

Responsible Dog Ownership

A Basic Guide:

Vaccinations - will help protect your dog from several potentially fatal infectious diseases. Two or more vaccinations (an injection) are usually given to begin with, followed by regular boosters - normally received once a year-you can speak to your own vet about your dog's immunity requirements. Your vet will also be able to carry out a 'health check' when you visit your clinic.

Worming - Remember to regularly de-worm your adult dog. There are two major types of worms which can affect your dog; tapeworm and roundworm. Seek further advice regarding the worming regime if you have a puppy and always follow the instructions given by the manufacturer. Internal parasites are detrimental to your dog's health. Roundworm eggs can also pose some risk to humans if inadvertently swallowed.

Fleas/Ticks - If your dog has fleas and/or ticks-there are several remedies available to purchase, you will also need to treat the area, e.g., where the dog sleeps, other household animals/dogs may also need attention as well as any dogs your dog comes into close contact with. Again, always follow the instructions before applying.

Hot Weather - Dogs DIE in hot cars. Never leave a dog in a vehicle during sunny weather, even if it is cloudy out - it only takes a few minutes for a car to heat up, even with the windows open - your dog is in agony and then he's DEAD. When it's hot out, dogs, like us, get hot and bothered, exercise in the early morning or evening when it is cooler, make sure your dog has drinking water down and shade. If it's hot-then give your dog some space and quiet time to help him chill out. An overheated dog can become agitated - please keep yours cool and calm.

Health care - The grooming needs of a dog will differ according to breed/coat type. All dogs need to be kept clean and introduced positively to bathing and regular grooming when a puppy so that it becomes an enjoyable experience. Also pay attention to nails, pads, teeth and gums, areas within folds of skin, eyes and ears-see advice if need be.

Make sure you provide access to clean drinking water and give adequate bedding; your dog will benefit from having his own safe secure spot to retreat to when tired or just needing to be undisturbed. Think about your dog's daily dietary and exercise requirements at the different stages of his life-from puppy to senior dogs, needs will change over time.

Legal requirements - The Animal Welfare Act 2006 introduced a 'duty of care' - dog owners are now legally obliged to ensure the welfare of dogs in their care; a owner, or person looking after a dog, must make sure that the dog has:

- a suitable environment to live in
- a suitable diet (including water)
- is able to exhibit normal behaviour patterns
- is protected from pain, suffering, injury and disease and
- is housed with, or apart, from other animals

A person commits an offence if they do not take steps to ensure that the needs of their dog for which they are responsible are met. Different dogs will have different needs - it is your responsibility to know what these needs are and that they are provided.

For further advice - please contact us:

Email: advice@endangereddogs.com

Telephone Help lines: 0844 856 3303 * 07020 934072



Your responsibilities:

Much has been written about responsible dog ownership, here we take a basic look at some of the topics which every current and prospective owner should be aware of; education is crucial - please visit our web site to access further information which is valuable to both owners and dogs alike.

Identification:

Collar and ID - Many owners don't realize that since April 1992 it is actually a legal requirement that a dog wears a collar with the name and address of the owner inscribed on it or on an identity tag attached to it, when out on the highway or in a public place.

Permanent Identification - If you haven't already ID Chipped or tattooed your dog - this is something EDDR would really recommend you do straight away. Permanent identification is important and a one off procedure which could save your dog's life and reunite you both should your dog ever become lost or stolen. If your dog is already ID chipped or tattooed do make sure that your current address/telephone numbers held on the database are up to date.

Missing - Stray dogs are no longer the responsibility of the Police (as from April 2008) and they no longer have a duty to accept or collect a stray dog. Sole responsibility in England and Wales now lies with your local authority (council), if you lose your dog or find a stray dog you will need to contact your local authority for advice. Many lost and stolen dogs are reunited with their owners every year due to being micro-chipped.

Cleaning up!

All dogs need to go daily and it's your job to pick it up, be responsible, considerate and be prepared to scoop that poop - you can purchase 'poop bags' for the job. Please don't leave it on the ground and walk away; it's unhygienic, annoying and gives dogs a bad name. Once you have it bagged make sure you dispose of adequately too.

Existing bye-laws or new dog control orders issued by your local authority may relate to fouling of land by dogs and the removal of dog faeces. Fines and fixed penalties can be given to offenders.

Don't forget to also keep your own garden clean, sometimes it is easy to forget and it can soon mount up, which can especially be a noticeable problem in the summer months, so pick it up daily, dispose properly and keep both your dog and your neighbours happy.

Neutering:

Neutering is the term given when a dog's reproductive organs are surgically removed by a vet. In the male dog, this is known as castration and in the female dog, this is known as spaying.



Population crisis - Thousands of pet dogs, from puppies to adults, are destroyed each year as there simply are not enough good homes to go round.

The situation has reached a critical point for many dogs, such as the Staffordshire Bull Terrier, American Bulldog and Bull Breed crosses, who due to their popularity, have undergone a population explosion resulting in the deaths of homeless dogs each year.

By neutering your dog, you will be ensuring that you do not add to the unwanted pet population and bring more lives into a situation where there are far too many already. Rescue centers are struggling to cope and you can help do your bit by neutering your dog.

Benefits - Neutering your pet also has several health benefits for both male and female dogs and can also help with some behavioural problems.

Neutering is a straightforward procedure; your vet will be able to advise you further. Costs vary depending on the vets and the area, some welfare groups offer free or cheaper neutering in certain areas.

Under control:

Safe and secure - Keeping your dog under the control of a competent adult is your responsibility. Regularly check your dog's collar, lead, head collar, harness, muzzle etc – do they fit properly and is any item excessively worn? Never let your dog out unattended. Make sure your garden is secure and your dog cannot escape-check your gates and fencing regularly, especially following adverse weather.

Never leave children and dog(s) alone together without adult supervision-adult (a responsible adult) supervision is essential-asking or telling a child to stay away from a dog is not good enough. When you are out and enjoying a walk with your dog-do remember that not everyone is comfortable around dogs, for many different reasons, please be considerate at all times.

Barking - Excessive barking can cause a problem with your neighbours who may lodge a complaint with your local authority (council). Complaints are investigated and a 'Noise Abatement Notice' can be issued. If you have a problem with your dog barking a lot – please take advice.

Livestock - Your dog should never be allowed to worry livestock. Under the Dogs (Protection of Livestock) Act 1953 it is a criminal offence if a dog is at large (not on a leash or otherwise under control) in a field or enclosure which contains sheep. Worrying livestock also includes attacking livestock or chasing livestock in a way which may reasonably be expected to cause injury or suffering. Livestock includes cattle, sheep, goats, swine, horses and poultry such as domestic fowls, turkeys, geese or ducks. Injury doesn't have to have taken place for the offence to have occurred.

Civil action - Under the Dogs Act 1871 a complaint can be made to the Magistrates Court that a dog is dangerous and not kept under proper control. If it appears to the court that the dog is dangerous, the court may make an order directing the dog be kept under proper control by the owner, or destroyed. It is important to note that the law can be applied to **both** public and private places.

Criminal offence - Under the Dangerous Dogs Act (DDA) 1991 - Section 3 as amended, it is a criminal offence for a dog to be 'dangerously out of control' in a public place, or a private place where the dog is not permitted to be. This applies to **all** dogs of all breeds/types.

A dog shall be regarded as dangerously out of control on any occasion on which there are grounds for reasonable apprehension that it will injure any person, whether or not it actually does so – an aggravated offence (more serious) will have been committed if the dog, whilst out of control, injures a person.

An injury doesn't have to be in the form of a dog bite, it could, for example, be from a dog enthusiastically greeting someone and knocking them over, or jumping up and scratching a person's leg, injury to a person is classed as an aggravated offence under the DDA.

Liability - Under the Animals Act 1971 you could be held liable to pay compensation in a civil action brought, for any damage caused by your dog. Liability rests with the keeper – the person in possession/in control of the dog at the time it caused damage. Conditions have to be met and there are exceptions from liability.

Local Restrictions - Under the Clean Neighbourhoods & Environment Act 2005 your local authority can/or may have already, introduced a 'Dog Control Order' (DCO) in their own public areas. These orders can relate to dog fouling, the keeping of dogs on leads, the number of dogs which a person may take on to any land or the exclusion of dogs from land.

Open spaces, parks etc in your area could become/may already be subject to a dog control order, limiting your use as a dog owner. You will need to be aware of any local measures currently in place and abide by them.

Insurance:

EDDR always recommends that you take out third party liability and health cover insurance, there are many companies that offer pet insurance and various options depending on your needs. You never know when it will be needed-but if you are covered you do at least have peace of mind. If you don't have spare funds available – how would you manage to pay out on, for example, a large veterinary bill?

It is highly advisable that all dog owners hold up to date comprehensive liability insurance to cover themselves - insurance to cover court costs, legal representation, compensation claims etc ideally need to be included in your policy - are you covered?

Training:

It's fun and the whole family can get involved, your dog will love it! Teaching your dog the basics will improve your relationship no end and makes for a happier dog and owner. It's never too late to start and you can teach any dog **at any age**. How do you get started? Find a local class and make enquiries, there are also many good books available from beginners to advanced, visit our site for helpful links too. Bored dogs often = problems; dogs need stimulation, adequate exercise and interaction-all basic requirements that can easily be overlooked with today's often hectic lifestyles.

Got Problems – then get some help. Many dog owners have problems from toilet training, chewing and pulling on the lead to the more complex end of the scale, so you're not alone. The important thing to remember is that you don't have to try and work out what to do on your own-always seek advice and help from the professionals – there to help you and your dog.

General Health:

It makes sense to register your dog with your local veterinary practice; you don't need to wait for an emergency but can register beforehand, that way they'll have all your details on record and you'll know exactly who your vet is and where they are.

