

# Neigepearl



## Neigepearl Educational Puppy Pack

*For owners who have  
purchased a puppy from us!*



**HEALTH \* TEMPERAMENT \* BRAINS \* BEAUTY \***



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## Neigepearl - Our Story

Neigepearl breeder, Brooke Taylor, was founder and President (2000-2006) of the first White Shepherd Club in Australia, and is now involved in the White German Shepherd Dog Club of Victoria.

Brooke's journey into the breed, first started in 2000, when she learnt of the controversy of the white German Shepherd and that they were commonly (and cruelly) culled at birth. Brooke passionately pursued the media about this horrible practice and promoted the dogs as equals, despite their unacceptable coat colour. In 2002, due to media awareness Brooke created, the German Shepherd Dog Clubs of Australia removed the culling clauses from their breeding practices documentation!

She then started the Australian club and Stud Book for the breed in Australia (ANKC Main registrations of whites ceased in 1995 as it was no longer acceptable to breed with an outlawed coat colour), which encouraged a breeding program focused on breed and health improvement. Brooke is actively involved in events and activities for owners and educates breeders into the genetics, health, reproduction and breeding ethics of these dogs.



Indy (Neigepearl Vital Obsession) & Karo (Whitepearl Karo) are important family members in the home and also have the run of a large suburban backyard during the day. They partake in all sorts of working activities and training and love their outings to the lovely parks, reserves and beaches in the area (as you can see by the image on the top left of the screen). Our dogs and their offspring do very well at club conformation shows and we have produced several pups that have gone on to compete in obedience, agility and herding but more importantly, all are well-loved family pets.

Neigepearl breed only for the improvement of the breed but are much loved family pets, first and foremost. The dogs in the Neigepearl breeding program are owned and spoiled by well-trusted friends, and their litters are managed by Neigepearl when they are passed stringent health and temperament testing.

Neigepearl Kennels proudly preserves the magnificent heritage of whites as German Shepherd Dogs. Many of the Neigepearl lines go right back to the first ever registered German Shepherd Dog in Germany 100 years ago! The lines we use are 100% purebred and we use a combination of fully registered American, German and Australian pedigrees.

Brooke has been heavily involved in all aspects of the breed in Australia and is involved with breed improvement on a worldwide scale. In 2006, she was invited to be a member by the committee of the Master Dog Breeders Association (MDBA), a first for any breeder in Australia to get an invite to. The MDBA is an Australian organization promoting elite and ethical dog breeding and educational courses for breeders who go above and beyond normal breeding responsibilities.

Many White Shepherd breeders have made breeding choices based on Brooke's advice and in turn, they have also been produced top winning dogs. Her influence has stretched far and wide and we now see many quality dogs in Australia and a huge increase in the genepool due to her dedication and selfless assistance to other breeders over the years. For Neigepearl, breeding is a art form and also obsession to take the breed to levels of quality unseen of in Australia.

## History of the German Shepherd Dog Breed

The German Shepherd Dog (GSD) is known throughout the world for his loyalty, trustworthiness, intelligence and affinity for people. These qualities have helped make the German Shepherd Dog one of the most popular breeds of companion dog throughout the world. These attributes combined with the breed's well-balanced temperament, physical size, versatility and courage continue to make it the undisputed king of working dogs. In fact the breed is almost a canine version of a Swiss army knife.



The German Shepherd Dog has been utilised in a vast array of areas. In Australia, the German Shepherd Dog has served with the Australian Defence Forces, Federal, State and Territory Police Forces, Australian Protective Service, Australian Quarantine and Inspectorate Service and State Correctional Services.

German Shepherd Dogs in Australia have also been used as guide dogs for the blind, utilised in search and rescue work and employed in a host of other applications. The breed is also a popular choice for Pets as Therapy visits.

The German Shepherd Dog is a highly intelligent and active animal and demands stimulating activity to give them a quality of life. They also enjoy physical exercise and owners must be prepared to regularly exercise them. The height of the withers for dogs is between 60-65 cm, and for bitches is 55-60 cm. A German Shepherd can weigh between 30 to 45 kg.

As the name suggests the breed originated in Germany from the various sheep dogs found at the time. The acknowledged father of the German Shepherd Dog is Captain Max Von Stephanitz. Von Stephanitz believed that **"The breeding of shepherd dogs is the breeding of working dogs; and this must always be the aim, or we shall cease to produce shepherd dogs"**. In 1899 he bought a dog named "Hektor Linksrheim". He immediately changed the dog's name to "Horand von Grafrath." To the Dog enthusiasts of that time, Horand embodied the fulfilment of their fondest dreams. He was of medium size, with powerful bones, beautiful lines and a nobly-formed head. His character corresponded to his exterior qualities. Von Stephanitz and his friend, Artur Meyer, founded the Verein für Deutsche Schäferhunde, (SV), and Von Stephanitz became its first President. Artur Meyer became Secretary and conducted the affairs of the Club from his home in Stuttgart. They were joined by 9 other co-founders and subsequently founded the club that was destined to become the greatest single breed club in the world. The SV today has over 100,000 members.



The term **'Alsation'** came from Anti German sentiment following the First World War. The British re-named the breed as the "Alsation Wolf-Dog". This was then shortened to Alsation. **Today the breed is known by its correct name as the "German Shepherd Dog"**.

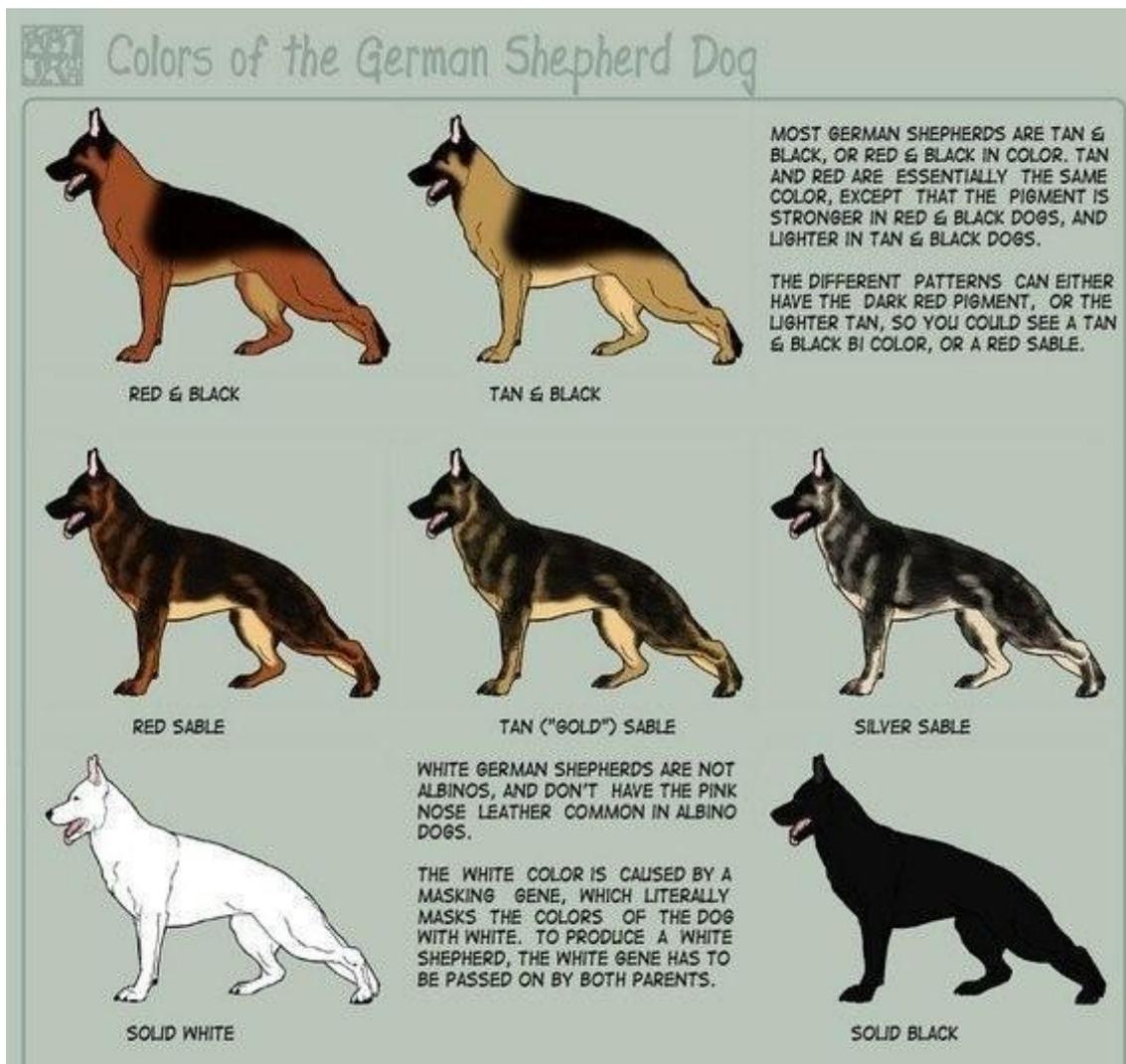
It is believed unofficial imports of the breed had arrived in Western Australia as early as 1904. However it was not until 1925 that the breed's official Australian history began with the importation of Crufts winner "Ito of Fallowdale" into Australia. Also on the same boat was "Pinkerton Rhoda". During the mid 1920's the "Graziers Federal Council of Australia" and other parties claimed that the "Alsation Wolf-Dog" represented a threat, that the dog was vicious, it had wolf blood in its veins, it was a sheep killer and if crossed with the dingo it would be dangerous. This was partly based on the British re-naming of the breed, "Alsation Wolf-Dog". (Although the breed is no closer to a wolf than that of a Poodle or Labrador)! Despite professional advice which repudiated these claims, the Federal Government passed an import ban in 1929. At this stage only about 55 to 60 official imports had entered Australia. This ban was removed in 1973.

## How is the white gene inherited?

|   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Coloured German Shepherd (carries white gene) | x | Coloured German Shepherd (carries white gene) | = | Coloured <b>and</b> white pups will be produced. Mixed litter.                              |
| Coloured German Shepherd (no white gene)      | x | White German Shepherd                         | = | all coloured pups that will carry the recessive white gene. No white pups.                  |
| Coloured German Shepherd (carries white gene) | x | White German Shepherd                         | = | all coloured pups that will carry the recessive white gene and 25% of litter will be white. |
| White German Shepherd                         | x | White German Shepherd                         | = | 100% all white  |

### Colours in order of dominance...

Sable  
 Black and tan  
 Bi-Colour  
 Solid Black / Solid White (recessives)



## Hereditary Diseases

*Here is a list of some of the more common diseases found in the breed. We extensively research the genetics of the bloodlines we use and when it comes to the health and genetics of the dogs and lines we use, we are highly involved, dedicated and do lots of research. We work very hard to lower the incidence of hereditary disease.*

**Degenerative Myelopathy** This condition is relatively common among GSDs. It can appear in a young dog, but generally appears from middle age. The degeneration occurs over time, beginning with hind limb weakness. Eventually other weakness can occur, including the lower portion of the esophageus, which makes complete swallowing difficult and can lead to recurrent pneumonia. Although initial signs resemble hip dysplasia, in actuality, it is the degeneration of the spinal cord rather than hip joints.

**Elbow Dysplasia** Elbow dysplasia is characterized by an onset of severe lameness at between 4 and 6 months of age. It almost always affects only one of the elbows but occasionally will affect both. There are three different types of elbow dysplasia: UAP (united anconeal process), FCP (fractured coronoid process), and OCD (osteochondrosis). OCD more resembles arthritis in the elbow that may or may not be brought on by trauma or looseness of ligamentation at the elbow. Final diagnosis can only be made by radiograph. OFA now certifies elbows as well as hips.

**Epilepsy** This may possibly be genetically transmitted. At the least, the tendency exists in a few lines. The disorder may not express itself until the dog is about three to four years old. There is no way of testing for the disease until the dog has a seizure.

**Hip Dysplasia** The hip joint is not constructed properly, usually with a shallow acetabulum. Dysplastic dogs can vary from minor problems to severe dislocation of the hips. This condition is generally considered to be inherited. Breeding stock should be x-rayed and scored.

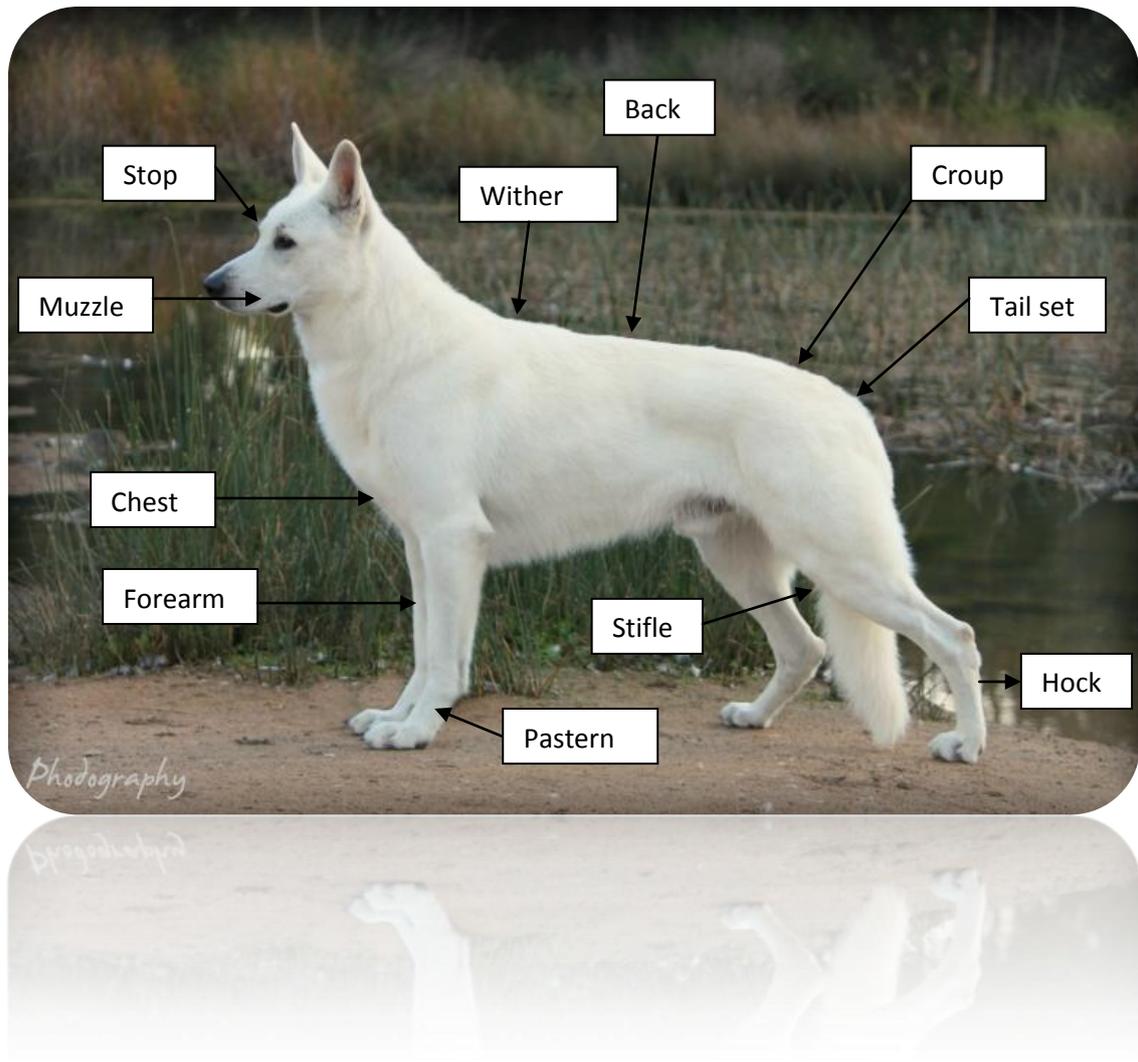
Although HD is thought to have a genetic base, pedigree, diet, exercise and so forth can play a role in the extent that the dog exhibits a existing predisposition to HD. Even dogs from long lines of certified parents can still produce HD puppies. The inheritance factor of HD is not fully known and is thought to be polygenetic (many different genes to produce it). This is why it has so far been impossible to eradicate the condition and why even pups from long lines of certified parents can still have HD. However, pups from generations of certified dogs are less likely to have HD.

**Pannus** (Chronic Superficial Keratitis (inflammation)) Pannus is an eye condition in which blood vessels grow onto the cornea. It can lead to blindness if untreated. It is not curable, but is controllable with medication. Some studies suggest an autoimmune problem. (Im)

**Panosteitis** (Commonly called "long bone disease," "wandering lameness," or simply "pano.") Generally seen between 5-12 months of age, it is caused by excessive bone production on the long bones. Dogs will generally grow out of the problem, but it is a painful condition. Pano is, for unknown reasons, common in GSDs. If the dog is x-rayed during a bout of pano, lesions on the growth plates will be visible. However, pano leaves no lasting ill affects on a dog. Diet is thought to play a role. High protein puppy diets may make the puppy grow too fast and increase the chance of the pup experiencing pano (sometimes described as "growing pains"). Pano is also called "Shifting Leg Lameness" as it can show up in any leg and may come and go without warning. Pups usually completely outgrow Pano by 18 months. Enforced rest is usually prescribed. Painkillers are contraindicated since the pup will play more without pain, and may exacerbate the condition.

**Peripheral Vestibular Disease** A congenital defect of the middle ear. Puppies will generally circle in an unbalanced way, holding their head back or to one side. Dogs rarely recover, and as afflicted adults, there will still be some head tilt.

# Anatomy



**Online Resource:**

[http://www.shawlein.com/The\\_Standard/Index\\_Page/Index\\_Page.htm](http://www.shawlein.com/The_Standard/Index_Page/Index_Page.htm)



**Above: Show stance**

## Puppy Proofing your home

Follow this checklist to give yourself peace of mind that your dog is safe when left home alone.

### Keep them safe

Puppies are naturally inquisitive – it's one of their most endearing characteristics, but it's also a potentially harmful one. Before you bring your new dog home, you'll want to make sure your house is safe. Follow this checklist to keep your dog out of danger.

### Store all poisonous items out of reach

Put household cleaners, laundry detergents, bleach, disinfectants, insecticides, cleaning fluid, fertilisers, mothballs, antifreeze, insect poisons, rat poisons and other items in cabinets or on high shelves.

### Check your plants

Many plants in and around your house can be harmful to your puppy. For example, the seeds of apricots and peaches, as well as spinach and tomato vines, can make your puppy sick, and can even be fatal in large dosages. For a more complete list of dangerous plants, consult your veterinarian.

### Pretend you're a puppy

Look at your house from your puppy's point of view: get down on all fours and look around. Move or remove dangling electric cords, loose nails, plastic bags or other tempting objects that are in reach. Pick up buttons, string, sewing needles, pins and other sharp objects, and anything small enough to swallow. If your puppy swallows any of these objects, they may cause damage to the mouth and internal organs. String and other entangling objects like curtain pulls may cause abrasions or strangulation.

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### Keep the toilet seat down

Puppies are often tempted to play in or drink the toilet bowl water. This habit can be very hard to break. It's unsanitary and toilet cleaner may be harmful if swallowed.

### Unplug, remove or cover any electrical cords in your puppy's confinement area

Chewing on these cords can cause severe mouth burns, electrocution and fires.

### Close off balconies and high decks

Puppies – and small mature dogs – can slip through openings and fall.

### Buy a book on puppy care

Place a handy reference guide on a shelf in your bedroom, den or kitchen. You never know when you'll need a quick answer.

### Prepare thoroughly

In the last few days before you first bring your puppy home, give your house a good cleaning and remove breakable items from areas where your puppy will be. Also, spend some time preparing yourself or your family. Small children in particular need to know how to act around puppies.



## Settling in to the pups' new home

### Shopping list:

- Large bag of Supercoat Puppy
- Collar
- Lead
- Newspapers
- Stainless Steel Dog Bowl (plastic can react with noses)
- Water bowl
- Puppy Bed
- Crate or Puppy Enclosure (optional)
- Toys



After picking him up, best to go straight home. He will need to be let out in the backyard as soon as you get home to go to the toilet and explore his new territory.

I'd keep away from parks and cafes for a week or so – bond with your puppy first... Pups have a small attention span and don't like to be the one spot for long. Also there aren't always friendly dogs at dog parks and he won't be fully vaccinated, so best to socialise him in other ways.



When he is a bit older and more laid back you can take him for a walk up the street and hope he relaxes whilst you sit out the front of a cafe etc. For the time being though, he can be socialised at puppy school/kinder and also at the German Shepherd Club. The German Shepherd Club might even run puppy classes themselves. So you will need to call them to ask.

You should take him out on short drives with you if you need to something like get dinner or go to the shops etc... You should take him out front on lead for a walk up the street (only for about 5-10 mins letting him have a sniff around and slowly get used to the lead). If you have any friends who you like to visit, take him along to their place if they are happy to have him there with you. As long as they don't have any dogs/cats who could hurt him!



## Introducing other pets

*If you have any reason to believe that your dog may be aggressive to the new family member, it may be best to conduct the initial introduction on neutral territory. This way, aspects of dominance and territoriality will be minimized or may even be negated. Also, introductions should probably be on leash just in case a fracas should develop.*

Introduce your new puppy to other members of the pet population *s-l-o-w-l-y*. If there is more than one other animal in your menagerie, introduce the newcomer to one pet at a time, so you don't overwhelm him.

Let your new charge and the incumbent(s) sniff and inspect each other. They may growl and bark at first, but this may simply be a sign of insecurity.

Let them sniff around and check each other out while you talk to them softly. Watch for body language that could signal aggression, which includes:

- Staring
- Stiff-legged walking
- Barred teeth or growling
- Ears laid back or raised hair on the neck or back
- One dog trying to mount the other

If you notice any aggressive behavior, distract the dogs and lead them away from each other. Let them cool off and introduce them again a little later. If the meeting goes well, take them both for a walk.

Make sure you don't neglect them as you try to make the new pet welcome. Don't use physical force to put the older animals in their place; this may make them wary of the new arrival. Never leave your new puppy unsupervised with any of your older pets until you're sure they all get along well. To cut down on sibling rivalry, let your older pets know they're still an important part of the family and that the new puppy isn't a replacement for them. Spend 10 to 15 minutes alone with each of pet, so that each one gets your undivided attention for a while, at least. The key to introducing a puppy to your dog is to be alert and in control at all times.

### Introducing your puppy to a cat

Introducing a new puppy to your cat is fairly simple; you should allow the cat to determine the tenor of the meeting. You should designate areas that are off-limits to your puppy. This will give your cat "safe zones" and keep her from feeling evicted by your puppy. Don't leave them unsupervised until you're very sure they can get along. Watch for any aggressive behavior by either animal.

If your puppy starts to chase the cat, don't allow the behavior to continue but don't punish your puppy either. Simply get his attention with a treat or toy. He's likely reacting to his natural prey drive and you don't want to instill fear over an ingrained behavioral pattern. If your cat roughs up the puppy, don't punish the cat. Your puppy has to learn where the boundaries are in their relationship.

Stay alert and let the introductions progress slowly. Don't force the meeting or expect your new puppy and cat to be the best of friends overnight.



## Which Collar?

We highly recommend you start off your puppy on a lightweight flat nylon or leather collar specially designed just for puppies. Always make sure it is not too tight and not too loose. You should be able to fit two fingers snugly inbetween the pup's neck and the collar (2cms – 2.5 cms).

When the puppy gets a bit bigger around 6 months, it is recommended that you switch to a check chain (correction collar, also known as "choker chain"). You must learn the correct way to accurately correct the dog when you pull it. Your local obedience dog club instructor will show you how to do this, otherwise please get in contact with us and we will have a short training session with you.

We don't really recommend head collars or haltis as dogs should be trained not to pull and should be focussed on you and under control when going on walks etc. Halti's are a lazy (but simple way) to walk your dog without any training. Head collars such as these, can also cause rubs on the dogs face from excessive pulling and they will always try and rub them off by rubbing their heads on the ground or on you.

For very headstrong dogs, we recommend pinch collars/prong collars. Please discuss this further with us should you think your dog might require one.

Dogs should not be left in the yard with a correction collar as these can run and get caught around something and choke the dog. They also leave grey staining around the dogs' neck fur.



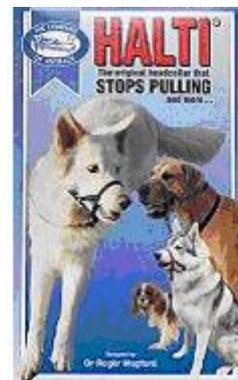
**Correction Collar**



**Flat leather collar**



**Prong (pinch) collar**



**Halti/head collar**

## PUPPY DIET

**MORNING** 1 CUP PREMIUM QUALITY DRY FOOD

**EVENING** As above, but substitute ½ CUP meat chunks with ½ cup of dry food (diced/MINCE beef).

**Twice a week** Give your puppy a chicken neck (raw) to chew on. They love to chew bones and this will not harm their little teeth and will help strengthen them and will also clean them from plaque and tartar build up and stop the development of gum disease. Raw bones from the butcher are fine, but **never give a dog cooked bones**. Cooked bones can break and splinter and cause massive internal injuries or even be fatal.

**Once a week** Give your puppy a little tin of sardines or a little Tuna or Salmon. We do this instead of the beef once a week. The omega 3 fatty acids in the fish is good for the dog. Do not feed more than once a week. We get the Sardines, Tuna, and Salmon at supermarkets. The quantities of food you should give will vary according to the age of the puppy and its eating habits. Beware some puppies, which will eat until sick. Increase the quantity carefully according to the pups body weight, and avoid over-feeding your puppy. This may lead to growth abnormalities due to extra stress on growing joints.

### Feeding

If you use the same type of puppy food we have raised the pups on, you will avoid any upset tummies/diarrhoea that occurs when you switch diets. If switching diets, do so very gradually. Do not give puppies human grade milk – it will give them diarrhoea. We don't even feed our puppies puppy milk – it's simply unnecessary. A well-balanced dry food is scientifically balanced with all types of nutrients/vitamins and extra calcium is not required. Over supplementing dogs can be dangerous and cause health problems.

We have been feeding our puppies "Supercoat" series of dog foods for over two years and are delighted with the results. Supercoat contains high quality ingredients in an ideal balance for the various stages of a dogs' growth and development. Other top quality foods are "Advance", "Royal Canin", "Science Diet" and "Eucanuba". Although we have tried these foods with our dogs in the past, we don't see any difference in the health or condition of our dogs. Supercoat is affordable and easily accessible, stocked at most supermarkets, hence why we raise our puppies on it. When looking at the ingredient list of a food, "Meat" should be the first ingredient listed. The order of the listing is by law from the highest content down. Don't be fooled by the Protein percentage and Fat and fibre percentages either. Two foods both with say 20% protein give totally different results. If the protein is Meat based then it is almost 100% absorbable by the dog. On the other hand if the Protein content is partly provided by Soy or other grains then poor absorption in the dogs gut will result in poor value for money and larger stools.

***Never give a dog any chocolate as this can kill them - it brings on heart failure. Also, never feed them onion (raw or cooked) or grapes.***

**Please feed to condition!** Pet owners nearly always over-feed their dogs. Over-feeding your dog is cruel and it will live a shorter life and be very uncomfortable, in pain and suffering for the last third of this shortened life as a result of your overfeeding. Remember your dog loves you and trusts you to know what's best for it. Care for it. Earn and deserve this trust by feeding correctly and making sure it is healthy and the correct (lean) weight all the time. Your dog will reward you with many more years of joyful unerring love!



## Worming

**Your puppy has been wormed at 2, 4, 6, and 8 weeks.** You will need to give him worming treatment in the form of chewable or tablets appropriate for his weight at week 10 and week 12 then once each three months for life or what ever your veterinarian recommends. Do not forget this important responsibility.

## Vaccinations

Your puppy has had his first C5 vaccination at week 6 He/she will need the second vaccination at week 12  
The third vaccination should be given at week 16

All the dates are listed on your vaccination card. Simply take it to the vet each time and they sign it off each time the puppy/dog gets vaccinated.

Then a top up vaccination should be given once each year for life.

Forgetting to attend to this important duty will ultimately lead to suffering and additional expenses dealing with unthinkable consequences for your dog and perhaps others.

## Heartworm

Your puppy must be protected from Heartworm. There are various products available for this. I suggest you discuss this with your veterinarian as it can be a matter of personal choice which suits you and your lifestyle best.

Most veterinarians recommend treatment start at week 12. However you should consult your veterinarian at this stage when you are getting the 12 week vaccination.

In my opinion if you are a well-disciplined and organised person who is not inclined to be forgetful, then you should use the daily tablets as they are cheaper and have proved themselves over many years to have little or no side effects. If given at the correct dose regularly without lapsing are 100% effective in stopping infection by Heartworm.

If on the other hand you are forgetfully or spontaneous and may tend to let the supply of tablets lapse then I suggest you go with the annual injection. Allowing your treatment against Heartworm to lapse is inadvisable because to resume treatment you first will have to get your dog tested to ensure he has not contracted Heartworm before resuming taking the tablets or getting a new injection. Also if your dog contracts Heartworm (especially at an advanced stage) your dog will suffer greatly from the treatment to save him/her.

## Fleas

Make sure any product you use on a puppy less than 12 weeks of age is safe - most flea washes and rinses are toxic to young animals. Fleas need to be controlled on the dog as well as in the dog's bed/sleeping area, in the home, and in the yard. Treatment should be done at least every 14 days until the problem is under control. Fleas can transmit tapeworm and cause anaemia, but most significantly they cause dermatitis (skin allergies) a very frustrating problem. **Collars, sprays, rinses, powders and flea bombs are available, consult your vet for recommended treatments.**



## Toilet Training

Don't punish your pup for "accidents" if you're not paying attention. By following some simple guidelines, toilet training your puppy can take a short time:

Take him out **after each meal, after a nap, after a period of activity and when you see him sniffing around.**

**Restrict the puppy's access by a combination of any of the following means: \***

confine to a crate or a small fenced off area;

\* have the puppy accepting of being placed in a small room such as the laundry or bathroom (where accidents will be easily cleaned up);

\* conditioning the puppy to be on lead, or

\* give the puppy your full and undivided attention.

\* we don't recommend the toilet pads that some places sell. It takes longer to toilet train them and the pups get used to only going on the pads and not outside.

You will need to take the puppy outside, on lead, to the grassy area where you would like him/her to toilet, every 30 minutes to begin with – if he/she obliges, reward with tidbits of a favourite food treat, reserved for this occasion and/or a game. Our aim is to minimise the number of inappropriate soilings and be able to reward toileting in the appropriate location.

If the instructions in the above paragraph are followed precisely, the puppy will not have the opportunity to make mistakes and we will be constantly rewarded for the correct behaviour. However, if the puppy does manage to toilet in the wrong location, do **not** reprimand or show your disapproval in any way. You will not teach the puppy not to toilet in the house, you will simply be teaching him/her not to toilet in your presence – then when you go to the grassy toilet spot, puppy will not want to toilet because it will make you cross! Furthermore, when you return indoors, the puppy will take the first opportunity to find an appropriate spot (your bedroom or the living room – anywhere away from his/her own sleeping and eating areas) to eliminate, when you're not watching! Watch for the obvious times that your puppy will need to toilet, such as immediately after a meal or a big drink; upon waking up; after a play session; and any other time in between! Ensure that the puppy is in the correct toilet location at these times. If your puppy is fed on a regular schedule, you will find that toilet habits will also be performed on a consistent schedule – this will help you in anticipating just when to get the pup to that grassy toilet spot in time! If, while watching your puppy in your house, you observe the pre-toileting behaviours such as sniffing, circling, etc (it will vary from one puppy to the next), rush the puppy to the backdoor, keeping him/her close to floor level so that they can see where they are being taken and how to get to their correct toilet spot. Thoroughly clean the areas where the puppy has had accidents. The scent of previous droppings will stimulate a puppy to stop and toilet then and there. Use this fact to your advantage by collecting up a few droppings and placing them in the grassy area where you would like the puppy to toilet – he/she will believe that this area is his/her chosen toilet. Feeding your puppy indoors and locating water bowls indoors will hasten the understanding that these areas are not suitable for toileting. Take the blame for any mistakes yourself – you were not paying sufficient attention. Remember, your puppy's Mum cleaned up without scolding – attempting to reprimand the puppy for a bodily function will only create anxiety. PS: the puppy is not suffering from guilt when you walk into the room where the pup has had an accident – he/she simply knows that the presence of a puddle or pile and you in the same room is bad news! Most puppies will be showing a vast improvement by 12 weeks of age, though still having occasional accidents. Toilet training is a natural process and will happen unaided in most instances. However, there will be a wide range of ease or difficulty from one pup to the next. Try to remain calm and accepting – your stress will be obvious to your puppy and may undermine his/her confidence and trust in you as a consistent, reliable good-natured leader, capable of taking care of their needs and providing protection.

## Car Travel

Car harnesses can be purchased from vets, pet stores or online. They come in many different sizes and colours. Too many pets fly through the windshield or are injured due to sudden braking and accidents. The car seat belt is plugged in and the harness woven through the connected seat belt.

### Car sickness

The first thing to realize when dealing with car sickness is that in 95% of cases it is stress related and not motion related. Your pet may relate a car trip with being taken away from its first home, or trips to the Vet or even worse, the kennel. So, its not surprising that subsequent rides in a car should evoke very strong mental and subsequent physical trauma.

**Re-program your pet's attitude towards travel in a car.** Find a park about 5-10 minutes from home, ideally have someone else in the car too, to soothe the dog and distract him from the ride. Keep him happy all the way to the park. When at the park do all the enjoyable things that the dog loves, fetch the ball, and chase the Frisbee. The stay at the park doesn't need to be that long.... just as enjoyable as possible. Then drive the dog home soothing him all the way again and when home make just as much fuss of the dog as you did at the park. Finish the session with his meal or a treat if time and conditions permit.

Now your pet will now associate car travel with fun times.

**Travel on empty.** It's a good idea not to feed your pet six to eight hours before embarking on a road trip. Having an empty stomach will make him less likely to throw up, and if he does get sick, there's no food in the vomit, so at least it's easier to clean up. Giving your pet water, however, won't upset his stomach and may make him more comfortable.

**Or put in a quarter-tank.** While some pets travel best on an empty stomach, others will feel more comfortable after eating a small meal. Some pets just need a little food in their stomach to help keep them from getting sick.

**Take frequent rest breaks.** While some pets can travel for hours without having problems, others start getting queasy after a few miles. Get to know your pet's pattern and stop at least every hour or two to take a quick walk to help your pet get his land-legs back. It's also a good idea to pour him a little water, since he may not feel like drinking when he's in the car.

**Be up-front with him.** There's not as much movement in the front of the car as in the back, so it might help your pet if you let him ride in the front seat, but make sure they are in a doggy seatbelt or a small kennel that buckles into the seat.



**Expand his horizons.** Pets, like people, are less likely to get carsick when they can watch the passing scenery.

**Crank down the windows.** Fresh air is good for anyone who's feeling a little carsick, including your dog or cat, but don't open the window enough so he can escape or get his head way out.

## Discipline

Never let your puppy get away with anything that you don't want him to do when he is older and larger. Behaviours that are cute at 6kgs are often NOT cute at 30-40kgs. Try to always ask yourself "would I want him doing this as a full grown dog? If the answer is no, then do not allow the behaviour.

Your puppy is learning every day, whether you are training him or not. He has begun learning every day since he was born, and his active learning began at about three weeks of age. He can be learning the things you want him to, or if left to his own devices, learning things he picks up on his own that you may not appreciate.

If every day is a day of learning for you and your puppy, and you start off on the right path, you may be able to avoid many of the common pitfalls and behaviour problems often encountered.

Do not play rough with your puppy. Do not allow the puppy to develop bad habits such as jumping up on you or the children, biting at clothing, etc. A young puppy jumping can knock someone to the floor, and biting at clothing and hands will only result in shredded clothing and injuries.

Within the first four months the most common complaint we hear is that the puppy is nipping at the owners in play. To correct the behaviour, you hold the muzzle of the puppy in a firm hold while saying "NO". The very second he stops the protest by squirming, screaming, crying (and acting as if he were being tortured), you let go of his muzzle and say "good boy...no bite"

Every time he does it again, you must follow through in the above manner. He'll learn eventually. Be ready for him to have a tantrum and start nipping at you as soon as you let go of his muzzle. Be consistent, and punish the behaviour EACH TIME he does it.

For discipline we recommend the word "NO" used in a loud/growly/stern voice. A good verbal reprimand will usually be enough. If it isn't enough. If the sin is repeated immediately, you must respond just a bit tougher. A little shake by the scruff of the neck (not collar) with a deep, loud growl, or restraining the puppy firmly on his back may be used to let him know that you're not happy. You must remember, however, that just as soon as your pup has stopped doing something he wasn't supposed to do, he should be petted and praised. Tell him what a good dog he is.

**NEVER CALL HIM TO YOU AND REPRIMAND HIM!** If you call the puppy to you and reprimand him, he will associate the word "come" with a reprimand. This is the best way to teach your dog never to come. The command "come" is a life saving command. Your puppy must learn to come EVERY TIME you say that word. Never give up and allow the dog to win. Use treats or a long lead if necessary. **REMEMBER THE PRAISE!**



## Chewing

The sole focus of your dog's chewing should be directed toward items you select. There are a wide range of items to choose from, including *Gumabone* and *Nylabone*-type products. There are also many safe, long-lasting chew toys that are made especially for teething puppies that will keep them occupied and content for hours.

Examples would be knotted rawhide and durable rubber teething products, like Kong toys, that satisfy your puppy's need for chewing and gum stimulation. The items should not be similar to articles you do not want your puppy to chew. Your puppy can not tell the difference between your new dress shoes and an old tattered pair. If you catch your pup in the act of chewing anything but his chew toy, remove the object and replace it with an acceptable chew toy. If your pup then chews on the toy, praise him. You always want to reinforce desired behaviour with praise. If possible, treat the 'inappropriate object' with a product designed to deter chewing, such as Bitter Apple or citronella that will give it a bad taste. If he chews on

forbidden objects after you leave the room, your quick return will catch him in the act - the only time when corrective action should be taken. Again, give him the toy, and praise if it is accepted. If he is chewing forbidden objects but you cannot catch him, he should be crated when un-supervised until he learns what is and is not acceptable to chew on.



## Digging

Digging is a natural instinct for dogs, but digging holes in dirt is also considered a fun game for them. Naturally dogs may dig for different reasons: to retrieve a prey out of its hiding place, to dig out roots to chew on, to make holes to be able to sleep in or just a shelter from the wind. But many dogs just dig for entertainment when they are bored. There are many different ways to deter digging. There are commercial products such as *Keep Off*, *No-Dig*, or *Get Off My Garden*. These products work by creating a scent in the area which is repugnant to animals, or which interferes with the animal's sense of smell. Some products can be used directly on plants and grass, some cannot. This is probably the easiest of the solutions. This will also work at repelling nuisance animals other than your own. If you leave your dog out alone in the yard for any length of time, he may dig just for something to do. Play with him out there, or provide him with chew toys or interactive toys like a Kong or Pet Planet rubber toy with treats stuffed inside. **Never** reprimand your puppy if you don't catch them in the act of digging.



## Puppy Socialisation

Training and socialization is crucial if your puppy is to grow into a good canine citizen. Start with puppy kindergarten as soon as your puppy has the necessary vaccinations (kindergarten sessions are often run through the local vet), and follow up with obedience training.

Young puppies can be rambunctious and destructive, so be consistent and firm. Never let them jump up on people - it may be cute at 9 weeks, but at 9 months they could easily knock over and injure a child or an elderly person.

Shepherds were originally bred for the traits that make a good herding dog. Because they are so attuned to changes in the environment, they are in a constant state of "alert" and may appear nervous and fearful. They were also developed to react to these changes in the environment. So they have extremely high reactivity to stimulus. This trait makes them very "trainable".

This is one of the reasons that socialisation is so vitally important to them. Puppy socialising is the process of exposing the puppy to small doses of all sorts of normal situations they may encounter later on in life.

### **A few hints on socialising your puppy:**

Never console the puppy or pat him if he acts nervous or snappy out of fear. Tell him "no" if he snaps! By consoling or patting him you are telling him that that kind of behaviour was called for. If he acts nervous – ignore it and let him work out that there is no reason to be scared.

If your puppy is a little weary of strangers, do not console him – tell the stranger to be gentle and let the puppy sniff them. A stranger looking down straight at the puppy making direct eye-contact can be very threatening. Have the stranger come down to the pups level and not look directly at the puppy. Let the puppy meet the stranger on his own terms. Once he learn that strangers are OK and its good to get a treat or a pat, he will improve.

Always check with the owner of other dogs that their dogs are friendly and will not attack you puppy. A bad experience can leave mental scars on the puppy and might make him nervous of meeting other dogs for a long time to come. Do not let your puppy boss another puppy or growl seriously at it. No owner likes their puppy being beaten up by another pup or dog! Learn the difference between rough-housing play and aggression.



## SOME BRIEF TIPS FOR RAISING A WELL-ADJUSTED PUPPY

© Brooke Taylor, Neigepearl Shepherds. May not be used without express permission

### A FEW HINTS ON SOCIALISING YOUR PUPPY

- Never console the puppy or pat him if he acts nervous or snappy out of fear. By consoling or patting him you are telling him that that kind of behaviour was acceptable. **NEVER 'BABY' YOUR DOG!** If he acts nervous – ignore it and let him work out that there is no reason to be scared. Do not allow people or other dogs to force themselves upon your puppy. You would not like it if someone came up in your face and jumped on you or grabbed you!
- Correct any bad behavior, such as nipping or biting out of fear.
- If your puppy is a little wary of people, do not console him – tell the person to allow the puppy to approach them on their **own terms**. They may need to be patience. Do not force the pup!
- A stranger looking down straight at the puppy making direct eye-contact is a threatening thing in the dog world. Have the stranger come down to the pups' level and not look directly at the puppy. Tell them to totally ignore the puppy. Once he learns that strangers are OK and there is nothing to be afraid of, its good if the person offers them a treat or a pat.
- If socialising with other dogs/pups, always check with the owner that their dogs are friendly and will not attack your puppy. A bad experience can have long-lasting effects on the puppy and might make him nervous of meeting other dogs for a long time to come. Dogs must always be under full voice control if off lead and must come when called. Learn how to interpret dog behaviour to avoid problems when socialising off leash.
- Do not let your puppy boss another puppy or growl seriously at it. There is a difference between playing and getting too rough. No owner likes their puppy being beaten up by another pup or dog! Learn the difference between rough-housing play and aggression.
- Get your puppy focussed on YOU when working and socialising. YOU must be the most important person in their life – not anyone or anything else. Break playtimes or times they are distracted by a fun game with YOU.

### DAY TO DAY TIPS

#### *Exercise and Getting Out and About*

A build up of energy and lack of exercise can cause behavioural problems such as aggression, frustration, fearfulness and destructiveness, so make sure the dog/pup is well-exercised and stimulated. GSDs are a working breed and were bred to have brains – and to USE THEM!

Take him out on daily walks and enclosed areas where they can run safely off lead (and not get hit by a car!).

Make sure that you don't over-exercise your puppy though. No forced running i.e. jogging with you or jumping until they are at least 12 months old, because their joints are still growing and over-doing it can cause life-long joint problems!

If there are other dogs around or loose, ensure the other dogs are stable and will not hurt the pup. Most people these days are courteous and will put their dogs on lead. Better to be safe than sorry in these situations! If there is ever a fight or attack, the person who has their dog off lead, are the ones liable, even if their dog didn't start it!

You and your family are the dog's PACK, not every dog down the street or in the park. YOU are the Pack Leader. During the walk or run, they must still be focussed on you when you request their attention. It's fair enough to allow them to just 'be a puppy', sniff things etc, but ensure that when you ask for your pups' attention that they give it to you immediately. Give positive verbal encouragement and make things fun for them – give treats and lots of praise!

Get the puppy out and about visit different environments i.e. milk bars, a shopping strip or supermarket. Puppies must learn how to be calm in different surroundings. Always end training sessions on a positive note!

### **Praise**

When you get your dogs focus and attention and they do what you say, reward it with food and verbal praise, but don't overdo the praise. Calmly, warmly and confidently praise them (not a high-pitched crazy voice – that will only hype them up and they are likely to get over-excited and jump on you!).

### **Avoiding Separation Anxiety**

When you come home or leave to go out without them, **don't touch, make eye contact, or talk to them.** Don't make time apart such a big deal. If you do, it can develop behavioural problems such as separation anxiety. Give calm and gentle attention once they settle down – this may take 5 minutes or even up to one hour! Your dog must learn to spend time alone where they are not centre of attention. Ignore bad behaviour. Reward the good!

If you have more than one dog, alternate the dogs inside and outside. They should not learn to be dependent on each other. It's very important that when raising a puppy with your other dog around, that they are taken separately on walks so the puppy can learn how socialise by themselves and not rely on the other dog for confidence.

It's also a good idea if you are not at home, to leave a bone or a toy like a kong with food stuffed in it. They'll be occupied and busy for a while!

## **HOW TO BECOME A PACK LEADER AND GAIN YOUR DOGS' RESPECT**

**No pulling on lead!** Don't allow the puppy to pull on the lead. The Pack Leader walks in front. Walk with confident posture and a calm, assertive attitude. Train your dog the basic commands i.e. sit, heel, drop, come. You don't want to be dragged down the street! Join a local dog obedience club to learn how to make your dog do these things.

**No jumping!** Your dog should always be prepared to accept a reasonable measure of control and when young children or elderly people are around it. A boisterous young dog can easily knock down the very young or elderly. Children may become frightened of dogs for life and the elderly are very prone to injury.

**Getting up on couches or beds!** What's cute as a puppy is not cute at 30kgs! Couches and beds are for Pack Leaders – not dogs! Do not allow your dog to lay upon you – this is a dominant position for the dog. Do not confuse your dog's ranking within your pack by allowing it to do things that make it think it's the boss.

**Feed your dog after you and your family!** Pack Leaders eat first. If it's not dinner time for you and the family, even eat a biscuit or something small yourself then prepare the dogs' meal.

**Never give up if you give your dog a command and he/she ignores it!** Every time you give a command, you must always carry it through to completion. If you give in, the dog learns they can get away with ignoring your commands and will not take you seriously and they think they are the Pack Leader. If commands keep getting ignored, be patient, keep trying and make the dog do it! Reward the dog and praise him when he complies!

**Never give your dog anything if they are whinging or carrying on!** Whinging and barking at you is THEM being the Pack Leader and DEMANDING something from YOU. Don't give in to this behaviour as it will reinforce it and they will keep trying it! If you must, put them outside and ignore them.

**Do not allow your dog to barge through doors first!** As Pack Leader, you go first, they follow.

**Do not give the dog attention/affection unless it is deserved.** Reward the dog if it has done something very good. Make them work to gain food or praise. Making them sit, drop, stay or heel. Attention is not a given right – it's something they must earn. In a pack environment, food and respect doesn't come for free!

**If the dog is in your way and not moving – walk right through it!** As pack leader, you have "right of way". By walking around your dog, this is you submitting to your dog. When pushing through with your legs – don't fall over!

# CRITICAL PERIODS OF CANINE DEVELOPMENT

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## NEONATAL PERIOD

### (Birth to 12 Days)

The Neonatal Period, from birth to 12 days of age, is devoted to two functions: obtaining nutrition by nursing, and staying warm.

A puppy is not physically self-sufficient when he is born. He needs the warmth of his environment to control his body temperature. He needs physical stimulation to urinate and defecate. He has neither sight nor hearing, and is deficient in his senses of smell taste and touch. He reacts to hot and cold, and to some extent to pain. He also reacts to the smell of mother.

He moves by crawling forward in a circular pattern, moving his head from side to side in an attempt to locate mother. He may vocalize while he's searching, which stimulates mother to nuzzle him and let him know where she is.

The environment affects him only inasmuch as it touches him. While the puppy grows rapidly in size and strength during this period, his behavior patterns remain virtually the same throughout. EEG's taken during the Neonatal Period show no difference between the puppy's brain waves when he is asleep and when he is awake.

## TRANSITION PERIOD

### (13 Days to 20 Days)

The Transition Period is from 13 to 20 Days and is marked by a number of physical changes in the puppy. At the beginning of this period, the puppy's eyes will open, at an average of 13 days. While his pupils will react to light, the retina is still undeveloped, and he is unable to see objects or movement until around 21 days of age.

The puppy will begin to crawl backward as well as forward, and a few days later he will begin to walk in a wobbly fashion, falling as often as he takes steps forward. Once he starts walking, the puppy no longer crawls. The first teeth erupt at around 20 days, and he begins to bite and chew. Tail wagging also begins during this period, indicating that tail wagging is not reliant upon seeing and hearing, since he cannot yet see or hear.

He begins to react to sounds at an average of 19.5 days, when he startles at a noise, but is unable to locate the source of the sound.

This critical period is one of rapid physical changes. Over a period of just a week, the puppy has changed from a Neonate who cannot hear, walk, move his bowels without stimulation, keep warm by himself or eat other than by sucking, into a puppy who can do all these things.

## AWARENESS PERIOD

### (21 to 28 Days)

The Awareness Period is from 21 to 28 Days. This is the first week during which the puppy is able to use his senses of sight and hearing. Because the change in his sensory perceptions happens so abruptly, over a 24-hour period in most puppies, he needs a stable environment. Now he has the greatest need for his mother and for a familiar environment. Weaning or moving the litter to a new location at this time in all likelihood will psychologically scar the puppies.

Learning begins during the Awareness Period. It is the time in the puppy's life when he learns what it is to be a dog.

## **CANINE SOCIALIZATION PERIOD**

### **(21 to 49 Days)**

The period from 21 to 49 Days, or three to seven weeks is the Canine Socialization Period, when the puppy learns to use the species - specific behaviors that make him a dog.

To reach his genetic potential, the puppy must stay in the nest with his mother and littermates throughout this time. During this period he will practice body postures, facial expressions and vocalizations, and learns their effects on his siblings, mother and any other dogs he meets. He learns how it sounds to bark and be barked at; how it feels to bite and be bitten.

He learns the various behaviors that make him a dog: chase games - imitating the chase necessary to catch and bring down game - teach him coordination and timing; greeting behavior teaches him the body postures of greeting; fight games teach him the use of his body, body postures and expressions to elicit various responses. For example, during play, when a fight might begin, the puppy learns that a submissive body posture has the effect of turning off the aggression of his littermate.

During this critical period, the puppy learns one of the most important lessons of his life - to accept discipline. He learns it from his mother, who through discipline teaches the puppies not to bite so hard, or, during the weaning process, to leave her alone.

## **HUMAN SOCIALIZATION PERIOD**

### **(7 to 12 weeks)**

The best time to bring a puppy into its new home is during the Human Socialization Period, from 50 to 84 days, or seven to twelve weeks. It is also the best time to introduce him to those things that will play a role in his future life. For example, if he has not already been exposed to farm animals and it is necessary for him to interact peacefully with them, it is at this age that he should meet them in a positive, non-threatening manner. If the breeder has not already introduced him to the sounds of the vacuum cleaner, car engines and city traffic, he needs to be exposed to these now. Children, men with beards, women in floppy hats, and senior citizens while all people to us, appear different to the dog. His education and socialization should include exposure to many types of people of all ages.

At seven weeks of age, a puppy's EEG shows the brain waves are the same as those of an adult dog. His capacity for concentration is not yet adult and his attention span is short. However, he can learn. Not only can a young puppy learn, he will learn whether we teach him or not. This is the age when the most rapid learning occurs. Everything he experiences makes a greater impression on him now than it ever will again. Learning at this age is permanent.

Because of the relative ease of teaching at this age, because the puppy has not yet learned any bad habits that will later have to be cured, and because the puppy is just a fraction of his adult size and weight, this is the ideal time to begin obedience training in a positive, non-punitive manner, taking into account his physical limitations and short attention span.

## **FEAR IMPACT PERIOD**

### **(8-11 Weeks)**

During the Fear Impact Period, from eight to eleven weeks, any traumatic, painful, or frightening experience will have a more lasting impact on the puppy than if it had occurred at any other time. It is the puppy's perception of the experience that is important, not that of the owner.

For example, a trip to the animal hospital during this period, if unpleasant, could forever make a dog apprehensive about going to the veterinarian. By taking along a toy and some treats and making the experience pleasant and fun, the potentially negative impact is alleviated.

## **SENIORITY CLASSIFICATION PERIOD**

### **(13 to 16 Weeks)**

This critical period, from thirteen to sixteen weeks, is also known as the "Age of Cutting" - cutting teeth and cutting the apron strings.

During the Seniority Classification Period, the dog attempts to clarify and resolve the question of leadership.

## **FLIGHT INSTINCT PERIOD**

### **(4 to 8 Months)**

The Flight Instinct Period occurs sometime between four and eight months of age. This is the time when a puppy will test his wings. He will venture off on his own and may turn a deaf ear when called.

The Flight Instinct Period lasts from a few days to several weeks. How the dog is handled during this stage will mean the difference between a dog that doesn't come when called and one who responds readily. Because most dog owners are not aware of this naturally occurring developmental stage, they react incorrectly, thereby creating a problem for themselves.

This emergence of the Flight Instinct is another reason for starting puppies in obedience class before this age.

There is a physiological change that corresponds with the Flight Instinct Period - teething. While the adult teeth come through the gums prior to six months of age, they don't set in the jaw until between six and ten months. There is a physiological need for him to exercise his mouth at this time.

## **SECOND FEAR IMPACT PERIOD**

### **(6 to 14 Months)**

This Fear Impact Period, also called the Fear of New Situations Period, is not as well defined as the first. The Second Fear Impact Period corresponds with growth spurts. Hence, it may occur more than once as the dog matures.

What marks the Second Fear Impact Period is a change in the behavior of the now adolescent dog. He may suddenly be reluctant to approach something new, or be frightened of something or someone familiar. When a dog is exhibiting fear or reluctance, he should not be forced into a confrontation, bullied into being brave, or reinforced in his fear through soothing tones and petting. Force can frighten the dog further, and soothing tones only serve to encourage his fear.

His fear should be handled with patience and kindness. The dog is permitted to work it out for himself without being forced to deal with something he perceives as dangerous. Training during this period puts the dog in a position of success, so his self-confidence will be built up.

## **MATURITY**

### **(1 to 4 Years)**

Many breeds, particularly the giant breeds, continue growing and physically changing beyond four years of age, so maturity refers to sexual maturity rather than full growth. For the average dog, maturity occurs sometime between one and a half and three years of age, with small dogs maturing earlier and giant dogs maturing later. This critical period is often marked by an increase in aggression and by a renewed testing for leadership.



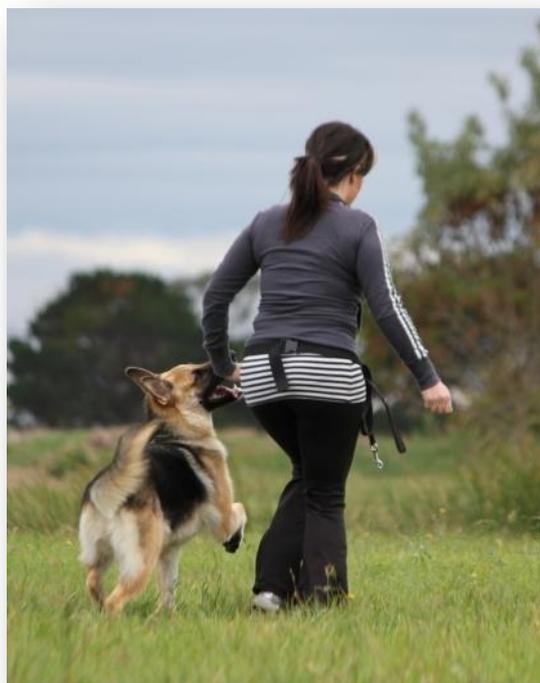
## BE A RESPONSIBLE DOG OWNER

1. A dog should never be out on the street on its own. The temptation to investigate the outside world and become one of a pack can be very great. A stray dog is detrimental to society.
2. Keep your dog on the lead. There is nothing clever about taking a dog on a walk without a lead. Another loose dog may cause a fight, a cat may cause him to dart on to the road. It only requires a passing car and the prospect of human and canine tragedy is very real.
3. When your dog is free in an exercise area, keep a close eye on him, especially when another dog comes into view. The other dog may be a fighter and experience has taught us that it's always the breed that gets the blame in the media, not always the deed. Dogs must always be under full voice control if off lead and must come when called. Learn how to interpret dog behaviour to avoid problems when socialising off leash.
4. Always carry a plastic bag to clean up after your dog. If you do not and get caught, you will incur a fine from the council.
5. Train your dog the basic commands i.e. sit, heel, drop, come. There is nothing worse than having your arm pulled out of its socket with attempting to go for a leisurely walk. Join your local obedience club. You will be amazed how much you and your dog will actually learn and benefit from.
6. Your dog should always be prepared to accept a reasonable measure of control and when young children or elderly people are around it. It would be advisable to keep your dog on lead. A boisterous young dog can easily knock down the very young or elderly, Children may become frightened of dogs for life and the elderly are very prone to injury. ***WELL-TRAINED DOGS CAN ONLY COME FROM RESPONSIBLE OWNERS WHO ARE WILLING TO INVEST TIME & EFFORT INTO THE DOGS TRAINING PROGRAM. EVERY TIME YOU TAKE YOUR DOG OUT IN PUBLIC, YOUR DOG IS AN AMBASSADOR TO HIS/HER BREED.***

## THE IMPORTANCE OF TRAINING

*We actively promote the concept of responsible dog ownership amongst puppy buyers to ensure that all puppy buyers and their dogs play an active and meaningful role in the wider community.* Obedience training is, in fact, critical when it comes to nurturing a healthy human-animal relationship and creating a socially compatible pet. The basic elements — sit, down, stay, come, and heel — help produce a good canine citizen. In a practical sense, obedience-trained dogs have an easier lives, and are easier to live with, than their untrained peers. If dogs desist from jumping up on strangers, sit or lie quietly when asked, and walk politely on lead, they're bound to spend more time with their owners going to picnics, parks, and other public places, and will spend less time alone at home. Dogs taught to lie down on the arrival of visitors - after barking a greeting or alarm - are more likely to be included in the dinner party and less likely to wind up isolated outside when guests visit. Obedience training is an education in good manners that, almost literally, open many doors for otherwise confined dogs.

Rather than thinking of obedience training as a series of pointless rituals, think of it as a tool to help dogs cope in the real world. **Training Can Be Positive and Fun!** When training is positive and fun, both you and your dog can enjoy the process as well as the results. To teach your dog anything new, the task must hold some kind of reward when successfully completed. It's unrealistic to imagine that your dog will perform a task simply because it pleases you – though some do seem particularly eager to please. For less owner-oriented dogs, even petting may not be a potent enough reward, especially when the dog is excited and would rather cavort than be petted by you, his momentary obstacle. In order to convince your dog that training exercises are fun, consider what he'll work hardest for. For most dogs, the most compelling reward is a small but delicious piece of food, such as breakfast cereal or freeze-dried liver.



## Obedience Classes

If you're inexperienced in dog training, consider enrolling your dog in a formal class (puppies can join "kindergartens" or pre-novice classes). An interesting evolution in thinking often occurs when people join training classes. Though folk may sign up for just one class — typically eight weeks of classes — they enjoy the experience so much that they often re-enroll for the next level of training, and then the next. In fact, it's not uncommon for puppy owners to continue their joint learning experiences for years — even entering local matches or competitions — because training classes are such fun for both the owner and the dog. Most basic obedience classes — typically at the "novice" or "pre-novice" level — include the basic exercises: "sit," "down," "stay," "come" (or "recall") and "heel." Each command plays an important role in day-to-day communication between people and their dogs. An experienced instructor can help guide you with issues such as timing of rewards when your dog "listens" and the best way to respond when he doesn't listen. Even your facial expression and body posture can affect your dog's performance — subtle influences that you may not be able to detect without the help of a trainer. In some classes, time is also devoted to dealing with behaviours unrelated to obedience competition, such as jumping up, dropping objects on command, and controlled walking (without a formal "heel"). There may also be aspects involving proper socialisation, and short lectures on other relevant topics, in addition to basic training. Obedience classes often have their own culture that is shared between the attendants, all other people who love their dogs as much as you do.



**Applying What You've Both Learned** Remember to use and practice exercises after you've earned them. Your dog may be "staying" beautifully while in class, but he may 'act deaf' in other environments. So, help him practice — in your home, back yard, near playgrounds, and in crowded shopping plazas. Apply the skills you and he have worked so hard to master, so that he can join you everywhere and be the companion you always knew he could be.

## Exercise

A mistaken belief of many owners of our breed, is that a young puppy (up to 12 months of age) should have "plenty" of exercise. As the German Shepherd is such a fast growing breed (compared to some other working breeds) the opposite is actually more correct. The strain of over exercise on the skeletal make up of a youngster is often irreversible. The stretching of ligament at too early an age, the strain on young



growing joints, the carrying of too much weight on the overall framework, can and will do harm to the young puppy, and lead to problems in adulthood.

Consider a young Shepherd in comparison to a 3 - 4 year old human child - certainly not ready to run a marathon (even though the spirit may be willing!) but with growth and maturity, that time could come. As a general rule of thumb and guideline for novice owners, "on lead" exercise should be very limited until final growth and height is achieved at

approximately twelve months of age (when both hips and elbows can be x-rayed). At that time, the young dog is then ready to commence more prolonged exercise. Should there be any chance that there is already some problem with wear on the joints of the hips and elbows, further advice would be sought as to appropriate exercise. Then, and only then, should you build the dog up to the desired level of fitness you require for whichever field you have chosen - be it show dog, trialing, agility or family companion, with the adult animal - complete in growth.

Until then, it should be "careful and slow". Up to twelve months of age, natural free running is the best form of exercise for a youngster, for a young pup, upon tiring, can easily stop when they wish, and not keep on performing because they wish to please and keep up with you!

Of course you will wish to lead train and socialise your puppy, but exercise on lead should be no more than that. Maximum time walking (the dog at a fast trot) of a puppy up to six months of age should be barely five minutes at one instance (equivalent to a short stroll around your local block or park) and then rest.

Puppies need plenty of rest and sleep, just like a young toddler.

Certainly they can play and romp in your back yard or in their kennel run, but they will stop when they feel tired, rest and then play again. Over six months - training on lead could extend to ten minutes if you wish, but again, moderation is the best guide, and if a puppy shows an inclination to tire, then stop!

Moderation and common sense are the guidelines. Allow your puppy to grow steadily and slowly, and the fun of having a companion with which you can run your kilometres (upon adulthood of the dog) will not be impaired by the damage you may do, by doing too much, too soon.

Enjoy your puppy's first twelve months as a friend, and savour a lifetime with a fit and healthy adult.

## Grooming

### COAT

The shepherd is a "double-coated" breed. It has a "down" type undercoat next to the skin, with longer, coarse hair as an outer shell. Under normal conditions, the shepherd will only require regular brushing, and an occasional bath. Diet plays a significant part in coat condition, so feeding quality foods will help prevent any skin problems. Regular brushing and combing twice a week is essential in order to manage the double coat of German Shepherds. Remove the woolly hair shed from the dense undercoat, and not only the outer coarse guard coat which protects the undercoat. The density of the hair coat can be misleading to novice groomers or owners of this breed; it is somewhat dense. This breed sheds year round.

Use a stiff bristled brush and a steel comb with rounded (not flat) teeth (you don't want to scratch or injure your dog!). Groom daily, or as

frequent as is possible. It is good to have a dog that doesn't mind being handled/inspected/groomed.

At first it will take a little while to do it thoroughly, but as both you and your dog get use to it, you will be surprised how little time is actually needed if you groom regularly. Your dog will be clean, without smells, and looking smart - you will be both pleased and proud to introduce your dog to people.

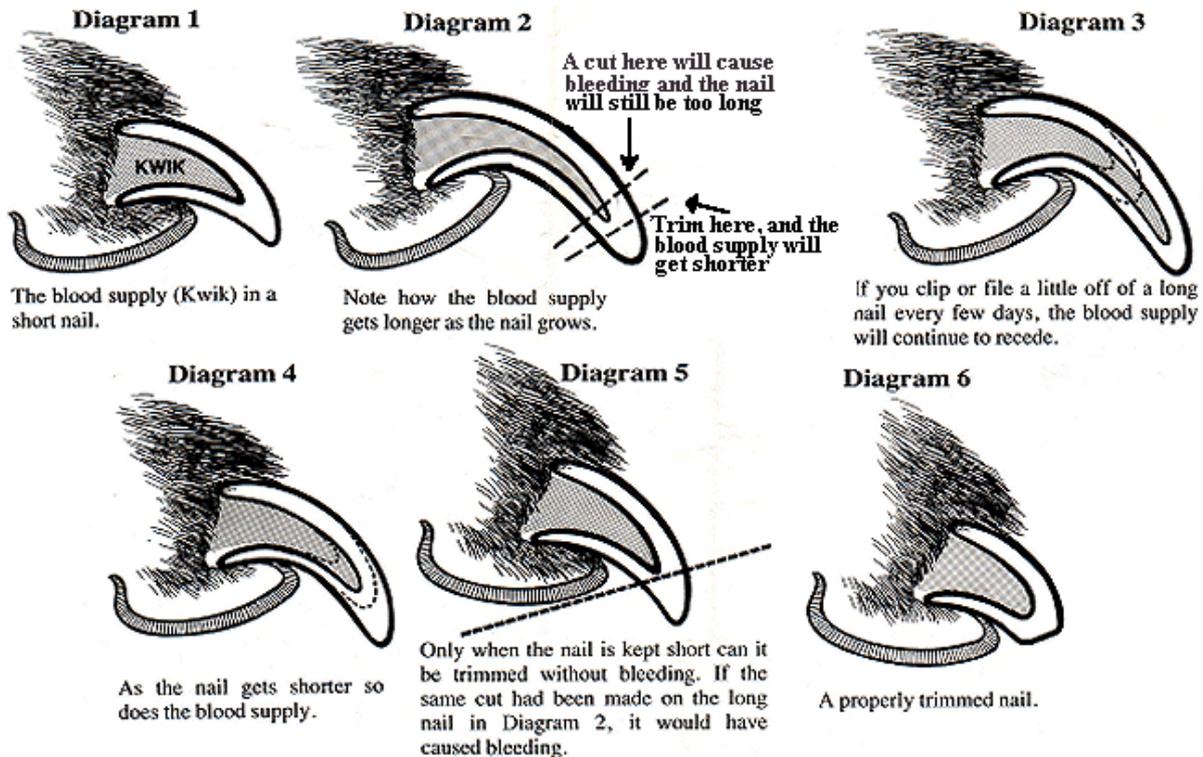
With the brush gently brush the back, down the back and sides, lift the tail and brush down the hind legs, and then lift up the chin and brush down the neck and chest. To do underneath, make your dog lie on its back. Even old dogs will learn to do this after a short struggle - be firm or get another member of the family to help hold them. (This is where training comes in useful i.e. the "stay" command)

First, brush the chest, then under the armpits and the inside of the hindlegs; afterwards, do the whole thing again with the rounded toothed steel comb.



## NAILS

Your shepherd will also need to have his toenails, ears, and teeth attended to. If your dog runs on pavement daily, you probably won't have a problem with nails. However you should check the nails on a weekly basis (while you are brushing) to avoid future headaches caused by split or broken nails left growing too long. Commercial nail trimmers for dogs are available at any pet supply store. Nails are hard in density, and dark nails will hide the "quick" (small vein that feeds the nail). It is better to trim off small amounts of nail a little at a time. If you cut the nail too short it is painful for your dog and he will bleed. If you do cut the quick of your dog, use styptic powder, scrape the nail against a bar of soap, or press cornstarch firmly into the quick to stop the bleeding. Have one of these items on hand, and within easy reach when trimming. Don't let nails get too long as the quick gets longer and it will be hard to trim the nail back to a proper length.



## EARS

Ears should be checked and cleaned at least weekly. Your vet has products that will dissolve excess wax when used regularly. To clean excess wax and dirt simply deposit a few drops of the ear solution into each ear, massage the base of the ear for a few seconds, and then wipe out any debris with soft tissues or a cotton pad. The remaining solution will be shaken out by the dog or will evaporate quickly. The ear solution is inexpensive and should be purchased from your vet. Try to avoid getting water in your shepherd's ears as it will sit at the bottom of the ear canal and can create infection. The ear solution helps keep ears dry. Prevention is the key to maintaining healthy ears.

