

PUPPY PACKET SUGGESTIONS

The purpose of a puppy packet is to provide the new puppy owner with important information that will help the owner appreciate and care for a new puppy in a family setting. The packet should include information on registration, medical concerns, feeding, house training, safety, and general care. The packet may also include any additional information the breeder wishes to include. Many breeders continually add and refine their puppy packet content, making certain the information is relevant and readable, and the format is attractive. There is no right or wrong way to organize the material. The following suggestions are offered to assist breeders in constructing their own puppy packet.

PUPPY/DOG MAINTENANCE INFORMATION

- 1. The Health History Record:** Most veterinarians provide an individual medical record for each puppy when the first puppy shot is administered. Usually this record documents the date and the type of shot given. Additional notations such as “normal on physical examination” or the documentation of any medical problem discovered are also added to this record. Those breeders who administer their own puppy shots should maintain a similar record but should still have a health check performed by a veterinarian before selling the pup. This record should go home with the new puppy owner. Because protocol for vaccinations has changed in recent years, some breeders recommend a particular protocol (type and frequency of vaccinations). Pamphlets explaining the new protocol may be available from the breeder’s veterinarian. If the puppy buyer lives in the area, the breeder may wish to make a veterinarian referral including the vet’s name, address and telephone number.
- 2. Food and Feeding Instructions:** Recommend the type of food, the amount of food, and the frequency of meals. Provide several food suggestions for people who do not have access to a comprehensive dog food outlet. Advise new owners how to increase the quantity of food as the puppy matures. Instruct new owners to leave the food down for no longer than 20 minutes and then remove any remaining food – allowing a pup to “feed-on-demand” is not a good practice. To help avoid bloat, recommend that strenuous exercise 20 minutes before and after meals be eliminated. Suggest when to switch from puppy food to adult food and that the transition be done gradually. Reference: The Ralston Purina Company has available a brief summary of a recent lifelong study on eating habits. “Lean-fed” dogs lived an average of 1.8 years longer than those dogs allowed to eat as much as they wanted. This report could be a good reminder for new puppy owners to carefully monitor the entire lifetime eating habits of their Airedale.
- 3. Water Availability:** Recommend that fresh water be available to the pup at all times during the day. To help the housebreaking process, suggest removing the pup’s water from mid evening to morning at which time the pup should be “exercised” immediately

upon waking. Encourage the new owner to keep the water clean and cold and suggest the use of a weighted crock-type bowl to prevent spillage.

4. Basic Grooming Instructions: Stress the need and benefits of periodic grooming. Provide a list of basic grooming tools needed to keep both puppy and adult coats in good condition. Include instructions on regular care of the following: puppy fuzz removal, dematting, foot care, rectal area cleaning, and ear cleaning. Provide enough information to enable the new owner to decide if he/she wishes to clip or strip the adult coat. Suggest the names of Airedale-competent grooming shops. Provide information on flea/tick detection and prevention. Resources: How to Trim and Show the Airedale Terrier – an introductory \$3 ATCA booklet outlining proper methods of Airedale grooming, oriented to the novice owner. Grooming the Broken Haired Terrier – a more advanced booklet also available through the ATCA Assistant Secretary. It contains grooming instructions and excellent illustrations. Michael Kemp Grooming Tapes – can be ordered through J-B Wholesale Pet Supply Company (www.jbpet.com).

5. Nail-clipping Technique: Stress the importance of regular toenail clipping, perhaps cutting off the hooked part or tip of the nail every 2-3 weeks. Demonstrate nail clipping technique and offer hints on introducing the technique to a young dog. Make special mention of avoiding the “quick” of the nail in the trimming process. Suggest the type of nail clipper you prefer and the importance of having on hand a special styptic powder for accidental bleeding that may occur. Some breeders recommend the use of a Dremel grinding tool instead of a nail clipper.

6. Teeth Information: It is advisable to tell new pup owners not only of the emergence of permanent teeth between the pup’s age of 4-5 months, but also that in many medium to large breed of dogs, the permanent teeth don’t set into the jaw until the age of 10-14 months. This period is usually accompanied by a pup’s need and desire to chew anything in sight! Provide some helpful hints to get both owner and pup through this period with a minimal amount of mutual anxiety. Encourage early handling of a puppy’s mouth – the lips, teeth, gums, and tongue. Stress the importance of regular dental care and suggest several methods (and frequency) for keeping the teeth and gums healthy (brushing, scraping, nylabones etc.) Resource: Companion Corner Article – Teeth Cleaning, American Airedale, Issue #4, 2001 – copies can be obtained from ATCA member, Les Lueck.

7. Ear Care: Instruct a new owner to keep the hair short on and around the pup’s ears to encourage proper set. Suggest a future consultation at a predetermined age concerning the necessity of ear gluing. Encourage checking the inside of the ears on a regular basis, especially during warm weather. Provide information on the prevention of ear canal infections and the availability of special ear canal cleaners. Resource: Companion Corner Article – Ear Care, American Airedale, Issue #3, 2001 – copies can be obtained from ATCA member, Les Lueck.

8. Bathing Recommendation: Provide information on both bathing frequency and type of shampoo. Because puppies tend to be more sensitive to shampoos and conditioners,

recommend the exclusive use of products designed specifically for dogs (avoid human products and dish soap.) Warn against mixing products such as flea soap followed by flea dip.

9. Spaying and Neutering: Provide puppy buyers with the reasoning behind a spaying/neutering request and recommend the best age to accomplish the procedure. Keep in mind that animal rights organizations and some veterinarians may believe that spaying/neutering should be done at a very young age. If the breeder disagrees with such practices, a written justification of the breeder's position can be helpful.

10. Exercise: Stress the importance of proper exercise – a puppy will NOT get enough activity merely by letting it walk around the yard by itself. Suggest family play, short walks, and free play with other dogs of appropriate age and size. Emphasize that pups should never be allowed to run off leash in an unfenced area, no matter how devoted/obedient they may appear to be. Recommend games like Retrieving and Hide and Seek as positive activities, but avoid engaging in Tug of War and Keep Away games. Warn against stress on joints that can be caused by jogging or even long walks if such physical activities are started too early in the dog's physical maturation. Wait until the dog is at least two years old before beginning these pursuits.

TRAINING AND POSSIBLE HAZZARDS

1. Crate (House) Training: Most breeders recommend (and many breeders require) the use of a crate (kennel) for house training a new puppy. In addition to speeding up the housebreaking process, a crate also protects the puppy from destroying property, ingesting harmful materials, and getting into dangerous situations such as biting on an electrical cord. The inclusion of published material (book/pamphlet) on crate training is advisable. Optional: Some new puppy owners find a crate training schedule to be helpful and reassuring. The Evans Guide to Housetraining Your Dog has a crate training schedule for owners who work all day as well as for those who stay at home.

2. Formal Training Classes: Stress the need for early training of an Airedale puppy. Remind the new owner that in six to eight months a pup will be growing close to adult size but will remain mentally a puppy for at least two years. Recommend the names of reliable obedience/training schools in the area and encourage the entire family to attend appropriate puppy kindergarten classes with their new canine family member. Summarize articles dealing with all the developmental stages of a puppy's life. Share that information with the new buyer, emphasizing especially the adolescent stage.

3. Outdoor Confinement: Remind new owners their Airedale should be confined to a fenced area or on a leash whenever it is outdoors. More often than not, a loose dog is a dead dog! Instruct the new care-givers to always pick up after their dog when walking on public property. A large fenced backyard is probably the most convenient containment for both dog and owner, and will most readily provide the space needed especially for a

young Airedale to stretch out his/her legs in a full “gallop” (a necessity for solid physical maturation.) A large fenced yard also provides a safe place for important game/interactive/socialization activities. The topic of invisible fences may come up if the new puppy owner lives in an area where regular fences are not allowed. Many breeders will accept this method of containment as long as the fence is installed and the pup trained by a professional installer/trainer. Resource: Companion Corner Article – Don’t Fence Me In, American Airedale, Issue #2, 2003 – copies can be obtained from ATCA member, Les Lueck.

4. Housebreaking: The following information can be shared with a new puppy owner: Housebreaking is much easier if a strict schedule is maintained. A young pup does not have strong bladder control. (Rule of thumb – a puppy can hold its bladder for the number of hours equal to its age in months, plus one.) Crate training is one of the best ways to housebreak a puppy. Generally a puppy will not mess in its sleeping area unless the area is not kept clean, the pup has diarrhea or an urinary infection, or the pup has been confined for too long of a time period. When family members play with the pup, he/she may need to go out more frequently. Let the puppy outside as soon as the first family member gets up in the morning or arrives home at night – also after the pup awakes from sleeping during any time of the day. Coupling a “command” word with the potty behavior greatly assists the learning process. Choose a word that can be used in a public place! When the pup does what the owner asks, lavish him/her with praise. Never rub a puppy’s nose in its mess or strike a pup in any way. A pup will not understand the intended message. Clean any “soiled” area immediately with vinegar or any number of commercial products available. It is the smell that stimulates the pup to use the same area over again. Remove all drinking water after 8 PM.

5. Behavior Problems: The following information can be shared with a new puppy owner: Most behavior problems can be avoided by conscientious observation and training. Raising a puppy is a task that takes upward to two years. A puppy kindergarten class is the most valuable experience for a new owner and puppy. No matter what limitations might exist – time, money, energy – do a puppy kindergarten class! A young puppy will learn basic commands, learn how to interact with other dogs, and begin to comprehend who the true “alpha” will be in the relationship. A puppy should be crated for up to two years of age when unsupervised. It is the new owner’s job to teach the puppy to like the crate. When a puppy does cute things such as chewing on hands or shoes or jumping up on people, think about how this action will be received when the pup is a year old and weighs 45 to 60 pounds. The easiest time to eliminate undesirable behaviors is when they first occur. There are many good books published on raising and training a puppy. If serious behavior problems persist, seek professional help.

6. Undesirable Digging: The following information can be shared with a new puppy owner: When an unwanted hole appears in the yard, the owner should look for the reason behind its creation and then consider possible solutions. If an Airedale digs in a shady spot during warm weather, the dog is likely to be hot. If an Airedale is hyperactive, chewing and digging can be the result of boredom. Underground burrowing rodents may precipitate an unwanted surface trench. The smell of fresh dirt seems to stimulate the

need to dig in that area. Pregnant bitches will dig to create a den in which to give birth. Fence line digging may be caused by boredom or an attempt to get at something seemingly more interesting on the other side of the fence. Once the reason for digging has been discerned, put into action a solution that may modify the problem. The breeder may wish to make possible problem modification suggestions. Resource: Companion Corner Article – A Hole in One/Terrier Style, American Airedale, Issue #3, 2003 – copies can be obtained from ATCA member, Les Lueck.

7. Pup Identification: We all know that our dogs should not be allowed to run loose, but accidents can happen. Breeders should remind new owners that a properly identified loose Airedale is more readily found and returned. An explanation of several identification methods is important. Microchip Identification: There are several different registries that maintain databases to use in dog identification. By far the largest is the HomeAgain program promoted by AKC. The HomeAgain program has provided every recognized animal shelter and humane society in the United States with a microchip reader to use in identifying dogs. Most vets also have a reader. A veterinarian inserts a small chip with an identification number into the dog's shoulder. This number is sent by the breeder or new puppy owner to the AKC to be filed with the owner's information. If the dog is lost, any veterinarian or animal control person can match the dog with the purchaser of the chip. Some breeders microchip their puppies before they are sold. If a pup/dog is found loose, the breeder will be notified and then can deal with the owner. Tattoo Identification: The original method of identifying dogs was by tattooing a unique number (often the owner's social security number) on the stomach or interior lip of the dog. There are many tattooing clinics held locally each year and several companies provide this registration service. Collar identification: The least expensive way to identify your dog is to purchase a collar and inscribe the dog's name and owner's phone number on it. This method has some limitations. Should the collar be removed from the dog, the identification information is lost. Also dogs can outgrow a collar or the information on the collar may become too faint to read. Over time several collars may have to be purchased to maintain the identification. It is best to use collar identification along with one of the other two identification methods listed.

8. Child Safety: Breeders should warn buyers not to leave a small child alone, either indoors or outdoors, with an Airedale puppy or allow a small child unsupervised play with a puppy. An exuberant new pup can unintentionally scare, overwhelm, or even hurt a youngster. Conversely, although the safety of a child is of prime concern, a small child can also unintentionally do harm to a puppy. As a way of teaching children proper behavior around a dog, some breeders include a puppy coloring book in the puppy packs going to homes with small children. Resources: How to Play With Your Dog! – a coloring book by Christine Popovich, Andrea Myklebust and Peter J. Vollmer – Super Puppy Press (www.superpuppy.com). Companion Corner Article – Children and Dogs, American Airedale, Issue #4, 2002 – copies can be obtained from ATCA member, Les Lueck.

9. Canine Travel Tips: The following information can be shared with a new puppy owner: Traveling with a dog can be fun and stress free if one plans ahead. A dog should

be introduced to traveling at a very young age so it accepts travel as a normal activity. Local Trips: Begin by taking short rides to fun places so the pup will accept the car as a means of obtaining pleasure. Encourage the owner to have their pup ride in a crate for added safety and to simplify clean up if the dog becomes ill or relieves itself. Give suggestions on how to overcome car sickness. Emphasize that a dog should NEVER be left alone in a parked car. Travel Within the United States: Just as one makes advance plans for human travel, such planning is also required for a canine traveling companion. Contact your destination hotel or campground and ensure that they will accept your breed of dog. Research flea and tick conditions at your destination and along your route of travel and prepare your dog accordingly. If travel is by airplane, check far in advance to make sure the airline will accept your dog and by what method (baggage or cargo) it will travel. Also get information on necessary health certificates and size/type of containment crate. Travel Outside the United States: In addition to the items listed under intra-U.S. travel, the following steps are necessary: All countries, including Canada and Mexico, require a current health certificate and vaccination record. Check with U.S. customs for regulations regarding your return to the U.S. Check with the Foreign Consulate of the destination country for regulations and restrictions regarding the importation of dogs. A breeder-prepared list of items necessary to keep a dog healthy and comfortable on a trip can be helpful.

RESOURCES TO ASSIST IN BRINGING UP & LIVING WITH AN AIREDALE

- 1. New Puppy Shopping List:** The breeder should provide a list of necessary items to be acquired by the buyer before the puppy goes to its new home. Allow the buyer adequate time to purchase the items and prepare for the pup's arrival. The list should include the name of the recommended puppy food, dimensions of a proper-sized crate, food and water bowls, leash and collar. This list should also include what items/toys that are and are NOT suitable for a young dog. (Discourage stuffed toys with parts that the puppy might swallow, rawhides, and balls/other toys small enough to get lodged in the throat.) Some breeders also suggest that the house should be "puppy-proofed" before the pup's arrival – hiding electrical cords, putting chemicals and house-cleaning fluids out of reach etc.

- 2. Catalog Sources:** Suggestions of Outlet/Warehouse dog product catalogs can be helpful for a new puppy owner. There are many sources available – here are four randomly picked examples: Care-A-Lot Pet Supply Warehouse, 1-800-343-7680 (www.carealotpets.com). Doctors Foster & Smith, 1-800-826-7206 (www.DrsFosterSmith.com). J-B Wholesale Pet Supplies, 1-800-526-0388 (www.jbpet.com). PetEdge, 1-800-738-3343 (www.PetEdge.com).

- 3. Local Dog Club List:** Provide a list of local dog clubs and contact information for each club.

4. ATCA Information: Provide basic information about the ATCA – the benefits, who is eligible, and how to apply – and include the ATCA web site (www.airedale.org)

5. Puppy Training Video: Puppy Kindergarten Video by Corally Burmaster. This 40-minute videotape features 7-10 week old puppies using clicker training techniques. It is an excellent training tool for breeders and puppy buyers. It was awarded the Maxwell Award for Best Video of 2003 by the Dog Writer's Association of America. \$30 plus \$4 S&H from ATCA website store (www.airedale.org).

ADDITIONAL ENCLOSURES

1. The Puppy's Pedigree: Create a pedigree for the puppy or include the pedigrees of the sire and the dam. Point out to the new owners that a pedigree is also available from the AKC for an extra charge by checking the appropriate box on the registration form. Optional: Some breeders include photos of the sire and dam.

2. Registration Form and Process: When the breeder registers the litter with AKC, the breeder receives an individual Dog Registration Form for each puppy. The breeder should complete the appropriate sections of the form and then give it to the new owner at the time of the sale. Some breeders have the new owners complete their sections of the form at the time of the sale, and then the breeder sends the completed forms and fees to AKC. This assures that each puppy in the litter is registered under the new owner's name.

3. Historical Introduction to the Breed: Many breeders include in their puppy packets a brief historical introduction to the Airedale breed.

4. Breeder Biography: Many new owners appreciate breeder background information. Include such things as how, when, and why the breeder got interested in exhibiting and breeding Airedales; important show wins; and perhaps a personal philosophy statement on breeding Airedales.

5. ATCA Code of Ethics: Many breeders choose to include the ATCA Code of Ethics in their puppy packs. A copy of the code can be found at the end of the ATCA 2004 Official Membership Roster and Information Booklet.

6. Contract of Sale: Most breeders use a contract in the sale of puppies. Such a document establishes in writing the responsibilities of both new owner and breeder. Often times the contract also asks the new owner to sign a spay/neuter clause.

BOOK REVIEWS

Many breeders provide a training/general help book or a resource list of books that can be useful in bringing up a new puppy. Here are some book suggestions (not meant to be all inclusive) and a review of each:

Airedale Terriers, A Complete Pet Owner's Manual by Dorothy M. Miner – Barron's Educational Series, Inc. This comprehensive book covers everything about Airedale purchase, care, nutrition, breeding, behavior and training. It also includes a listing of useful addresses and literature. Helpful illustrations and full-color photos appear abundantly throughout the book. The text is informative and designed for pet owners of all ages. 96 pages. Price - \$5. Available from Care-A-Lot Pet Supply Warehouse (www.carealotpets.com / 800-343-7680), and from Amazon, Barnes & Noble, and the ATCA web site store.

Don't Shoot the Dog! The New Art of Teaching and Training by Karen Pryor – Bantam Books. This publication is an entertaining explanation of “the principles and practical uses of positive reinforcement in teaching new behaviors. Here are the secrets of changing behavior in pets, kids – even yourself – without yelling, threats, force, punishment, guilt trips . . . or shooting the dog”. Specific sections deal with the power of reinforcement; developing super performance through the process of “shaping”; achieving cooperation without coercion; using reinforcement to get rid of a negative behavior; and how this whole concept applies to instruction methods like clicker training. 202 pages. \$12.95 U.S. Visit Bantam's web site at www.bantam.com

Puppy Primer by Brenda Scidmore & Patricia B. McConnell, Ph.D. – Dog's Best Friend, publisher. McConnell specializes in canine behavior problems and is co-host of the Wisconsin Public Radio show, Calling All Pets, a show that is broadcast on more than 110 stations nationwide. Her specialty is in diagnosing and treating aggression and other serious behavioral concerns. This book contains down-to-earth, easy-to-read and easy-to-remember information on socializing and training issues. 63 pages. Price - \$10, \$6 for purchase of 10 or more books. Available from www.dogsbestfriendtraining.com or by calling 608-767-2435.

Super Puppy: How to Raise the Best Dog You'll Ever Have! by Peter J. Vollmer – Super Puppy Press. This book is written especially for novice pet owners. It is a basic guide providing valuable information on the following general areas: what to look for in a puppy; how to build a good human-pup relationship; how to read dog body language; how to prevent problems through social stimulation; and suggestions on discipline, housebreaking, housetraining, chewing, barking, jumping up, recall, exercise, and pup control in your absence. 40 pages. Price \$5 - \$10, depending on source. Can be found in some pet food/supply stores or www.superpuppy.com

What All Good Dogs Should Know, the Sensible Way to Train by Jack Volhard & Melissa Bartlett – Howell Book House. This book provides a wealth of information for teaching a dog to be an ideal companion. “Humorous yet practical suggestions are presented for preventing bad habits, dealing with a dog's basic needs, growth stages and why things happen and when.” (Book cover) The text of this abridged book on dog

behavior is accompanied by supportive original cartoon art. 113 pages. Price - \$8.95. Available from Care-A-Lot Pet Supply Warehouse (www.carealotpets.com / 800-343-7680).

CONCLUSION

Experienced breeders provide a wide variety of information in their puppy packets. The materials included are usually based on research, knowledge and experience. There are excellent puppy packets, good puppy packets and not-so-good puppy packets, but there are no right or wrong puppy packets. Good puppy packets evolve over time and are based on the breeder's experiences. Talk to other breeders and examine the puppy packets of those with more experience. Do not copy the written work of other breeders without their permission. The construction of a puppy packet forces one to think through what he/she believes in and then to elaborate accordingly. This "thought process" is definitely a growing experience – one that helps a breeder do a better job of screening new buyers and also makes a breeder think about what information is truly essential. For the borderline breeders it may be a wake-up call as to the serious role and responsibility they have in breeding and placing puppies. So, enjoy this creative process!