**A picture containing plate, white

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**Dog Care & Training**

[A dog sitting in the woods

Description automatically generated with medium confidence](http://wiki.pathfindersonline.org/w/File:Golden_Retriever_standing_Tucker.jpg)1. Describe the steps you should take in the following areas of dog care:

1. **Selection**

Golden Retrievers are renowned for their gentleness and intelligence.

For average owners, the importance of the breed is in understanding for what purpose the dog was bred and how that purpose relates to its life as a pet. Herding dogs often get a reputation for nipping, because that is the way they control animals they are herding. Retrievers require lots of regular active running and chasing. Lap dogs love to be in your lap. Dalmatians are coach dogs. As decorative as they are, if they will not have an opportunity for regular exercise, you should choose some other dog. If you like an active dog, you should get a bigger dog. If you like a more laid-back dog, get a lap dog.

You can buy a dog from a reputable [dog breeder](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/dog_breeder), if you are motivated to adopt by the desire for a specific type of dog or if you wish to minimize the uncertainty that often accompanies a shelter dog. You will also pay significantly more for the privilege, but welcoming a well-bred, healthy, and trained dog into your home is quite a privilege, indeed! The extra cost is often small compared to the treatment of the symptoms of a genetic disorder.

Keep in mind that good, reputable **breeders** do not breed every cycle and may even lose money when they do have a litter. Costs they assume include

* health and genetic testing of the mother,
* getting the mother together with a genetically appropriate father who is also tested for health and genetic problems,
* medical care for the mother during pregnancy and birth (including a caesarian if necessary),
* medical and routine care for the puppies (even sick ones) for at least 8-10 weeks,
* microchipping of each puppy, and
* caring for any puppy that becomes homeless during its lifetime.

Buying a dog from a **pet store** is not recommended, as these dogs are often poorly socialized, receive no training, and are commonly weaned from their mothers and siblings too early (often 5 weeks). You usually don't know where they came from and how the previous owner treated them. If you ever see a dog in a pet store, and want to take them home and care for them, consider the following:

* Puppies require a great deal of attention and time.
* Training is a tedious and occasionally frustrating process.
* Puppies normally learn bite inhibition from their mothers and littermates between 5 and 10 weeks of age so you will have to do the teaching.
* Pet stores commonly (some would say "always") stock animals bred in [puppy mills](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/puppy_mill) or by non-reputable breeders, in unsanitary, dangerous and inhumane conditions -- and every puppy mill dog purchase perpetuates the existence of puppy mills.

Many [animal welfare](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/animal_welfare) charities recommend [adopting a dog](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/adopting_a_dog) from an [animal shelter](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/animal_shelter), rather than buying one at a store or from a breeder. Getting an adult dog from a shelter avoids surprises in such things as the size and temperament of your pet. They are often neutered and house-trained, too!

**b. Registration**

There are two ways a dog could be registered. The first of these, for purebred dogs, is with the dog's breed registry. This type of registration is done once, usually by the dog's breeder.

The second type of registration applies to all dogs, but perhaps not in all localities. Most local governments require that dogs be licensed. The owner must pay a small fee and prove that the dog has been vaccinated against the rabies virus. The government agency may issue tags that the dog is to wear on its collar. Failure to register a dog in this way when it is required can lead to stiff penalties that far exceed the cost of the nominal fee and the cost of vaccination.

**c. Shots**

As mentioned in part b of this requirement, vaccination against rabies is often mandated by the local government. Even if it is not mandated, it is still a good idea. When you acquire a dog, you should get documentation on the shots it has had. Do not trust the seller in this regard. If the dog does not have documentation, it is very unlikely that it has had its shots, and you may be required to get them again anyhow. A dog must be taken to a veterinarian to receive its shots. They will know which shots are required, and they will provide you with the documentation you need to get your dog registered.

**2. Do at least two of the following:**

**a. Describe what can be done to remove fleas, ticks, and lice from your dog.**

**Prevention**

The best course of action is to prevent these parasites from infecting your dog by treating them with a preventative medicine. One such medicine is *Fipronil*, the active ingredient in **Frontline**. Another is *Imidacloprid Permethrin*, the active ingredient in **K9 Advantix** and **Vectra 3D**. These medicines are applied topically every month and are available with a veterinarian's prescription. Your dog's vet may advise other measures as well.

**Tick Removal**

If you find a tick attached to your dog, find a pair of tweezers and dip them in rubbing alcohol. Grasp the tick as near the dog's skin as possible and then gently pull. Be patient and pull firmly and with consistent force. The tick will eventually tire and release its grip. You can then either place it in a sealable container (such as a freezer bag or a jar) so that it can be analyzed by a vet, or you can destroy it by dropping it in rubbing alcohol. Wash your hands when you are finished.

When removing the tick:

* Do not squeeze the tick's body - pull it out by grasping it near its jaws.
* Do not twist the tick - just pull.
* Do not try to "burn the tick out" by applying a lit match to it. This is dangerous! It is also likely to cause the tick to disgorge bacteria into your dog's bloodstream.
* Don't allow your dog to eat the tick (it will likely try).

**Flea and Lice Removal**

Fleas and lice can be combed out of your dog's hair. If your dog has an infestation, you should give it a bath with flea/lice shampoo, then groom the dog with a fine comb. Finally, dip the dog in a pyrethrin dip. You will also need to treat any area where your dog has spent a lot of time (its bed, doghouse, etc.) to prevent reinfestation.

**b. Mention some of the diseases, pests, and worms that dogs can get.**

**Rabies**

Rabies is a viral disease commonly associated with dogs, although in recent years canine rabies has been practically eliminated in North America and Europe due to extensive and often mandatory vaccination requirements. Rabies in dogs is a fatal disease transmitted by the bite of an infected mammal, such as a cat, raccoon, bat, or another dog. Animals with rabies suffer deterioration of the brain and tend to behave bizarrely and often aggressively, increasing the chances that they will bite another animal or a person and transmit the disease.

**Distemper**

Canine distemper, caused by a virus like the cause of measles, is a highly contagious disease that affects the respiratory, gastrointestinal, and central nervous systems. It is spread through either direct contact with respiratory excretions, through the air, or on inanimate objects such as clothing. Symptoms and signs include discharge from the eye or nose, coughing, difficulty breathing, vomiting, diarrhea, depression, seizures, and paralysis.

**Kennel cough**

Kennel cough is a highly contagious canine illness characterized by inflammation of the upper respiratory system. It can be caused by viral infections such as canine distemper. It is so named because the infection can spread quickly among dogs, such as in the close quarters of a kennel.

**Fleas and Ticks**

Fleas and ticks of various species can be acquired and brought home by a dog, where they can multiply and attack humans (and vice versa). This is particularly important, now that tick-borne Lyme Disease has become endemic throughout a large area, in addition to other similar diseases such as Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever.

**Hookworms, Tapeworms, and Roundworms**

Parasites, particularly intestinal worms such as hookworms, tapeworms, and roundworms, can be transmitted in a dog's feces. Some tapeworms have fleas as intermediate hosts: the worm egg must be consumed by a flea to hatch, then the infected flea must be ingested (usually by the dog while grooming itself) for the adult worm to establish itself in the intestines. The worm's eggs then pass through the intestines and adhere to the nether regions of the dog, and the cycle begins again.

**Heart worms**

As the name suggests, an infected mosquito injects a larva into the dog's skin, where it migrates to the circulatory system and takes up residence in the pulmonary arteries and heart, growing and reproducing to an alarming degree. The effects on the dog are quite predictable, cardiac failure over a year or two, leading to death. Treatment of an infected dog is difficult, involving an attempt to poison the healthy worm with arsenic compounds without killing the weakened dog, and frequently fails. Prevention is much the better course, via heartworm pills which are fed to the dog and contain a compound which kills the larvae immediately upon infection without harming the dog. Often, they are available combined with other parasite preventives.

**c. Explain what you should do for a dog bite.**

This depends on the severity of the bite. If the dog did not puncture the skin, the most important thing for you to do is correct the dog. For innocent chewing on people's hands and feet, an effective correction is to spray some bitter apple into the dog's mouth. This is available at a pet supply store, and quickly teaches the dog that biting, and mouthing are not allowed.

If the skin is punctured but the injury is not severe, you will need to wash out the wound with soap and water and apply a disinfectant. The often-parroted theory that a dog's mouth is clean and even promotes healing is patently false. Dogs routinely eat feces! It is therefore imperative that the wound be disinfected. The dog will also need to be corrected.

If the injury is severe, the victim may need to seek attention from a qualified medical professional. In serious attacks, the dog may need to be euthanized. If a dog is not trained properly, it may severely injure or even kill a human. If this happens, the dog will almost certainly be put down, and the owner may face legal action.

**3. Describe how to housebreak a puppy.**

There are two common approaches to housebreaking a puppy: crate training, and paper training. Both have their proponents and detractors. Both techniques are known to be effective, but it is best to choose one and stick with it. Switching from one technique to the other will confuse your dog and lengthen the amount of time required for housebreaking.

**Crate Training**

By instinct, most dogs do not want to defecate or urinate in their den. The crate is intended to be a substitute for a den.

A puppy may be kept in a crate except during feeding time or during supervised play time. When allowed to exit the crate, the puppy is taken to a soiling area to defecate or urinate.

A crate should be large enough for a puppy to be able to stand up, turn around, and lie down comfortably. If there is too much space, the puppy might use the unoccupied end for wastes. If an owner doesn't want to buy multiple crates as the puppy grows, it's possible to block off one end of a larger crate, or to buy a crate with removable dividers.

The puppy's potty breaks must be frequent enough to avoid “accidents” since puppies have a difficult time controlling urination and defecation. Control gets better as the puppy gets older. Even an adult dog, when ill or affected by certain medications, can end up soiling the crate, making the dog uncomfortable both physically and mentally, if the owner isn't vigilant and aware of the dog's needs.

Toys and soft bedding material in the crate make it more comfortable for a dog or puppy.

A crate should not be used as a prison. Trainers advise that the crate only be closed when the owner is home. Crate training is not the same as confinement for extended periods. No dog should ever be confined to a crate beyond its ability to control its bodily functions.

**Paper Training**

Paper training is easier if the puppy is confined to a small space (i.e. inside a pen). Place a plastic sheet covered with a layer of newspaper (preferably 3 pages thick) on the bottom of the pen. Watch your puppy closely. When the puppy goes to the bathroom on the papers, reward him (preferably with a clicker word and a treat). Clean the dirty papers immediately (but, if you don't mind this, don't clean the plastic. Your puppy may be encouraged to continue going on the papers if it smells a little.). Gradually decrease the amount of papers in the cage until you've gone down to three pages stacked on top of each other.

**Bell Training**

Bell training is best used if you're training your dog to go to the bathroom outside. First, get a cow bell, a buzzer with a large, paw or nose-friendly button, or some other noise making device and teach your dog to use it.

Hang the bell near the door your dog would have to go through to get outside to his bathroom space. Smear cheese wiz on it. If the bell rings when the dog licks it off, reward him (preferably with a clicker word and a treat). Next, put the dog outside every time he licks the cheese wiz off and rings the bell. Reward the dog when he goes outside with the bell but reward him even more if he goes to the bathroom after ringing the bell. Continue this until the dog rings the bell without the cheese wiz.

You can train the dog to push a buzzer button with his paw by placing a treat on the button. Don't let him get to the treat with his mouth. This will frustrate the dog, causing him to try to reach the treat with his paw.

**4. Explain in detail how you would wash a dog and care for its general hygiene.**

**Bathing**

Bathing is an important part of the overall grooming process.

Brushing is often recommended before bathing, to remove dead skin and loose hair. Human shampoos are generally not recommended, due to pH differences between humans and dogs.

Here are some general steps:

* Rinse the dog completely.
* Apply the shampoo on dog's back. Lather well. Repeat for belly, legs and tail.
  + Short-haired dogs can be scrubbed in a circular pattern. It may be easier to wash medium-length haired with a back-and-forth motion; longer-haired dogs in the direction of hair growth.
  + A washcloth can be used to wash the dog's sensitive head and face.
* Rinse again, holding the water with one hand as you work out the soap with another.
* Run your hand all along the dog to remove excess water. Squeeze longer hair to remove excess water.
* Towel-dry. Use a hair dryer on longer haired dogs but use a very low heat setting because of the sensitivity of the dog's skin to heat.

Many use an indoor tub for dog bathing. For many homeowners this can be burdensome, especially with large dogs. If you have an outside dog, chances are they may be particularly dirtier than an inside dog. Getting your large, dirty dog inside can be difficult and messy. You can always wash your dog outside with a water hose. It is important to be conscious of the outside temperature and the temperature of your outside faucet water.

It may be useful to purchase an elevated dog bathtub that brings the dog up to the level of the human, not vice versa. The ability to wash your dog without bending down or getting on your knees is not only convenient, but less stressful on your body. Many tubs also have straps to hold your dog inside the tub and prevent them from slipping and hurting themselves. A simple search for [dog bathtub](http://www.google.com/search?q=dog+bath+tub) will reveal many providers of quality tubs especially for bathing your dog. They can also substitute for a grooming table.

**Hygiene**

Other areas of dog hygiene include brushing, cleaning its ears, and trimming its nails.

**Brushing**

This is especially important for long-haired dogs. Brushing will pick up loose hair from the dog and reduce shedding problems. Have your dog sit or lie down, and use a dog brush to gently sweep through its fur. Do not tug at tangles (it hurts!) If you find a heavily matted area of fur that cannot be brushed out, carefully cut it out with scissors, but be *very* careful. You do not want to injure your dog, and you do not want to give it a bad haircut either!

**Cleaning the ears**

This can be done with a damp paper towel. Again, you get your dog into a sitting position and begin petting it. Scratch it around the ears, and then gently work the paper towel into the inner ear, rubbing and massaging the dog as you clean. Do not insert the paper towel into the ear canal where you will be unable to retrieve it. Throw the soiled paper towel away and use a new one for the other ear.

**Trimming the claws**

For this you will need a special nail trimmer made just for trimming the nails of dogs. You should be able to find one at a pet supply store. Do ***not*** use nail trimmers made for human nails. Carefully examine your dog's nail, looking for the *quick*. If you trim it too short, you will cut into the quick, causing much pain for your dog, and causing it to bleed (sometimes profusely). Trim the front paws first, and then if desired, trim the rear ones as well. Dogs that spend a lot of time running on pavement or rocks will not need their nails trimmed.

**5. Take full responsibility for feeding and watering a dog for two or three months.**

Decide how often you will feed your dog - typically it is done once or twice per day. Be careful not to overfeed the dog, and do not give it snacks (i.e., human food) between meals. It is best to fill the dog's bowl at the same time every day - dogs love routines.

Water, on the other hand, should always be available to your dog. Keep an eye on the water dish and refill it if it is not full (even if it's only half full). You should also keep an "ear" on the water dish. When you hear your dog drinking, you should refill the dish as soon as it is convenient to do so - sooner if the dog has just been exercising.

6. Train your dog until you can successfully demonstrate the following: \*

The commands listed here are very similar to the ones listed in the **AKC Novice Test**, which has a score of up to 200. The AKC Novice Test also include a "free heel" which is the same as a regular heel, except without a leash. See <http://www.uwsp.edu/psych/dog/LA/DrP9Nov.htm> for details.

**a. Heel: Your dog walks close to your left side and sits when you halt.**

This can be done by holding a treat in your left hand and letting your dog smell it. Then start walking and give the command *heel*. If you allow the dog to nibble at the treat while you walk, he will follow along just where he is supposed to. Stop and command the dog to sit. When he complies, give him the rest of the treat.

**b. Figure 8: Your dog stays close to your side without sniffing people, fire hydrants, or other dogs.**

The *Figure 8* is an exercise during which the trainer walks in a figure 8 around two cones while the dog heels. The dog should ignore distractions during the exercise. During the figure eight, the dog will have to walk around the cone while the trainer walks on the outside of the first circle. Then the direction changes and the dog will walk around the cone while the trainer walks along the outside of the second circle. Once the dog knows how to heel, this exercise can be practiced until the dog (and the trainer) have learned it.

**c. Stand for examination: Your dog allows strangers to touch him.**

* Get your dog's attention.
* Hold a treat to his nose and let him smell it. Move it behind his head and he will sit. (This is how you teach *sit* by the way).
* Move the treat away from him and give the command to *stand*.
* Keep moving it away until he is standing.
* Give him plenty of praise (and the treat).
* Practice.
* When the dog seems to know *stand*, drop the treat on the floor.
* Do not allow the dog to get the treat until you release him (by saying "OK!")
* If the dog goes for the treat before the release, take it away. Then give the stand command again.

In the AKC Novice Test, the "stranger" is the judge.

**d. Recall: Your dog comes when called, sits directly in front of you, and moves to your left side on command.**

For this action, the command is either "front" or "come." To train a dog to come when called, get a treat, and get the dog's attention. Tell her “Come" or "front," perhaps even using her name: "Come, Penny!" When she comes, give her the treat. When the dog seems to "get" this, have her sit on your left before giving her the treat. You can do this by getting her to follow her nose for the treat - just move it around until she is next to you, then move the treat over her head as when teaching "sit". Do not praise the dog or give her the treat until she sits, but then give her the treat, and pour on the praise. Practice until she can do this easily.

Do not use this command anytime you wish to confine the dog or to scold her. If your dog is misbehaving and you tell her to come - and then you punish her - she will be very confused. In her doggy mind, she will associate the command with the punishment, as in "Uh oh! I'm in trouble! I'd better get outta here!" This is exactly the opposite of what you want.

If the dog is misbehaving, it is OK to tell her to come, but then you must not punish her.

**e. long sit and long down: Your dog stays in either position while you attend to other business.**

**Sit** is one of the first (and easiest) commands to teach a dog. Hold a treat in your hand and get your dog's attention. Hold the treat so that she can see it and smell it, but not take it. With the dog positioned in front of you, give the command to sit. Then move the treat over the dog's head (over the ears). If the dog does not sit (which is the natural reaction), move the treat farther back. When she does sit, say *OK!* immediately give her the treat, and heap plenty of praise on her. Practice until the dog knows to sit when you say *sit*. The next step is to command the dog to sit, and then - instead of giver her the treat, place it on the floor out of her reach. If she gets up from the sit position, pop the leash and give a firm (but not angry) *No* and remove the treat. Do not let her take the treat until you say *OK!* which is the release command. Do not make her wait for more than five seconds at first, but then practice with longer and longer delays.

**Down** starts out just like sit. Give the command *down* and hold the treat over her head until she sits. Then move the treat between her front paws. Keep pushing it underneath her chest until she lays down. Then release (say *OK!*) and giver her the treat. Again, practice until she has this down. Then instead of giving her the treat, place it out of her reach, as you did with *sit*. Do not allow her to get the treat until you give the release.

**\* If possible, dogs and handlers should get instructions from a qualified teacher, preferably in a class. A certificate of completion of training in any dog obedience class with a qualifying score of 170 out of the possible 200 will be accepted for this honor.**