

INFORMATION

Please always remember that if you need help with anything to do with your dog, trustworthy sources of advice are:

Your vet,

who has veterinary qualifications and is registered with the RCVS, and has examined your dog.

Your dog's breeder,

who has extensive knowledge of your dog's bloodline and years of experience working with this breed.

A dog trainer,

with experience in working with dogs, such as someone who trains at a local Kennel Club recognised club, and has observed you and your dog (and probably not the author of a self-published book or website who self-describes as a trainer).

A WORD OF CAUTION: THE INTERNET AND SOCIAL MEDIA

While there can be good information online, unfortunately there is no regulation as to what anyone can publish on the Internet and it can sometimes be very difficult to tell genuine and well-researched information written by a knowledgeable and experienced person, from disinformation, misinformation, hysteria, zealotry, hate campaigns, and conspiracy theories propagated by malicious or ill-informed people. Please always seek advice from one of the above sources before following any advice you have encountered online.

Social media can be a wonderful way to keep in touch with friends and family, but please be aware it can also be misused. Please keep safe online, do not reveal private information where anyone you don't know might be able to see it, and don't accept 'friend' requests from people unless you are sure they are who they say they are and you know them well.

LIST OF RECOMMENDED FOODS

PUPPIES under 1 year old

Recommended (your puppy has eaten mainly these foods during its first 8 weeks):

Little Wolf of Wilderness	<i>All varieties</i>
Lukullus Junior tinned food	<i>Turkey Hearts & Lamb, Chicken & Veal</i>

Supplemental (your puppy has eaten these foods, but they are not complete foods or are assumed not specifically suitable for large breed pups, so they should be enjoyed as occasional meals):

Natural Instinct frozen puppy food

'They Love It' frozen mince – mix together the 15% bone chicken mince and the lamb tripe 50:50

Suitable (good quality foods that your puppy has not yet tried):

Applaws puppy large breed	<i>Chicken</i>
Purizon Puppy	<i>Chicken & Fish</i>
Lukullus Junior cold pressed	<i>Chicken & Northern Wild Salmon</i>
Jack Wolf	<i>Original and Beef recipes only (others not optimally balanced)</i>
Barking Heads	<i>Little Bigfoot</i>

ADULTS over 1 year old

Extruded

Purizon	<i>all varieties</i>
Wolf of Wilderness	<i>all varieties</i>
Barking Heads	<i>all varieties</i>
Fishmongers Finest	
Field and Trial	<i>duck and turkey varieties only</i>
Applaws	<i>Adult medium and large breed</i>

Cold Pressed

Lukullus	<i>all varieties</i>
Markus Mühle	
Lupo	<i>all varieties</i>

Tinned

Lukullus	<i>all varieties</i>
Wolf of Wilderness	<i>all varieties</i>

Frozen

Natural Instinct	<i>all varieties</i>
'They Love It' frozen mince	<i>minced chickens, tripe, others</i>
Nutrient	<i>all varieties</i>

CHEWS for dogs of all ages

Dibo dried chews from Zooplus (other dried chews may be suitable; avoid any dried chews from China)

'They Love It' cow and sheep ribs

FEEDING GUIDE

Your puppy has been weaned onto a number of different complete dry and wet foods suited to large breed puppies and will also have tried various other kinds of food. I feel that feeding a variety of good quality foods to my dogs may reduce the risk of dogs developing allergies, and recommend that your dog does not eat the same food for every meal for this reason. However, I do also recommend that a good-quality large breed puppy food (or food with a suitable nutritional profile for a large breed puppy) should form the bulk of your dog's diet while it is growing. Please refer to the list of recommended foods for suggestions.

There is no exact amount that you should feed your dog, as each dog has a different metabolism and lifestyle, so some degree of trial and error is required. It's normal for puppies to feel 'bony' while they are growing. If you are not sure what the optimum body condition is, ask your vet to examine your dog. It's important not to overfeed your puppy while it is growing, as overnutrition can cause uncontrolled growth and orthopaedic problems (problems to do with bone and cartilage development). Poodles usually stop growing at a year old and should have filled out properly by age 2. An adult poodle is usually 23-25" at the withers and tends to weigh between 2 1/2 and 4 stone (about 20 kg or a bit more on average). I find my adult dogs eat in total around 400 g of dry food per day, or 800 g of wet food. Pups need to eat more frequently than adults as their stomachs do not have the same capacity. The following is the approximate schedule the puppy has been fed from here and may serve as a useful starting point:

Breakfast (7 am): a handful of dry food, e.g. Little Wolf of Wilderness

Lunch (12 noon): 200g (a quarter of an 800 g tin) of Lukullus Junior

Dinner (6 pm): a handful of dry food e.g. Little Wolf of Wilderness

Supper (10 pm): another handful of dry food, or a treat meal such as an uncooked, previously frozen chicken wing, a portion of frozen food such as Natural Instinct, safe table scraps, or some sardines from a tin (use the tins with oil in, not brine).

Your puppy is fully weaned and does not need to be given milk.

Young puppies who do not have supper tend to vomit up green froth (bile) in the morning because their stomachs are empty too long. Older puppies can be moved to three meals a day by serving dinner an hour or so later and providing a small snack at bedtime which can gradually be phased out.

If you have other dogs you should keep the puppy away from them while they are eating, and provide a safe place for the puppy to eat where they cannot bother it. A crate is ideal. Dogs will often eat hastily and become stressed at mealtimes if they live in fear of others trying to take their food, and this situation should be avoided.

Adult poodles should ideally be fed three or two meals a day. Do not feed all the dog's daily ration in one meal as this is thought to increase the risk of GDV. Dogs who are very lean are also at increased risk of GDV, so once your poodle has finished growing, feed it sufficient food to enable it to fill out.

Do NOT feed your dog, and seek veterinary advice if you have reason to think your dog may have eaten:

Grapes, including grape products such as raisins, wine, or grape juice

Chocolate (dark chocolate is most dangerous)

Avocados

Anything containing caffeine: tea, coffee, Red Bull, some brands of fizzy pop

Anything containing xylitol: this substance used to be occasionally found in products like mouthwash and medicines, but more recently it is increasingly being used as a substitute for sugar in food items. It is EXTREMELY poisonous to dogs even in small doses and very dangerous since the things it is likely to be found in are obviously food objects and likely to be attractive to a dog that encounters one.

Because of the very serious dangers of xylitol, I would recommend checking everything you buy and avoiding anything containing this substance as much as possible.

If you think your dog has eaten xylitol, chocolate, or grapes/raisins, these are particularly dangerous and getting them out of your dog as fast as possible could mean the difference between life and death. To do this, you need to induce vomiting:

Fill a syringe with 30 ml of 3% hydrogen peroxide solution (you can buy this from a pharmacy and should have it on hand with the syringe in case of emergencies). If the dog in question is elderly, infirm, or a small puppy, or anything other than fully conscious and acting normally at this point, ring your vet FIRST.

Hold the dog's mouth open, point the syringe down into the back of the throat, and discharge the hydrogen peroxide. Hold the dog's mouth shut to make sure it is swallowed.

Either get another person to watch your dog, or keep your dog with you and phone your emergency vet to explain what has happened. The dog should vomit and you need to be able to see this has occurred and what has come out in the vomit. If you are confident everything the dog ate has come out, the vet may not need to see your dog, but it is always a good idea to check. If the dog is not sick within ten minutes, or it is sick but you don't think the dangerous thing has come out in part or at all, you can give the dog another dose of hydrogen peroxide. If the dog is sick (including in the car on the way to the vet) you need to prevent it from re-eating any vomitus.

In addition, do not feed your dog salty, sugary, or spicy foods, cooked poultry with bones in it (without bones is OK), onions and onion-type things such as shallots (can cause anaemia if consumed frequently), booze, nuts, or Bakers dog food (contains sugar and colourants that have no nutritional value). Do not give your dog plastic chews, rawhide, or those green things that look like toothbrushes and are sold in pet shops. These things are indigestible and if your dog swallows them they could cause a bowel obstruction. Instead you can give your dog an antler, an uncooked bone such as a rib from a cow or sheep ('They Love It' the company selling minces for dogs mentioned above, also sells sheep and cow ribs which are excellent chews for dogs), or some dried natural chews such as the Dibo dried chews from Zooplus which are all sourced from EC slaughterhouses (can you tell I really like Zooplus?!).

HEALTH AND VETERINARY

Puppies will have been seen by a vet in the 7th week before leaving us and any veterinary information will be included in your puppy pack. Please make an appointment with your vet soon after bringing your puppy home for a check-up so you can discuss worming and vaccinations.

Unless you have asked to use a different vaccination schedule, your puppy will have received an initial vaccination for parvo, distemper, and hepatitis in the week before leaving. This is NOT adequate to provide full protection as some puppies will still have maternal antibodies at this age, and your own vet needs to administer a second vaccination at a later time, and until this has come into effect the puppy should be regarded as at risk for these diseases and not exposed to anything that would put it at risk (such as the floor in any public place, or dogs whose vaccination history is unknown). I recommend a titre (to check antibody levels) rather than a third vaccination at one year old. The core vaccinations have been found to be effective for at least three years, so it is not necessary to revaccinate your dog every year for these diseases, but a titre every three years or so may be a good idea.

When you visit your vet to have your puppy checked, make sure to take the vaccination record you have been given and show it to the vet. The vet should either confirm that they carry the same vaccine from the manufacturer used, or if not they should agree to order it in for the puppy's next shot. Some vets will try to give two further vaccinations and claim this is because the vaccines they carry are from a different manufacturer. This is unnecessary.

You will need to discuss with your vet to decide whether vaccination for leptospirosis is necessary. If you decide it is, this requires two separate vaccinations a couple of weeks apart and will need to be redone once every year. It is recommended this is done in the spring to give best coverage.

Your puppy has been wormed with Panacur as follows:

2 weeks old
5 weeks old
7 weeks (before leaving)

Worming will need to be continued. Please discuss this with your vet. Also discuss flea and tick prevention to decide whether this is necessary.

You will also need to discuss with your vet future surgery to prevent breeding. The procedures I most recommend are a vasectomy for a dog and a hysterectomy with retention of ovaries and removal of cervix for a bitch. Current research suggests that dogs enjoy overall better health and longer life if they can keep their gonads, but the suitability of this needs to be weighed up according to the owner's situation and desired outcome. A bitch without a uterus will still have seasons, but she will not bleed and the risk of pyometra is removed. It is still important to be aware of the few days every six months or so she is likely to be sexually receptive, and it is inadvisable to allow her to mate with a dog as she could panic and be injured, or contract venereal disease. She is also at slightly higher risk of mammary tumours than is a spayed bitch, but regularly examining her and going to the vet if any irregularities are noted will enable them to be treated effectively. A vasectomied dog will still exhibit sexual behaviour when exposed to a bitch in heat (as many neutered dogs also can) but can likewise be injured or acquire infections if he is allowed to mate in uncontrolled circumstances. Any vet should, in theory be capable of performing these surgeries, but it may be difficult to find one willing as they are not currently routine procedures that vets are taught. They can be done at any age.

If you decide you would prefer to have your poodle spayed or neutered, it is best to wait at least until the puppy is a year old and has finished growing. Spaying dogs younger than this has been linked to developmental abnormalities such as hip dysplasia and urinary incontinence (bitches who wet themselves).

If you want to keep your dog entire, you must be responsible for it and not allow it to get into situations that could result in mating. Careless breeding of mixed-up puppies either accidentally or as deliberately as novelties to sell is irresponsible when there are many dogs in shelters and when breeds are facing a crisis of genetic impoverishment, and this is why there are penalties written into our contract for allowing such things to happen. Owners of entire bitches should also be aware that any bitch with both her uterus and ovaries is at risk of pyometra, and the risk is greatest in older bitches who have never been bred. N.B. I do not recommend tubal ligation for any bitch under any circumstances. Tubal ligation is the removal or obstruction of the Fallopian tubes to render a female infertile. It does not address either bleeding from seasons or the risk of pyometra or other uterine diseases. Most bitches undergoing such a procedure will require a hysterectomy or spay at a later date. It is not in the welfare interests of your bitch to have two operations when one to remove the uterus in the first place would have done the job.

After a year of age when growth is complete is also the ideal time if you wish to have the prophylactic gastropexy procedure carried out on your dog. This is a surgical procedure to attach the stomach to the abdominal wall to prevent torsion (twisting). Torsion (GDV) is a deadly condition that can occur in tall dogs, poodles being one such breed. When carried out as a prophylactic operation it drastically reduces the risk of GDV occurring. The surgery can be done either laparoscopically 'key hole surgery' or through an abdominal incision. You will need to discuss with your vet and decide for yourself whether this procedure is right for you and your dog. It can be carried out at the same time as a surgery of your choice to prevent breeding.

We provide a health guarantee for hereditary and congenital conditions up to our puppies' 5th birthday. We feel that choosing to buy a poodle should mean you are getting a dog of an historical breed who is fit for purpose and that the best possible effort has gone into bringing this about, and that you should be entitled to at least 5 years of good health from your dog. Of course we hope you get far more than this and would like all the pups we breed to make it to double figures, but dogs are living things and are not infallible, and there are no absolute guarantees, just as with people. You must follow the recommendations we give as to diet, exercise, and veterinary care in order for the guarantee to remain fully valid.

EXERCISE

Please remember that your puppy when you first bring it home is very young and still needs time to grow. What many do not realise is the amount of time a young puppy needs to spend sleeping. It is fine for your puppy to sleep on your lap, or on your feet, etc. if it should end up there of its own accord, but family members and in particular children should not disturb the puppy to play with or cuddle it while it is asleep. Exercise for a young puppy should be confined to several daily short periods where the puppy can dictate the pace and level. Access to a garden (season permitting) where the puppy can play is ideal. Try to limit playing on floors that are very hard or where the puppy cannot get a firm grip, particularly if bigger dogs are involved, as they can slide the pup around and knock it over.

As soon as your puppy has finished its vaccination course, you can begin taking it for short pavement walks on a lead. The purpose of these walks at this age is not to exercise the dog, but to train it to walk properly and to socialise it to other pedestrians and dogs. If you go on long hikes with older dogs, it is possible to take the puppy, but it should not be expected that the puppy will walk the whole way. The puppy can be carried in a bag or sling (the puppy must be able to curl up comfortably inside the bag so it can sleep in a natural position, and the carrier must be adequately ventilated) when it gets tired.

Do not begin any of the following activities until your dog is at least a year old: running/jogging, agility, or extended retrieving other than throwing toys in the house and garden. Swimming for young dogs is encouraged if you can find a safe place and the puppy will try it.

Adult poodles ideally need two daily opportunities for either a lead walk or off-lead running. Adults usually have very high levels of stamina and can take as much exercise as you can give them. It's not possible to 'wear out' a poodle as can be done with some dogs in order to get it to be calm in the house, but conversely they tend to be fairly settled and will not misbehave if they can only have a short walk during spells of bad weather. Poodles can be demanding work before they are emotionally mature (which usually only starts to happen around 2 years old) because of their inexhaustible stamina and intelligence. Persevere with a routine of sensible exercise, crating, and training and games to give your dog adequate stimulation. If you have more than one dog, be aware they can sometimes encourage silly behaviour in one another. If one dog is older and well-trained, it will teach the other good habits, but if both are young and silly, it will take more time and work to teach them to behave properly. When your poodle matures, the work you have put in will start to pay off.

TRAINING

When your puppy is old enough and it has finished a vaccination course decided on between you and your vet, it is strongly recommended that you take your puppy to a training class. Included with your documentation are results from the web-based 'Puppy Socialisation Plan' which includes the website where you can find generalised advice, and a personalised socialisation plan tailored to your puppy's own unique needs, as calculated from a temperament test developed specifically for poodles. Refer to these documents for more information and ideas on socialisation and training.

We teach the puppies basic things before they leave, such as response to name. Unless you have specified that you would like to show your puppy, it will have been taught the 'sit' and 'wait' commands (a show prospect puppy will have been taught to stack in place of sit). A foundation for house-training is established by reinforcing the pups' natural instincts not to foul their sleeping area by encouraging them to use a newspaper-filled tray for their business, which is gradually moved farther away from

their nest. Please note that we do encourage pups to go outside when the weather is suitable, but it is not possible to house-train pups fully before they leave as this needs to be done on a one-to-one basis (it is impossible to monitor 6-10 pups who need to relieve themselves every 1-2 hours, and not safe for pups to have the sort of access to the garden necessary at certain times of year).

For puppy training treats, we like the Bosch Goodies grain-free, as they are small pieces and contain glucosamine and chondroitin which are thought to benefit cartilage in growing dogs. You can also use cheese cut into little pieces (you want to use small pieces ideally, because you will want to give your puppy lots of treats without unbalancing its diet). Keep the cheese treats in a greaseproof paper bag as you can put this in your pocket and carry it easily (they will get sweaty and unpleasant to touch in a plastic bag, although the puppy will not mind!), and can dry out or make your pocket oily in an ordinary paper bag). Have your treats on hand and reward your puppy regularly for correct response to instructions, and on every occasion the puppy does its business in the correct place. Refer to your puppy's individual plan for more information about the sorts of rewards that might motivate your puppy. You can also use mealtimes as an opportunity for training (the puppy is expected to respond to a command correctly before receiving the meal). The most important command that you should practice as much as possible and always reward is recall. Practice in as many different places as possible (safety permitting) and make sure you have this command trained well before you let your dog offlead in a public place.

If the puppy bites or mouths at your hand while playing, take your hand away and stop playing. Puppies learn quickly from this that biting is not acceptable. It is not necessary to punish a young puppy with anything beyond a calm 'No' and the correct alternative (access to an appropriate place to eliminate, an appropriate item to chew, etc.) should be offered as soon as possible after the 'no' and the puppy should be praised for using it.

The easiest and safest method of controlling the puppy's behaviour and environment while it is learning is to use a crate (dog cage). There is no evidence that using a crate is harmful, and indeed there is ample evidence that wild dog-like creatures' puppies stay hidden in nests while they are not eating or interacting with other members of their family. The idea is to let the puppy out at set intervals to go to the toilet, and then reward it by playing and interacting with it, and afterwards encourage the puppy to sleep, rest, or play quietly in the crate by itself. Whenever your puppy cannot be supervised, it should be shut in the crate, in the interests of its own safety as well as your sanity. This will aid with house training a great deal and stop a lot of problems before they develop, as the puppy cannot develop a taste for chewing your possessions if it cannot access them while you are not about to stop it.

The general rule of thumb with using a crate is that your puppy can go its age in months plus one hour between needing to go to the toilet. So your 8-week-old puppy when you bring it home can contain itself for around 3 hours maximum, and you should not leave it in the crate for longer than this. If it is necessary that you have to leave the puppy for longer, it is important that you make it possible for it to eliminate outside the crate, as if you do not it will be forced by desperation to foul its bed, and if this happens repeatedly the puppy can unlearn its instinct to be clean and this can be very hard to repair later. In this case, put the crate with the door open in a contained area with a cleanable floor, such as a downstairs loo, and provide newspaper for the puppy to use on the floor outside the crate. This is not an ideal solution as the dog learns by it that it is OK to dirty the house, and so is not recommended for the puppy to be regularly left unattended for longer than it can hold. When the puppy is around 7 months old, it has a similar bladder and bowel capacity to an adult of roughly eight hours, and this is the maximum length it should be left alone for any time over its adult life.

Remember at the start, you want to praise your puppy as much as possible for using the place you want it to use as a toilet. Minimise negativity when a mistake is made, because you don't want your puppy to be afraid of eliminating in sight of you, which is what can inadvertently happen. Say 'no' and immediately move the puppy to the appropriate place. If the puppy then uses the right place, use over-the-top praise. Also remember that in the early stages of house training, puppies often quite sensibly understand from all the praise that they are getting that their owners think poo and wee are wonderful and want to enjoy them everywhere they go, and will often eliminate in the house in front of them thinking they are making a lovely gift. The refinement of poo and wee in the garden being good and poo and wee in the house being bad will come later.

If your puppy keeps pooing inappropriately, and this is happening more than three times a day and the faeces looks loose/'toothpaste-like' and the puppy seems to lack the capacity to hold it, it is very possible you are feeding too much. This is quite a common mistake. Stick to the amounts and the routine given, and remember the puppy will nearly always poo just before or soon after it has been fed. Give it access to its toilet area before feeding it, and again after if it has not poo'd.

If you see your puppy urinate outside and praise it, only to let it back in the house and have it urinate on the floor only a few minutes later, it is quite likely the puppy is not emptying its bladder properly. This sometimes happens and is probably precipitated by owners being a bit overzealous when praising the puppy before it's finished. If the owner is making excited happy noises and the puppy is still mid-stream, often it gets excited and stops before it's finished. Make calm noises of encouragement while the puppy is 'busy' and praise when it has had time to finish. Puppies weeing too much can also be caused by habitual excessive drinking (motivated by either a natural interest in water, or boredom because suitable toys are not available, rather than thirst) and playing in the drinking water. The puppy does not need water in its crate as long as it has access to water whenever it is let out. Taking the water away a few hours before the puppy goes to bed for the night will help to avoid accidents happening at night.

When the puppy reaches 6 months old, it is usually mature enough to start to be trusted unsupervised out of its crate. Initially this should be for short periods and within limited areas of the house.

GROOMING

GENERAL

Your poodle's claws need to be trimmed each time it is washed, if not more often. Use the pliers-type clippers and try to cut a small piece off at a time to avoid quicking the nail, which will result in bloody footprints all over everything as well as hurting and frightening your dog.

After you have washed your dog, or any time it has become wet such as from swimming, use a syringe to put a few ml of a 50:50 vinegar (white vinegar or apple cider vinegar) and cheap vodka into the ear canals. Massage the ears and let the dog shake the solution out. This helps the ears to dry and prevents yeasts from growing in them. From time to time, the hair in the ear canals is likely to get excessive, and you will see a small mat forming in the entrance to the ear canal. Carefully tease out this mat in one piece with tweezers or ear forceps – this should not hurt unless there is an ear infection. You do not need to poke forceps or tweezers down the ear canal in order to try to remove ear hair completely. As long as the ears are kept clean, this should not be a problem.

Sometimes poodles can get ear mites. Symptoms are an odd smell and a brown wet substance in the ears. You can buy over the counter medicines to treat this.

Check your dog's teeth regularly and ensure you have appropriate things for your dog to chew, such as cow hoofs and antlers. You can use a toothbrush with dog toothpaste to brush your dog's teeth, and you can buy descalers to remove tartar from the gum line. Puppies will grow adult teeth and shed their puppy teeth at around 3-5 months of age. Usually this will cause their breath to stink. Occasionally some deciduous teeth will not come out and will need to be removed by a vet.

Brush and comb your puppy's coat every few days. The coat at this age will not need it, but the puppy must become accustomed to this since it will be necessary as an adult. Handle the feet and trim claws regularly, and get the puppy used to having the mouth checked.

From between 6 months and 8 months your puppy is likely to begin coat change. The coat change usually lasts well past the dog's first birthday, and is usually complete by 18 months to two years. During this time the puppy coat sheds out and the harsher adult coat begins to develop, and the coat will usually mat heavily and have all the disadvantages of a puppy coat (soft and floppy) but none of the advantages such as ease of maintenance! Your puppy will need regular, thorough brushing at this stage, or alternatively some owners opt to keep their poodles in a very short trim until coat change has passed.

WASHING

Your poodle will need to be washed and groomed about every month, or about every six weeks if it is in a very short trim.

Adult poodles normally have very thick, water-repellent coats. Getting shampoo into poodles with long coats thoroughly is hard work. An effective labour-saving method that not only reduces the physical exertion of washing poodles, but reduces the amount of shampoo and water needed, is to use a recirculating pump. You can obtain a [dirty water submersible pump](#), attach an extra-long washing machine hose to it using a Jubilee clip, and stand this in your bath (make sure to use a circuit breaker when you plug it in). The idea is then to put just enough warm water in the bath that the pump will run, stand the poodle in the bath, rub shampoo roughly over the coat with no need to work it in well or get a good lather, and use the hose to recirculate high-pressure water with shampoo dissolved in it into the dog's coat.

If you are intending that your poodle will only ever have a short coat, you do not need to use a recirculator, but you can still wash your dog this way if you want.

I recommend using professional dog shampoos and conditioners as they produce good results and are reasonably priced. I would not advise using generic 'dog' shampoos you can buy from a pet shop, as they tend to be formulated more for the other kinds of dogs who have greasy double coats that tend to smell, and the shampoos have a very strong fragrance to overpower the smell. Because poodle coats have little odour but are good at absorbing odours they are exposed to, these shampoos tend to leave an unpleasant and overpowering smell, and the oil-stripping properties can be quite harsh on poodle hair.

While your puppy is young, you don't need to use a conditioner, since puppy coats tend to be soft and conditioner only makes them more so. The puppy should be washed when it needs it with a mild shampoo, such as Chris Christensen Day to Day. You can dilute this shampoo and put it in a spray gun bottle, to make it easier to apply.

When the puppy begins coat change, usually any time after 6 months, it will probably need to be washed more often (possibly as much as once a week if it is in long coat) to reduce matting. You should start using a conditioner to help keep the matting down, such as the Chris Christensen Day to Day conditioner.

A dog who is fully grown and whose coat change has finished can usually go four weeks between washes. If you are showing your dog, before a show you can wash it with special shampoos and conditioners such as Chris Christensen Spectrum One to give the best coat texture.

DRYING

Unless you are intending to keep your poodle in a very short, simple trim, it is worth obtaining a stand dryer to dry your poodle's coat properly after it is washed. To dry your dog properly, you need to brush the coat as it dries. This removes any loose coat and knots and helps to prevent mats from forming. It will take about an hour to completely dry an adult poodle in a pet trim (assuming areas of long coat on legs, neck, and tail) and the drying time increases with longer coats, but it is worth spending this time after washing your dog, because it will mean less knotting and brushing in between washes as well as a nicer finish on your dog. Don't leave dogs in long coat to 'drip dry' or the thickness of the coat is likely to mean it won't dry properly and the dog will likely smell musty and get matted. For the people who claim it's 'high maintenance', it is surely more enjoyable to spend an hour with your dog stood on a table, being brushed as warm air is blown on it, once every four weeks. than it is to spend several minutes every day getting out and using a vacuum cleaner to clean up the hair shed from a dog with a 'low maintenance' coat!

When you dry your poodle, direct the air stream from the dryer into the coat so the hair parts. Brush the coat to separate the hairs with either a slicker brush or a pin brush until the area is dry. If you find knots or minor mats forming in the coat, which you should be able to see when the dryer is separating it, use a detangling spray. Spray onto the knotted areas, allow to soak in for a few minutes while drying another area, and then carefully separate and brush out the knot. Once the dog is completely dry, go through the coat thoroughly with a comb to remove any tangly bits that might remain. After the poodle has been dried is also the right time to scissor the coat.

CLIPPING AND SCISSORING

It is a good idea to have two kinds of clippers and a few different blades. A good mains-powered

clipper should be used for most areas of the body, but a rechargeable clipper is easier to use on areas like the face and feet. Clipper blades are numbered, with closer blades that leave shorter coat having the highest numbers. The three most useful blades to have are:

#30 or #40 for clipping the face and feet.

#10 for clipping the undercarriage, base of tail, around the bottom and 'private parts'.

#7 for 'shearing off'. This blade leaves a short blanket of coat, just enough not to look shaved. Often it is used on the body with the legs and neck blended in to the clipped area by scissoring. It is generally the 'go to' blade when taking off a show coat. Puppies and young dogs who have not filled out yet can look shockingly thin if they are clipped with this blade. Any areas of your poodle you use this blade on are unlikely to need any maintenance between monthly clips and washes.

There are other blades available, but what many people do rather than buying dedicated longer blades is to buy 'snap on combs' that fit over a #10 blade to clip longer lengths.

Unless your poodle is really filthy, it's usually a good idea to do basic clipping before washing. It means you don't have to try to dry difficult areas like the feet and you are not using the clippers on coat that might be damp. Oil the blades when you have finished clipping.

There are a few basic ways of trimming your poodle, generally known as 'pet trims':

A Gundog clip is the whole poodle clipped to an inch or less, with no longer coat left on even the head or ears. The face, feet, etc. might be shaved closer or not. Poodles in this trim tend to look a bit like Pointers with short curly coats, and people not familiar with the breed may not realise they are poodles.

A clipped body with longer coat on the ears, head, and tail is sometimes called a kennel clip, or a lamb clip if the coat on the legs is left longer. The longer coat is shaped and blended into the clipped body with scissors. The coat on the neck is either left longer and blended, or clipped in which case the coat on the head forms a ball. Longer variants of this trim with more shaping and scissoring are called a modern trim.

The same as above but with legs clipped to the same length as the body coat apart from 'anklets' shaped into balls at the bottom of the legs is called various things, such as a summer clip or a clown clip.

Variants of the above trims with close-clipped ears and tail are considered German trims. It's also possible to blend the coat on the ears into long coat on the head rather than having separate long ears; I call this a Canadian trim because it looks like the hats people wear in Canada in the winter, but I don't know of an official name for it.

You can also cord all or part of the long coat on any of the above trims. Cords are the dreadlocks seen on breeds such as Komondors and Pulis. Some poodle coats cord better than others. The cording process involves washing the dog with no conditioner and not brushing nor combing it, but as it begins to mat, separating the mats into even cords. Cords don't require brushing and drying as do normal coats, but they do need some maintenance to keep the cords separate, and may be difficult to clean if they get really dirty, and hard to dry properly in cold weather.

A useful book to have if you are interested in doing more advanced trims on your dog is Kalstone's *Poodle Clipping and Grooming: The International Reference*.

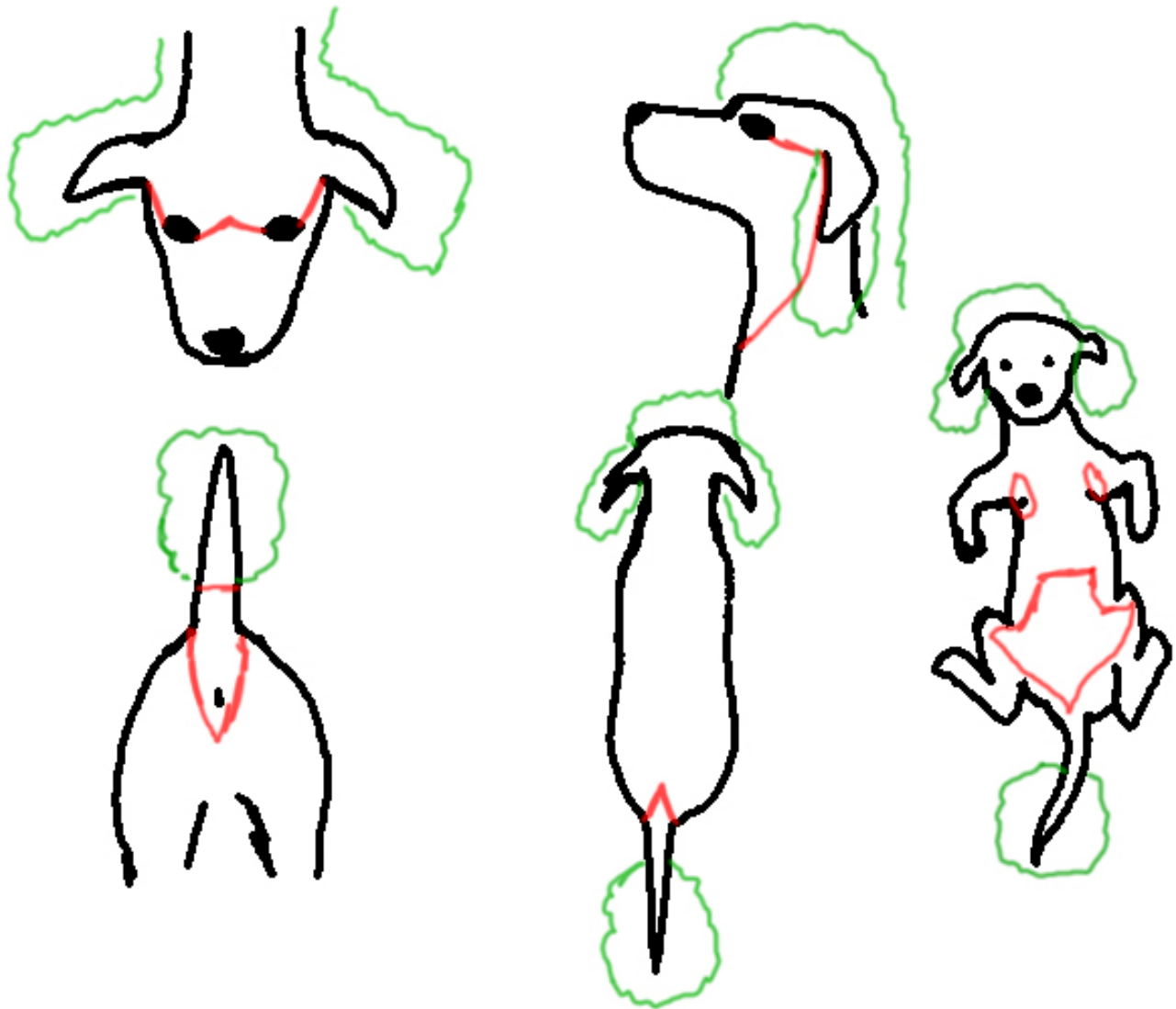
CLIP LINES

The following atrocious and anatomically incorrect illustrations of a puppy demonstrate roughly the lines where the shaved area of the poodle should meet the coated area.

When clipping the face (top) clip from the edge of the ear to the outer corner of the eye. Shape a chevron across the muzzle in front of the stop, between the inner corners of the eyes. Clip a 'v-neck' from the area under the ears to the bottom of the neck.

When clipping the tail (lower), clip a line around the base of the tail extending into a chevron on the back (this stops the coat from looking lumpy when the poodle carries its tail up, and helps form a smooth line from the croup into the topline) and extend the clipped area over the dog's bottom to help prevent the area around the anus from getting dirty.

Clip the undercarriage of the dog, and its armpits if you wish as they are not visible normally and mats tend to form here. Use #10 blade or lower number to avoid nicking and rashes in sensitive area. Clip the insides of the thighs and up to the navel including the dog's 'private parts' (vulva on a girl or sheath and testicles on a boy).



I do not recommend grooming your dog in a style that leaves the normally clipped areas untended.

Most of the commonly used clips have the feet, face, and base of the tail shorn for reasons that are for the welfare of the dog and nothing to do with appearance. Unclipped feet invite prolonged dampness when they get wet from grass, can collect painful burrs between the webbing of the toes, and very long foot hair can get under the pads and interfere with the dog's grip on the floor. The tail and around the dog's bottom should be kept short to prevent it becoming fouled with faeces or stained with urine. The face is also normally clipped as frequent contact with food and water would otherwise cause it to become matted and stained (not to mention smelly and otherwise unpleasant) and it is hard on the dog that it should need to have the sensitive areas on its face brushed in order to maintain long coat here. The vibrissae (whiskers) on a poodle grow curled -- they seem to be under the influence of the same gene that causes the coat to be curly -- and they serve little function and indeed will become matted with the coat and painful if left to grow. It does not hurt the poodle or damage it in any way for the vibrissae to be clipped off with the rest of the hair on the muzzle.

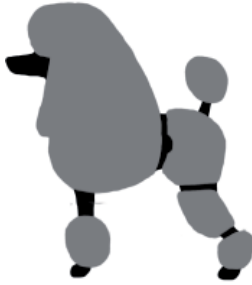
NOTE

Some poodles with mild, non-confrontational temperaments do have an unfortunate tendency to wet themselves when someone goes to pick them up in order to groom or wash them. Although properly socialised dogs should not hate grooming, it should be borne in mind that when we groom a dog, it is expected to endure a lot of one-sided physical contact, including in sensitive areas such as its feet where it isn't otherwise handled with such duration and intensity. Therefore, while they generally enjoy some aspects of grooming, such as the warm water and the shampooing and brushing, it should be understood that they probably won't feel enthusiastic upon picking up the message that it's 'that time of the month' again. If your poodle is in the habit of doing this, do not punish it or become disgusted/distracted into cleaning up the urine immediately, firstly because it is almost certainly not deliberate, and secondly because if you do this, you might actually reinforce the act of weeing, as the act of urinating has caused you to not groom the dog, if even momentarily. Ignore the wee, continue with picking up the dog, and after the dog is on the table/in the bath, then clean up the wee.

Traditional Poodle Clips

Show Clips

usually bands are used in the coat on the head to help form the shape



English Saddle



Scandinavian



Continental

Puppy show clips

Coats of poodles under 12 months are not long enough to shape into the adult show styles. The left image is more of an 'American puppy' style, with a slope scissored in to balance the outline where the neck hair is missing. The image on the right where there has been more of an attempt to create the adult 'mane' shape leaving a hole where there is not enough neck hair is more common in other countries.



Intermediate (sometimes seen at shows)



Modern



German
(clipped tail & ears)

Pet-type clips (not usually seen at shows)

not enough coat to assess texture



Gundog

Same length all over. Practical but tends to make dog look amorphous and unbalanced



Lamb



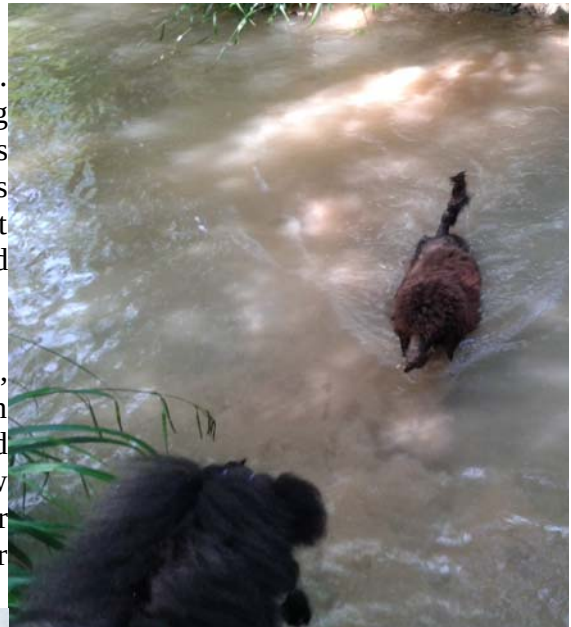
Summer
(other names Clown, Miami, etc.)

About Poodles

Poodles descend from the 'curly water dog' landrace that evolved alongside the people of Europe. *Poodle*, which means something like 'splashes in water' comes from the same German root as *puddle* and poodles were the branch of the family found in the Germanic regions. Other related breeds in this group include the Spanish and Portuguese water dogs, the Irish Water Spaniel, the now sadly extinct English Water Spaniel, the Barbet of France, and the Lagotto Romagnolo from Italy. The normal height for standard poodles is 20-25 inches and poodle coats can be any solid colour.

Standard Poodles are the original wetland hunting dog. Miniature poodles were developed later for hunting truffles, and Toy Poodles were developed still later as lap dogs, which were historically popular as it was believed at the time (and probably quite correctly!) that having a warm little companion to sit on your lap and stroke after meals was soothing to the digestive system.

Many poodles still retain their water-loving instincts, although this has been lost from some of the modern show lines. If you do have a very water-oriented poodle, it's important to be careful of where you allow your dog to swim, as stagnant water can harbour pathogens and fast-moving rivers and bodies of water used by water craft are hazardous.



The most recognisable trait of the breed is its dense curly coat. The coat does not have to be high maintenance, but does have specific grooming requirements and techniques necessary for its proper maintenance. Poodles don't shed large amounts of hair, so time spent grooming your poodle is time saved that would otherwise be spent with the vacuum cleaner!

Poodles remain at heart working dogs who can take as much exercise as you can give them. Psychologist Stanley Coren ranked them as the second most intelligent breed after extensively studying different breeds in obedience training environments. Poodles need mental stimulation and training to thrive and live as well-adjusted companions.

