

ALDERWOOD LABRADORS
<http://www.oregonlabrador.com>

Feeding your New Puppy

We will provide a starter bag of dog food to get you pup started right. You should continue to feed that same puppy food for a period of time - a week or so - even if you want or plan to change to a different brand of food.

Current recommendations from many Veterinary Colleges are stating that for "large breed" dogs it is best to NOT feed them a "puppy chow" but place them on a good adult food right from weaning.

A puppy needs to be fed a specific amount 3 times a day at regular intervals until he is 6 months old to supply him with adequate calorie and nutrition for rapid growth. Helpful guideline are listed on the bag that your dog food came in. His "aging" and increasing size will change the daily intake of food regularly. However, he will get diarrhea and gas if he is overfed. He may also periodically 'go off his food' from time to time when cutting new teeth. Don't be alarmed. If the kibble you are offering is a hard crunchy food then try wetting it with some water a few minutes before feeding time to soften it.

Follow the manufacturer's directions for amounts written on the bag of food, and keep an eye on the pup's physical appearance and behavior. Pups should not be fat, but their ribs or spine should not be sticking out either. We feed our pups at 6:00 a.m., noon time and 6:00 p.m. approximately, with a dog cookie at bed time. Having the puppy on a regular feeding schedule makes housebreaking easier, because the bowel is activated by eating. If the food is left down for him to nibble at all day, then his bowel movement times will be very erratic which makes training very difficult for you. After 6 months of age, reduce the feedings to twice a day. You may find that the puppy is not eating every meal at about the 5 month mark, which is an indication that he is getting ready to reduce his numbers of meals. Do not leave the food sitting around for the pup to nibble at when he feels like it. If he has not finished his meal in 10-15 minutes, remove it and refrigerate it until the next feeding time. Do not tempt him by adding tidbits to it to coax him to eat. This will only make him a picky eater, and cause many problems later in life. If he is finishing the meal very quickly and seems to be still hungry, gradually increase the food, a little bit at a time, watching to make sure that he does not develop diarrhea. He will be fed 3 times a day until he is 6 months old, and then go to 2 meals a day, until he is about one year old, and then once a day is sufficient. If you want to continue to feed him twice a day, divide the daily recommended adult portion into the 2 meals. Clean fresh water should be available at all times for him, except when he is crated for his sleeping. He

knows how much water he needs to drink at any given time for digestion and thirst.

Playing with your Puppy

Your new Lab will be a toy addict and will need a supply of toys. Tennis balls are good, and pups love squeaky toys and fuzzy plush ones to carry around. Nylabones and Kongs are good for gnawing on. Playing "tug" is not recommended as it encourages aggressive behavior. Throwing the toy and teaching the "fetch" is a fun game, most Labs will do this until you are worn out, be careful on hot days that your dog does not get overheated! Do not give real bones - they splinter and will cause diarrhea. There are baked, sterilized bones in assorted sizes available in most pet stores, when the puppy simply must have something to gnaw on. You can put a little peanut butter or Cheez-Whiz down into the center to keep the puppy busy for long periods of time. These bones can be washed too. Look for squeaky toys with built in squeakers, such as in baby toys. Pups usually love to try to kill the squeak, and the cheaper ones have a little plastic part set into it that the pup could chew out and choke on. We don't recommend Rawhides in any form - not only do they glue up the leg hair - they are dangerous. Dogs have choked on them, and have also developed bowel obstructions which are emergency situations, and require surgery to save their life.

NEVER GIVE THE PUP HUMAN OBJECTS TO PLAY WITH - SUCH AS AN OLD SLIPPER OR GLOVE - THEY CAN'T DIFFERENTIATE BETWEEN THE OLD WORN OUT ONE AND THE NEW ONE YOU JUST GOT FROM AUNT MARY FOR CHRISTMAS.

Their toys should be just that - toys - not cast-off human items. If you know how to knit or crochet, you can make toys for them. The pup will play extremely strenuously for a time and then, like the baby he is, will fall asleep, unless he gets a second wind. Those of you who have children know what I mean. At that stage, you can't do a thing with them. They're simply too wound up.

They Need lots of Sleep

One of the best investments you will make before you bring the puppy home is to purchase a "crate". They are available at Walmart, Pet stores, some grocery stores and often can be found in the "for sale" column of your newspaper. Most of them are plastic or fiberglass, but you can also buy metal ones that allow the puppy to see everything that is going on. We don't think the open crates provide the solitude and quiet that a puppy needs for a good rest. Remember that he is a baby and requires many hours of undisturbed sleep in his crate. A crate is not a "cage". It is - HIS PLACE - HIS BED - HIS ROOM - HIS SECURITY.

DON'T FEEL GUILTY OR ALLOW YOUR FRIENDS TO MAKE YOU FEEL GUILTY BECAUSE YOU ARE CONFINING HIM PERIODICALLY.

We put infants in cribs for their safety and our security. HE IS A DEN ANIMAL and likes to feel enclosed. He can get away from the cat, the kids, or the other dog, and be secure in the only place in the house that is "his". He can't get hurt while in the crate, he can't get into mischief when you're busy or at work, and he can't destroy anything of yours when left to his own devices. A crate is also a wonderful housebreaking aid. Animals never want to 'soil' their den. Even 3 week old puppies will crawl away from the warmth of their mother to piddle on the newspaper 4 feet away. When he barks or whines after a sleep in the crate, you **MUST** rush him outside immediately. Ignore that cry and you'll defeat your housebreaking attempts and have an 'accident' to clean up. If you can, borrow a 'starter' crate that is the right size for the puppy, rather than a large one that he'll 'grow into'. When his space is a little restricted, but big enough to stretch out, he'll settle down better. If you must use a larger crate from the beginning, then put a cardboard box into the back portion to close off some of the area. It's best to use a bath towel in the crate for bedding. If the puppy has an accident it can be washed with soap and a little bleach easily. When his bathroom habits are more under control, you can give him a cushion for comfort. Your first few nights with him in the house will no doubt be noisy and you'll all be sleep-deprived. He'll probably howl like a banshee when he's put to bed with a cookie and a firm "night-night" and the lights turned out if he's sleeping in an area by himself. Plug your ears, occasionally holler "quiet" at him, but don't go to him, unless you feel that he needs to go out for a bathroom break after an hour or so of racket. I never found that a 'ticking clock' or a 'radio' made any difference. Puppy's fear and loneliness can't be overcome by ticking or music! If the crate is put by your bed, the puppy often settles much more quickly, but many people do not want a dog in their bedroom area. You and your family will have to make the decision as to where the pup will be sleeping. We have the luxury of having an outbuilding where we cannot hear the wail. Eventually they will understand that you always come back in the morning. During the day, he'll need morning and afternoon sleeps too. These should also be in the crate - not on the couch or the carpet. He'll play very strenuously for a short time, then, like a baby, fall sound asleep. When this happens, gently pick him up, carry him to the crate and put him in with a quiet 'nite, nite', close the door and let him sleep. Be sure to listen for the wakeup cry and take him outside right away.

Housebreaking Your Puppy

Always bear in mind that a dog evacuates his bowels on waking in the morning, after a meal, and about 3 hours after a meal, especially as a puppy.

As soon as he wakes in the morning, and after every nap, take him directly outdoors on a leash and collar to empty his bladder and/or bowel. Take him to the same place each time, stay with him and give him 10-15 minutes to "perform". Your pup has been raised on cedar shavings, a good trick is to make

2x4 framework about 4 feet square, in the place you want him to go. Fill the framework with pine or cedar shavings, and take him there as his place to go. If there is an accident in the house, bury the paper towel you used to clean up in the shavings. He will quickly get the idea that that he supposed to go in that place. A great side benefit is you don't have to hunt all over your yard to clean up messes. Many find that an expression associated with the action is very helpful in the teaching process. You choose your own words - "go potty" - "do your duty" etc. When the same phrase is repeated over a few days, the pup learns what it is you want of him very quickly. Your puppy is a very intelligent dog and eager to please you. When he does what you've requested of him, heap praise on him and bring him back into the house immediately and give him a little reward treat. There should be no outdoor play until he has it firmly in his mind that the outdoors is the place to go to relieve himself, and is giving you signals that he needs to go out (and RIGHT NOW). This may be whining, circling, sniffing at various places or going towards the door. IT'S UP TO YOU TO LEARN TO READ HIS MESSAGES !!!

Remember that you are dealing with a baby with a small bladder, and you should expect to have accidents to clean up until he is about 6 months old. When accidents do happen, DO NOT RUB HIS NOSE IN IT, OR HIT HIM. A rolled up newspaper has no value in teaching a dog. You wouldn't do that to a child or want it done to you. YOUR PUP DOES HAVE DIGNITY TOO!!! The dog crate will be your most valuable asset in the house-training effort. Dogs are den animals and he will not want to soil his sleeping area if he can help it. He will whine or bark from the crate when he needs to go out, but he will do that too if he just wants to be with you. This has been called the "Puppy Con" and you'll have to learn to differentiate between them. Ignore the message and you might be cleaning up a mess! You can train your pup to "ring the bell" when they need to go out. You'll need a 3'-4' length of soft rope. Make a loop at one end that will fit over the door knob and tie a great big knobby knot on the other end, so that the puppy has something to grab on to. Attach a group of little brass bells - available at dollar stores - above the knobby knot, so that they tinkle when the rope is shaken, then hang this "rope" over the door knob of the door going outside, so that it is low enough for the pup to reach. When you are starting the housetraining, each time you go out the door, reach over and grab the rope so that the bells ring, and say, "time to do chores" or whatever word you have chosen. Within a matter of hours or days, the puppy will be ringing the bells on his own.

Bath Time

Kids will be kids - and puppies are no different! They do get dirty and they do need baths. Your Lab's coat is such that when they dry dirt usually just falls off, but often it more than dirt! If the puppy is very young, you can bathe him in the kitchen sink. After that, you'll have to kneel beside a bathtub with a non-slip bath

mat in it and a shower hose available. Buy a dog shampoo in the Pet department of your supermarket or department store. Human shampoo is NOT acceptable or desirable. The Ph (acid/alkaline balance) of dog skin is different from human Ph. and therefore needs special products. Dogs feel heat more strongly than we do, so make the bath water about 100 degrees Fahrenheit. Test it the way you would a baby formula using your wrist or elbow. If it feels warm, it's too hot! If you wish, you can put some small pieces of cotton into his ears. The following is my method for bathing a young puppy - up to about 12 weeks of age, depending on the size of the dog.

Gently immerse the puppy into the sink, keeping his head above the water, but getting his body wet all over. You will wash his head last. Pour the shampoo into your cupped hand and drizzle it over the pup's wet coat and work it in with your fingers and palms. Don't forget to wash the tail!

When you have got the body all soaped up and the lather worked into the coat, drain out the soapy water and refill the sink with clean water to rinse away the soap. Drain the sink again and fill the sink and rinse one more time.

It is very important that all the soap is removed from the coat. Remove the pup from the basin and wrap him well in a towel, leaving the head exposed.

Gently pour warm water from a cup over his head, from behind the skull, tipping his nose down so that the water runs down and away from his nose and eyes.

Put a small amount of shampoo onto his skull and work it around his ears and neck and under his chin, keeping the soap out of his eyes and mouth. Rinse his head twice with warm water from the cup, again pouring from back to front, as before. Now with another small towel dry his head and face. Remove the cotton from the ears. The reason we wash the head last is because water on the head results in automatic shaking of the whole body. Since the pup is secured in a towel while you wash the head, you avoid having water sprayed all over the house when the head gets wet.

Car Rides

If you are REALLY lucky, car rides won't be an issue, but a large percentage of pups get car sick, and if this condition continues the pup will learn to hate the car. You should do all you can to prevent the problem as much as possible. Put the pup in the car, turn the motor on and sit for a few moments before driving to the corner and home again. Bring the pup into the house and let him have his meal. Repeat this exercise 3 or 4 times and then next time drive for about 10 minutes and come home again. If all goes well, make the next ride 20 minutes. However, if the puppy shows signs of car sickness - drooling or vomiting, you'll have to take extra steps. Do not take the pup for a ride if he has just eaten a meal. Try to restrict the amount of water before a ride in the car. In other words - have the stomach as empty as possible.

Keep a roll of paper towels in the car, along with a garbage bag and a spray bottle of water for clean-ups. An anti-nausea pill called "Bonamine" is very good and does not cause drowsiness, as Gravol does. Give it 45 minutes before the car ride I wrap the pill in a small dab of cream cheese and I find the dogs lick it from my finger and swallow the pill - cheese and all with no fuss.

The car-sick prone pup will need to sit in a stationary car many, many times, just listening to the radio, or playing with a toy. Have the car windows open and the motor turned on. If there is no drooling, then give the Bonamine and drive to the corner and home again. Gradually increase the driving time, and continue to use the Bonamine. Good luck with this project! It's best to try and overcome this condition early in the pup's life. Many car-sick pups eventually outgrow the nausea and are fine as adults.

Vaccinations

Preventing disease is extremely important for the puppy. The pup has had virus protection from his mother's antibodies which were present in the colostrums he drank in the first 24 hours after birth but by 8 weeks of age, his immunity has almost disappeared. Your pup has received his first "puppy" shot at 6 weeks of age. Your Veterinarian will continue the series of 3 shots shot at 9 and 12 weeks of age to protect him against Distemper, Hepatitis, Kennel cough, and perhaps Leptospirosis (if your area warrants that vaccine) and Parvovirus. This first needle is a 'temporary' shot and must be followed by 2 more in 3 week intervals, which confers immunity for a year.. Discuss these options with your Veterinarian. The Rabies vaccine is given at about 16 weeks of age. The other preventative measure you may want to take is giving Heartworm medication, if Heartworm, carried by mosquitoes, is a problem in your area. There is no vaccine or pill against West Nile Virus, so keep your dog indoors when the mosquitoes are most active - early morning and early evening, and use an insect repellent such as a natural homemade repellent. In the past, we immunized our dogs annually, but there is evidence emerging that annual vaccines are not required. Your Veterinarian will guide you in this matter. It is wise to keep your pup out of dog parks until at least 2 weeks after their 3rd shot. A side note: hold him in your arms when you go to the vet's office, you never know who has been in the waiting room a few minutes before you got there.

Puppy Hazards

The top fatal hazards for puppies are as follows:

- 1. Slug & Snail poison**
- 2. Antifreeze**
- 3. Auto tires**
- 4. Parvo** (bad places are dog parks, pet shops, veterinarian waiting rooms, freeway rest stops) your pup received his first shot on his 6th week birthday, he needs 3 more at 3 week intervals for immunization.

5. **Worms** - Nearly all puppies are born with roundworms. This is true because nearly all dams harbor dormant larvae of one of the roundworms - *Toxocara canis* - in their tissues. Toward the end of pregnancy, these larvae "come-to-life" and migrate across the placenta to the lungs of the puppies. In addition, some immature forms of roundworms can be shed in the dam's milk and cause additional infection of the newborn puppies, though this is a minor route of infection. Puppies may also become infected by eating dirt or feces contaminated with roundworm eggs. The eggs then hatch in the dog's stomach, the larvae invade the stomach walls and are carried by the blood to the liver. After causing some damage in the liver, the larvae migrate to the lungs, are coughed up and re-swallowed. After undergoing further growth, the parasites end up in the small intestine as adults. The fertilized female then lays eggs to perpetuate the cycle. As dogs grow older, the life cycle of roundworms becomes more restrictive in the dog. In most dogs six (6) months of age or older, the Roundworm larvae do not undergo the tissue migration as described above, but rather become dormant in the tissues. Heavy infections of roundworms can cause intestinal blockage and even intestinal rupture usually resulting in death. The more common lighter infections retard growth in pups which are characterized by a dull hair coat with dry skin and a potbelly. The best way to prevent dogs from being infected by the environment is to practice good hygiene or sanitation by removing the feces from the dog's habitat. Roundworm eggs are extremely resistant to extreme temperatures, arid or dry conditions, and even to many disinfectants. Hence, Roundworm eggs can remain in the environment for years. It is also advised to consult your veterinarian and routinely deworm your pet. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) has recommended that puppies be dewormed at 2, 4, 6, 8, 10 and 12 weeks of age. This is a more aggressive program than the 3-week intervals more commonly used by animal health professionals.
6. **Diarrhea** - Milk and milk products, table scraps, overfeeding, switching dog food and stress can cause diarrhea. A good remedy can be Pepto-Bismol, Capacitate or sugar free Metamucil.
7. **Salmon Poisoning Disease** - Fishing can be wonderful recreation, but sharing the catch with your dog can be an act of kindness that kills. Salmon Poisoning Disease is a potentially fatal condition seen in dogs that eat certain types of raw fish. Salmon (salmonid fish) and other anadromous fish (fish that swim upstream to breed) can be infected with a parasite called *Nanophyetus salmincola*. Overall, the parasite is relatively harmless. The danger occurs when the parasite itself is infected with a rickettsial organism called *Neorickettsia helminthoeca*. It's this microorganism that causes salmon poisoning. "Salmon poisoning occurs most commonly west of the Cascade mountain range," says Dr. Bill Foreyt, a veterinary parasitologist at Washington State University's College of Veterinary Medicine. He adds, "Canids (dogs) are the only species susceptible to salmon poisoning. That's why cats, raccoons and

bears eat raw fish regularly with out consequence.” Generally clinical signs appear within six days of a dog eating an infected fish. Common symptoms of salmon poisoning include: vomiting, lack of appetite, fever, diarrhea, weakness, swollen lymph nodes and dehydration. If untreated, death usually occurs within fourteen days of eating the infected fish. Ninety percent of dogs showing symptoms die if they are not treated. Thankfully, salmon poisoning is treatable if it’s caught in time. A key to its diagnosis is telling your veterinarian that your dog ate raw fish. If you have a dog that wanders, or raids trashcans and you are unsure of what it’s eaten; consider the possibility of salmon poisoning. Salmon poisoning can be diagnosed with a fecal sample or a needle sample of a swollen lymph node. Detecting the parasite’s eggs as they are shed in the feces confirms its presence. The rickettsial organism can be detected in a needle sample from a swollen lymph node. The combination of symptoms, and the presence of parasite eggs or the rickettsial organisms, are enough to justify treatment. Given the severity of the condition, treatment is relatively simple. Your veterinarian will prescribe an antibiotic and a “wormer”. The antibiotic kills the rickettsial organisms that cause the illness, and the wormer kills the parasite. If the dog is dehydrated, intravenous fluid are given. Once treatment has been started, most dogs show dramatic improvement within two days. Next time you are fishing or purchase raw salmon and you hear the familiar begging whine of your dog, ignore it. They may not understand it, but not sharing the fish is the best thing for them. This will save them from suffering salmon poisoning, and save you from a veterinary bill.

8. **Chocolate**

9. **Raisins/Grape**

10. Don’t let them chew on landscape plant, especially **rhododendrons or azaleas**