

General Information

Shedding - If kept in good condition your Chesapeake should shed twice a year. (Labradors will shed once a year heavily). In late spring he will shed his heavy winter coat and get in a shorter, lighter one for the summer. In late Fall he will shed the summer coat and get in the heavy winter coat for cold weather.

Ears & Coat - At least every other week clean the ears with a moistened cloth, or you can use an ear cleaning solution then wipe it out. Brush the coat with a soft brush getting out all mats and checking for fleas and ticks. Use the product called Frontline Top Spot, applied once a month, for prevention of lymes disease from ticks and for flea protection.

Monthly cut the toenails keeping them short. Hose off with fresh water after swimming in salt water, as the salt will dry the coat. Bathe only when really muddy or dirty using a non-harsh quality dog shampoo. Do not put a flea collar on a pup less than six months and I suggest never using them. They can cause skin irritation in the collar area and if you are using Frontline topical applications for fleas/ticks this would be too much to use a collar and unnecessary. Also, children will grab the collar getting chemical residue on their hands and then put their hands in their own mouths

Treats - Read my information on chewing and what products and bones to use or not use. Do not give dog treats to young puppies for at least 2 months after you take them home. These treats are not needed and only give the puppy diarrhea. The bones mentioned in the written material will help keep his teeth clean and in good shape. Treats are for the owners satisfaction not puppies! A good pat with a "good boy" is plenty!

Collar – you do not need to put a collar on a 7 week old puppy. He is too little for a few weeks to be expected to walk on a leash. Use can use a flat buckle collar or a rolled leather collar, as it won't cut the coat. Use a chain or choke collar for obedience training and do not leave it on the dog as it can get caught and pull tight and choke him. Use the choke collar when you are correcting for unwanted behavior.

Walking and Jogging - A pup under a year should NEVER be subjected to forced exercise or over exercising. A young puppy should be free to follow you and scamper around but not taken on long walks. They tire quickly and will only learn bad habits...such as lagging behind, not coming when you call (because they are tired) or they are tired and they want to do their own thing. When much older, walking a mile or two at a casual pace helps develop muscles for both dog and owner. Jogging or jumping should never be done before the age of 1 year. The growth plates are not closed and injury or bone problems can easily occur. These dogs are not made for long distance jogging like the owners are! Several miles as an older dog should be the maximum. The setters and spaniels are built differently and bred for this and the retriever is not. Their function is to run out a short distance and bring back critters to you so keep that in mind.

Never leave your dog in a parked car with the windows rolled up. Dogs have died in minutes from heat stroke under these conditions. Even with the windows slightly open the temperature in the car will rise rapidly.

Do not let him run loose. It is against the law and it will enable him to be stolen, injured or possibly poisoned. Provide an outdoor fenced area for play and exercise. Retrievers are active, and were originally bred for hunting. They need plenty of space for outdoor exercise protected from traffic and unfriendly dogs and people. The fenced yard need not be huge or expensive or difficult to install. Your pup should never be left alone in a fenced yard. No matter how sturdy you think your fence is, some dogs are escape artists. Leaving him alone also lets him think about himself with things such as digging.

Crying at Night

Your puppy wants to be with the rest of the "pack" at bedtime. This behavior is highly adaptive from the standpoint of dog behavior. When a puppy becomes separated from its pack it will whine, thereby allowing it to be found and returned to the rest of the group. This is why so many books on puppies and dog behavior strongly recommend that you allow your puppy/dog to sleep with you in your room to reduce the likelihood of crying at night. Try moving the crate into your bedroom. If your puppy whines, first make sure it doesn't have to go outside to eliminate. This means getting up and taking it outside. If it whines again, or doesn't need to go outside, bang your hand on the crate door and say something like "NO, SLEEP" or "NO, QUIET". If the puppy continues to whine, try giving him a toy or chew toy and then simply ignore any continued whining. If you don't reinforce the "no whining" by comforting him (other than to take him outside -- which is OK), he will eventually learn to settle down. Also, be sure to have a vigorous play session JUST BEFORE you are going to go to bed. This should poop it out and it will sleep much more soundly. Alternatively, you can designate a spot for your puppy on the bedroom floor. Keep the door closed or put a leash on it to keep it close to the bed. When it

whines or moves about, take it out to eliminate. Otherwise, as above, say "NO, SLEEP." A ticking clock nearby, and a t-shirt of yours from the laundry may comfort puppies that cannot sleep in the bedroom.

Housetraining - If the dog makes a mess in the house - slap YOURSELF. You didn't do your job, and that's in no way the dog's fault. You let him down. If you have to supervise him and not let him "wander off". The idea is to take advantage of a rule of dog behavior: a dog will not generally eliminate where it sleeps. Exceptions to this rule are: Dogs that are in crates that are too large (so the dog can eliminate at one end and sleep at the other end). Dogs that unfortunately have lived in small cages during critical phases of development and have had to learn to eliminate in the cage. Dogs that have blankets or other soft, absorbent items in the crate with them. Dogs that are left for too long in the crate and cannot hold it any longer.

If the crate is too big, you can partition the crate off with pegboard wired to the sides to make the crate the correct size, and move it back as your puppy grows. To house train a dog using a crate; establish a schedule where the dog is either outside or in its crate when it feels the need to eliminate. Using a mild correction (saying "No" in a firm, even tone) when the dog eliminates inside and exuberant, wild praise when the dog eliminates outside will eventually teach the dog that it is better to go outside than in. Some owners correct more severely inside, but this is extremely detrimental to the character of puppies. To make the dog notice the difference between eliminating inside and outside, you must praise more outside rather than correcting more inside. The crate is crucial because the dog will "hold it" while in the crate, so it is likely to have to eliminate when it is taken out. Since you know when your dog has to eliminate, you take it out and it eliminates immediately, and is praised immediately. Doing this consistently is ideal reinforcement for the behavior of going out to eliminate. In addition, the dog is always supervised in the house, so the dog is always corrected for eliminating indoors. This strengthens the inhibition against eliminating inside.

In general, consistency is MUCH more important than severe corrections when training a dog. Before a dog understands what you want, severe corrections are not useful and can be quite DETRIMENTAL. Crating allows the owner to have total control over the dog in order to achieve consistency. Hopefully, this will prevent the need (and the desire) to use more severe corrections. Housetraining is relatively simple with puppies. The most important thing to understand is that it takes time. Young puppies cannot wait to go to the bathroom. When they have to go, they have to go NOW. Therefore, until they are about four months old, you can only encourage good behavior and try to prevent bad behavior.

First rule of housetraining: puppies have to go to the bathroom immediately upon waking up. Second rule of housetraining: puppies have to go to the bathroom immediately after eating. With these two rules goes the indisputable fact that until a puppy is housetrained, you MUST confine them or watch them to prevent accidents. This means that the puppy should have a place to sleep where it cannot get out. Understand that a puppy cannot go all night without eliminating, so when it cries in the night, you must get up and take it out and wait until it goes. Then enthusiastically praise it and put it back to bed. In the morning, take it out again and let it do its stuff and praise it. After it is fed and after it wakes up at any point, take it out to eliminate. Make it aware that this is not playtime, but understand that puppies get pretty excited about things like grass and snails and leaves and forget what they came outside to do! Use the same spot each time if you can, the smell will help the puppy remember what it is to do, especially after 12 weeks of age.

To make life easier for you later on, use a key phrase just when the puppy starts to eliminate. Try "hurry up," "do it," or some similar phrase (pick one and use it). The puppy will begin to eliminate on command, and this can be especially useful later, such as making sure the dog eliminates before a car ride or a walk in the park. Don't let the puppy loose in the house unless it has just gone outside, and/or you are watching it extremely closely for signs that it has to go. The key to housetraining is preventing accidents. If no accidents occur (ha!), then the dog never learns it has an option other than going outside.

Reinforcing Good Behavior - Puppies want attention. They will do a lot to get that attention -- even if it is negative! Thus, if you scold your puppy for doing things you don't want it to do, and ignore it when it is being good, you are reinforcing the wrong things. Ignore the bad things (or stop it without yelling or scolding) and enthusiastically praise it when its doing what you want, even if it's as simple as sitting and looking at you, or quietly chewing one of its toys. This can be difficult to do, as it is essentially reversing all your normal reactions. But it is very important: you will wind up with a puppy that pays attention to you and is happy to do what you want, if it understands you.

Canine Heartworm Disease - Of all canine parasites, heartworms are the most life-threatening. Untreated, they are eventually fatal. Heartworms live primarily in the heart of the dog, where, each day, mature females release thousands of tiny microfilaria (baby heartworms). Although these microfilaria may be active for years,

they can't develop further in the dog without an intermediate host: a mosquito. A mosquito ingests the microfilaria when it bites an infected dog, and incubates them for about two weeks. Then the insect bites another dog, passing along the infected larvae. They continue to develop and grow in the dog, eventually finding their way to the heart.

Symptoms: Heartworms usually cause no outward signs until the disease is advanced. The dog will gradually lose weight and stamina and often develop a cough that worsens with exercise. In the later stages, breathing can become quite painful or difficult. Large numbers of adult heartworms, which can be 14 inches long, can restrict blood flow in the lungs, kidneys and liver, stressing the heart and causing organ failure. In acute infections, symptoms appear suddenly and death may occur in 24 to 72 hours. If the disease is caught early (well before clinical signs appear), treatment is possible; however, the treatment is occasionally fatal, extends over several months, and is frequently expensive.

Prevention: Prevention with monthly medication is better than treatment of the disease. If medication is started and stopped, dog must be tested for heartworm before starting the medication again. Giving the medication to an infected dog can cause shock and possible sudden death. Once your dog is confirmed by blood test to be negative, you can use a preventative medication. Start this medication immediately and continue it all year round for the rest of your dog's life. Newborn puppies should be started on the preventative by 9 weeks of age, usually at the time of your first trip to the vet after bringing home your new puppy.

Owners - An owner should be willing to provide adequate and proper shade and housing for his dog when outside. An owner should agree to properly and sufficiently feed his dog and not neglect him in any manner and in no manner mistreat his pet. The dog shall receive adequate and proper veterinary care throughout its lifetime with all inoculations maintained. The owner should let the breeder know of any titles that are completed by his dog and send pictures!

Hip Dysplasia - All pure bred dogs have an incidence of some hereditary defects. The knowledgeable breeder is aware of the problems that exist in his breed, and he takes measures to assure that he is not using unsound animals in his breeding program. As in larger breeds, a common problem is hip dysplasia. Dysplasia is a malformation of the hip joint, which in some cases can be severe enough to be disabling for the dog. Many dogs have hip dysplasia even though it is not evident to the naked eye. The only way to determine whether a dog is dysplastic is to have its hips x-rayed. A veterinarian takes the x-rays and then the film is sent to OFA. A board certified radiologist evaluates the x-rays and gives a certification in writing with a number if the hips are of good quality. X-rays taken of a dog age two or older are believed to be 95% accurate in diagnosis of the disease. You will be interested in purchasing a puppy whose parents have had their hips x-rayed. You should never purchase a puppy from an un x-rayed parent. While no disability may be visible in the parents, a minor problem to them may be compounded in the breeding of the two of them. Or working and hunting conditions will cause dogs with a problem to be lame. Your puppy may not x-ray normal, but having come from normal parents greatly enhances his chances of being normal or only minimally affected by hip dysplasia.

Eye Disease - Retrievers have an incidence of two types of hereditary eye disease -- a hereditary cataract and progressive retinal atrophy (PRA). Conscientious breeders are making sure their breeding stock is checked at least annually by a veterinarian ophthalmologist -- not just a general practicing veterinarian.

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