



# Hawkesbury Companion Animal Shelter

## Helpful tips for dog owners

A well-loved and trained dog is unlikely to annoy anyone. Unfortunately, dogs that are unsocialised, bored, neglected or untrained can and do cause problems for their owners and the broader community.

Some rules are necessary to ensure that dogs and humans can live in harmony.

***Implementing the golden rules is your first step to responsible dog ownership.***

### **Never buy a dog on a whim**

Take enough time to choose a breed that fits in with your lifestyle. Owning a dog is a long-term commitment and can be a distressing experience if you choose an unsuitable dog.

Research breeds by visiting shows or dog clubs and asking plenty of questions. Use an online test to find out which dog would best suit your lifestyle.

### **Always socialise your dog with other dogs and people**

Take your dog to puppy pre-school or dog obedience school. It is very important for dogs, in particular puppies, to be socialised with other dogs and people.

### **Always supervise children with dogs**

A dog's behaviour can be unpredictable, especially when left unsupervised with children. Children should be calm and respectful to animals. Teach your child to interact appropriately with dogs and not to 'play-fight' or play 'tug-of-war' games with them.

Put your dog out of the way when children are playing loud games and running around. Dogs can sometimes get over-excited or frightened if there is a lot of noise or if other children are visiting.

### **Always teach your dog how to behave with visitors**

Teach your dog to sit before you allow visitors to stroke it. Allowing it to jump up may frighten or annoy some people and children may feel very intimidated by the behaviour.

### **Always be consistent and constructive in your training and reward the desired behaviour**

Do not lose your temper with your dog. It will become confused, making it difficult for the dog to learn what you want to teach.

### **Always ask permission before you stroke a dog you do not know**

Not all dogs like to be patted and cuddled. Ask the owner of the dog for permission to pat the dog, and if the owner agrees, allow the dog to sniff the back of your hand first. If it is happy to be patted it will sniff your hand and move towards you. You can then stroke it under the chin.

Do not pat it on the top of the head - some dogs may interpret this as threatening behaviour. If the dog backs away and does not sniff your hand, it is telling you it does not want to be patted.

### **Never let your dog demand attention by jumping, barking and pawing**

Ignore any undesirable attention-seeking behaviour, but reward all good behaviour. Call your dog to you and ask it to sit or perform another task before giving it your attention.

If your dog scratches the door to come in, do not open it immediately. When your dog stops scratching, ask it to sit, open the door and then allow it inside.

## Good manners for dogs! Never feed your dog from the dinner table

Feeding your dog from the dinner table encourages it to beg for food, which is simply bad manners. Ask your dog to sit and stay on its bed while the family eats. When you feed your dog, ask it to sit first.

## Always let a dog eat its meal in peace

Do not go near any dog when it is eating its meal or chewing a bone, especially if you do not know the dog. If you approach, the dog may bite to defend its food.

## Never stroke or disturb a dog when it is asleep

Dogs can be scared by sudden disturbances. Scared dogs may bite. Always call your dog first so that you do not surprise it. If your dog is ever unfortunate enough to be injured, be very careful how you approach and handle it.

Remember: a dog that is frightened and in pain, will often bite.

## Never let your dog sleep on your bed or furniture unless you invite it to do so

You should start with instructing your dog to sit first. Ideally, give your dog its own bed in a peaceful spot away from children and the bustle of family life.

## Always dedicate some time each day to training and exercising your dog

Feeding and housing your dog is not enough. It needs to spend quality time with you. Dogs, like children, have energy to burn and one way to stop your dog getting into mischief is to keep its mind occupied and give it enough exercise.

## Never abandon your dog

It is an offence under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1985 to abandon a dog and the penalties are severe.

If you find, for any reason, that you are unwilling or unable to continue to care for your dog, contact the Companion Animal Shelter on (02) 4560 4644, and we may be able to find a new home for it.

If for any reason you cannot care for your dog, it is much better to give it the opportunity to find a new home, rather than leaving it in your yard or, worse still, dumping it.

**There are also many animal rescue organisations that can possibly assist you in rehoming your animal.**

**These can be found on the internet by searching keywords such as *animal rescue groups* or *rehome my dog*.**

**Some dog breeds also have a rescue arm associated within their breed clubs.**



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



### Hawkesbury Companion Animal Shelter

Address: 10 Mulgrave Road  
McGraths Hill NSW 2756  
Mailing Address: PO Box 146  
WINDSOR NSW 2756  
Phone: (02) 4560 4644  
Fax: (02) 4577 6604  
Email: [companionanimal@hawkesbury.nsw.gov.au](mailto:companionanimal@hawkesbury.nsw.gov.au)  
Council Website: [www.hawkesbury.nsw.gov.au](http://www.hawkesbury.nsw.gov.au)  
Office Hours: Monday to Friday 9am-12:30pm and 2pm-4:30pm  
Saturday 9:30am-11:30am  
Sunday 7am-9am  
Public Holidays 7am-9am

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