

**Damory Veterinary  
Clinic**

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# Damory Veterinary Clinic

## Small Animal Factsheet



### A GUIDE TO YOUR NEW PUPPY

So you have decided to get a puppy. Hopefully you've done some research and have an idea of what you've let yourself in for! This fact sheet is designed to give you some help and tips to get you and your puppy on the right track.

#### **Basics:**

**Bedding** – Sleep in an important activity for puppies and unlike children, they know when they need to sleep and a sleeping puppy should never be disturbed. A bed for your puppy should be arranged somewhere quiet and out of the way; a place where your puppy can escape to be left alone. A suitable bed can be as simple as a cardboard box with the front cut out and some towels or sheets placed inside, especially for young pups that are going to grow.

Some people like to invest in a puppy crate/cage. These are a good idea but should be treated as a place your puppy can escape to rather than somewhere you put them as a punishment.

**Feeding** - When it comes to what to feed your puppy there is no such thing as one perfect diet for all, it's what works best for you and your puppy, so you need to ask advice from your vet as to what would be most suitable as the diet can vary on your pup's size and breed.

Any change in diet should be done gradually over a period of time, introducing a small amount of the new diet to the current food until the current diet is phased out. On average this normally takes a week. Amounts to be fed vary on the diet but frequency should be roughly as follows:

Up to 12-15 weeks	4 meals a day
Up to 6 months	3 meals a day
Up to 1 year	2 meals a day
Over 1 year	Can either stay at 2 meals a day or reduce to one.

With regard to large breed dogs such as Mastiffs or Great Danes they can take twice as long (about 2 years) to reach full maturity. Please ask if you require further advice.

#### **Puppy Behaviour:**

**Toilet Training** – this is one of the most important things that you should teach your puppy. The easiest way to do this is to be consistent and praise your puppy when they do their business in the garden.

The times your puppy will need to go out are:

After eating (about 15 – 20mins)

After Sleeping

After playing/any excitement

Every 1-2 hours



If your pup does have an accident in the house the worst thing you could do is to shout at them, as this will make them nervous and have an adverse effect on the training and your relationship. Instead pick up your pup up and take them outside and then praise them for going outside.,

**Basic Training** – We recommend that you take your puppy to training classes, even if you have an idea on how to train your puppy, it is still good for socialisation (more on this later) and you can meet other new owners. The basics of puppy training are quite simple; praise the good behaviour using either treats or toys as a reward and your puppy will start to associate good behaviour with a reward.

Another good thing to do on a daily basis whilst a puppy is doing a 'vet check' regularly. This includes looking in their eyes, ears, teeth, running your hands over their body and touching all their feet, all the time telling them what you are doing. This is a good way to try and ensure they get used to having these areas examined and don't become resentful or worried in the future about it, both at home and at the vets.

### **Health Care:**

**Vaccinations** – we vaccinate against 5 diseases:

Distemper  
Hepatitis  
Parvovirus  
Leptospirosis



The initial puppy vaccinations are two vaccines four weeks apart, usually with the first one at 8 weeks old and the second vaccination at 12 weeks of age. We advise pups are kept in for 1 week after the 2<sup>nd</sup> vaccination, to allow for full immunity before going out. This primary vaccination course is topped up yearly in a booster vaccination, at which point we will also do a thorough health check. We also offer a vaccination against Kennel cough and a Rabies vaccination for those wishing to take their pets abroad. Please ask for more details.

**Flea Treatment** – Fleas can be a big problem in pets. Not only are they irritating but heavy burdens, particularly in young puppies, can cause anaemia. There are a few different products available so please ask for advice on the best product for you and your puppy.

**Worming** – A regular worming regime should be started as soon as you collect your puppy. We advise starting the worming regime at 8 weeks with a suitable wormer then continuing monthly from 12 weeks to 6 months, after which 3 monthly is usually sufficient for roundworm and tapeworm. We also recommend protection against lungworm, ideally monthly until your dog is 2 years old. The appropriate worming regime depends on each individual dog's circumstances and thus should be tailored to your dog's requirements. You should discuss the best regime for your dog with your vet.

**Socialisation:** Socialisation is very important for puppies. To be a happy and well adjusted pet they need to get on with other animals and everyday experiences. There is a sensitive period at the start of their lives, up until 12 – 20 weeks old, where puppies are more tolerant of experiences and therefore more likely to enjoy them. A pup that does not receive adequate socialisation can develop unwanted behaviour traits. A typical response is to be fearful of an unfamiliar person/surrounding and this fear can then easily turn into aggression. Most aggression in dogs has a root in fear, which is usually a result of inadequate socialisation. Socialisation is actually very simple; it's just a case of making sure the puppy has as many good experiences with as many new people/things as possible when young.