

***Info shared by Pitbull SA.***

***Manjaro APBT kennel.***

***South Africa.***

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***The new puppy.***

Taken from [Dr. Angie Krause, DVM](#)

**Getting a new puppy is exciting and nerve wracking.**

*See related articles on my website.*

Most new dog owners want to do the right thing for their new puppy and ensure a good start in life.

There are so many things to consider and so much conflicting information.

See related articles about your puppy on this website.

**Diet.**

See related articles on my website.

We all know that what we put in our own bodies has a huge impact on our health.

This is true for our dogs as well.

Nutrition is paramount in achieving and maintaining optimal health.

Puppies should be fed a diet with the least amount of processing possible.

At the very minimum a high quality puppy kibble with fresh whole foods added is a great start.

A home cooked or raw diet may be even better.

If you go the kibble route, consider using a best brand without grain (corn, wheat etc.) or toxic preservatives.

You can add fresh whole foods such as scrambled eggs, carrots, lean meats (boneless, skinless chicken breast) etc.

Adding cultured foods is also a great way to get vitamins, minerals and beneficial bacteria for your pup.

See related articles about fermented food and recipes on this website.

Home cooked diets can be a great alternative to a raw or kibble diet.

See related articles on this website.

If you have the time resources, this can be a very rewarding way to nourish your dog.

It is important that you balance the vitamins and minerals in the diet.

Feeding a variety of foods is not a sufficient method for achieving a balanced diet.

You might like to feed a raw diet, there are many options for you to choose from.

Commercially available raw diets are also available, some come frozen and require time (not much) to thaw before each meal.

Raw diets also come in a dehydrated and freeze dried forms.

These can be more convenient as they only require water to be added before the meal.

Remember there is no one diet that works for every dog and also various choices.

If your puppy has a sensitive digestive system, consider a grain free or home cooked diet.

When changing diets for your sensitive dog, don't forget to transition slowly.

## **Vaccines.**

*{See related articles on my website.}*

This is a really controversial topic!

No matter what your opinions/beliefs around vaccinations are, it is important that you are educated.

If you choose to vaccinate or not vaccinate it is imperative that you know the risks associated with each choice.

To consider when evaluating each vaccine.

Is the vaccine recommended by your veterinarian?

Is the vaccine a core or non-core vaccine?

What disease is the vaccine preventing?

What are possible consequences of my dog contracting this disease?

Is this disease transmissible to people?

Is this disease fatal to animals or people?

What is the prevalence of the disease in my area?

How does my dog contract this disease?

What are the risks of the vaccine?

How effective is the vaccine?

Remember to take it one vaccine at a time.

*{See related articles on my website.}*

This is a great time to discuss these questions with your veterinarian.

If they are not willing to educate you and help answer these questions, find a new vet.

Being informed is imperative.

After you get through the puppy phases, vaccine choices will become easier and less frequent.

You might first want to have a titer test done ore actually give the vaccination to ensure if the dog has protection.

A blood titer is simply a measurement of how many antibodies are present in the blood to a certain disease.

If you are deviating from your veterinarian's recommended schedule for whatever the reason it is recommend doing a titer test to ensure immunity.

### **Spay/Neuter.**

*See related articles on my website.*

There is a growing body of evidence that suggest that spaying or neutering your dog before they are done growing can cause orthopedic problems later in life.

One such problem is ACL injury (knee injury) in larger active dogs.

When we take away sex hormones before a dog is done growing, the growth plate's close later and the long bones are longer.

This changes the angles of the joints and may contribute to injury.

At 12-14 months, we know that the growth plates are generally closed.

At and before this age you would endure at least one heat cycle.

Then it is important that you keep both female and male dogs in close proximity to avoid unwanted pregnancy.

### **Socialization.**

*See related articles on my website.*

This is perhaps the most critical and most overlooked area of raising a puppy.

Exposing your puppy to many people, places, things and other animals can having lasting benefit.

Dogs (puppies and adults)

Cats

Bikes (with people riding them)

Skate boards (with people riding them)

Children (supervise closely)

People

Men

Women

Wearing hats including baseball hats

Joggers

The more positive experiences your puppy can have with the list above, the better.

### **Training.**

*See related articles on my website.*

The amount of training you NEED to do for your puppy is up to you.

Consider what you want your puppy to be able to do in life.

For example, my dog knows how to sit and knows the command 'leave it'.

For our lifestyle, that is functional.

My dogs doesn't go off leash but off the leach training can be essential if that is to what you want to expose your dog to.

Therefore teaching the dog recall would be imperative.

Here are three considerations when making a training plan:

**Size.** If you have a puppy that will grow into a big dog, consider teaching them to walk nicely "in place "on a leash without pulling.

You may also need to consider helping your dog learn not to jump on people.

**Breed.** Many working breeds can have unwanted behaviors when their mental ability is not utilized.

Teaching them only to sit and walk on a leash may not be enough to maintain mental health.

**Lifestyle.** Consider what you want to do with your dog.

Do you want to be able to travel with your dog?

Would you like to be able to take your dog to other people's houses or to a dog show?

Would you like to play Frisbee at the park or a safe place?

Go on backpacking trips?

Look at your desired outcome and work backwards.

Keep in mind that not all dogs will be able to share in all these activities – especially a high prey driven APBT.

No matter if you hire a trainer or do it yourself, keep all reinforcement POSITIVE.

Negative reinforcement training is so damaging.

So, don't do it!

### **Crate training.**

Many people think crate training is cruel.

While I agree leaving a big dog in a crate all day every day is inhumane, there are huge benefits to helping your dog feel comfortable in a crate. When dogs have a familiar safe place, their stress can be greatly reduced.

When guests arrive, the carpets are being cleaned or a new animal is introduced to the house, a crate can be a lifesaver.

I found crate sleeping for pups very useful – up to a certain age.

Feed your dog in their crate.

Allow your dog to sleep in the crate at night.

Make sure the crate is large enough for your dog to get up turn around.

When you are potty training your puppy, ensure that the crate isn't too big.

When teach crate entering, give a treat or praise to allow positive reinforcement.