

# *Puppy Handbook*

I will include in this package, some suggestions that we have found very useful and have put to the test on House Training, Crate Training and Obedience Training, as well as a vaccination schedule that we use here for your new Puppy/Dog.

I hope that this information will help you get started with the proper foundation needed to have your puppy become a welcome part of your community and your family, and have a healthy future.

Sincerely  
Wanda

## Part 1 House Training and Feeding

House training your puppy really covers a two-part section of information. One is a feeding/watering schedule, and this in turn, reflects on the House Training portion of the subject.

First lets talk about Food. I get asked all the time, “What brand should we feed our puppy/dog” Well, in some 25 years in German Shepherds, I can honestly say, I don’t have any rock solid advice on this.

The obvious is of course, a healthy balanced diet is always a good thing.

As to “WHAT” that product may be, it really will depend on your puppy. You can purchase the most expensive food on the market, based on its nutrition and value for your dog, and if you don’t will not eat it...what good is it?!!

I recommend, finding a food, (if you cannot find what the breeder was feeding in your area), that is similar in ingredients, and start there. Don’t buy the biggest bag, as you have no idea at this time if the puppy will like it, or if it... will like your puppy.

Feed the same schedule, or as close to it, that the breeder did, based on your work schedule. If the puppy likes it, and it does not cause diarrhea and or upset stomach, (Shepherds have fussy tummies sometimes)... then stick with it and see how the puppy does on it. Watch for nice firm stools, a healthy happy active puppy, shinny coat, and lots of energy. (Don’t be overly concerned if you puppy has a loose stool for a few days after arriving in its new home. The water change and all the excitement can cause this, however don’t let it go on for to long)

Again, let me stress that a good balanced food is important. I am not suggesting you buy the cheapest bag on the shelf. I am just saying that just because a bag of food cost you \$70.00, does not mean your dog will like it, or that they will do well on it.

A good quality food, with a high digestibility, means less required going in and out, which is nice for yard cleanups.

Once you have a food your puppy likes, you may find that you will need to make changes down the road, but start there. See how the puppy does on the food.

I personally like to have my pups switched over to adult food between 4-6 months of age, this does of course depend on each individual puppy. It's important not to grow your puppy too quickly, and to keep them on the lean side until their bones have had a chance to calcify. **You can read more about diet on our health page, and how feeding too much too quickly can contribute to dysplasia as all pups are born with "normal" hips.**

Before we move on to the next "step" I just want to say, that Last Mountain Kennels does not agree with a self-feeding practice for your German Shepherd. Due to Bloat, Torsion, and Twisted Gut, all the same condition, it is not advisable to leave food available at all times. Keep your German shepherd on scheduled feedings. You will then know if your GSD has just eaten and drank some water, so that he can have the appropriate rest time for his food to digest and not risk having these problems. In simple terms this condition is a cause from food and water mixing together in the dogs stomach, the food then expands and gases are released, if your dog is allowed to jump and play at this time, you risk his stomach swinging and causing no place for the food or gases to escape. The death is quick and painful. Ideally a rest time of at least 1 hour after eating is recommended.

### **PLEASE DO NOT ALLOW YOUR NEW PUPPY/DOG TO SELF-FEED.**

This brings us to what goes in must come out part of the picture.

House breaking is a stressful time. You have this puppy for the next 12 –15 years and you definitely don't want to mess up the housetraining part or you will be forever cleaning and replacing carpets.

However, at a very young age, the puppy has only a limited amount of bladder control and does not understand the concept of "going outside" to go to the bathroom. We raise our pups on shavings in the kennel barn, and this can sometimes be a good way to get them to go outside, by spreading a few shavings in an area outside where you want them to go. Also because there are "no" shavings in your home, they will not feel comfortable going anywhere else, and this helps to speed up house training. Many clients tell us their pups are house trained in a week.

This can however be a long process and if proper time is taken now, can make for a lifetime of little to no accidents.

Start with looking at your schedule. Take a look at what your able to change or alter and how that will work with the schedule the puppy has arrived to you on.

We don't all have the same schedules in our lives so some changes may need to be made. This can affect the puppy and you... so be patient.

Ultimately, if you can take a few days off work when you get your puppy, it will give your puppy time to adapt to its new surrounding, get acquainted with its new owners and check the place out, both inside and out. Don't expect too much in the first few days, the puppy has been pulled from its only familiar surroundings, and away from its littermates and mom and the people that cared for it. It will be a bit uncertain of its new surroundings, but with patients and positive encouragement, it will soon feel right at home.

Remember your first day of school, or the first tryouts on a new team...not always a comfortable position to be in, this didn't mean that you didn't succeed but you needed time to adjust and someone to take you by the hand and show you around. :O)

I could sit here and lay out an hourly schedule for you but that is most likely not going to work as everyone's schedule is different, if you need help you can call me and we can figure out something to try, personalize it... so to speak.

If you have been able to take some time off work and get the puppy settled for the first few days you are lucky as I truly believe this is the best way to get to know your puppies schedule and build up its confidence in the new surroundings.

Rule of thumb...puppies will always go pee, when they wake up from a nap, within a ½ hour to an hour of their meal, and after drinking a lot of water.

First thing you do in the morning is take the puppy out of its crate and no matter how tired you are, no matter how you feel, the puppy must be tended too. Remember, it has no control over its urge to go to the bathroom, and at a younger age has, even less control, over how long they can hold it. I have been seen over the years in my housecoat and slippers, my pj's and slippers and sometimes a bit less, but my first priority is to get the puppy out and let it relieve itself, that means in WARM or COLD weather. If you succeed and you make it outside with no mistakes...TONS of praise to the puppy, while still outside. Then in you go and have a coffee, and play time with the pup.

This procedure is what you need to do each time the puppy wakes up from a nap or an entire nights rest. It will most certainly have to go to the bathroom within a VERY short amount of time.

This same procedure will need to happen, anywhere from ½ hour to an hour after the puppy eats. You will have to be "IN TUNE" with your puppy at these times to watch for any signs of looking for a place to go. If you watch your puppy, you will notice that there are signs that should alert you to taking them out. They become restless, may whimper a bit, look like they are going to squat and take a pee or a poop, start to run and spin. You need to rustle them up and get them outside, happily when they go, PRAISE THEM LOTS.

If you miss, it, Oh well, if you catch them in the act... say No No and quickly take them outside to finish... then LOTS of praise.

Feeding your puppy is scheduled as well. The puppy should be fed three times per day, for the first while, and the food should be left available for no more than 20 –30 minutes tops. It is then taken away and placed back again at the next feeding time. What this does is encourages the puppy to "eat it while he's got it" and to not fuss about what is in front of him or her. This is not only good for the puppy but also great for housetraining schedules. What goes in at a certain time, will soon come out, at almost always a certain time...its trial and error for the first few days to know exactly what that time will be...so BE Patient!!!

Don't forget if you are treat training this will also affect how much your puppy is eating and when, so keep this in mind if they are not eating their meals...you may be treating them too much and it is affecting their meals and bathroom breaks!

Once you know your puppy's schedule, what its tummy will allow it to do and when, you will be able to decrease the amount of accidents and help your puppy succeed at housebreaking. Basically, until such time as the puppy has complete bladder and bowel control, you are the one who is trained, not the puppy. You will be able to "SHAPE" these times by working with the feeding schedule for the puppy, your work schedule and utilizing that information to better fit your lifestyle. This takes time and patients. If you push this too hard, you can create a dog that will not be sure of what is expected of it, and submissively pee or seem frightened, this is not a problem we want to create. The amount of time your puppy/dog can wait to go to the bathroom will soon change, and the times will increase that you can expect your puppy to "HOLD" it. But for now, let's work on a positive experience.

Also do not give your puppy free run of the entire home while house training. It's far too easy for the puppy to find a place "over there" to do its business which to the pup will be far enough away from where it "lives". Smaller areas when unsupervised and gradually increase this as the pup realizes where it is supposed to go. I like to start at the back door area, and pen this off with a baby gate, then increase this area as the pup learns. This is also the door we take the puppy out of to do its business so they learn to go to that door when they have to go out. Ultimately if you cannot supervise your pup use a crate. More on that type of training farther down.

## Part 2

### **A Bit about Dysplasia**

The following info is in the best interest of your puppy, and "Will" contribute either positively or negatively to your puppy's development.

#### **A short lesson on Dysplasia:**

Dysplasia is a terrible disease. Why? ...Because of the various degrees of arthritis, that it can eventually produce, which in turn could lead to pain and debilitation.

#### **What does dysplasia mean?**

Abnormal growth or development which leads to... abnormal anatomic structure due to such growth

#### **What does Subluxation mean?**

**Subluxation:** is based principally on the degree of congruence (good fit) between the femoral head (ball) and acetabulum (socket).

If a joint is subluxating it is considered partial dislocation; looseness

Subluxation is said to be the first cause of problems, in a dog's hips.

The "ball and socket" or "femur head and acetabulum" in the case of a hip joint, are made to "fit" properly into each other. There is a lining between them called the articular surface, which is cushioned with protective cartilage. This protective cartilage allows for the ball and socket to work in conjunction with each other during movement.

This package is neatly wrapped and held together with ligaments and tendons and together this creates a healthy hip joint.

If the ligaments and tendons do not hold this "package" together properly there is unnecessary wear and abnormal growth or development which leads to... abnormal anatomic structure due to such growth.

If the ligaments and tendons cannot hold this "package together" because of environmental contributions, such as injury to the area, there is unnecessary wear and abnormal growth or development, which leads to abnormal anatomic structure due to such growth and the end result is Dysplasia.

SO having read this little blurb that very easily describes what dysplasia is and how it can be caused, its easy to see that "any joint" can be affected, and that owners have as large a responsibility as breeders to ensure proper care and attention is paid to the growth and development of the pup/dog.

What types of activities to avoid:

Stairs, the jarring to the elbows on the way down, or straining on the way up for the hips if not conditioned for the job can contribute.

Jumping off and on elevated things such as couches, chairs, beds, or even in and out of vehicles on and off of your deck, etc for the same reasons as the stairs.

If your home has one or two steps into it, carry your pup for as long as you can, then teach them ON LEASH to use every step, to go up and down, especially down, as that would be quit a landing if they jump from the top step, when you can no longer carry them up and down. ☺

Pups bones are not calcified until they are mature; stats show they are not "totally calcified until approximately 2 years of age. Use common sense, and make the right decisions for your pup/dog.

Condition muscles at your dogs pace, DO NOT GROW YOUR PUP TO QUICKLY OR FORCE EXERCISE ON HIM/HER. Like a good athlete progress is made in stages. You are officially our pup/dogs athletic trainer.

Please read the document on our Health Page titled: Hip Dysplasia in Growing Dogs it is very informative and it states very plainly that all pups are born with normal hips, how fast that puppy grows and how much rough housing it does, will play a role in whether or not it will get hip dysplasia and must be taken into consideration. A very interesting read!

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### Part 3 Crate Training

Somewhere in all the housebreaking and feeding schedules we made mention of a crate.

Some people do not think that a crate is a good thing for a puppy or dog. This could not be farther from the truth. It is my opinion that you are doing your puppy a favor, by offering it a place to call home, no matter where you are, a **safe place to sleep** and a **safe place to travel**. No matter where you go or where you stay, your puppy/dog will always have its bed along with it,

and since dogs are den animals they are soon happy to hop in their “den” or crate and feel safe and content.

The trick is getting your puppy to “LIKE” its den, instead of being snuggled up with you in bed. This seems appealing, but in fact your puppy could easily fall off the bed and hurt itself very badly. The best place for your puppy to sleep, rest, travel, and in my opinion, learn to eat in some situations, is in its crate.

**LMK believes all dogs should travel in crates, for the safety of your pet and yourselves.**

This is usually the toughest on the owners; the puppy will in most cases try everything in its power to get you to let it out of its crate. It will cry, scratch, whine, maybe even howl once in a while, just to remind you that, it would like out, and to be with you.

Lets not forget, dogs are also pack animals and they have... up until this point been with their littermates, or pack. So this is a change. We will discuss the “PACK” portion of our manual a bit later.

So the noise you will hear for the first few days while the puppy is in the crate, may be a bit annoying, it may frustrate the heck out of you, and you may start to feel like you are loosing your patients, but hang tough...if you can get through this short time of learning, you will forever be grateful and the next 12 –15 years with your dog will be that much easier, especially if this will be a dog that travels with you.

I remember with one of my dogs, he was learning to be in his crate, and I called my neighbors and told them not to fret, we were “Crate Training” and the puppy was fine...they laughed and said no problem; we will just turn up the radio for a bit. They were all dog owners too and appreciated the communication as to what was going on.

So the puppy has been fed, watered and is due for a rest in its crate. You have a few things to do, such as vacuum, dust, scrub the floor mow the grass, trim the hedge and you don’t need puppies help. Good time to put him/her into its crate and let it have a rest.

Putting the puppy into its crate should NEVER EVER be a punishment, it is meant to be a pleasant place to be and you should NEVER scold the puppy and force it into its crate and sound angry and lock it up.

You can take a treat or a toy and encourage puppy to go into the crate on its own. Some gentle persuasion may be needed for the first while but he will soon learn that good things happen when he/she goes in it, maybe a treat, a car ride, or just some much needed quiet time. You will be able to NAME this action as well...I tell my dogs to “KENNEL UP” and they can’t wait to get into their crates, where ever they are, because around here it means a treat, and/or a car ride.

REMEMBER the crate is NEVER used for punishment. This does not mean that if the puppy has done wrong that you can’t put it in the crate for a while, but it should not be scolded, smacked, rough handled yelled at and then put in there. Use it as more of a “TIME OUT” for the puppy/dog.

An example would maybe be...puppy has destroyed your shoes, your fault for leaven them their but the puppy decided if they are out they must be something I can have. Your angry, and

you need to clean up the mess and calm down. You take the puppy to the crate, gently put him/her into the crate and shut the door. No comments needed. Walk away and calm yourself down. Take a look at some sale flyers and see when the next shoe sale is. Had you caught the puppy in the act, you would have removed the shoe, told him/her NO! and gave them a toy of theirs to play with.

Most likely you will find it hard to get your puppy in the crate for the first while, hard to listen to, but whatever you do, if you are certain that the puppy does not need anything, does not have to go to the bathroom, is not hurt... you MUST not open that door as long as the puppy is making a fuss be that whine, bark, scratch at the door, jump at the door etc. NO matter how long it takes. They must settle down and relax before that door will be opened.

If you do, the puppy will soon figure out, if I keep up this fussing, they are sure to come and let me out. You can reassure the puppy, simply by having a calm energy, but don't sit at the crate and say things like "its ok baby, you're all right" this will only encourage the behavior.

Once the puppy has stopped fussing, you can let it out, but only if you have been able to count to about 30 with no fussing. If puppy gets out and starts jumping up and all over you, discourage the jumping, say nothing remain in a calm energy and don't reward the "jumping" by paying any attention. Once puppy settles and sits nicely you can give pup a pet!

If its morning and the puppy has been very good all night and it wakes up fussing, it NEEDS to go out to the bathroom, as I said above, nothing comes first at this point, just the pup, so get it outside before it has an accident and praise it when it goes outside before coming in.

Use the crate, when you need some time to do some errands, clean up the house, when company is over, so the puppy learns it is not always to be WITH everyone, (although company is a great socializing tool...so let it come out and play for a little while).

You will soon have a happy puppy/dog, when as soon as the crate door is open, they are in it looking for a treat or a ride or just sensing that you are happy with how well pup listened. . :O)

#### Part 4 Obedience Training

I have added this paragraph into my booklet just recently. It is moreso on behavior than obedience, but I truly believe that if you can shape your dogs behavior, obedience will be a breeze. I could get busy and type out a whole lot of information I have learnt over the past couple of years of watching Cesar Millan, but truthfully, my best advice it that you commit to watching a minimum of one week of his program, and you will have an enormous amount of information that will give you and your dog a balanced start to life and this in turn, will make owning your new puppy and doing formal training with your puppy a very simple task. I have told many people to watch the show, many say they do, but they still do not understand applying the techniques so really ask yourself as you watch the program, do I understand this well enough to apply it to my new pup and our home. Make sure you "get it" before you pup arrives, so you can properly apply the methods you will be taught for many canine behaviors. I use these methods myself, and they work, so give it a try. Its what I am going to recommend if you call me anyways. :O)

Obedience is one of the most complex subjects out there. Some 30 years ago I started working with my first German Shepherd, got hooked into training, and soon became an instructor myself.

The methods used back then, although not as archaic as some before my time are much stricter than what we see being used today, known as positive reinforcement.

I think that most puppy's/dogs will do very well with positive reinforcement training. They grow to be happy working dogs, whether working means, going for a walk, playing Frisbee, or ball or whatever activity you do with your dog... Dog Shows, obedience trials, Agility or Personal Protection. They seem to do it with a happier attitude and more confidence.

There is bait training, clicker and bait training, correction and praise training...all offering different types of positive reinforcement training.

My suggestion to you is to find an obedience club that offers just this type of training. Ask if you can attend some classes prior to booking your dog in. Tell them that you want to see how they present their class and how the people and dogs are doing.

It is best, if you can, to attend a class that has just started, and then go back towards the end of the training session, say in 4-5 weeks and see how they have improved. If the dogs are happy, if the owners are happy, you may have found your place to train your dog.

Most clubs are very good about having you come and watch a couple of classes to assess the situation, if they say NO...don't go there.

Check out more than one club, it will give you something to compare too. Look at all methods of training. I believe that ALMOST ALL methods are useful, sometimes a dog required different methods for different exercises, such as the sit or the down. Each can be taught using any of the three methods above, but your dog may be a bit stubborn on the down and the instructor needs to be able to adjust the method to the dog. A good instructor should have no trouble incorporating different methods IF NECESSARY to obtain the end result. All ending in a positive experience, and lots of PRAISE.

I have also used pinch/prong collars, on some of my dogs. These are not torture devices. They are simply another method of training that if used properly, can help achieve the goals that we want to meet.

These should only be used under the proper instruction. IF not used properly, they can make a bad situation worse. They are NOT for all dogs, or all situations.

Socialization for your new puppy or dog is very important, make certain the club you join will take the time to help socialize your new puppy to people and other dogs.

**WE DO NOT AGREE WITH A PUPPY CLASS CONSISTING OF ALL PUPS TAKEN OFF LEASH AND A BIG FREE FOR ALL TAKING PLACE WITH BIG AND SMALL PUPS AND ALL PEOPLE IN THE CLASS ENCOURAGED TO GO AROUND AND PET ALL THE PUPS. PLEASE DO NOT ATTEND A CLASS THAT IS JUST A BIG PLAY SESSION WITH NO STRUCTURE. THIS COULD BE THE START OF MANY PROBLEMS IF THERE IS NO SUPERVISION BY THE INSTRUCTOR. THERE IS NO WAY FOR AN**

**INSTRUCTOR TO PROPERLY DEAL WITH ANY DOMINANCE OR SUBMISSIVE PROBLEMS IN A SITUATION WHERE ALL ARE LEFT TO RUN AND PLAY IN A BIG ROOM.**

**Part 5  
Vaccinations**

This is another interesting topic. I won't go into details, I will simply tell you what we do here in regards to vaccinations for our puppy's/dogs.

First set of shots are given at 7 weeks, then again at 11 weeks and then the third booster is given at 15-16 weeks, at which time, we will give the rabies vaccination, in most cases.

We vaccinate again at 1 year of age, and then I will go into a 2-3 year rotation.

Depending on what I am doing with my dogs, and how exposed they would be to possible rabies or other canine diseases, I may choose to vaccinate every 2. It depends on the dog, what activities I do with the dog and where.

We de-worm our puppies at the same intervals as the vaccinations, however at the 1-year stage, I de-worm every 6-8 months.

This is something to discuss with your veterinarian.

Last Mountain Kennels does NOT agree with taking your puppy out in a public area until it has received two series of vaccinations. This is usually completed by 11 weeks of age with a 2 week window after for the vaccination to be active in the body. Talk to your vet, if there is an epidemic of parvo or other canine disease in your area stay home till all vaccinations are completed.

**PLEASE DO NOT PUT YOUR PUPPY AT RISK BY TAKING IT OUT IN A PUBLIC AREA UNTIL SUCH TIME AS IT HAS RECEIVED PROPER VACCINATIONS.**

I hope that the information above will be of some help. It has worked for me for years. If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to email me. This really does work the best for me, then I can reply when it is convenient. :O)

Hope this information helps get you started....Wanda

***QUALITY GERMAN SHEPHERD DOGS ARE PRODUCED BY  
RESPONSIBLE BREEDERS***



***DEVELOPED BY DEDICATED OWNERS***