

Hawkesbury Companion Animal Shelter

Adoption Kit





This document contains important information.
If you do not understand it, contact the
Telephone Interpreter Service on 131 450.



Hawkesbury Companion Animal Shelter

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Office Hours: Monday to Friday 9am-12:30pm and
2pm-4:30pm
Saturday 9:30am-11:30am
Sunday 7am-9am
Public Holidays 7am-9am



Table of Contents

Section 1	When you bring your new cat or kitten home	1
	Settling in	1
	Nutrition	1
	Vaccination	1
	Worming	1
	Fleas and ticks.....	1
	Abscesses	2
	Training.....	2
	Grooming.....	2
	Housing.....	2
Section 2	When you bring your new puppy or dog home.....	2
Section 3	Having fun with your new puppy.....	3
	Record the milestones in your puppy's life!	4
Section 4	Keeping your dog healthy	4
	A healthy dog should	4
	Vaccination	4
	Animals purchased from the Hawkesbury Companion Animal Shelter.....	4
	Worming	5
	Fleas	5
	Paralysis ticks.....	5
Section 5	Training and exercise	5
	Obedience classes	6
	Agility Classes	6
Section 6	Health and safety tips for people and pets	6
	Living disease free with your pet	6
	Avoiding dog bites	6
	If a strange dog starts barking at you	6
Section 7	Your pet and the law.....	7
Section 8	Keeping your pet safe.....	7
Section 9	Caring for your pet while you're on holidays.....	7
Section 10	Volunteering at the Companion Animal Shelter	8
	How to become a Volunteer	8
	Things you need to understand about Volunteering	9
Section 11	My Pet's Milestones and Health Information	10



Section 1 When you bring your new cat or kitten home

Settling in

Before you bring your adopted cat or kitten home, prepare its sleeping area. The basic requirement is a warm and secure place which can be anything from a commercially available bed or basket, to a cardboard box with an entrance hole and a blanket.

Food and water bowls should be provided and placed in a familiar and safe area, a litter tray should also be provided. Cats are fussy about cleanliness and will not use a soiled litter tray so it is essential to clean the tray regularly.

Cats like to explore their new surrounds but it is advisable to keep the cat or kitten indoors for at least the first few weeks. In the case of a kitten at least a month is recommended.

Cats are also naturally playful animals and enjoy having a few simple toys to play with.

Nutrition

A balanced diet is essential for your cat's health and wellbeing. An all meat diet is not sufficient and will result in your cat or kitten suffering nutritional deficiencies and growth problems. High quality prepared cat food (both canned and dry) is the most reliable and convenient way to ensure your cat has a balanced diet.

Kittens have different nutritional requirements to adult cats and it is preferable to feed your kitten specially formulated kitten foods in both canned and dry forms. Milk is unnecessary for cats and may cause diarrhoea in some cats which have a lactose intolerance; a low lactose cat milk is available at supermarkets.

Vaccination

It is recommended you speak to your vet regarding vaccinating your kitten.

Worming

Cats and kittens need to be wormed regularly to control roundworms, hookworms and tapeworms which live in the intestine. A variety of tablets, liquids and pastes are available.

Fleas and ticks

These are often a problem during the warmer months. When treating a cat or kitten for fleas, only use products specially formulated for cats and follow the directions on the packaging. The cat's bedding and any other pets should be treated at the same time.

Paralysis ticks occur in some parts of Australia (including the Hawkesbury) and these can be fatal to cats. You should check your cat daily and remove any ticks and consult your vet if you do find ticks.



Abscesses

These are common in cats due to fighting and can show up as a swelling or discharging sore anywhere on the cat. Veterinary attention is required to treat abscesses.

Training

Cats are highly intelligent and can be trained to show desirable behaviour rather than undesirable behaviour. A scratching post should discourage your cat from scratching your furniture. But if it does scratch items other than a post, a firm 'no' and a spray of water should stop such behaviour.

Grooming

Cats spend a great deal of time grooming themselves but long haired cats should be brushed and combed several times a week.

Housing

It is recommended that you keep your cat inside at night, to prevent the cat from roaming and possibly killing wildlife.

Section 2 When you bring your new puppy or dog home


Having considered all the issues around the adoption of your new dog or puppy, it's time to introduce your new pet to your home and family.

If you have adopted a puppy, you'll need to make special arrangements to ensure it feels safe and secure in its new environment. Because your puppy has left the security and comfort of its mother and siblings, it is now totally reliant on you for all its needs - food, warmth and protection from things that might frighten it.

You have by now decided whether your new dog or puppy is to live in its own kennel outside or inside the house. In either case the most basic need is a snug, warm and secure bed. If this is to be inside, the bed should be in a confined area, such as a laundry, and the dog or puppy needs to know from the very start that this room or kennel is their place and they are safe when in it. A kennel should be warm, dry and off the ground, close to the house and not in a thoroughfare.

It is not unusual for a puppy to fret and perhaps whimper for the first few nights in new surrounds. But there are a few simple things you can do to help it to feel more comfortable, such as placing a hot water bottle and a small transistor radio or ticking clock under his bedding. The warmth and the soft rhythmic sounds should do the trick and puppy and family will get a restful night's sleep!

As soon as your new dog or puppy is settled into the new surrounds, it should be familiarised with all the normal sounds, activities and noises of the household. Other pets should be introduced to the new arrival gradually and closely supervised. This will help it to become confident and well socialised.



Your new dog or puppy should have its own sturdy food and water bowls placed near the sleeping area.

Fresh, clean water is essential and should be accessible to your pet at all times.

A well balanced diet is essential to your dog's health and general well-being. High quality prepared dog food (both canned and dry) and raw bones is the most convenient way to do this - an all meat diet can lead to nutritional deficiencies and growth problems.

Remember that puppies have different nutritional requirements from adult dogs. They need frequent small meals and should be fed canned and dry foods specially formulated for puppies. Cow's milk should not be given to dogs or puppies. Apart from being nutritionally unnecessary, cow's milk can cause diarrhoea. There is a commercially prepared pet milk with low lactose available. Large raw bones will give your dog or puppy hours of enjoyment and chewing on them will help keep teeth and gums clean and healthy. Never offer cooked bones or bones which are likely to splinter.

Puppies will need to be toilet trained - the best time to do this is immediately after a meal. You should introduce your dog or puppy to the area where you expect toileting to take place, whether it is to be a litter tray or an area of the yard. Droppings should be regularly removed so your pet feels comfortable about using the same area again. Seek more information from the Animal Shelter or your local vet.

Section 3 Having fun with your new puppy

Your new puppy will be a friend for life and there are lots of fun things you can do with your puppy that will help it become part of your family as well as learn how you expect it to behave.

To enjoy your puppy and help it to grow into a well socialised and obedient dog you need to train it from the very start. For example, you should teach your puppy to sit before petting it or giving it food. It must learn to come to you when you call it - this is especially important later on when you are out together in a special dog off-leash area.

You and your puppy can enjoy many hours of fun time together, playing and going for walks. Both these activities are important for your dog's (and your own) physical and mental health and gives your dog the opportunity to meet and interact with other dogs.

Remember, when children and dogs are playing together they should be supervised by an adult until an understanding has developed between the dog and child.

Record the milestones in your puppy's life!

Sits for the first time	
Stays for the first time	
Comes to your call for the first time	
Fetches a ball (and brings it back to you!)	
Learns to walk on a leash for the first time	
Performs a special trick you have taught it	

Section 4 Keeping your dog healthy

A healthy dog should

- Be alert and respond quickly to sounds and calls.
- Move freely and have good stamina especially when young and show no signs of lameness.
- Have a good appetite, be enthusiastic for food and eat efficiently, not vomit.
- Have a clean, glossy coat which is free from parasites and dirt.
- Have good hearing, alert to the slightest sound and no discharge from the ears.
- Have clear eyes with no sign of discharge or inflammation.
- Have a cold damp nose when outdoors and a dry warm nose when indoors and no persistent discharge.

Consult your vet if your dog appears to be unwell with loss of appetite or is unresponsive and lacking in energy.

Vaccination

Consult with your vet on the proper vaccination schedule for your dog.

Animals purchased from the Hawkesbury Companion Animal Shelter

Council has adopted a policy that states that all animals that are sold from the Hawkesbury Companion Animal Shelter will be desexed prior to sale.



Worming

- Essential to keep your dog healthy. Puppies should be wormed regularly throughout the first year of life - roundworms in puppies can infect humans.
- Tapeworms, hookworms and whipworms can also infect dogs.
- Heartworm is a major mosquito borne disease affecting dogs in many areas of Australia and is preventable.
- Consult your vet before commencing treatment as medication can be fatal to dogs already infected.

Fleas

Are a common external dog parasite. They cause severe itching and skin inflammation which can lead to dermatitis and are the intermediate host for the tapeworm most common in dogs. Fleas can be controlled with internal and external medication, insecticidal sprays, powders or washes or the use of a flea collar. Your vet will be able to advise on the most suitable method of flea control for your dog.

Paralysis ticks

Occur in some parts of Australia (including the Hawkesbury) and can be fatal to dogs, especially puppies. If you live in a paralysis tick infected area you must check your dog daily and remove any ticks. Consult your vet if you find a tick.

Section 5 Training and exercise

Having a well behaved and well adjusted family pet should be the goal of every dog owner. Teaching your dog or puppy manners and a few simple ground rules of your household will make for a long and happy relationship.

Remember, your dog really does want to please you so be patient when you are training it; reward it for appropriate behaviour and use a firm 'no' when you need to correct behaviour.

As a basis for training, a puppy should learn to obey the 'sit' command before being petted or fed. As the puppy grows it is advisable to seek more formal training through local dog obedience clubs, listed below.

Puppies should be taught not to bite or chew humans, even during play and that unnecessary barking is not allowed. Excessive barking disturbs the neighbourhood and almost guarantees neighbours will be unlikely to investigate a disturbance should something be amiss.

Constant barking can be a sign of boredom, something you can change by taking your dog for regular walks which give it both physical and mental stimulation.

Your dog should be kept on a leash when out and about with you, except when in a designated off-leash fenced area. Hawkesbury City Council has three dog-off-leash areas. These are located at Pool Park on the corner of Ham and Cox Streets at South Windsor, Yarramundi reserve, Yarramundi and Peel Park in North Richmond.



Obedience classes

- Tamplin Field, Hobartville on Monday nights. Contact the Shelter on 4560 4644.
- Macquarie Towns Dog Training Club at Deerubbin Park, Windsor on Wednesday nights. Contact the Shelter on 4560 4644.

Agility Classes

- Hawkesbury Dog Agility Club, John Maroney Correctional Centre, Northern Road, South Windsor. Contact the Shelter on 4560 4644.
- There are links on the internet to other dog obedience and agility clubs at www.dogsnsw.com.au.

Section 6 Health and safety tips for people and pets

Living disease free with your pet

You CAN live happily with your pets and avoid catching diseases from them by:

- Not letting them lick your face.
- Washing your face and hands after handling a pet, especially before you eat.
- Keeping your pets away from the food you eat.
- Not letting them lick your food dishes or utensils.
- Cleaning up your pet's droppings every day and washing your hands afterwards.
- Regular worming of your dog or cat.

Avoiding dog bites

You CAN avoid dog bites by:

- Leaving dogs alone if they are eating or near their food.
- Not surprising a sleeping dog - remember the old saying 'let sleeping dogs lie!'
- Don't enter a strange dog's yard unless the owner is present.
- Don't play with a litter of puppies, particularly if the mother is still feeding them.
- Don't grab or cuddle a dog around the neck.
- Always check with the owner before you pat their dog.
- Don't play with any dog unless the owner is watching.
- Don't get dogs over-excited when playing with them.

If a strange dog starts barking at you

- Don't try to pat it.
- Stand still and wait for the dog to stop barking at you.
- Don't hit it or kick it to make it go away.
- Lower your head and don't look at or make eye contact with the dog.
- Keep your hands by your sides and slowly back away.



Section 7 Your pet and the law

The Companion Animals Act 1998 was created for domestic dogs and cats. There are many laws regarding the obligations of dog and cat ownership, which are covered in the Companion Animals Act 1998 and the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1993.

Under the Companion Animals Act you are required to have your dog on a lead whenever it is off your property. If your dog is found roaming on the streets, it can be impounded at the Animal Shelter by Council Officers or a member of the public and you will be required to pay the relevant release fee. You are also liable to be issued with an infringement notice.

Dogs that bark constantly can be constituted to be a Nuisance Animal and may be the subject of a Nuisance Dog Order. Breaches of these orders carry substantial fines. If you find your dog is barking through boredom etc, speak with your Vet or the staff at the Animal Shelter for suggestions to prevent the problem escalating.

If your dog rushes at, chases, harasses, bites or attacks a person or another animal, it will be subject to a dangerous dog order. This order has severe ramifications and infringements associated with it, along with personal liability for costs of injuries sustained in the incident.

Section 8 Keeping your pet safe

Your dog or cat will already be microchipped at the time of purchase and your current details will be recorded on a state wide computer database. However, if you move or change contact telephone numbers, you are required by law to update these details with your local Council within 14 days of the change.

Too often we see pets that are microchipped but their owner's details are out of date and we cannot contact them to inform them that we have their pet. We liken the registration details of your pet to the registration details of your car, if you change the car's details you will need to change the pet's details.

We recommend that your pet wear a collar with a tag on it that has your pet's name and a contact telephone number on it. That way if your pet gets out and someone picks them up, they will be able to contact you straight away and save your pet a trip to the Shelter.


Section 9 Caring for your pet while you're on holidays

You must consider what arrangements you are going to make for the care of your cat or dog when you decide to go away on holidays. The nature of the arrangement will depend on how long you plan to be away and on your particular pet.

The most appropriate care option is to arrange for your pet to go to a licensed boarding kennel or cattery. You may need to make a booking for your pet well in advance if your holiday is during a peak period such as school breaks, Easter or Christmas.

It is important to keep your pet's vaccinations up to date as most reputable kennels or catteries will only accept animals which have proof of up to date vaccinations against infectious diseases.

It is advisable to place your pet in a boarding facility if you are planning to be away for any length of time or engage a professional pet minding service.



If it is not possible to arrange either of these and you are planning to be away for a period of less than a week or a couple of days, there are several things you should do:

- Ensure your pet is in a secure enclosure so it can't escape and run away and that it has adequate shelter from the elements and access to plenty of fresh water.
- Arrange for a reliable person who has an affinity with your pet (neighbour, relative or friend) to visit daily to feed, top up water and check that your pet is healthy and safe - they might even spend some time playing with your pet so it does not feel too lonely or neglected.
- Put a tag on your pet with the contact details of the person minding your pet. If this person regularly minds your pet, ask them if you can use their name and telephone number to be put on your pet's microchip details. Obtain information from your local Council.
- Give them the Companion Animal Shelters phone number in case the dog goes missing - 4560 4644.

Section 10 Volunteering at the Companion Animal Shelter

There are a number of different roles in which volunteers can be involved with the Hawkesbury City Companion Animal Shelter.

These include:

- Dog Walkers - exercise those dogs that are suitable to be walked on a leash.
- Animal Socialisers - spend time with the animals giving them the training that will make them a better pet. They also groom them and make them presentable to the public.

How to become a Volunteer

- Please telephone the Companion Animal Shelter on (02) 4560 4644 to make a booking for a safety induction session.
- Participate in a safety induction/training program as required by the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*.
- Donate your time at a rate that suits your lifestyle.



Things you need to understand about Volunteering

There are potential pitfalls which you should be fully aware of:

- Some animals which come into care are eventually euthanised. This can be difficult to deal with especially after caring for them.
- Working with animals involves a lot of cleaning and dealing with body wastes.
- Working with animals involves outdoor work in all weather conditions.

Section 11 My Pet's Milestones and Health Information

Date Adopted or Purchased	<input type="text"/>
Birth Date (if known)	<input type="text"/>
Breed	<input type="text"/>
Vaccination Record	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
Date Desexed	<input type="text"/>
Health Problems	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
Favourite Foods	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
Favourite Toy/s	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
Favourite Activity	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
Useful Contacts Telephone Numbers	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
Local Vet:	<input type="text"/>
Boarding Kennel/Cattery	<input type="text"/>
Companion Animal Shelter	10 Mulgrave Road McGraths Hill NSW 2756 (02) 4560 4644

