

A fluffy black, white, and brown puppy, likely a Bernese Mountain Dog, is sitting on a green lawn. The puppy has a white blaze on its face and a white patch on its chest. The background is a blurred green lawn and trees.

BlackHawk®

Every ingredient matters

My new puppy

A comprehensive guide

The Black Hawk Commitment

The history, achievements and ambitions of Black Hawk are quite remarkable – born of the unshakeable commitment to giving our pets the best care, we are a brand like no other.

Our story is one of a constant search for better; better ingredients and better products.

Our Belief

We believe people feel better about themselves when they feed good food. It shows how they care.





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Preparing for your new puppy

Congratulations on choosing your new puppy!

Before your new addition arrives home, take time to plan and get your home ready to ensure the transition is as smooth as possible.

It is an exciting time and can be overwhelming for both the new puppy and other members of your home (four-and two-legged family members alike). Everyone will be affected in some way, and don't forget to consider the impact it will have on your other pets too.

Make sure you have a few of the essentials to keep your puppy happy...

- ☐ Food
- ☐ Food bowl
- ☐ Water bowl
- ☐ Training treats
- ☐ Collar and ID tag
- ☐ Lead and harness
- ☐ Bedding
- ☐ Training pads
- ☐ Toys
- ☐ Crate/pen
- ☐ Kennel (if needed)
- ☐ Grooming tools



First days

Bringing your puppy home

The first day you bring your puppy home will be an exciting experience for you, your puppy and other family members. It's also a great opportunity to teach children to properly care for a pet.

Your puppy has a lot of adjusting to do with so many new things to learn and explore. They will most likely feel a bit insecure for a period of time, until they adjust to their new living arrangements and get used to being away from their mum and litter mates.

Remember that all puppies are like babies and need to be handled with care and given lots of love and protection. During the first introduction, make sure everyone is quiet and calm.

Start by settling your puppy into a smaller area that is designated as their 'safe space' or 'den'. Try to make this a positive place to be by spending lots of play and cuddle time there. You can then gradually give your puppy time to explore their new home and environment under supervision.

Let your puppy practice short periods of alone time in their space when they appear to be calm, and then try to gradually increase alone time without them becoming distressed.

Reward calm and independent behaviour to reinforce that your puppy is okay on its own and is loved, even when you are not there.

When introducing the 'new kid on the block' to your other pets, start slowly after all the excitement settles and consider the following steps:

- For the first few days, it is best to let them have their own space and get used to the new smells in the house.
- Then bit by bit let your other pets spend short periods of time near the puppy area under supervision.
- In time they will usually all be happy to share their space without stress or over-excitement.

TIP: Crate training

Crates and pens are a great way to provide your puppy with their own safe space.



The first night

Your puppy will need a special area to sleep and will need to feel warm and protected.

The first night can be a challenge for puppies when they are without the company of their dog-family and some puppies may cry during their first few nights. A little distress is normal and frustration is part of their learning, but major upsets are best avoided by making sure they feel comfortable and safe in their own area. Make sure your puppy has a clean soft bed and is able to stay nice and warm. You can use a heat pad to help them stay warm throughout the night, however you'll have to make sure these are at the right temperature and chew proof to prevent your puppy from injury.

Puppies need regular toilet breaks throughout the night and this may also be a reason for crying. Most puppies cannot hold through the night until they are over 6 months old.

“The first night can be a challenge for puppies when they are without the company of their dog-family and some puppies may cry on their first few nights.”



Feeding

Puppy nutrition

The key to a healthy dog is to feed them a quality diet right from the start. Puppies develop at a fast pace and this varies depending on genetics, breed and adult size. In peak growth, puppies require nearly 2x the energy of an adult dog of the same weight. Small breeds finish growing by as little as 8 months, whereas large/giant breeds develop for up to 2 years.

If you compare this time frame to humans, who keep growing until 16 to 18 years of age, you can see that puppies have a lot of growing to do in a short time.

Feeding your puppy a premium puppy food will ensure they get all the right amount of energy, protein, calcium, phosphorous, omega fatty acids, vitamins and minerals to help build strong muscles and bones, whilst supporting their growth phase. What you feed them can even affect their ability to learn the skills they need for life.

TIP: Puppy nutrition

Black Hawk Puppy diets are complete and balanced and specifically developed for growing puppies, with formulas designed to meet their specific nutritional requirements. The balanced calcium and phosphorous levels are important for strong bones and joints as well as nerve and muscle function. Black Hawk Original Puppy foods are made according to their future adult weight, catering for Small (up to 15kg), Medium (15-30kg) and Large (over 30kg) dogs.



Which Black Hawk Puppy Food is right for your puppy?

ORIGINAL PUPPY

Complete nutrition for optimal development by size.

SMALL BREED

**Future adult weight
up to 15kg**

MEDIUM BREED

**Future adult weight
15kg to 30kg**

LARGE BREED

**Future adult weight
more than 30kg**

grain free PUPPY

For puppies with sensitivities,
or require a high protein diet.

ALL BREED

All future adult weights

Balanced for growth.
Easily digested for their young, developing gut function.
Highly palatable and available in tasty
Lamb & Rice and Chicken & Rice flavours.

Balanced for growth.
Highly palatable and digestible
nutrition available in
Wild Caught Ocean Fish that
is rich in omega-3 fatty acids.

■ Helps support cognitive
development

■ Kibble size to suit
small mouths

■ Helps support muscle
development

■ Kibble size to suit
medium mouths

■ Helps support bone and
joint development

■ Kibble size to suit
large mouths

■ Helps support brain
development and coat health

■ Kibble size to suit all sizes



For information on our Black Hawk Puppy diets, please visit blackhawkpetcare.co.nz

Tips

- Feed a complete and balanced puppy diet. There is no need to add supplements unless prescribed by your vet.
- Use the feeding guide on the bag or visit the Black Hawk website for an individualised daily feeding recommendation.
- Always ensure there is fresh water available, ideally from many, easily-accessible drinking stations.
- When swapping over to a new food, transition over a minimum of 7 days to avoid an upset stomach, gradually increasing the proportion of new food over time.
- For very young puppies, you might want to soften dry foods by soaking it in warm water for 5 minutes and then serve at room temperature. Discard any uneaten food within 1 hour.
- Puppies will start to teethe between 3-6 months. In many cases the crunching of dry food can help exercise their teeth, so they get through the teething process quicker.
- The time to transition to adult food varies by dog size (around 8-10 months for smaller breeds and up to 2 years for larger breeds). Ask your vet or breeder what is right for your puppy.

Feeding your puppy

Once you have chosen a quality balanced food for your puppy, you will need to consider how much they need and how often they need to be fed.

Feeding requirements will vary for each puppy depending on age, breed, size, ancestry and growth pattern. As a general rule, puppies need to be fed 3 to 4 small meals per day, as they only have small stomachs and are burning through all of that energy very quickly. This is why it's important to choose a food that can give them all of the right nutrients in an easily digestible diet. Once your puppy reaches 6 months you can reduce their meals down to just 2 per day.

Remember there is no exact science to feeding your puppy, so it is important to monitor their weight and growth. Your vet will be able to keep an eye on how well they are growing and help you to stay on track. Refer to the back of the bag for recommended feeding guidelines.

For a tailored feeding recommendation for your puppy scan this QR code or visit blackhawkpetcare.com



Training

Basic training tips

It will take a while for you and your puppy to learn how to communicate with each other. The sooner you start basic training, the easier it will be for your new friend to understand what you're asking them to do.

Training should always be positive and based on reward. Punishing puppies can make them afraid to try new things, and we need them to try new things in order to learn.

Puppy preschool is a great way to get supervised guidance on puppy training. The key with training is to give clear signals (a sound, word or gesture) to ask for a particular action, then to reward immediately after it is carried out.

This way your puppy associates responding to your signals with the positivity of the reward. The key is to be consistent and patient. Keep training sessions short while your puppy is young because they get tired easily.

Start training by following these steps:

- When you have your puppy's full attention, say his or her name using a fun/welcoming voice and then reward them for giving you their attention.
- Once they know their name, you can start to introduce a signal that means 'good dog, you got that right!' Again, you can choose any signal as long as you are consistent. Some people even use a training 'clicker' for this signal.
- From here you can start to introduce new signals for different behaviours and reward them when they get it right.

It is a good idea to get your puppy used to a soft collar soon after coming home. Get them used to this by putting the collar on for short periods of time while they are happily distracted or eating so that they associate it with positive experiences. Once they have mastered the collar you can add a soft, light lead as well.



House training

One of the first and biggest challenges that you may face as a new pet owner is toilet training.

Toilet training your puppy is about patience, consistency and positive reinforcement. The goal is to instill good habits and build a loving bond with your pet because they tire easily.

TIP: House training

Training pads make it easy to train and clean up after puppies while they are in the learning phase of toilet training.



TIP: Clean-Up

Discourage repeat marking by avoiding ammonia based cleaning products and opting for solutions with odour eating enzymes.



Effective toilet training

Be consistent:

Choose an area for your puppy to relieve itself. Use one command such as 'go' or 'toilet' to train your puppy to go in that specific location.

Be one step ahead:

Take pre-emptive action to predict when your puppy is most likely 'do their business':

- As soon as they wake up after sleeping
- After playing or training
- Just after a meal
- Before you put them to bed

The signs that your puppy may need to go to the toilet include:

- Walking in circles and sniffing the ground
- Sitting, pawing or whimpering at the door (or near the toileting area)
- Starting to squat when walking around

Be patient:

Accidents will happen, getting it right will take time, so be patient and always use positive reinforcement. Being consistent with praise will give them an emotional incentive to do their business in the correct place.

Health

Vaccinations

Ensure the best start to life for your puppy with regular visits to the vet. Your vet will be able to advise on everything from how well your puppy is growing, to how to prevent common diseases.

Puppies should have their first visit to the vet at around 6-8 weeks of age. At each visit the vet will collect some general information on your puppy and will give them a thorough health check. All puppies should be vaccinated to prevent common and preventable diseases such as Canine Parvovirus, Canine Distemper and Canine Infectious Hepatitis. Depending on your location, your veterinarian may also recommend additional vaccines for other diseases.

The first vaccination is usually given by the vet at their first visit. Booster vaccinations are given every 3-4 weeks until 16-18 weeks of age, however vaccination protocols may vary.

Puppies should be kept away from non-vaccinated dogs and public areas until at least 1 week after their final puppy vaccination is done (or as directed by your vet). Adult dogs need to be given a booster vaccination every 1-3 years as recommended by your vet.

TIP: Vaccinations

Your local vet will be able to give you the best advice on the right vaccination protocol for your puppy.

CORE VACCINES

Recommended for all puppies

☐ Canine Distemper ☐ Canine Parvovirus ☐ Canine Infectious Hepatitis

ADDITIONAL VACCINES

As recommended by your vet

☐ Leptospirosis ☐ Canine Coronavirus ☐ Kennel Cough



Worm and flea treatment

It is important to protect your puppy from parasites. Parasite treatments should be started soon after bringing your puppy home. There are several convenient treatments on the market that can be used for puppies. Check with your vet for recommendations on the best treatment options available.



Fleas

Fleas breed very quickly and can build up in the environment that the puppy spends its time in. Just a few fleas can quickly become an infestation, so don't leave them unchecked. If you do need to treat your puppy for fleas, remember to treat the environment as well as fleas can lay eggs that remain dormant for some time.

Intestinal worms

Intestinal worms can make your puppy unwell and some canine intestinal worms can also cause disease in humans. Puppies should be wormed with an intestinal wormer at least monthly until 6 months of age as puppies are more prone to having worms than older dogs. After 6 months of age seek advice from your vet as to the most appropriate worming schedule for your circumstances.

Microchipping

To make sure your puppy can be found if they ever go astray, microchipping is a must. Some puppies will have a microchip placed by the breeder and others will need to have this done at the veterinary clinic. Always ensure your puppy and its microchip number are registered on a National Database. Check how to do this with your Veterinarian.

Make sure to also register your puppy with your local council and always keep them clearly identified with a collar and tag with their name and your contact details.



Desexing

To prevent unwanted breeding and some common health issues, it is recommended that dogs that are not going to be used for breeding should be desexed. Most dogs are desexed from around 6 months of age, but your breeder or veterinary hospital can advise you on what is the best time for your breed of dog.

Desexing involves staying in hospital for a general anaesthetic and surgery. Your puppy will need to rest when they get home and may have stitches which need to be kept clean and dry. Often the vet or nurse will ask to see your puppy again after 7-14 days to check that they are healing well and remove their stitches.

Dental care

Four out of five dogs over the age of three years have some sort of dental disease, which left untreated becomes more severe with age.

This can be a real problem for you and your pet because it can lead to more serious problems such as illnesses related to the heart, liver and kidney.

Take preventive action with your puppy with annual dental checks at your vet. Dental checks provide an opportunity for you to discover whether your pet has an existing problem which has gone unnoticed.

Brushing their teeth daily is also a great way to keep their teeth and gums in good health. Dogs can be trained to enjoy having their teeth brushed, especially if started at a young age. Make sure you use a toothpaste that is appropriate for dogs.

TIP: Dental care

Prevent and reduce tartar build-up with specially designed dental treats and toys.





Wellbeing

Exercise

Exercise is very important to keep your puppy fit and happy. A chance to let out all of that puppy energy is not just important for physical health but also important for learning and development.

Once your puppy is used to having their collar or harness and lead on, you can start taking them on short adventures around the house and yard. The aim is to keep your puppy's attention on you as much as possible. You can encourage them to do this by rewarding them when they are walking by your side and paying attention to you.

TIP: **Training and play**

Training and games are a great way to keep your puppy engaged.

The amount of exercise needed each day varies from dog to dog, so make sure you get some guidance from your breeder or vet on how best to exercise your dog, and when to do it safely (depending on their vaccinations). All dogs need mental stimulation to keep them happy and healthy. For those that just need to get all of that energy out, you can try games such as fetch or even swimming which is also great for keeping dogs fit and strong.

Socialisation

Just like us, most dogs really love some regular social time. It's a great idea to start socialising your puppy while they're young and doing lots of learning.

The key socialisation period for a puppy is between 3 to 12 weeks of age. Proper socialisation during this time minimises the risk of your puppy developing behavioural issues later in life.

It's often best to start with meeting other puppies of a similar age and size. It is important to make the first few experiences positive so that your puppy feels confident and learns appropriate social behaviour.

Puppy pre-school is a great way to do this. Check with your puppy pre-school organiser for vaccination requirements and make sure your puppy is fully vaccinated before going into public areas.

One of the joys of owning a dog is including them in all the things you do, and puppies just love social time with their humans. You can even get your puppy set up with a car safety harness and start taking them with you on short trips.

TIP: Training and socialisation

Exercise, training and time with other dogs are all important for your puppy to learn the skills and co-ordination that they will need for life.



Grooming

Grooming is not just to keep tangles away, it also stimulates skin and coat health, as well as providing some nice one-on-one bonding time with your puppy. By regularly running your hands or a grooming glove over your puppy you can start to get them used to being handled before you introduce a brush.

Choose a brush that's gentle on your puppy's skin and coat and easy to hold. Different coat types benefit from different brushes. For example, the slicker brushes are great for most fluffy and short coats, and the shedding rakes are perfect for heavy shedders and dense, tangled coats. For tough tangles use a detangling spray before brushing the area. Get down to your puppy's level or pop them up on a table and brush them gently from head to tail and toes.

TIP: Skin health

If your puppy has had a little too much fun in the mud, try giving them a lukewarm bath using a puppy shampoo. A puppy conditioner will help keep their skin and coat hydrated and healthy.



Nail trimming

Getting your puppy used to having their feet touched while they are young will make the important task of trimming nails much smoother for you both. It is only the very tip of the nail that needs to be trimmed and if your puppy walks on solid surfaces a lot they may not need nail trims at all. If you are unsure about how much of the nail to trim make sure you ask your vet to show how to avoid cutting too much and injuring the nail quick.



Preventing inappropriate chewing and excessive barking

Inappropriate chewing

There are many reasons your puppy may chew on inappropriate things. The most common by far is the fact that they are teething. Puppies need to work their gums to help their adult teeth come through and ease teething discomfort. The key is to get them chewing on specially designed durable chew toys rather than your favourite shoes or furniture. Provide them with a variety of chew toys and include their toys in games so that they learn what toys are all about. Make sure you rotate the toys regularly, because just like children, puppies can get bored.

TIP: Appropriate chewing

Dog toys are also a great way to keep puppy occupied and develop strength and co-ordination.



Excessive barking

Just like us, our puppies like to say their piece. However, if you think your puppy is vocalising excessively, consider these tips:

- Make sure puppy has had plenty of exercise and mental stimulation and is not simply barking out of boredom.
- Keep puppy occupied while you are not there by leaving them with toys and some even try putting the TV or radio on for some background noise.
- Teach them a word or signal for 'quiet' and reward them for obeying rather than punishing them when they bark. Punishment will only make them feel less secure and may make them bark more.



Preventing separation anxiety

They just love us to bits, but they need to know they are okay on their own too. Separation issues in puppies is very common and can be difficult to manage with the busy lifestyles we humans live.

Separation anxiety is a condition that leaves puppies feeling fearful when they are not near their humans. Some of the signs that your pup may be experiencing separation anxiety when you are not there include:

- Excessive vocalisation (barking/howling/whimpering).
- Destructive behaviour such as chewing and digging.
- Inappropriate toileting and refusal to eat and drink.

Of course, chewing and toileting accidents may just be puppies being puppies but if you are concerned that your puppy is showing true anxiety, rather than just having fun and being a normal, curious puppy, have a chat with your vet.

TIP: Separation anxiety

Your scent can provide a calming effect on your puppy. A toy that includes a 'fill me' pocket to include items of clothing may help with anxiety in times of separation.

Luckily there are some things we can do even in young puppies that make them less likely to develop separation anxiety. Giving them their own safe space and rewarding them for calm and independent behaviour is a great start.

Other important things to remember include not making a fuss when you are saying goodbye and when you get back from being away. It is exciting to see them, but try to contain your excitement until they are calm and not demanding attention – this way you say to them “you are okay without me.”



Troubleshooting

Frequently asked questions

What treats should I feed my puppy?

Although there are a range of treats on the market, it is always best to choose a healthy option. We recommend that you select a treat that lists real meat as the main ingredient and uses human grade, natural ingredients.

Treats should make up no more than 10% of a puppy's daily energy requirement and always follow the handy feeding guide on the pack. Excessive treating may lead to health issues such as nutrient imbalance, obesity and frustration or confusion for your puppy.



What diet do you recommend for puppies?

We recommend feeding a complete and balanced food that is designed for growing puppies. Black Hawk Puppy diets, formulated by pet nutritionists and vets, contain the right levels of energy, protein, calcium, phosphorous, omega fatty acids, vitamins, and minerals to help build strong bodies and aid learning.



Is it safe to take my puppy travelling with me?

It's important that the car is a positive place, so start with short car trips to get them used to being on the move. The most important part of travelling with your puppy is safety, so make sure they are set up with a quality safety harness or a travel crate with some comfy bedding to keep them safe and secure.

Should I feed my puppy table scraps?

We do not recommend feeding your puppy human food. Puppies have different nutritional needs to people and the wrong foods can upset their stomachs and lead to nutritional imbalances. Some human foods such as chocolate, onions, grapes and garlic are dangerous for dogs. Stick to feeding your puppy a balanced diet that is specially designed for them.

How should I clean up toileting accidents?

Most puppies have the occasional toileting accident. Start by soaking up urine with a paper towel and picking up any faeces with a doggie bag. The job is not done yet, even though you can't see any evidence, your puppy will still be able to smell where they have been and may think that this is a good spot to go again. Use the Yours Droolly® No More Marking spray, which neutralises the smells in the area, making them less likely to return to the 'scene of the crime'.



How do I change my puppy onto a new food?

When your puppy is ready to be moved onto an adult food, it is important to transition them over gradually as dogs can be sensitive to changes in their diet. Gradually increase the ratio of new food to previous food starting with $\frac{1}{4}$ new food and $\frac{3}{4}$ previous food on the first day, and gradually increase the percentage of new food over 1 week. After the transition week you can stop feeding the previous food all together.

BlackHawk®

Every ingredient matters

Congratulations on your new puppy

We are so excited that you have chosen to take us on this journey with you.

At Black Hawk everything we do, every ingredient, every product is about nourishing the real, honest, unique relationships we have with our pets, so that you can share the very best quality of life together. We'll never stop searching for and creating better ways to show how we care, because Every Ingredient Matters.®

For more articles and hints and tips on how to care for your puppy visit our website blackhawkpetcare.co.nz or follow us on Facebook or Instagram. We always look forward to sharing your journey and being able to answer questions that you may have. But for now, happy playing!

– Your Black Hawk Team





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