



Rosewood Shepherds Puppy Handbook

THE FIRST WEEKS

The first couple of weeks should be a pleasant, calm experience for your new puppy. It is important not to stress your new puppy. As with all babies, puppies need their quiet time. They need a place and the opportunity to take their short naps during the day.

Have your home prepared for the new puppy. Food and water dish, a secure pen, and a dog crate (500 size will accommodate the adult Shepherd). You will need a leash, adjustable breakaway collar, toenail clippers, grooming rake, pin brush, and a metal comb. The rake is used for adults during the shedding periods, the pin brush and metal comb, for daily grooming. Grooming should be short and frequent (once a day, for 5-10 minutes). It should be a fun, bonding time with your dog. You will find it helpful to have chew toys for your teething puppy. I use rawhide chips and raw marrow bones cut at least 2" thick. I use raw marrow bones because they do not splinter. Knucklebones and pigs ears can't be digested and do cause diarrhea. Hoofs can cause bowel obstructions and should never be used.

HOUSEBREAKING

When you get your new puppy home, walk it around the yard so it can have a chance to explore and relieve itself in an appropriate spot. It is important to start housebreaking your puppy immediately, so bad habits don't start. Take your puppy in and out of only one door. During the first day, take the puppy in and out of that door 10 plus times. Eventually, the puppy will know which door to go to when it needs to go outside. Praise your puppy and give it a biscuit when it goes. Remember that they will usually eliminate a short time after meals, after sleeping, and after playing. If you see the puppy moving in a small circle and sniffing the floor, quickly pick it up and take it outside! After playing and eliminating, you may use your crate for resting. After resting, immediately take the puppy outside to eliminate. Never put a puppy or adult dog in a crate for more than 1-2 hours at a time during the day. Dogs need to use their muscles. After 12 weeks or so, the crate may be used to sleep in at night. If the puppy is under 12 weeks old, they will not be able to hold it all night. Restrict food and water before going to bed. If you do not allow your puppy to be unsupervised in the house, housebreaking will be a breeze.

FEEDING

Adult dogs should be fed twice a day. The amount varies for age size and sex of your Shepherd. German Shepherds are fast growing dogs; you do not want them too fat or too skinny. As a rule, for an adult, you want to be able to see just a shadow of their ribs. Use a good quality food. I use Eukenuba Large breed puppy food, but Natural Choice, Ultra, Purina One large breed puppy, and Pro Plan large breed puppy are all excellent foods. I also use raw meat with every meal. Meat has enzymes which are cooked out of dry dog food. If meat is not used, the only supplement I use is Prozyme for digestion and to provide good gut bacteria for the intestinal tract. I order Prozyme through the Care-A-Lot catalog 1-800-843-7680. PLEASE USE PROZYME WITH EVERY MEAL! I believe it helps prevent bloat and torsion. Use a couple of tablespoons of canned food, add warm water to the dry dog food and sprinkle the Prozyme on top. I keep my puppies on puppy formula until 6 months at which time I switch to Eukenuba adult. Remember not to have FAT PUPPIES. Too much weight stresses their joints. You should not see ribs but keep them lean. Just like in people, food intake is dependent on how much exercise they receive. Below is a general food guide.



8-9 weeks – ½ cup of kibble 3 times a day. Add 1 tbsp. good quality canned food and warm water to kibble. Sprinkle Prozyme on top. At this age, I start adding ½ tablet of glucosemine and chondriton to food once a day. I get the people kind from Sam's Club. This helps prevent problems with joints and ligamentation.
9-10 weeks – ¾ cup kibble 3 times a day. Moisten, add Prozyme, canned food and glucosemine tablet.
10-12 weeks – 1 ½ cups-kibble 3 times a day, moistened with water. Add Prozyme, tbsp. canned food and glucosemine. I keep giving glucosemine until bones are completely calcified at 2 years of age.
12-16 weeks – 2-3 cups kibble moistened 2 times a day with Prozyme and glucosemine.

VACCINATIONS

Your new puppy from me has had its first puppy shot at 8 weeks and a vet check. If this is mosquito season, you will need to get heartworm medication pronto. I use Heartgard. Heartworm meds are given once a month during mosquito season 30 days after you see the first mosquito. Shots are given every 4 weeks, starting at 8 weeks until 16 weeks and rabies, with the last series. Your puppy will need one more vaccination between 1 year and 16 months. Never vaccinate more than once every 3 years. Rabies must be every 3 yrs.

EARS

German Shepherds usually will have their ears up by 6 months of age. Ears have a tendency to go up and down during the teething stage. It is important to have the bases up by 14 weeks or so. If the bases are not up by 16 weeks, call me and we'll make arrangements for me to tape them so they learn to hold them up. Limit crating significantly when ears are going up (4-6mo stage). In my experience, it somewhat prevents the ears from going up at that critical stage.

PANO

Fast growing, big boned puppies often get Pano. It is an inflammation of the marrow of the long bones. All the large breeds are prone to Pano, especially Shepherd males. Ask your vet for Rimadyl to relieve the symptoms. They outgrow this condition as they get older.

SOCIALIZATION

Proper socialization of your new puppy will create a personality you will love to live with. You want to have a puppy that will become a confident, happy, loving, protective dog. If your puppy is under 16 weeks, you will want to be careful where you take it. The puppy has not had all its shots and is still vulnerable to diseases. Once your puppy is 12 weeks and has had two series of shots, you can start taking it to public places. Avoid areas where other animals relieve themselves and where strays roam.

It is a good idea to expose your puppy to lots of sounds, objects and people. If your puppy is startled or frightened by something, IGNORE the reaction. Do not praise or pet the puppy for frightened behavior because in effect, you would be reinforcing that behavior.

TRAINING

Puppies need to know when they're doing something you do not approve of. Shepherd puppies grow big very quickly. It is much easier to have control of a puppy when its 20-30 pounds than 70-90 pounds. Puppy socialization classes are great for youngsters. When your puppy is 5-6 months old enroll him in an obedience class. Shepherds are very intelligent and want to please. Set your puppy up to succeed and not fail. That means don't leave food or trash around to tempt him. Don't call him to you to clip nails. NEVER call your



puppy when you're angry at him or to scold him! Keep training periods short and fun. I'm a believer in using food to motivate (the smaller and tastier, the better). Always use the same command to elicit a certain reaction. Make sure all family members understand this concept. A confused puppy will often just stop listening. Keep the commands simple. Try to stick to one-syllable words, when possible. Praise your puppy when he listens to you and when he does what you ask.

EXERCISE

Young Shepherds are babies and have very loose ligaments. Shepherd puppies have a small bone in the elbow that does not fuse until after 5 months. DO NOT walk a puppy under 4 months more than ½ block or so. They can run around the yard and self-exercise. Do not let your puppy jump off any significant heights until those elbows have fused. The result of non-fusing is elbow dysplasia. They should jump no more than their own height until after 6 months. NEVER jog with a young puppy. After at least 1 year of age, you may work up to walking or running 1-3 miles on soft grass.

BASICS

- I intend for this dog to be a COMPANION HOUSE DOG.
- Toenails must be kept short. Clip once a week. If you hear them click on the floor, they're too long.
- NEVER leave a CHAIN collar on your dog unless he is on a leash with you.
- NEVER tie a GSD!! They must have a safe fenced area for exercise if they are not on a leash.
- Never crate your puppy more than 1-2 hours per day. They need exercise to develop their bone and muscle. If ears are coming up (4-6 month stage), do not crate because they will be much harder to get up.
- Brush often with a pin brush and a steel comb. Shedding will be greatly lessened if you spend 5-10 minutes a day brushing your dog. This is a wonderful bonding time with you and your dog.
- Heartworm medication such as Heartgard is a must! Interceptor kills the heartworm larva and most worms except for tapeworm. If you have ticks, Frontline used monthly during tick season will keep ticks from biting.
- Bloat and torsion are killers of GSD's and will affect 30% of the GSD population. Learn to recognize the symptoms and RACE to the Emergency vet if your dog is: 1) attempting to vomit but foam is coming out 2) pacing and agitated abnormal behavior 3) swelling in the stomach area. Emergency clinic vets are best equipped to deal with bloat and torsion.

Enjoy and love your German Shepherd. In my opinion, it is the best breed on earth. The more you include them as part of your family, the better dogs they become. Don't expect miracles from your puppy, but slowly shape the behavior you want over time. Reinforce them with treats, and a happy, praising voice. I am always available for questions or issues that you may need guidance on.

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