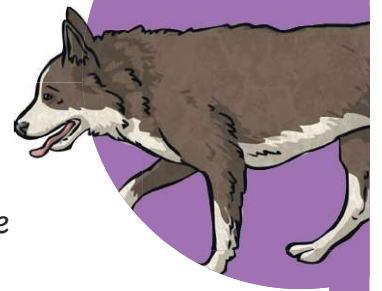


Pet Care of a Dog

Dogs are hugely popular pets. In fact, there are eight and a half million dogs being kept as pets in the UK alone.

They are known as 'man's best friend', but how should dogs be cared for and what do we actually know about them?



Food and drink

Dogs need a well-balanced diet of meat and plant-based foods. They need one meal a day, unless the vet gives different advice for your type of dog. Their teeth are well-developed, with sharp teeth for tearing meat and molars for grinding other foods.

They must be able to get to clean, fresh water at all times, or else they would become very poorly.

Environment

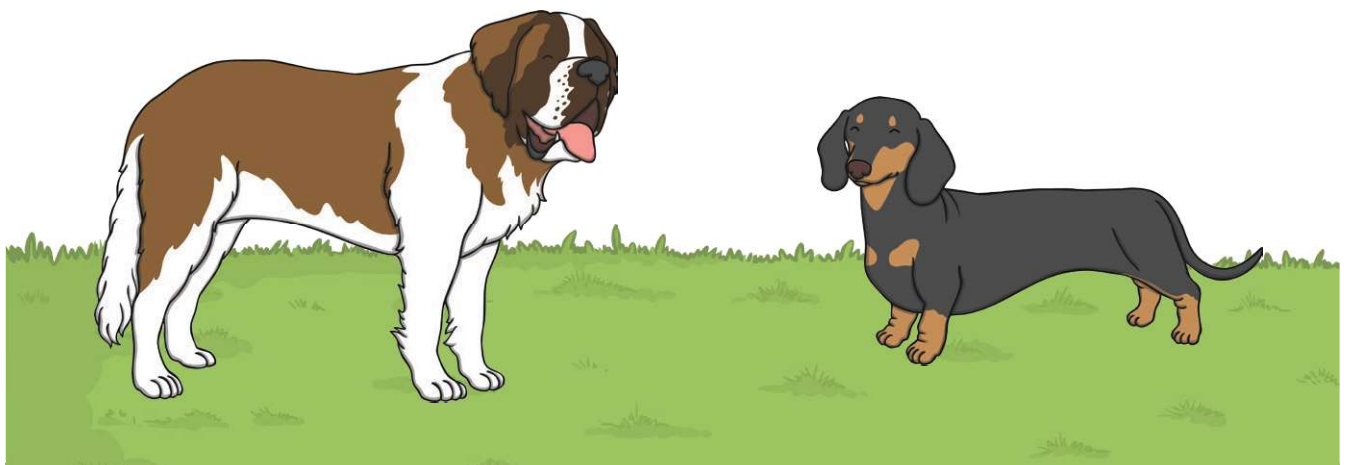
Dogs need a comfortable, clean and quiet environment to sleep, undisturbed.

Dogs need a place where they can go if they are frightened. They have different personalities, and rescue dogs might have had bad experiences, so some get scared more easily than others.



Did You Know?

Dogs descend from the wolf!



Dog behaviour

Dogs are intelligent, playful animals, and need to be exercised and have toys to play with. There are 400 different breeds of dog, and each breed has different traits particular to its breed. Some are bred to be small and fast, to find rabbits down their burrows; others are big and strong, bred for pulling things. From herding to hunting, retrieving and tracking, dogs have instincts, meaning they need to be able to play, fetch, run and jump to stay happy and healthy.



Did You Know?

Dogs can hear sounds four times quieter than humans can hear!

Changes in behaviour

A dog which is licking their lips with their ears back, and not looking at you, might be feeling worried.

A dog which is lying down, cowering with their ears flat, showing their teeth and their tail down between their legs, could be feeling unhappy or angry.



Training a dog

Dogs need to be given treats when they have done something well. They should not be shouted at, as they won't understand this behaviour. They need regular, clear instructions.

Dangers to dogs

Dogs are curious, and need to be watched to make sure they are safe at all times. Some items are poisonous to dogs:

- Foods like chocolate, onions, raisins, grapes and sultanas are very poisonous for dogs, causing them to become very ill if they eat them.
- Slug and rat poison can make dogs very ill and can even result in death!



Helpful dogs

Some dogs can be trained to be assistance dogs. They are trained to help disabled people around the house and with their shopping, and dogs that can find explosives, drugs and even detect illnesses like cancer.



Questions

1. How do we know dogs are a popular pet in the UK?

2. Describe what and how you would feed a dog.

3. Name two factors which might contribute to why some dogs might get scared.

4. What might a dachshund have the right characteristics for, and why?

5. Imagine you are a vet. An owner brings their dog in and says the dog keeps looking around, lies down a lot and is licking its lips more than usual. What might be wrong with it and how do you know?

6. Which two points in the section Training a Dog do you think are the most important, and why?

7. What word has the author used which means that dogs are interested in things?

8. Why should you not feed a dog chocolate buttons?

9. How could a dog help a person in a wheelchair in their home?

10. Instead of this text being called "Pet Care for Dogs", think of a different title.
