

Whippet Puppy Care



First and foremost, your whippet puppy needs **YOU** ... you cannot spoil a whippet with too much affection and attention. Your whippet will live a long, healthy life in your companionship as your loving family member given proper nutrition, exercise, training, and socialization. There is certainly no one right way to raise and train a puppy. Be open to suggestions and ongoing education. Here are a few tips we have provided to new homes to help the transition go smoothly--- ENJOY!

Socialization It is important to introduce your whippet to your everyday routine as early as possible. If you spend time carpooling, running errands and such, include your puppy in your day-to-day activities. Your whippet will enjoy meeting new people, seeing new sights, and learning about your world. Most importantly, your puppy will be establishing a bond with you by spending time together.

Your whippet should meet young and old. Instruct children to be gentle and supervise their activities with your puppy. For some reason children and toddlers in particular seem fascinated with the eyes! Just take care to ensure a safe experience for both puppy and child.

Once your puppy has approval from your vet, you can begin to explore the great out-of-doors and meet other four-legged creatures. Always introduce your whippet to new activities with enthusiasm. If you are hesitant, your whippet will pick up on your attitude. Take extra care in introducing your whippet to other breeds. You need to be calm and slow in your approach and ensure that the new dog is not going to react adversely to your whippet. Unlike their two legged servants, dogs typically sniff their newfound friends' rears as a way of getting to know one another.

A puppy class or very basic obedience class will provide you with opportunities to socialize your whippet to other breeds. Be sure your puppy is up-to-date on shots before enrolling in any group classes. Spending time with your whippet will be very rewarding and will help establish your lasting friendship and bond, while also establishing your position as the alpha dog. Remember that the dog is a pack animal and you represent his new family.

A word of caution about large breeds and your whippet. Take care not to let them run free in open areas together. This can easily lead to accidents. When Snickers was a youngster, we visited our dear friends who owned several breeds. Their greyhounds and Snicks were having a wonderful time playing together in the yard. In no time, they began to pick up the pace and Snickers collided with one of the greyhounds breaking several ribs. Fortunately, she was willing to get back into running mode within six months of the collision. We know of several whippets and sighthounds that refuse to run, especially with other dogs, once they experience an injury or collision. Be cautious!

Mealtime Your puppy's proper diet is critical for healthy growth and development. Most dog foods are carefully balanced to contain all the essential ingredients your dog will need to grow strong and healthy. We recommend you provide your puppy with (Food Brand) for the first 6 to 9 months. It is high in protein and balanced with essential elements. You can purchase it in most major pet chains (PetSmart) but not typically in the grocery store. The food store brands may be full of more crude fiber and byproducts. If you do not have access to a pet store, you can use Purina O.N.E., which can be purchased at most food chains.

Compare ingredients and make wise decisions based on information you learn from others and consultation from your vet. Consider avoiding foods supplemented with high levels of protein as your puppy matures. And if you determine you want to provide a raw or cooked diet, discuss your decision with others who have tried and true experiences to share.

The key to picking a food is finding one your puppy likes. The pups have all been started on (Food Brand). Regardless of the brand you choose, be sure it contains the correct

amount of protein and fat to meet your puppy's growing needs and to insure a nice, soft coat. If you have a picky eater, We recommend a heaping spoonful of wet canned food (e.g., Pedigree Chopped Diet), just enough to flavor the kibble. Otherwise, add a splash of warm water to the dry kibble to make gravy for the morning and evening meals. Finally, once a day include ½ teaspoon of *Source Plus*, a natural sea-kelp product, to help maintain your puppy's dark pigment. This can be purchased from KV Vet Supply Company (800-423-8211) for under \$15 and will last you for 6 months.

Feed your puppy three times a day until the age of four to six months. Combine 1/2 cup kibble with wet food in the morning and evening and offer ½ cup dry kibble midday. Only add the 1/2tsp. *Source* once daily. After 10 to 15 minutes, remove the meal even if the pup does not consume everything. If you have other dogs, monitor your whippet to ensure they are getting their full meal. Provide separate eating areas for each dog. They learn quickly where to expect their bowl. We do not support self-feeding schedules where the food is left out for the dog to come and go and eat as they please. This makes for very difficult elimination training and if you have multiple dogs, a possible recipe for disaster with some dogs feeding well and others quite undernourished.

Older puppies can be fed two meals a day. At about 9 to 12 months, you may wish to feed your whippet once a day; however, We strongly recommend you stick with a twice daily schedule to regulate elimination patterns and insure adequate intake. Try and feed at the same time each day to establish routines. Full grown whippets average between 1.5 (female) to 2.5 cups (larger male) dry kibble per day. We prefer to feed our whippets in the morning and early evening, but we have a set routine that ensures they are pottied and ready to stay indoors during the day without having accidents in the house. Others prefer to feed their whippets in the evening or morning. Just establish a routine and stick with it!

You may wish to treat your puppy with an occasional dog biscuit ("cookie"), but be sure you don't overdo the treats. You don't want to fill your puppy up with treats to the point where regular meals are not consumed, and you don't want to put extra pounds on your dog. Additionally, we do not recommend feeding table scraps from your meals to

young puppies. Not only does this increase begging at your mealtimes, it also may cause stomach upset and your puppy may eat less of their nutritional kibble during their regular mealtimes.

Please avoid pig ears, hoofs, pressed rawhide (looks like it has bits to it, as opposed to a solid rawhide bone), and the like as they tend to cause diarrhea. You may occasionally give your whippet regular large rawhide bones that are American-made products. There is some concern about the processing of the South American rawhide and so we avoid these products. For puppies with strong chew drive, as well as for teething, rawhide chips may prevent your best shoes from being destroyed! We have even been known to give ice cubes to relieve gum discomfort in older puppies.

Elimination & Crates Your puppy's elimination patterns are very much tied to their eating and sleeping habits. Keep in mind the digestive track works on a twenty-four hour cycle. Once you have established a feeding routine, your whippet will have more predictable elimination habits. Your whippet prefers a clean "den" and will be easily housebroken if you are consistent in your approach.

We highly recommend the use of a crate to aid in housebreaking a puppy. Your crate should be large enough to accommodate your adult whippet. A 300-400 Vari-Kennel or medium- to large-sized metal crate will be fine. Whippets typically prefer a slightly smaller crate. Be sure they have enough room to turn around easily as a mature adult.

Make the crate the *best* place to be! Have a blanket and a toy in the crate. Always give your puppy a cookie for going into the crate: make it a fun and safe place. Never use the crate as a punishment. It should become his den and will be a good place for you to leave your puppy for short periods when you have to be away from your home. This will help you avoid having your puppy chew up your lovely sofa or Great Auntie's antique rug, or worse.yet, your favorite Gucci sandals or your one and only 'lucky' show lead!

Some whippets take easily to crate training and seldom whine, while others are more difficult to train. You should be able to get your puppy to stay quietly and peacefully in their crate for reasonable periods of time. If you are consistent in your approach and

make it an inviting place to go by treating the puppy when they get in, your puppy will accept the crate as a normal part of their daily routine.

Between twelve weeks and four months, you can crate the puppy for up to 3-4 hours at a time. Puppies from 4 to 8 months can handle crating for up to 6 hours. Older puppies and adults can last for 8 to 9 hours during the day, provided they are receiving adequate exercise and socialization. Of course when the puppy is not crated, provide plenty of exercise, play, and interaction. Whippets enjoy vigorous exercise and play, after which they are content to sleep for several hours.

Once your puppy is reliably housebroken, it is possible to leave it in a room with a secure safety gate (not a closed door!). This allows additional area for your whippet to move about, rest, and stretch. Be sure the floor is a safe material for potential accidents and avoid carpeted floors for loose younger dogs. Leave lots of bedding, blankets, and round doggie beds in sunny spots where your whippet will be content and safe for hours. Just be sure to maintain a potty schedule (even when you are home) and don't expect your puppy to manage for 8 hours without needing to eliminate. If you don't have to crate because you are home all day you may still find the crate helpful in establishing early patterns and then, even better that your companion is free to be with you with maturity!

To housebreak your whippet puppy, always take them out immediately following meals, upon awakening from naps and overnight, as well as after active play times together. If your puppy starts to sniff the floor, paces, or appears restless, better head for the door! Praise lavishly when he potties outside. Only discipline puppy for an accident in the house if you witness the occurrence. Pick him up, shake gently, and say "NO" in a scruffy, deep, loud voice. Immediately take him outside and praise highly if he goes there. You cannot punish after-the-fact and please, do not rub his nose in it.

Don't expect your puppy to be able to hold it more than 2.5 to 3 hours when being active. If you forget the routine and puppy has an accident, do not punish- be extra enthusiastic with your praise the next time he gets it right outside.

For stool or vomit, carpets can be cleaned with *Resolve Carpet Cleaner*. For urine accidents, it is important to get the smells out of the carpet to avoid repeat productions. There are several commercial products available. Blot up the spot with paper or a towel before you apply the solution. If puppy can smell the spot, it will be a signal that this is a place to relieve the bladder, remark the spot, which is exactly what you are trying to avoid. A small vacuum steam cleaner is an excellent item to purchase. It sucks the stain and fluid from your carpet and can be followed with a product that eliminates the odor from your carpet to avoid repeat performances!

Routine Vet Care Your puppy has been wormed and received its first vaccines. Be sure to keep a record of your future shots and vet visits. You should take your puppy for its first check up within a week of taking it home to allow you to introduce your whippet puppy to your vet and to provide you with the assurance that your puppy has come to you in good health.

It is your responsibility to continue with the inoculation schedule under your vet's supervision and guidance. Follow your local state guidelines for Rabies vaccines. Your dog should receive an annual examination for parasites, heartworm, and annual Distemper and Parvovirus vaccines. We recommend you treat your dogs monthly with Heartworm prevention after first discussing this with your vet. A 6-month treatment will be given to you by your vet and is in the form of a tasty morsel that can be given to your dog once a month as a treat or in your puppy's food dish. Also discuss products that protect your whippet from ticks and Lyme's disease with your vet if you live or travel in areas with incidence.

If you purchased your whippet with the requirement to spay or neuter (limited registration), you should have this procedure done at about 6 to 9 months for bitches (prior to their first season) and prior to one year of age for a dog. Your limited registration requires that your puppy be spayed or neutered to meet your contractual commitment and to receive your full AKC registration.

Have your whippet tattooed and/or micro-chipped for identification purposes. You can often go to a local dog show or match for tattooing. Tattooing can be done after 6 to 8 months, and I suggest you use your dog's AKC Registration Number as the identifier. Your vet may be able micro-chip your dog or recommend someone in your area. It is suggested by some providers that you wait to chip until the dog is at least 10-12 months old. Proponents report the chip is less likely to migrate with the growth of your puppy.

Play, Exercise, Simple Commands, and Sleep Puppies are very much like babies. They play in bursts of activity and then nap a good deal of the day. Following periods of activity, they will be content to sleep during the day in their crates if you begin this training at an early age. If you work or stay at home, you may be able to train your whippet at an early age to nap in a small round bed at your side. Just remember, as soon as your puppy awakens, head for that special spot on the lawn!

Whippets love to chase moving objects- try a soft ball, flexible Frisbee (cloth), or other soft plush favorite toys. If you provide a treat when the puppy returns the thrown object to you, and offer lots of praise, you reinforce a fetch-type game. If you chase the whippet for the toy, that will be the game you establish. Hiding small pieces of cheese or biscuits can be fun for your puppy and child. We don't recommend lots of food-type bones, such as pig parts, or cornstarch bone products for your whippet.

On rainy days, you can throw a soft ball in the house for exercise and to release some energy. Do not leave toys with squeakies with your whippet unattended. It is very easy for them to tear open the toy and consume the squeaker. Use these toys with supervision. Large rawhides are preferable if you are leaving your whippet alone for an hour or more. Between 12 weeks and 5 months your whippet may need additional chew toys for teething.

Avoid tug of war games, as this encourages your puppy to hold onto objects that you later wish to have released. Teach the command "drop it" as you accept something from your whippet's mouth. Do not let your puppy teeth on you or children's hands, wrists, ankles,

etc. Use a firm tone and growly voice and say "NO" in a loud, low-pitched voice, removing the puppy from the scene of the crime. Consistent training will pay off in the end.

Obedience training is an excellent way to build a long-lasting relationship of mutual respect with your dog. If nothing else, it helps you socialize your whippet and learn to read each other's signals. The four commands you should teach your whippet for your safety and his include: **sit, down, come, and stay**. These simple basic training commands can be vital in saving your whippet's life if he takes off unexpectedly. Enroll in a basic obedience class as soon as your puppy is up-to-date on his vaccinations.

Your puppy will nap much of the day as long as he is receiving regular exercise and attention. Naps should take place in the crate at a young age to promote the use of the "den" as a safe environment. As your whippet grows older and has greater bladder capacity, you may opt to use a doggie bed for part of the day and on weekends if you are home. Whippets love to curl up in a round bed, on your couch or favorite chair, and most of all in your bed under the covers. There is no better bed dog than a whippet. Since we are gone most of the day, we enjoy our evenings with our dogs, and they sleep with various family members every night.

Leash Training Train on the lead several times a day for short periods indoors (bad weather days) and outside. Raw or cooked hotdogs make great lures for the untrained whippet to move along with you. Plenty of praise using a high-pitched happy voice reinforced with a food morsel will encourage your pup along. Gradually reduce the treats as the training takes hold. If he pulls away and resists, do not pull back- simply praise the behavior you are trying to reinforce.

Please use collars and leashes that are wide enough to prevent trauma to the neck and windpipe. *Never* tie your whippet up outside or leave them on a chain unattended. They can easily run to the end of the line and snap their neck.

Lure Training As sighthounds, whippets are typically naturally very keen for the lure. It never hurts to encourage their enthusiasm! Start early with a white plastic

bag, fake fur tail, or old white sock and make a game of your puppy chasing the waving object kept low to the floor or ground, rewarding the behavior you seek. A whip or pole with twine with a white trash bag ('lure') can be a great training device and will provide great exercise and exertion for your puppy. As with all training, moderation is the key to your success. Shorter play times (10-15 minutes) twice daily are great fun for the whippet and will not extinguish their interest or natural drive. This is special time shared together that should not be overdone. Encourage more chasing of the low, jumping lure as opposed to catching. Do not put food in the lure bag as this often reinforces dogs grabbing and holding the bag at the end of a course.

Like show training, be sure you make lure training a fun game. Take your young puppy to trials early on to watch other whippets chasing the "bunny". You can start to run your whippet in ASFA and AKC at the age of one year old. Practice your puppy at 6 to 9 months at field trials for short straight stretches adding turns only as your puppy matures. Practice is often offered at ASFA and AKC trials following the Saturday afternoon Best in Field run as long as the sponsoring Club's equipment and the weather cooperate.

Competitive running is not recommended before a year, as your dog is still maturing and bones are growing and muscles are developing. We typically wait until our youngsters are at least 14-16 months old and have had plenty of single and partner practices before launching our whippets in competitive flights. A proper diet and routine exercise will help prepare your dog for competition. Your dog must be crate trained and a good traveler if you hope to head for the fields.

Show Prospect It is strongly recommended that you enroll in a handling class with your whippet puppy. Even if you are an expert handler, the class will help socialize your whippet to other breeds and allow him to become accustomed to the sights and sounds of dog shows. Additionally, you benefit from participating in local matches, which gives you and your whippet confidence and familiarity with the show routine before the "real thing".

If your whippet is to be shown by handlers or others, be sure you train it to 'free stack' as well as to hold its stand position. We cannot stress enough how much you and your whippet will both benefit from handling classes taken together and competing in matches before going 'live'. Practice moving the puppy on a loose show lead at a trot. Be sure to make it fun, fun, fun! We are happy to provide you with advice and support on training your puppy for the show ring but nothing is better than getting involved in a handling class to socialize your puppy and help you with the basics.

Try various show leads to see what works best for you. Some prefer a wide Resco while others prefer a small nylon choke collar with lead. See what works best for your puppy and practice coming and going and gaiting often on a loose lead, making a fun game of your training sessions. We do not recommend teaching your show puppy to sit at an early age while you are trying to establish a natural free baiting stack.

Practice outside first (weather permitting) and then move to an indoor ring. Have various people serve as the judge, both men and women. Let them examine the puppy's bite with and without your help exposing the teeth. Offer your puppy lots of food and praise on the table making sure the activity is fun and rewarding for you both. Our puppies enjoy licking a squeeze cheese can as we practice placing their feet for the table examination. Attitude is so important in the whippet ring. This should be a positive shared experience with you bonding with your puppy and having a great time together.

It is not necessary to excessively chalk or "make up" your whippet show puppy. We typically trim the hairline under the loin for a neat, clean finish. You can opt to trim the whiskers or you may leave them natural. We feel certain they serve a purpose for running and know for a fact they are useful in any dog finding their way around in the dark or in close quarters. Some trim inside the ears for a clean finish. We recommend you trim or grind the nails short for showing. Coursing whippets benefit from some nail length for gripping the ground and turning.

Routine Grooming The best part about whippets is the ease of managing their coats and grooming needs. They are very clean animals and because they spend much

time indoors, rarely have an odor. You can brush your dog's coat weekly with a soft brush to remove loose hairs. We typically bathe our whippets every 4 to 6 weeks unless the weather or outdoor play demands cleanup sooner.

If you show your dog you will likely be bathing him before each confirmation event. We recommend either *Shimmer Lights* (Clairol) for white coats or a dog shampoo product or a mild shampoo (any baby brand) for other color coats. Avoid frequent baths with harsh, drying shampoos.

You should brush your puppy's teeth at least weekly with a dog toothpaste brand. Do not use human paste. Start early to get the puppy used to having their mouth touched. You can also use dampened gauze or a washcloth to wipe away plaque and buildup. Your puppy's teeth should be scaled by your vet once the teeth show signs of plaque build-up.

Nails should be trimmed every week with a special nail clipper or ground with a Drumel Mini-Mate to avoid toe injuries and long toenails. Be sure you have KwikStop on hand (KV Vet Supply) to make a paste with water, in case you accidentally cut the quick and need to stop the bleeding. Trim small amounts at a time at a slight angle and avoid getting too close to the quick. If you choose to use a grinder you will need to slowly acclimate your puppy to the sound at an early age over several short sessions. For the first 8 weeks of your puppy's life, nail clippers have been used. Your puppy is used to being held on its back in our laps and clipped or drumeled on a weekly basis so keep up the routine for best results.

Car Travel Whippets are typically good travelers, if you start early and make it a pleasant experience for you and your puppy. Be sure you go for short fun trips to the park, a school field, or other places your pup enjoys so the car is considered a reward. Don't expect the puppy to be happy if car travel equates to a trip to the vet!

Ideally, the puppy should travel in the car in a crate. It is safest for you and the whippet in an accident and prevents having a loose dog at the scene of a fender bender. If you find your puppy shows signs of nausea or anxiety (drooling, panting, vomiting), you may give the puppy meclazine (*Bovine* or *Dramamine*) at least one half to one

hour before traveling. For young puppies, give ½ tablet and for puppies over 6 to 8 months, use a whole tablet. The dose typically last for up to 24 hours so you can leave early and return home in the same day on one dosage schedule.

After several fun trips free from nausea and vomiting your puppy will associate a car ride with a good time. If you expect a long trip or a bumpy route, you may want to dose your dog to help prevent motion sickness. Avoid feeding a large meal right before traveling as this tends to result in stomach upset.