up after your dog - allowing your dog to foul public places is punishable by a fine.

Make sure your dog will return to you when called before you let him off the lead outside. Practice "come when called" at home, rewarding him with a treat when he comes to you, until the recall is reliable. Never scold your dog once he has returned, no matter how long it takes. He certainly will not be keen to come back again if you do!

Dogs that are trained not only have better manners, they also feel more secure and content, and look forward to the mental workout a good training session provides. Nearly all basic training can be done at home, using totally force-free and simple methods. However, most dog owners enjoy the sociability of going to a training class, and most dogs enjoy it too.



## OBEDIENCE TRAINING

There are no age limitations to training a dog. Puppies as young as eight weeks can quickly learn basic training commands, so starting young can have its advantages. However, older dogs can be more receptive and focused during training sessions. It is possible to teach an old dog new tricks! The SPCA runs a range of training classes to cater for all ages and capabilities. Contact our staff for details.

If you want to try training your dog yourself, we recommend you use a method that relies on positive reinforcement - there are many excellent books available which demonstrate the basic commands.

View training your dog as teaching him a foreign language. Your dog already knows how to sit and lie down - your task is to teach him the word that means "sit" or "down" when you ask him to.

Don't get frustrated or angry if your dog does not do what you want him to. The chances are he is not being disobedient - he simply does not understand what you want.

Practice little and often. Fit training into your daily routine, practice "sit" and "down" during the ad breaks on TV!

Find something that your dog sees as a reward. Food treats work well for most dogs, while others like toys or praise. In the early stages of training, the reward needs to be a good one.

Once your dog is responding to requests when you have food on offer, start to phase it out, so that he does not become reliant on it.





## ETIQUETTE

Dogs are pack animals, and like to have a leader to show them the way. If a dog feels leadership is lacking, he will quickly take control, leading to all sorts of problems later on. There is no need to use any kind of physical punishment, confrontation or force to teach your dog to accept his position in the family; leaders gain respect by clearly communicating that they keep control. Follow these simple suggestions to ensure that your dog is happy and secure.

When taking your dog for a walk, or simply when moving around the house, don't let him charge ahead in front of you. If your dog has a habit of barging through doorways, open the door just one inch, and if he attempts to rush past you, close the door quickly. Repeat this without saying anything until he learns to step back as the door is opened, allowing you to walk ahead of him.

Some dogs, particularly small ones will raise their height and therefore their status, by getting on the furniture, or by training their owner to pick them up on command. Discourage your dog from getting on the furniture from day one. You can decide to make other areas off limits to him also. Remember, only the boss, and that's you, has free access to all areas in the house.

Give your dog attention and affection only when you decide. Dogs are absolute masters at demanding affection from us whenever they like. When he pushes against you to be petted or picks up his toy and starts playing, fold your arms, look away and ignore him, no matter how cute or appealing he looks. He should get plenty of quality time, but this should be on your terms. Practice "Nothing in life is free" - make him earn his rewards by obeying simple training commands before he receives food, exercise, games or even a pat on the head. This will help to reinforce basic training commands, but more importantly, will communicate to your dog that he should never take things for granted.



## YOUR DOG'S SOCIAL LIFE

No matter how much time you spend with your dog, getting him out and about to meet as many people and other dogs is an important part of his new life. It's not unusual for dogs to be wary of things that are unfamiliar. For example, if your dog has grown up with a single person in a quiet apartment, he may need some time to adapt to a new life with a large active family in a noisy neighbourhood.

Puppies need to learn all about their new environment - taxi rides, skateboards, and even umbrellas can seem scary if he has not been introduced to them at a young age. The most critical period for learning about his new world is between five weeks to five months. Try to ensure that he meets a wide range of people, other animals and situations during this important time, and that all his experiences are pleasant ones. The SPCA runs puppy socialisation classes, allowing your pup to develop social skills in a safe environment.

Adult dogs may need some retraining in social skills. If your dog seems anxious around new people or new situations, do not try to tell him off or reassure him. It may be tempting to stroke, talk soothingly or cuddle him to try and increase his confidence, but all these actions do is reward your dog for fearful behaviour. Instead, ignore all behaviour you don't like, and save your praise and reassurance for times when your dog acts with confidence.

It is also important that you allow your dog to meet and mix with other friendly dogs. Just like us, dogs need to have some social time with their friends too! Most dogs will sort out any differences quickly and without fighting if we allow them to. Owners often get worried about their dogs meeting others in the park, but unless yours shows signs of aggression with other dogs, it is usually better to let dogs be dogs and enjoy each other's company.





## PLAYING

It is a sad fact that some dogs don't know how to play. If yours is one of these, it is up to you to teach him. If your dog does know how to play, then it is equally essential that you get involved and play games that increase your bond and control at the same time.

For a dog that won't play, start off by getting him interested in a special toy. Some dogs like toys that squeak, some like balls, while others prefer soft toys. When introducing a new type of toy to your dog, supervise him carefully to make sure he won't tear it up and eat the pieces.

Move the toy around, wriggle it, and drag it past him. If he shows any interest at all - even looking at it, praise him and give him a treat. Repeat this a few times, and then put the toy away. After a few sessions your dog should start to take an interest in the toy. Now you can play hide and seek with it. If he picks it up, praise him madly. This could be the start of many fetch games!

For dogs that already play, try adding a little control to your games. Many dogs think that "tug-of-war" and fetch are tests of speed and strength and that you are the opponent. Asking your dog to sit before you throw the toy and then swapping the toy for a treat or another toy when he brings it back is an ideal way to overcome this. If your dog is practiced at winning games and gets over excited, growls, runs off with the toy, or refuses to give it up, turn your back and walk away immediately. Most dogs want you to take part in the contest, which is impossible if he is suddenly on his own.



## EXERCISE

Even a dog with a yard or a garden requires the mental and physical stimulation of regular walks. Under-stimulated dogs may discover that chewing or destroying items in the house relieves their boredom.

Depending on their age and breed, some dogs require a great deal of exercise, while others remain happy and healthy with very little. Two outings a day is usually ideal. You don't have to walk or run for miles - a game of fetch with a ball or a stick will provide your dog with plenty of aerobic exercise.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON ANY OF THE ABOVE TOPICS PLEASE ASK YOUR VETERINARY SURGEON OR VISIT OUR WEBSITE ON [www.sPCA.org.hk](http://www.sPCA.org.hk)

