



Foal Farm
Jail Lane, Biggin Hill
Kent, TN16 3AX
Tel/Fax: 01959 572386

www.foalfarm.org.uk

Frequently Asked Questions About Owning A Dog

[Question 1: I've Lost My Dog. What do I do?](#)

[Question 2: I've Found A Dog. What do I do?](#)

[Question 3: I'm Moving House – how can I minimise the stress for my dog?](#)

[Question 4: How Do I Get My Dog to Travel Comfortably By Road?](#)

[Question 5: How Does the Law Affect Owning a Dog?](#)

[Question 6: How Do I Care For An Older Dog](#)

[Question 7: Do I Need to get my dog Vaccinated?](#)

[Question 8: How Do I Deal with Fleas, Worms and Parasites?](#)

[Question 9: Should I Groom My Dog?](#)

[Question 10: Should I Neuter My Dog?](#)

[Question 11: How Do I Toilet Train My Dog?](#)

[Question 12: How Do I Train My Dog?](#)

[Question 13: How Do I Feed My Dog or Puppy?](#)

[OVERWEIGHT DOGS](#)

[UNDERWEIGHT DOGS](#)

[MILKY MEALS FOR VERY YOUNG PUPPIES](#)

[MEAT AND CEREAL](#)

[COMPLETE DIETS](#)

[SUPPLEMENTS](#)

Question 1: I've Lost My Dog. What do I do?

Precautions:

Your Foal Farm dog is microchipped and registered to Foal Farm. Microchipping is extremely effective in locating a lost pet. For this reason all dogs and cats re-homed by Foal Farm are microchipped before they leave us for their new homes. However it is vital that you keep Foal Farm's records up to date with any change of address and contact telephone numbers. This ensures that should your dog go missing and be returned to Foal Farm we can contact you quickly to let you know he/she has been found.

Make sure your dog wears a collar tag with your name, address and contact telephone number on it.

Take regular photographs of your dog so that you can accurately describe him/her should they go missing. These photographs can also be used for "Lost Dog" posters.

Take sensible precautions and never leave your dog unattended in a public place.

Make sure that all your gardens fences and gates are secure.

When you are out locally walking with your dog, get to know other local dog walkers, this forms a secure network between you.

Be Aware:

In accordance with the Environmental Protection Act 1990, dog wardens are obliged to seize stray dogs. The police also have discretionary power to seize stray dogs under the Dogs Act 1906.

Should your dog be lost or stray for any reason, it is likely that it will be picked up by the dog warden service or police. They are equipped with a special scanner which can read the dog's unique registration number, this will enable them to find Foal Farm's details via a petlog database and thus return the dog to Foal Farm. Foal Farm will then contact you to reunite you with your dog as soon as possible.

Ways to find a lost dog:

Contact Foal Farm Farm to report the dog missing. Please ensure that they have up to date contact details for you.

Make a thorough search of your neighbourhood immediately, and leave your contact details with as many people as possible. Ask postmen, milkmen, neighbours and also newspaper delivery people if they have seen your pet.

Advertise in the "Lost" section of your local newspaper and be sure to read the "Found" advertisements.

Call your vet, dog warden and police station. If you believe the dog has been stolen make sure you report this to the police and get a crime reference number from them.

Make as many posters/flyers as you can and place them everywhere, for example Vets, pet shops, lamp posts, supermarkets, shops etc. For outside posters you might want to cover them in plastic wallets to protect them from the elements.

Dogs can stray a long way so check everywhere and tell everyone.

Keep a list handy of contact telephone numbers you will need should your pet go missing or stray, make sure Foal Farm is top of the list, also vet, police, dog warden etc.

Question 2: I've Found A Dog. What do I do?

All local authorities have a responsibility for dealing with stray dogs; they employ dog wardens to collect any dog that is believed to be a stray. If a stray dog is found outside office hours it can usually be held at a local police station until the warden can collect it.

If the dog is microchipped it will be scanned by the dog warden service or police and returned to the registered owner as soon as possible.

The Environmental Protection Act 1990 states that the finder of a stray dog is to return the dog to its owner, or contact the local dog warden service to report it and have it collected, or to take it to the nearest police station to where the dog was found. Remember that it is illegal to take a found dog into your home without reporting it to the police first

Question 3: I'm moving house – how can I minimise the stress for my dog?

Moving house can be a very stressful time for the whole family and this includes your dog. It can be quite disorientating moving from a familiar and safe environment and this can lead to behavioural problems or even your dog going missing!

Preparation:

As far as possible try to keep your dog's routine as near to normal as you can leading up to the move.

Make sure your dog is wearing his collar tag which has your name and address on it, the dog should be wearing this at all times when in a public place in accordance with The Control of Dogs Order 1992.

Research in advance a new veterinary practice in the area you are moving to.

Check out your new area before you move for good walking places so that you can settle your dog into a new routine as soon as possible.

If your dog does not travel well in the car try and get him/her used to travelling in advance with a few practice trips out.

Make sure that whilst you are travelling the dog is safely behind a dog guard or in a crate but that it still has plenty of room in which to move.

Moving:

Whilst all your furniture and belongings are being taken out of the house, keep your dog secure in one room.

If your dog suffers from travel sickness do not feed him/her for 12 hours before travelling.

Make sure there is enough ventilation in the car for the dog and never leave your dog in a car while you stop for a break on warm/hot or on very cold days.

If you are to be travelling a long distance ensure your dog has enough stops for water and easily digestible food along the way. Some motorway service stations are dog friendly and provide water facilities and exercise areas for dogs.

Buy a new toy or chew to give to your dog once you have arrived in the new house.

Whilst all your belongings are being brought into the new house keep your dog secure in one room with all his/her familiar belongings, i.e. bed, toys etc.

Have a good look around the new garden and identify all possible escape routes and ensure they are fenced securely before allowing your dog outside.

Settling in:

Ensure you have a new collar tag for your dog with the new address details written on it.

Please make sure you notify Foal Farm Farm of your new address and contact details as soon as possible. This will ensure that our microchipping records are kept up to date and you can be quickly contacted should your dog go missing and be returned to Foal Farm.

Introduce your dog to regular callers, i.e. postman, neighbours etc as soon as you can.

Question 4: How Do I Get My Dog to Travel Comfortably By Road?

Accustom your dog gradually to road travel, by first taking him/her on short journeys.

Ensure that your dog always has plenty of ventilation and shade in the car and that fresh drinking water is readily available.

Make sure that you never leave your dog unattended in a car for long periods of time, especially in hot weather.

On long journeys make sure you make regular stops to exercise your dog, always clean up after your dog in a public place.

Make sure your dog wears a collar tag with your current contact details written on it. The Control of Dogs Order 1992 advises that any dog in a public place should wear a collar tag with written contact details of the owner on it.

Train your dog not to bark or move around excessively whilst in the vehicle as this can be very distracting to the driver.

Transport your dog safely either with a dog guard/cage or dog harnesses.

Before you travel, ensure that your dog is in good health.

Question 5: What Laws Affect Owning a Dog?

When you own a dog it is very important to be aware of any laws that affect you and your dog.

Identifying your dog:

The Control of Dogs Order 1992 advises that dogs that are in a public place must wear a collar tag that has the owners name and address written or engraved on it.

All dogs homed by Foal Farm are microchipped before they leave us for their new homes. Microchipping is a very quick and simple procedure which offers the peace of mind that should your dog wander off it can easily be traced back to Foal Farm. In the event that you do lose your dog you must inform us as soon as possible. It is also vital that you notify us of any change of address; otherwise we may not be able to contact you should your dog be found and returned to Foal Farm.

Dangerous Dogs Act:

Your dog should always be kept under proper control.

The Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 states that if a dog is dangerously out of control in a public place a criminal offence is being committed by the owner and/or the person in charge of the dog. If the dog injures a person (and this can be as simple as jumping up and scratching someone), the penalty can include a prison sentence, a ban on having custody of a dog and for the dog there is a presumption that it will be destroyed.

Remember keep proper control of your dog at all times:

If your dog defecates you should pick it up immediately! Failure to do so is an offence under the Dogs (Fouling of Land) Act 1996, which could result in you being issued with a fine of up to £1,000.

Be aware of local Bylaws:

When you get a dog make sure you check up on any local bylaws that may affect you and your dog. Local bylaws are often implemented to make it an offence for your dog to be on a road without it being on a lead. The Road Traffic Act states that dogs have to be kept on a lead when on a designated highway. Ask your local highways authority which roads are designated.

The Countryside Code states that dogs must be kept under control at all times when out walking and must be on a lead whenever there is livestock nearby. If your dog worries livestock the farmer has the right to stop your dog (in some circumstances this means the dog can be shot).

Vehicle travel:

Under the Road Traffic Act 1988, if a dog is injured in a car accident, the driver must stop and give his/her details to the person in charge of the dog. If there is no person in charge of the dog the incident must be reported to the police no longer than 24 hours later.

According to the Road Traffic Act 1988, dogs travelling in vehicles should not be a nuisance or in any way distract the driver during a journey.

Question 6: How Do I Care For An Older Dog

A dog's needs will change as they get older; the average life span of a dog is in the region of 10 years. This can vary a lot depending on the size and breed of the dog.

Exercise:

An older dog will not need as much exercise as it did when it was younger, but you should make sure they do still get enough. They stay fitter and "younger" if they are kept suitably exercised.

When returning home from a wet walk ensure you dry your dog to help prevent health problems such as arthritis.

Bladder control often reduces in older dogs and they will need to relieve themselves more frequently, older dogs therefore should not be left alone for long periods.

Older dogs may benefit from a woollen jacket to go outside in; some dog's coats get thinner and more porous with age and are therefore less able to withstand the rain and cold.

Feeding:

Older dogs need smaller, more frequent meals. Maintain a good healthy weight for your dog in accordance with the weight range for its breed/size etc.

Feed your dog a specific diet for elderly dogs, some dogs may need more palatable food as they get older. Your dog may also benefit from having tastier things added to meals to keep him/her eating.

Make sure you use a food type to suit old teeth if your dog has lost his/her teeth with age.

Health:

Regular health checks are important in an older dog; they allow you and your vet to look out for any problems. Some problems a dog may have shrugged off when younger could become more serious as they get older unless treated early.

Groom your dog regularly as coats may get thicker and more difficult to manage unless carefully looked after.

Recognise when it is time to say goodbye to your dog and listen to the advice your vet gives you. It can be very difficult to see things in a clear light when you are close to the situation

Question 7: Do I Need to get my dog Vaccinated?

When you adopt your dog or puppy we advise that he is taken to your vet. It is important for you to register as a client and your pet as a patient in case you ever need help in an emergency. Your vet will also be able to inform you about vaccinations, worming and the general health of your new dog. Parvovirus, Distemper, Leptospirosis, Hepatitis (Canine Adeno virus), Parainfluenza and Bordetellosis (Kennel Cough) can all be vaccinated against. Most of these diseases are life-threatening, and even if treated can leave your pet with permanent problems. It is not worth hoping to chance that your dog will be lucky – **get him vaccinated and be sure.**

Puppies and dogs which have never been vaccinated before require a course of vaccinations, until this has been done they should be kept isolated from other dogs and places other dogs have been. Protection only lasts one year so it is vital to ensure your dog always gets his annual booster on time.

Question 8: How Do I Deal with Fleas, Worms and Parasites?

Worms;- Always check your dog's faeces for evidence of worms (and for any other problems such as diarrhoea) so he can be treated accordingly. Roundworms are sometimes excreted whole and are creamy white, looking like short lengths of spaghetti, whilst tapeworms only shed segments (containing thousands of eggs) into the faeces. These look like grains of rice and may even be wriggling. Worm eggs cannot be seen with the naked eye and apparently normal faeces could contain many eggs of several kinds. As puppies can be born with roundworm it is important to begin worming early. Tapeworms are also common and because their life cycle involves the flea both should be treated for.

Fleas;- If when grooming your dog you notice small soot- like particles in his coat these could be flea droppings (and will stain red if brushed onto damp paper). Fleas incidently only feed from your pet, they actually live and breed in carpets, bedding and wherever else your pet frequents. To eradicate the pest totally, your home as well as the animal must be treated.

Lice and Mites;- These live and breed on the animal causing inflammation and irritation of the skin with eventual loss of fur. Mange is caused by mites burrowing in and out of the skin where they lay their eggs and repeated treatments are usually necessary.

Note;- Products sold by your vet are stronger and more effective than those available in pet shops and supermarkets. It's worth spending a little more to get the best treatment. Re-infestation by parasites is highly likely so all should be treated for routinely.

Question 9: Should I Groom My Dog?

All dogs should be regularly brushed to keep them clean. Always check his ears, eyes and teeth, and that his claws are not getting too long. If you see or smell anything unusual seek the advise of your vet before it becomes a real problem.

Question 10: Should I Neuter My Dog?

We ask that when your dog is old enough that he or she is neutered. Every day hundreds of dogs are being put to sleep because there are not enough homes for them all. Spaying is usual at about 6 months of age or after she has had her first season. Spayed bitches avoid many problems like breast cancer, womb infection and phantom pregnancies. Dogs can be castrated from about 6 months of age and is especially recommended for those which are oversexed or aggressive.

Question 11: How Do I Toilet Train My Dog?

Whilst your dog has been at Foal Farm he has been used to going to the toilet whenever and wherever he wants. It will therefore take a little time and patience before he gets back to being clean again, especially overnight.

Puppies of course will need to be housetrained. Until the puppy is fully vaccinated and can go outside newspaper will have to be used. Place this in a suitable place such as the kitchen or utility room and place the puppy there whenever he indicates the need. Usually puppies need to go shortly after waking as well as after each feed. Praise your puppy heartily when he performs in the correct place, some people repeat a command word like 'be busy' so that later on you can allow your pet only to mess where it is suitable ie; the gutter or preferably your own garden. Any fouling of parks or other public places is undesirable and a health hazard especially to children. The law now requires that you clear up after your pet and dispose of the faeces properly (usually in the bins provided).

Question 12: How Do I Train My Dog?

Training should be a pleasure for you and your dog. Always concentrate on praising the good. Use simple words and commands and don't expect miracles. Patience and understanding are essential as young dogs are not able to concentrate for long periods of time. Don't try to teach him anything for longer than about 10 minutes without a break. If possible join a local class with your dog when he is old enough and learn together.

It is at least essential that your dog learns a few basic commands for his own safety and to make him a pleasure to live with.

'NO', 'STAY' and 'COME HERE' are extremely important commands and could even save his life if he is ever in a dangerous situation.

'HEEL', 'SIT', 'BED' and 'DOWN' are also useful – there's nothing more exhausting than being dragged along the pavement (or dangerous if he decides to take you across a busy road).

Many other commands can be taught and will help you form a strong bond with your dog as he sees you as his pack leader and master.

Question 13: How Do I Feed My Dog or Puppy?

Please ask what your puppy has been used to eating at Foal Farm and at what times so that you can follow the same routine.

Diarrhoea is likely for the first 24 hours whilst your puppy settles into his new environment, it is also caused by changes in diet. However, veterinary advice should be obtained if the diarrhoea is severe or persists. Rice and chicken is a good diet for dogs with loose motions as it contains good quality proteins and is easily digested. Introduce any new foods gradually over several days thus allowing your puppy to adjust.

Keep to a routine as your puppy will look forward to his meals and feed as much as he can comfortably eat in about 10 minutes, his stomach should be full but never bloated. Any leftovers should be removed and discarded.

Fresh water must be available at all times.

Up to 8 weeks	5 meals/day (2 milky, 3 meat & cereal)
8 – 12 weeks	4 meals/day (1 milky, 3 meat & cereal)
3 – 6 months	3 meals/day (meat & cereal)
6 months to adulthood	2 meals/day (meat & cereal)

Puppies stop growing at different ages depending on their breed and size. As a rough guide; small dogs at 6 – 12 months, medium dogs at 12 – 18 months and large dogs at 18 – 22 months.

Once your puppy has stopped growing he should be content with just one meal a day. However, it is common to divide the total amount fed into 2 meals depending on the amount of exercise, lifestyle and size of your dog.

OVERWEIGHT DOGS

It is not kind to allow your dog to become overweight by indulging him with too much food – you could actually shorten his lifespan. Don't give him titbits between meals or allow him to beg from your plate (after all you don't beg from his bowl do you!). Fat dogs suffer from all kinds of problems:- heart disease, arthritis, low exercise tolerance and overheating in summer.

Low calorie diets are available from your vet, or you could gradually increase the amount of exercise given (if your dog is otherwise healthy), in order to match his energy output with the amount of food he eats. Otherwise just do the obvious and reduce the amount of food you give him until his target weight is gradually reached.

UNDERWEIGHT DOGS

Starved dogs usually have shrunken stomachs so it is important to feed smaller more frequent meals. Complete diets are good for putting weight on thin dogs. Too much tinned food can cause diarrhoea, so is sometimes best avoided at this stage. The diet may be supplemented with pasta, boiled potato, eggs or cheese in small quantities until the correct weight is reached.

MILKY MEALS FOR VERY YOUNG PUPPIES

Avoid cow's milk as it is often a cause of diarrhoea, much better to use a specialised powdered milk like Lactol or Welpi. Warm water can be used instead if the puppy has loose motions.

Mix with Farex, Farleys Rusks, Ready Brek or weetabix and feed as breakfast and supper. As your puppy gets older he will not need to be fed milky feeds so these are the first meals to be cut out.

MEAT AND CEREAL

These are mixed in equal quantities until the puppy reaches adulthood when a ratio of 2 parts cereal to 1 part meat is quite unusual.

Cereals and other carbohydrates provide energy. Give as cooked potato, cooked rice or buy dog biscuit. Special puppy size biscuits can be bought and moistened if necessary. There are many brands of mixers to choose from, but all must be fed with meat as alone they would make an unbalanced diet.

Meat makes the meal appetising and also provides protein and fat. Tripe, cooked chicken, white fish (cod), cooked beef (chopped up small) and tinned food are all suitable. Some tinned meats are especially for puppies and are ideal as they are rich in all the nutrients a growing puppy needs.

Avoid feeding leftovers, some human foods are too rich and spicy for dogs and **NEVER** feed lamb, chicken and pork bones – these can splinter and cause a lot of problems (often involving a trip to the vet).

COMPLETE DIETS

These are usually designed for the adult dog and may be tinned like Chappie and Happidog, or produced dry in sacks for mixing with water eg; Vitalin, Valumix or Omega. However, some have been produced specially for puppies and you may find this a convenient way to feed. Some dogs find complete diets boring and won't eat them unless mixed with a little meat or gravy.

SUPPLEMENTS

Tinned dog food, dog biscuits and complete diets already contain the vitamins and minerals your dog needs. It is not a good idea to over supplement any diet so instructions on prepared tablets and powders like SA37, Pet tabs and Canovel should always be carefully followed.

Scrambled egg, grated cheese, cod liver oil, cooked green and root vegetables are all suitable in small quantities.

There are also many herbal mixtures available like Denes Garlic capsules which may be useful from time to time, in fact the market in supplements is vast and varied and not always cheap.

Try to ensure your dog's basic diet is balanced and of good quality in the first instance and you shouldn't go far wrong.