



Pembroke Welsh Corgi
Pets by Paulette

MISSION STATEMENT

The American Kennel Club® is dedicated to upholding the integrity of its Registry, promoting the sport of purebred dogs and breeding for type and function. Founded in 1884, the AKC® and its affiliated organizations advocate for the purebred dog as a family companion, advance canine health and well-being, work to protect the rights of all dog owners and promote responsible dog ownership.



AMERICAN
KENNEL CLUB®

8051 Arco Corporate Drive, Suite 100 • Raleigh, NC 27617-3390
Customer Service: (919) 233-9767
e-mail: info@akc.org



twitter @akcdoglovers

www.akc.org

GBDR07 (3/11)

Keeping Your Dog Fit & Trim



Welsh Springer Spaniel
©AKC



AMERICAN
KENNEL CLUB®

Keeping Your Dog Fit & Trim • Keeping Your Dog Fit & Trim

DIETARY CONCERNS

Don't be fooled by the myth that if you want your dog to be big and strong, you must feed it lots of food. Each breed has different nutritional requirements. If you're not sure how much food to give your dog, check with a breeder or veterinarian.

If you think your dog needs to lose a few pounds, slowly cut down its caloric intake. "Crash diets" will only lead to nutritional deficiencies and are very unhealthy.

If you think your dog is not receiving enough vitamins and nutrients, consider adding a vitamin or mineral supplement to its diet. Consult your veterinarian.

Contrary to popular belief, dogs do not need variety in their diet. Use the same type of food every day, and if you want to change the brand of dog food, do so gradually. Always keep in mind that feeding your dog table scraps can lead to an unbalanced diet.

Bad breath is a common problem with dogs. It can be created from food, tartar deposits on teeth, or from digestive problems. Feed your dog dry food and tartar-fighting treats to help reduce plaque.

Brush your dog's teeth once or twice a week with a toothbrush and dog toothpaste. (Note: Never use human toothpaste.) You can also use a moistened gauze pad.

GENERAL NUTRITION

Just like humans, it is unhealthy for a dog to be overweight. Excess weight endangers the heart, lungs and joints and makes a dog more susceptible to other ailments.

An irregular eating schedule can affect your dog's digestive system and ultimately cause chronic digestive disorders. Digestive problems can usually be improved by a change in diet.

If your dog's feeding schedule is suddenly changed, don't be surprised if it still craves a meal at its old feeding time. Your dog is conditioned to expect a meal at a specific time, so biologically its internal alarm clock still produces a hunger drive.

Dogs don't easily adjust to a time zone change or to daylight saving time. To prepare your dog for a time change, gradually adjust its eating schedule over a few weeks.

It is important that your dog's water and food bowls are kept in the same place every day. If you have more than one dog, make sure each dog has its own food and water bowl.

Don't worry about your dog getting hunger pangs between meals. Your dog only needs one or two meals daily, if it is fed on a regimented schedule and receives a balanced diet.

Don't leave your dog's food out longer than 30 minutes. If your dog has walked away from its bowl, it has probably had enough to eat. Discard the remaining food, since exposed dog food is unsanitary.

www.akc.org

www.akc.org

STARTING AN EXERCISE ROUTINE

Exercise can improve your dog's physical and mental health, but it is important to research the best exercise routine for you and your dog.

Consider your dog's age, health, condition and current activity level. Check with your veterinarian before beginning anything vigorous.

Make sure to keep your dog on a leash at all times when you are exercising in public. You don't want your dog to get distracted by cars, people or other dogs.

Letting your dog out in your backyard doesn't qualify as exercise; however, a good game of fetch may do the trick.

When exercising your dog, try to keep it on a grassy or earth surface. A hot sidewalk or sharp gravel surface is hard on paws. And bring along clean water and a portable bowl should your dog need a drink.

If your dog begins to pant too rapidly, STOP exercising. Dogs can't speak to tell you when they have had enough. Dogs can suffer from heat stroke, so you need to make sure your dog is not overexerting itself.

Pay special attention to your dog's footpads and toenails. If there are any abrasions or cuts, stop exercising until they have completely healed.

ACTIVITY PROGRAMS

Walking or jogging, particularly on a soft surface, is a great form of exercise. But keep in mind that too much can be strenuous, and your dog can tire easily. Start your dog with short walks each day to get it accustomed to the sand.

When starting your dog on any exercise program, begin slowly to build its endurance level; too vigorous a workout may cause injury.

If you would like to start jogging with your dog, begin with short distances. Forcing your dog to keep up to your jogging pace may cause it to run at an unnatural gait. A pace other than what is natural for your dog (slower or faster) could cause cramps and muscle spasms.

Exercise is still important during the winter months when bad weather doesn't always permit outdoor activities. If it is too cold outside to exercise your dog, develop fun-filled indoor activities that are suitable for the size of the dog and the amount of space you have available.

Swimming is another good type of exercise, but don't let your dog overdo it. It will be using new muscles and may tire quickly. Remember: Never leave your dog unattended in the water. You should always be in a position to help your dog out of the water; even a strong swimmer can drown, if exhausted.

KEEP IN MIND

When preparing a diet and exercise plan for your dog, keep in mind three stages of development:

- Puppies eat more and are highly active.
- Adult dogs have normal routines and food intake.
- Older dogs might require special diets and limited exercise.

A veterinarian should always be consulted to discuss the appropriate diet and fitness plan for your dog.

Be sure your dog is registered with the AKC. Your dog's registration supports invaluable canine health research that helps dogs live longer, healthier lives. It promotes responsible dog ownership and programs that make communities better places for dogs, their owners and neighbors. When you register your purebred dog with the not-for-profit AKC®, you permanently record your dog in purebred dog history. And you give your dog – and yourself – the chance to participate in exciting events such as agility, obedience, retrieving trials, dogs shows and more. Contact AKC to find out more about how to register your dog.

