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Developed by Veterinary Surgeon

*John Burns*  
BVMS MRCVS

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# PUPPY *handbook*

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THE BEGINNERS GUIDE TO PUPPY CARE

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WRITTEN IN  
ASSOCIATION WITH  
**A.P.D.T**  
(ASSOCIATION OF PET DOG TRAINERS).  
**APDT.CO.UK**

# BUYING *a puppy*





# The best circumstances in which to buy a puppy:

**Home reared:**

Where the puppy has been exposed to human handling along with a variety of everyday sights, sounds and smells.

**Healthy age:**

No younger than 8 weeks of age.

**Temperament:**

The puppy's parents should be observed, especially the mother who should be interacting with her litter.

**The new home:**

Should be as similar as possible to the old home to minimise stress.

***Most of these points are common sense but people still buy puppies from a pet shop, and there is a chance that the puppy may be ill. This could lead to problems later on.***

There are arguments for and against the BEST age to separate a puppy from its mother.

Puppies bought from pet shops or puppy farms are likely to have problems as adults, as are puppies who have suffered illness. They suffer from fear induced aggression or excessive barking. This is a result of forced isolation, lack of early socialisation with humans and a stressed mother.

Puppies that leave their mother at a relatively late time such as 16 – 24 weeks can show an increased fear of other dogs and other environmental stimuli.

This may be due to the isolation experienced in a kennel-reared upbringing or a lack of stimuli.

Puppies removed at 6 weeks showed a loss of appetite, increased distress and a susceptibility to illness.



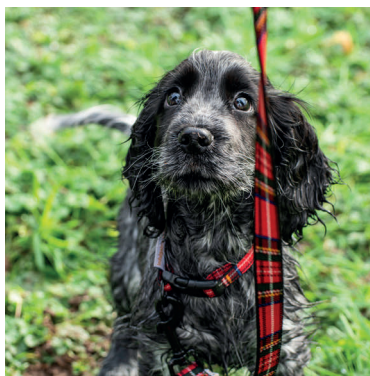
The optimum time for leaving the litter is 8-10 weeks when the puppy's instinct to make friends with strangers overcomes its natural wariness. This is why this time is advocated as the ideal time to remove the puppy from its mother and littermates to a new home.

# LOOKING AFTER *your new puppy*

***Being taken away from its mother and siblings into a strange environment where nothing is familiar is stressful and frightening for a puppy.***

Offer your new puppy food at feeding time but don't be surprised if (on this occasion) your puppy doesn't eat because they are too stressed. If your puppy does eat, the food (added to the stress the puppy is already experiencing) could lead to an upset in the digestive system. This can be avoided by giving smaller amounts of food for the first 48 hours.

Spend the first few days with your puppy, welcoming and showing the puppy where they can eat, sleep and go to the toilet. Try to keep visitors and well-wishers to a minimum in order to reduce potential stress.




Puppies go through many changes in the first 12 months of their lives and most of their learning and behavioural patterns are learnt in this time. Puppies need to be habituated (get used) to various stimuli that they will encounter in everyday life.

Socialisation is a period that lasts from 3 - 20 weeks (depending on the dog) and is an optimum time for your puppy to learn about their new world.

Create a  
positive  
experience  
at all times

With puppies, it is best to gradually introduce them to as many new things in their environment before the puppy reaches 16/20 weeks of age. It is important not to 'flood' the puppy with all these new experiences, as this can be overwhelming and will be detrimental to future development and learning.

Remember, your puppy has choices and if we positively manage interactions in their new environment and guide them to make the right choices (which we can heavily praise and reward). This enables you to set the puppy up



for success at all times and for the puppy to grow into a confident dog.

Start house training as soon as the puppy comes home. The key to house training is to be consistent and take the puppy out often so they have more opportunity to get it right. Yes, that means you have to go with them, so that you are ready to praise and reward them.

The puppy's bladder is very small and he/she is just beginning to control the muscles which operate it. As a last resort, provide a puppy pad at a doorway that will be used, if you're not quick enough to open the door. Praise and reward the puppy for going in the appropriate place.

The earlier the training the better, even if it's just the basics.

Most puppies enjoy their own 'space' from time to time. Provide a warm, comfortable, draught free bed area, such as a puppy crate where your puppy can go, feel safe and not be disturbed. Always provide fresh drinking water.

Enrichment provided in the form of toys and chews should be made available for your puppy.

# VACCINATING *your new puppy*

Vaccination is important to prevent your dog from becoming ill from infectious diseases.

***The micro-organisms that cause disease can be widespread in certain areas of the U.K. All unvaccinated dogs are at risk from canine distemper, parvovirus, leptospirosis, infectious canine hepatitis and kennel cough.***

**Vaccination** stimulates the body's own defence system to produce protective antibodies in the blood. This protection is called immunity.

A course of vaccinations will be needed for your puppy. These are usually given at around 9 and 12 weeks of age.

## **Worming**

Keeping on top of worming is also important. Your puppy may already have worms. These are passed from its mother. Worming should be done every month until the puppy

is 6 months old and then every 3-6 months thereafter. This will depend on the product you use. It is best to speak to your vet to ensure your puppy is fully covered.

## **Feeding**

A high quality, highly digestible food that contains a controlled level of protein and fat such as Burns, will enable your puppy to grow steadily whilst maintaining good bone health. Rapid growth can cause health problems in later life.

Try not to fill your puppy with too many treats on top of the daily food allowance. Take whatever treats are given out of the daily allowance. Using your pup's normal diet as a treat will be more than adequate at this stage.

Your puppy's diet will then not exceed its needs which can cause health problems and your puppy will not become fat.







### ***Exercise***

Give your puppy a balance of appropriate exercise (according to breed) and mental stimulation. Mental stimulation can come in the form of training, nose work and enrichment toys and games. These help to promote well-being and calm, relaxed behaviour while preventing boredom.

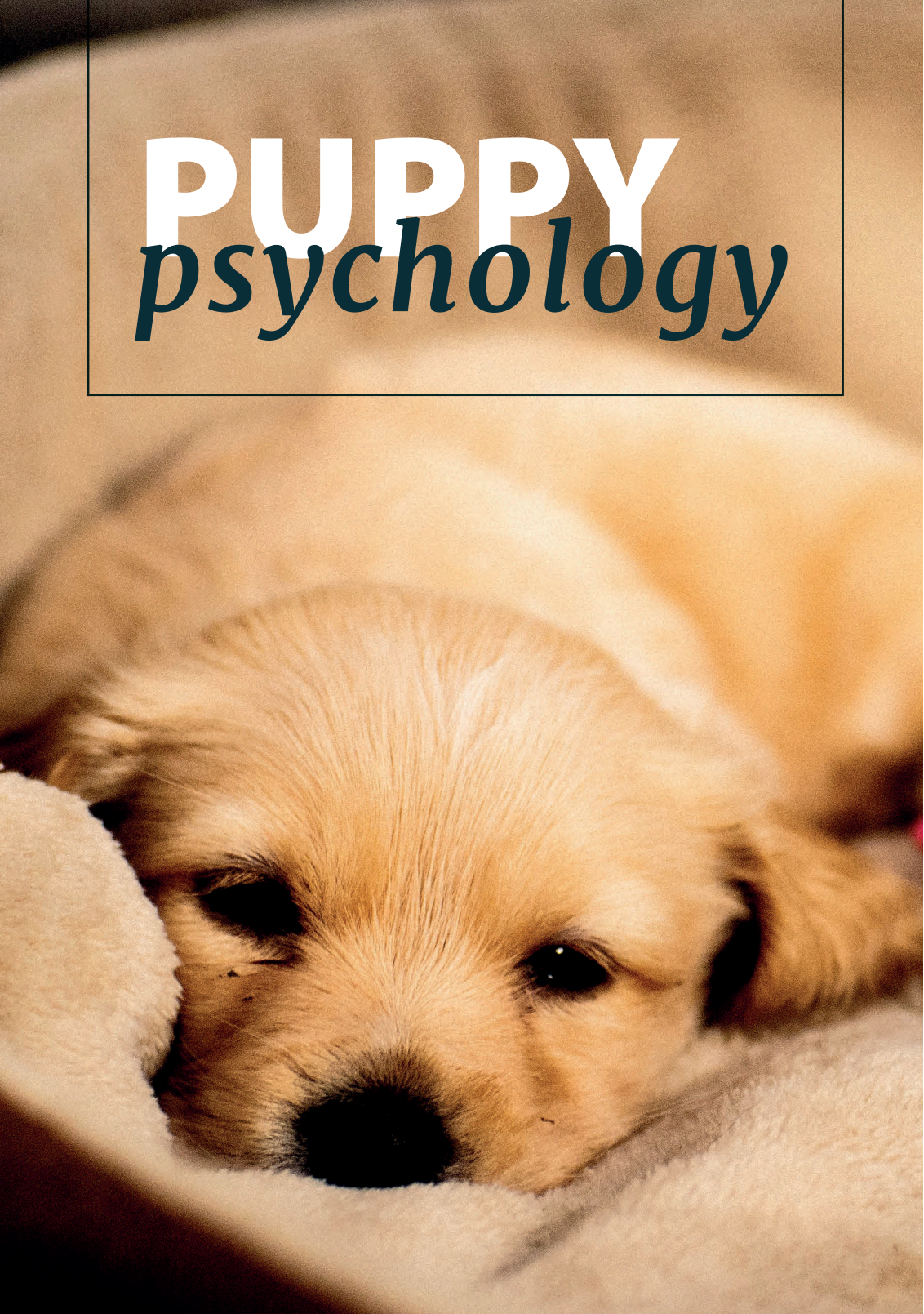
Be prepared to take your puppy out no matter what the weather but be aware that puppies get tired very quickly.

### ***Neutering***

Neutering should be considered if you are not planning on breeding from your dog. Neutering can alleviate many problems such as; roaming in male dogs, calling and spotting in the female dog and unwanted puppies.

Dogs can be castrated at around 9 months of age, but the later the better. Vets disagree about when to spay bitches but in most cases bitches are usually left to have their first season and then spayed. This can be any time from 6-12 months. The vets then advise spaying 3 months after the first season.

# PUPPY *psychology*





# The development stages of a puppy are...

## ***Prenatal Period – before birth.***

Adverse experiences for the pregnant mother may affect the behaviour of offspring. These include lack of balanced diet or a stressful experience such as an injury or accident.

## ***Neonatal Period – birth to 2 weeks.***

Constant human interference will interrupt the instinctive relationship between mother and puppy and can have a detrimental effect on the pup in later life. However, a puppy that has never had a human touch or external stimulation can grow up less confident and emotionally stable. The need for a happy balance is important if future stability is needed. The needs of a puppy at this stage are; food, warmth, rest, urination and defecation.

## ***Socialisation Period – 3 to 16 weeks.***

This is the period during which the puppy learns to interact with its littermates, mother, people and surroundings. This happens rapidly and is when responses are most readily acquired, and bonds are made. At this stage, environmental issues have the greatest effect on the behaviour in adult life. For example, traumatic experiences during the socialisation period may contribute to fearful behavioural problems in adulthood.

The more POSITIVE experiences the puppy encounters during this time, the more emotionally stable and resilient he/she will be as an adult.

It should be remembered that this can be a stressful time for a puppy as usually they are taken away from their mother and littermates at around eight weeks and if the move is traumatic, it can have an effect on the adult dog. However, this is also the ideal time to sign up for puppy classes with your local, accredited, APDT trainer ([www.apdt.co.uk](http://www.apdt.co.uk)).



## ***Juvenile Period – 16/20 weeks + onwards (depending on the breed)***

Many puppies experience a secondary fear period which can start as early as four months (depending on the dog). At this time, they will have a heightened awareness of stimuli previously tolerated (such as traffic or strangers) which can now provoke a fearful response. Please be patient with your puppy and keep him/her at a safe distance from things that may evoke that fearful response. Training will have already started, and it is important for you and your puppy to continue this positive, reward-based training journey together.

# PUPPY

## nutrition

### 6 to 12 weeks

At around 8 weeks old, the immunity passed on by the mother loses its effectiveness. This is an especially vulnerable time for puppies as they are starting to develop their own immune system. They also undergo several stressful changes such as;

- Removal from the mother
- Vaccination programmes
- Diet changes
- Exposure to new bacterial challenges

Optimum nutrition during this stage is vital but making too many changes at the same time can cause unnecessary stress. Special care should be taken if the diet is changed during this period and we recommend letting puppies settle into their new home for at least a week before changing their diet.

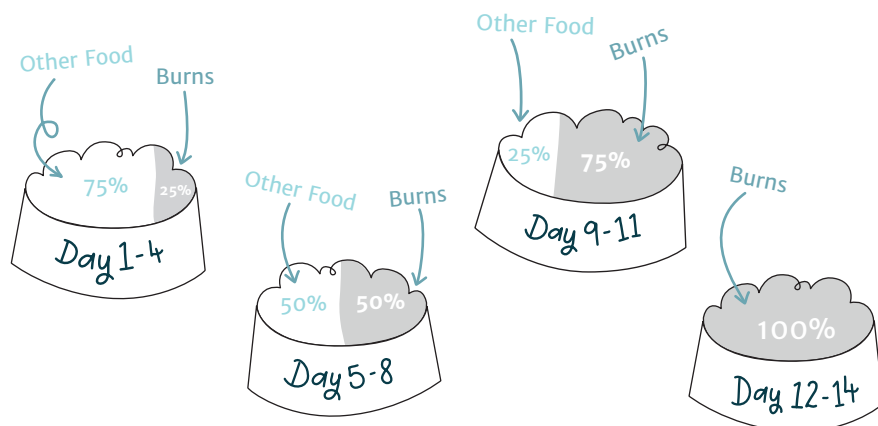
**When changing a puppy's diet we recommend doing it gradually**

### 12 weeks to 6 months

Burns puppy food can be introduced as a first food. Initially the dry kibble should be mixed with warm water to make a porridge. As the puppy matures, the food can be fed dry. Depending on individual performance

## TRANSITIONING

### to Burns





and size of dog, Burns puppy food can be fed up to adulthood or changed to adult food at about 9 months.

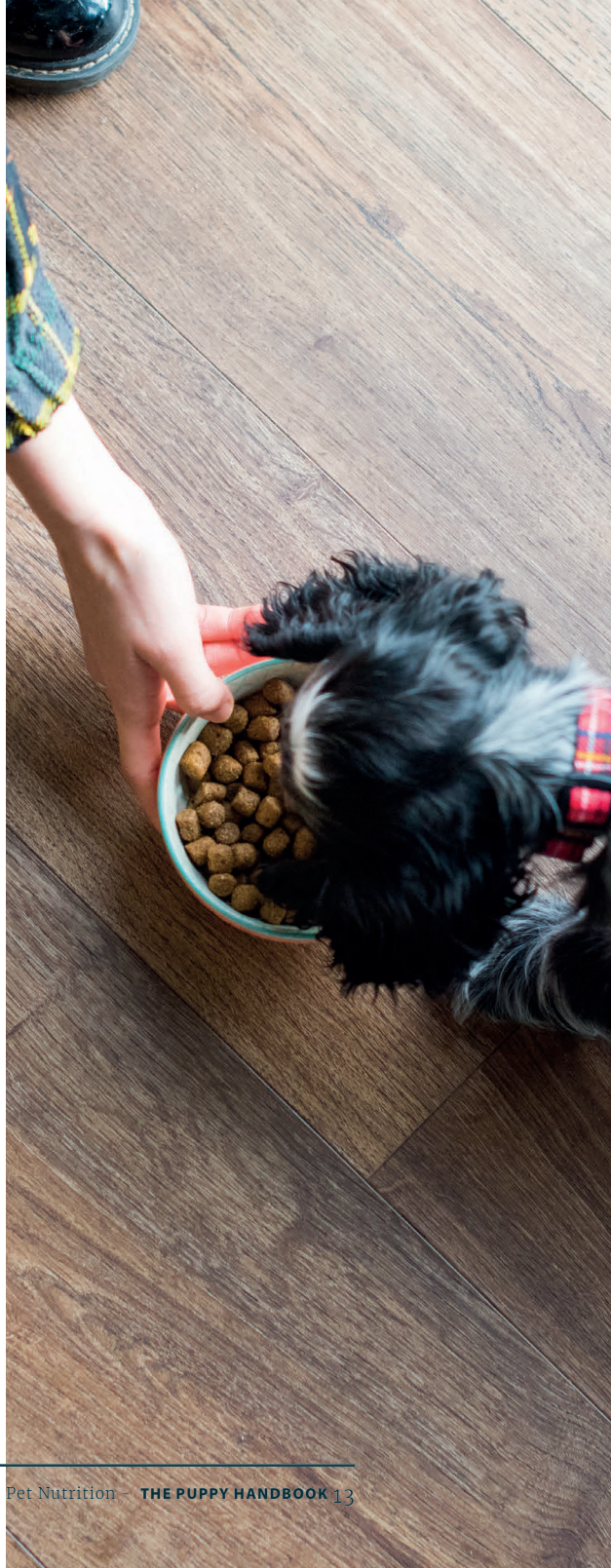
Between 3 and 7 months of age a puppy will develop adult teeth. At this time the puppy's eating habits may change due to the sensitivity of its gums. This causes the puppy to take longer at feeding time. To increase acceptance during this time you can moisten the food with a little tepid water to soften it. NB; Boiling water should never be used as it can destroy the heat sensitive vitamins.

## **6 months to 9 months**

At 6 months old, the growth rate of most puppies will start to slow down. Smaller breeds develop to adult weight sooner than larger breeds, and their energy requirements will reduce at an earlier age. At this stage the puppy's rib cage should still be felt easily. Closely monitor overall condition as this is also the time when the puppies are most efficient at converting energy to fat. An overweight puppy leads to an overweight adult.

## **Changing to adult food**

Changing to Burns adult food should be dictated by the puppy's activity, health and condition, but is usually from 9 months old. The changeover should be made gradually over 10-14 days so that the puppy's digestion is not upset.



“If a complete diet is fed it means nothing needs to be added, unless recommended by your vet.”



# GROWTH & development

***A slow but steady rate of growth during puppyhood is healthier than rapid growth.***

Hip dysplasia, osteochondritis and other skeletal problems have been linked to overfeeding during the earlier stages of growth. Overfeeding may also contribute to obesity and diabetes in later life.

Diets high in fat, protein and calcium cause a fast rate of growth. The joints are not able to form adequately causing loose sockets. The increased weight from muscle and fat further overloads the joints.

Supplementation can also lead to problems. If a complete diet is fed it means nothing needs to be added, unless recommended by your vet.

A lot of people believe that calcium must be given to growing puppies to ensure good bones but in fact if a high quality complete diet is fed supplementation may cause an excess. Calcium supplementation can also interfere with the cartilage and bone formation in the rapidly growing puppy. A high calcium intake can also interfere with the absorption of zinc and magnesium in the intestines resulting in a deficiency in other minerals, which in turn causes separate health issues.

## AMOUNTS to feed

***Individual requirements vary tremendously. These amounts are approximate and should be adjusted in the light of experience. If in doubt seek advice from Burns Pet Nutrition.***

We have a nutrition team who can be contacted on freephone number **0800 083 6696**. This is a free service and any health and nutrition can be discussed to help you get it right.

- ***Always have fresh water available.***
- ***Burns diets are complete and the use of supplements is not recommended.***

### ***Up to 6 months***

Up to 6 months of age Burns Pet Nutrition recommend 20g per 1kg of their current weight per day. We use their current weight rather than their predicted adult weight as this can be difficult to get right, especially with a cross breed.

### ***6 to 9 months***

From 6 months old we follow our junior feeding guide on Burns puppy foods which is 15g per 1kg of their ideal weight per day.



# PREVENTING *boredom*

Dogs need activities to stimulate them and relieve boredom. They also need the opportunity to sniff and search.

## ***Boredom strikes!***

***When dogs get bored they can start to become destructive. Give your dogs something to do.***

Provide things that can be shredded, a newspaper with treat wrapped inside, an old cardboard box or a plastic bottle with a small hole cut into it with a few treats inside.

The items do not have to cost much money but can provide hours of entertainment. It has been proven to be beneficial for many dogs to feed them in a more stimulating way than from a bowl such as; activity balls, Kongs, or hiding the

food inside or outside. Promoting their wellbeing by encouraging them to work for their food.

Feeding like this has also helped with digestive problems caused by bolting the food. Energy levels stay constant avoiding possible mood swings due to energy bursts after eating or reduced blood sugar levels. The dog utilises energy while scavenging and receiving vital stimulation.

Most dogs don't like being left alone; try to make the time alone as entertaining as possible.

- Leave a light on if darkness will fall while you're out.
- Leave the TV on or the radio so the dog can hear talking and noise.
- Leave an old item of your clothing for the dog to lie on.
- Avoid giving your dog lots of fuss when you come and go, but do take them for a nice walk when you return

Don't forget they also need appropriate physical exercise. These are only a few suggestions to try, but make for healthier, happier pets with more understanding and knowledgeable owners.







# BASIC TRAINING *for puppies*

***Puppies start learning from birth, so as soon as you get your puppy home you will be teaching it different things all the time.***

Your puppy has a short attention span so make training short but frequent. For example, if you make five cups of tea or coffee a day, do a little training while the kettle is boiling. By the end of the day, you will have done approximately 25 minutes in total.

You can expect your puppy to begin to learn 'sit', 'down', and the beginning of a 'stay' from as young as 8 weeks of age.

When you bring your puppy home and training begins, always use positive, reward-based methods.

Small pieces of food can be used to lure your puppy into required positions which can be rewarded with food or a game with a favourite toy. Always provide a reward that is motivating enough for your puppy to want to work for it.

Ideally the cue should only be given once when food is used to lure the puppy into a desired position. Immediately after the puppy offers a desired behaviour, use that

piece of food to reward the puppy. Don't forget to heavily praise your dog.

If the puppy does not offer the desired behaviour on the first cue, it may be because he/she simply doesn't understand. Slow down and go back a step.

If you need to repeat the cue to your puppy, they will learn several repeated cues are what he/she needs to hear before offering a desired behaviour.

Remember, your puppy is very young and doesn't understand language as humans do. The word 'sit' doesn't mean sit in the way we understand it, therefore it is important that cue 'sit' is associated with the act of moving a set of muscles that results in the puppy's hind end touching the floor.

When you begin training, use a piece of food to lure your puppy into position. Then reward with the food. Very quickly, you should be able to remove the food lure and just do the hand movement (but still reward with a small morsel of food). Once your puppy is offering the desired behaviour at the sight of the hand movement, begin to add your cue.

When your puppy is reliably offering behaviours that you have asked for, you can start to randomly reward your dog with tasty morsels and in time, you can phase out your food rewards if you wish.

It is always good to use praise as well because you may not always have food with you when you need your puppy to respond to a cue.

Training and learning should become a way of life for you and your puppy and will help to build that special bond between you.

To have a well-trained dog you need to be committed to daily training and continue throughout your dog's life. Training classes are hugely beneficial to your puppy's development and learning, but ensure you

sign up with a reputable and accredited professional. For further information contact: [www.apdt.co.uk](http://www.apdt.co.uk).

Remember to  
keep your training  
sessions short and  
frequent.

Training classes are an excellent way to socialise your puppy in the right way and teach your puppy to respond appropriately when faced with real life distractions. You will be able to speak with other owners, observe how their puppies behave and obtain current and up to date advice from your accredited trainer. A trainer accredited with the APDT will teach you how to prevent problem behaviours before they start.





# TOILET TRAINING *your puppy*

***Toilet training your puppy to go to the toilet where you want it to go and not all over the house requires a few basic house rules from the beginning.***

Accidents can be expected and may still occur as the puppy is learning where to go. Be prepared for a few mishaps!

Puppies have a strong urge to eliminate after sleeping, playing, feeding and drinking. This usually occurs within 30 minutes of each activity.

Most puppies need to spend a penny every 3-4 hours BUT with every month the puppy grows older its bladder control gets stronger.

Go outside with your puppy, praise and a tasty treat can then be given on completion. Once back inside it's too late!

The signs a puppy may show include; circling, squatting, whimpering, sniffing the floor, sneaking off and heading for the door.

If a puppy is punished for toileting in the house the dog may then not 'go' in the presence of the owner. Puppies do not associate indoor elimination with punishment. They will associate punishment with the presence of the owner. This can cause behaviour problems such as a fear of the owner.

If your puppy has had an accident there is no point in dragging the puppy to the spot or punishing the puppy in any way. It's too late! The puppy will not associate the behaviour with the punishment.

By regularly taking the dog out through the same door to the same place the puppy will learn that this is the place to go and get a nice treat for doing it here!



# INGREDIENTS & ANALYSIS

## Puppy Original Chicken & Rice

Puppy & Junior  
2kg, 6kg, 12kg



### Composition:

Chicken Meal (30%), Brown Rice (22%), White Rice (22%), Oats, Peas, Chicken Oil, Sunflower Oil, Seaweed, Minerals.

### Analytical Constituents:

Crude Protein 24%, Crude Fat 12%, Crude Fibre 3%, Crude Ash 7%, Copper 17mg/kg, Sodium 0.36%, Calcium 1.6%, Phosphorus 1.2%, Magnesium 0.13%, Potassium 0.6%, Omega-6 fatty acids 2.55%, Omega-3 fatty acids 0.34%.

### Nutritional Additives (per kg):

Vitamins: Vitamin A 25000IU, Vitamin D3 2000IU, Vitamin E 150IU, Taurine 1000mg; Trace Elements: Copper (copper (II) chelate of amino acids hydrate) 12mg, Iodine (calcium iodate anhydrous) 1mg, Manganese (manganous chelate of amino acids hydrate) 20mg, Zinc (zinc chelate of amino acids hydrate) 50mg, Selenium (3b8.11, Selenised yeast inactivated) 0.2mg.

### Technological Additives:

Antioxidants (mixed tocopherols).

## Puppy Original Lamb & Rice

Puppy & Junior  
2kg, 6kg



### Composition:

White Rice (18%), Brown Rice (17%), Lamb Meal (16%), Rice Protein, Oats, Lamb Fat, Peas, Pea Protein, Salmon Oil, Seaweed, Minerals.

### Analytical Constituents:

Crude Protein 24%, Crude Fat 15%, Crude Fibre 3.3%, Crude Ash 7%, Copper 19mg/kg, Sodium 0.4%, Calcium 1.6%, Phosphorus 1.2%, Magnesium 0.16%, Potassium 0.54%, Omega-6 fatty acids 2.1%, Omega-3 fatty acids 0.5%.

### Nutritional Additives (per kg):

Vitamins: Vitamin A 25000IU, Vitamin D3 2000IU, Vitamin E 150IU, Taurine 1000mg; Trace Elements: Copper (copper (II) chelate of amino acids hydrate) 12mg, Iodine (calcium iodate anhydrous) 1mg, Manganese (manganous chelate of amino acids hydrate) 20mg, Zinc (zinc chelate of amino acids hydrate) 50mg, Selenium (3b8.11, Selenised yeast inactivated) 0.2mg.

### Technological Additives:

Antioxidants (mixed tocopherols).

# INGREDIENTS & ANALYSIS

## Puppy Duck & Potato Free From

Puppy & Junior  
2kg, 6kg, 12kg



### Composition:

Potato (44%), Duck meal (28%), Buckwheat (12%), Duck fat, Peas, Sunflower Oil, Seaweed, Minerals, Salmon Oil.

### Analytical Constituents:

Crude Protein 24%, Crude Fat 15%, Crude Fibre 2%, Crude Ash 8%, Copper 20mg/kg, Sodium 0.4%, Calcium 1.2%, Phosphorus 0.9, Magnesium 0.14%, Potassium 1%, Omega-6 fatty acids 3.0%, Omega-3 fatty acids 0.5%.

### Nutritional Additives (per kg):

Vitamins: Vitamin A 25000IU, Vitamin D3 2000IU, Vitamin E 150IU, Taurine 1000mg; Trace Elements: Copper (copper (II) chelate of amino acids hydrate) 12mg, Iodine (calcium iodate anhydrous) 1mg, Manganese (manganous chelate of amino acids hydrate) 20mg, Zinc (zinc chelate of amino acids hydrate) 50mg/kg, Selenium (3b8.11, Selenised yeast inactivated) 0.2 mg.

### Technological Additives:

Antioxidants (mixed tocopherols).

## Puppy Mini Chicken & Rice

Puppy & Junior  
2kg, 6kg



### Composition:

Brown Rice (44%), Chicken Meal (23%), White Rice (13%), Chicken Oil, Oats, Peas, Sunflower Oil, Fish Meal, Minerals, Seaweed.

### Analytical Constituents:

Crude Protein 21%, Crude Fat 11%, Crude Fibre 2%, Crude Ash 7%, Copper 21mg/kg, Sodium 0.26%, Calcium 1.1%, Phosphorus 0.9%, Magnesium 0.14%, Potassium 0.6%, Omega-6 fatty acids 2.2%, Omega-3 fatty acids 0.3%.

### Nutritional Additives (per kg):

Vitamins: Vitamin A 25000IU, Vitamin D3 2000IU, Vitamin E 150IU, Taurine 1000mg; Trace Elements: Copper (copper (II) chelate of amino acids hydrate) 12mg, Iodine (calcium iodate anhydrous) 1mg, Manganese (manganous chelate of amino acids hydrate) 20mg, Zinc (zinc chelate of amino acids hydrate) 50mg, Selenium (3b8.11, Selenised yeast inactivated) 0.2mg.

### Technological Additives:

Antioxidants (mixed tocopherols).

# THE BURNS

## product range

### PUPPY

#### range

- Puppy Mini Chicken & Rice
- Puppy Original Chicken & Rice
- Puppy Original Lamb & Rice
- Puppy Free From Duck & Potato

### ORIGINAL

#### range

- Original Chicken & Brown Rice
- Original Fish & Brown Rice
- Original Lamb & Brown Rice
- Toy & Small Breed Original Chicken & Rice
- Large & Giant Breed Original Chicken & Brown Rice

### SENSITIVE

#### range

- Sensitive Duck & Brown Rice
- Sensitive Pork & Potato
- Sensitive Chicken & Wholegrain Maize
- Sensitive Fish & Wholegrain Maize

### FREE FROM

#### range

- Adult & Seniors Free From Duck & Potato
- Puppy & Junior Free From Duck & Potato
- Toy & Small Breed Duck & Potato

### WORKING

#### range

- Alert Chicken & Brown Rice
- Alert Lamb & Brown Rice
- Active Chicken & Rice

### PENLAN FARM

#### MOIST FOOD

#### range

- Egg, Vegetables & Brown Rice
- Chicken, Vegetables & Brown Rice
- Lamb, Vegetables & Brown Rice
- Fish, Vegetables & Brown Rice

### SPECIALIST

#### range

- Weight Control
- Hypo-Allergenic Mixer

### TREATS

#### range

- Kelties
- Weight Control
- Sensitive Pork & Potato
- Turkey & Potato Free From
- Ocean Bites
- Training Treats





# OUR NUTRITION *team*

Burns has a team of 8 Nutritional Advisors with over 50 years' experience

- Our nutrition helpline is completely free.
- We offer friendly, professional nutrition advice.
- We can help with anything dietary-related from feeding amounts to food intolerances.
- We're available on email, live chat or by phone.
- We've heard it all before so don't worry about contacting us about your dog's embarrassing problems.
- We speak to around 250 people a month on live chat alone.
- We keep up to date with the latest research, attending veterinary conferences, courses and webinars.
- We all have our own pets so we understand how worrying it can be if your dog is having problems with their diet.

Give us a call or drop us an email.

**NUTRITIONAL ADVICE FREEPHONE:**  
0800 083 6696 (UK) • 1800 83 66 96 (ROI)

We're here to help

Connect with us digitally

**Website:**  
burnspet.co.uk

**Facebook:**  
@BurnsPet

**Instagram:**  
@BurnsPet

**Twitter:**  
@BurnsPetFood

**#PoweredByBurns**

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