

## Feeding

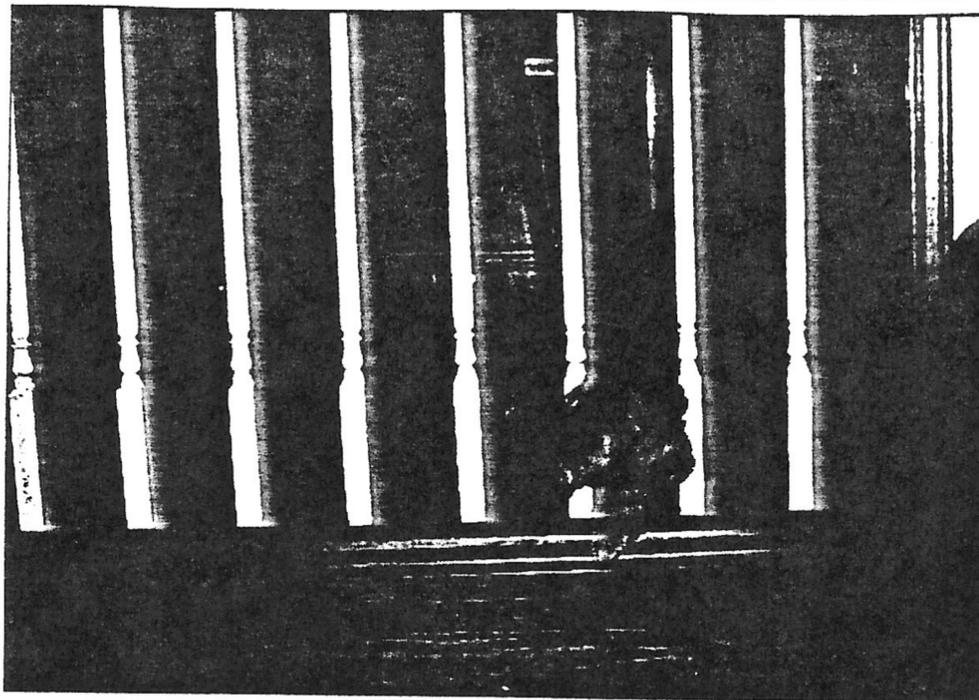
There are so many dog foods, it will be easy to be overwhelmed by all your choices. You may want to ask your breeder what your puppy is used to eating. If that is not an option, buy a high-quality dry food that is appropriate in its nutritional make-up and kibble size to the breed of your puppy. If you invest in a good quality food, it should not be necessary to supplement your puppy, but this is something you should discuss with your veterinarian.

A seven-to-nine-week-old puppy will be happy to eat three times a day. It will be easier to housebreak him if he eats on a schedule, so offer him some food, and when he loses interest and wanders away, pick it up and save it for the next meal. You may want to feed him some of his meals in his crate (see "Crate Training," below).

It is important for you to learn how to know if your puppy is the correct weight. A puppy carries extra weight over his ribs, so if you cannot easily feel his ribs, your puppy is probably overweight. However, if you can see the outline of his ribs, and especially his hip bones, he is underweight. Keep in mind that as he grows, the amount of food you feed him will be changing every few weeks, so measure your food, but make it a habit to look at him and feel his ribs so that you are ready to make changes as he grows.

## Housebreaking

It's important for your puppy to explore his new surroundings, and it's fun to watch him do so. Let him look around, but remember that he will have to go to the bathroom very frequently so you must keep an eye on him (photo 1). A dog is a den animal, and he instinctively does not want to go to the bathroom where he lives. Unfortunately, most of us live in homes that are so big the dog does not equate our entire house with his den. Therefore, it is important to keep any dog, and especially a puppy, that is not housebroken in the room you are in. If you let him



**Photo 1: Puppies like to explore and require constant supervision. Let your new puppy look around when you first bring him home, but remember he will need to go to the bathroom frequently.**

leave the room, he will equate this with leaving the den and think it is acceptable to go to the bathroom. As you let him explore, keep him in the room you are in. If you are in the bedroom, shut him in the bedroom with you. If you go to the kitchen, take him with you. If it is not possible to shut a door, put up a gate or put a 10- to 15-foot rope on him to constrain him in the room with you.

Your puppy is much too young to let you know when he needs to go out; try to watch for signals that he needs to go outside. The signals may be subtle like wandering a few feet from where he was playing, sniffing and walking in circles. Don't make the mistake of watching the clock to determine when your puppy needs to go outside; it is his change in activity that causes him to need to go to the bathroom, not the time that has elapsed. Every time your puppy changes activities, he should be taken outside. If he wakes up, take him out; stops playing, out he goes; stops eating, out again. Take him out before the accident occurs.

If you have a particular place in the yard that you would like your puppy to go to the bathroom, begin by carrying him to that location and then setting him down. Don't try to walk him there. At this age, there's a good chance it's too far for him to travel before he stops to relieve himself. As he gets older he'll be able to make the trip himself.

If your puppy does have a house-breaking accident right in front of you, make an exclamation of disgust and take him outside ("No" or "Bad Dog" is

sufficient). It is not necessary to drag him to the mess or to rub his nose in it.

If your puppy goes to the bathroom in the house while you are not watching, there is absolutely nothing that you can do to correct him. Why? Dogs do not remember and feel responsible for actions in the past. If you drag a dog to an old mess and make a fuss, he does not say to himself, "I went to the bathroom there 20 minutes ago; that is why my owner is upset." Instead, he records the situation in his mind and makes sure the situation does

not occur again. In this case, the dog records, "If my owner is present, I am present and a mess is present, I will get scolded." The next time there is a mess on the floor and he hears you coming, he will run. Our tendency is to give the dog human reasoning and emotions. Owners are often heard saying, "But I know my dog knew he was bad, he ran from me and he looked guilty." He is not running from you because he understands that he is responsible for the mess, but because he realizes that if he stays in the situation that includes himself, you, and the mess, he will be scolded.

## Crate Training

Crates are the cribs and playpens of dog training. A crate helps to prevent your dog from chewing and soiling the house. Crates protect a dog from consuming things in the house that could be harmful to *him*. A crate also calms anxious dogs and teaches hyperactive dogs to sleep when left alone. In addition, the crate becomes a home away from home whenever you are traveling with your dog.

Crates are not meant to be used to confine a dog for his entire lifetime any more than a playpen is used for the life of a child. They are simply a safe place for you puppy or adolescent dog to stay until he is housebroken and old enough to trust loose in your house or leave in your yard.

If the crate is used correctly, your  
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