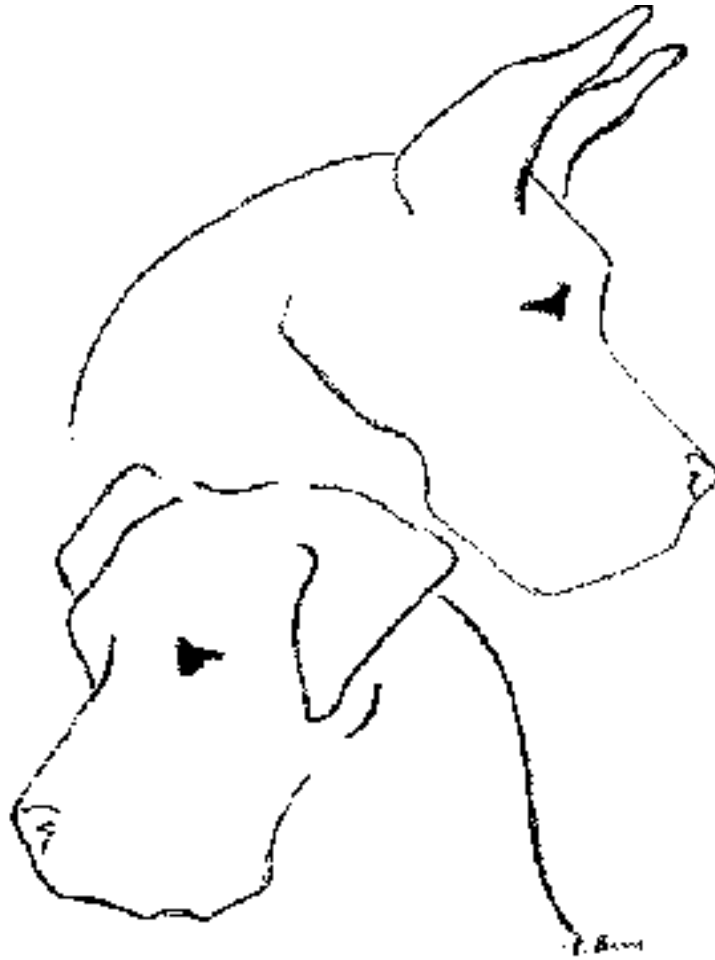


# A GREAT DANE OF YOUR OWN



## *A CARE HANDBOOK FOR THE NORTHWEST DANE OWNER*

*By Georgia Hymmen  
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## INTRODUCTION

Congratulations! Whether you've purchased a Great Dane puppy or obtained an adult from a breeder, shelter or rescue group, you've just added a family member into your household. With proper care and training, your new addition will give you many years of love, devotion, and companionship.

Great Danes are very special dogs. Often referred to as "Gentle Giants", they combine their large size with elegance, affection, common sense, loyalty, and a sense of humor. Danes are truly "people dogs" and need to be an active part of the family and household. They enjoy the company of people and do not do well as an outside dog with little or no human companionship. They should never be allowed to roam loose or be tied or chained up.

Being a giant breed, your new pet has some special needs. Taking time in the very beginning of your ownership will help you make sure that your pet reaches his full potential as a valued family member. Correct diet, proper training, quality veterinarian care and owner responsibility have a great impact on how much you will enjoy Dane ownership.

Owning a Dane is a responsibility and a commitment. Dane ownership can be costly with a breed as large as a Dane. Vet costs and training classes are expensive necessities, not options. A large commitment of time is also involved-it takes time to train and care for your Dane, besides give him daily attention. There are no excuses-only irresponsible owners.

This booklet has been written by Georgia Hymmen and distributed free of charge by Dane Outreach in the hope it will help you get acquainted with your Dane and to answer some of the common questions new Great Dane owners have. Questions of a more specific nature should be addressed directly to Dane Outreach, the Great Dane Club of Western Washington, an established, long-term breeder or a qualified veterinarian familiar with the breed.

This booklet has been prepared for the novice Dane owner, and is intended only as that. Distributed by Dane Outreach, this booklet is available to any interested party and/or new breeders to send with their puppies at time of sale. Distribution does not constitute endorsement of any breeder, club, group, or individual. Reprints must include this cover page.

Information in this booklet is the opinion of the author, and does not reflect the endorsement of any club or group. Permission is granted to reprint this booklet in its entirety and distribute as desired as long as credit is given to Dane Outreach and Georgia Hymmen.

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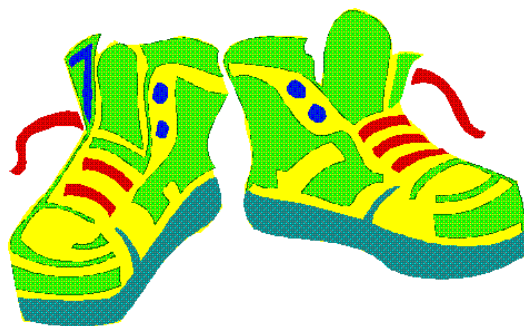


Big dogs = a big financial commitment

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank the people who have helped put this booklet together-Marta Brock, Jeanne Hilterbrant, Vickie Clements, Jill Hicks, and Heather Schmit. All have been generous with their time and suggestions.

Suggestions and comments are welcome, as this booklet will be revised on a regular basis.



**Having a Dane puppy around the house will teach you to put your shoes away!**

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**Danes are very much “people dogs” and need to be a part of your family.**

## GUIDELINES FOR BEING A RESPONSIBLE DOG OWNER

What *is* a responsible dog owner? The following guidelines for responsible dog ownership were established by the Responsible Dog Owners Association. We have borrowed these from them and added a few other guidelines.

We hope that when you purchase or adopt your new Dane, you will consider it as a commitment for life, and you will make every effort to be a responsible, caring and courteous dog owner.

- Assume ownership only when you can make the commitment to care for the dog for its entire life.
- Provide sufficient shelter to protect the dog from the elements. Provide fresh water and food on a regular, established basis.
- Spay or neuter **ALL** pets; leave breeding to those who are active in working or showing quality stock and are knowledgeable about the breed, and are responsible for the puppies they produce.
- Maintain the best possible standard of care; routine vaccinations, wormings, and vet care as needed.
- Tools of a responsible dog owner; poop scoop and proper means of disposal, leash, crate and a fenced yard or dog kennel. A responsible dog owner always cleans up after their dog, especially in public places.
- **NEVER** allow the dog to run at large or roam free. **NEVER** leave small children unsupervised with any dog. **ALWAYS** have control over your dog. **NEVER** tie out or chain up the dog.
- Praise, encourage, and reward good behavior. Firmly correct unacceptable, or over-aggressive behavior before it becomes a problem.
- Training is essential. Learn dog behavior and breed characteristics. Provide adequate human companionship. Get professional help to teach you how to teach your dog correctly.
- If you find you must give up your dog, deal with it in an adult, caring and responsible manner. If behavior or training problems, poor health or bad temperament is the issue, ask yourself honestly if another family could deal with it. If the problem is bad enough for you to give up the dog the answer is probably no. Act responsibly in this case. If the dog is a nice family dog, be realistic--don't take it to the shelter. Most dogs *don't* find good homes there, just the end of their life. Attempt to find a new home for the dog yourself. If it's a purebred, contact Seattle Purebred Dog Rescue, Inc. for help.

Can *you* be a responsible owner? If you cannot or are not willing to follow these guidelines, then perhaps you should consider some type of pet who is less demanding.

It is a very real fact that countless numbers of purebred dogs are destroyed each year. Through responsible dog ownership, you can be a part of the solution and not the problem.

Any person who is not a responsible dog owner is causing problems for those who are. Any animal is a commitment for life. Please think carefully before adding a dog into your life. If you or anyone you know is considering breeding a Dane, please be aware of the facts regarding the large number of unwanted dogs that are born each year. A bumper sticker popular with rescue groups reads "If you don't do rescue...don't breed!"

Please also try to encourage other Dane owners to act in a responsible manner.

## THE NEW PUPPY

I'm not going to write much about how to situate your new puppy into your household, as there are many excellent books, magazine articles, and video tapes on that subject. If your breeder does not have information, check with your local library, pet store or veterinarian's office, local Great Dane club; or call Dane Outreach for suggestions.

The very first thing you should do *before* your puppy comes home is to do a little bit of homework. Read the book "How To Raise A Puppy You Can Live With" (Rutherford and Neil, Alpine Publishing); watch Ian Dunbar's video tape "Cirrus Puppy Training", and learn about crates and their proper use. Find a Puppy Kindergarten class and enroll. Find out what needs your puppy has and be prepared for them. If you do this in advance, puppy ownership will be much more pleasant and rewarding.

In puppy training, you have a very narrow window of time in which to take advantage of the fact puppies have all their learning ability at twelve weeks of age. Gentle, consistent training and socialization are very important during this critical stage.

The use of a crate as a training tool is highly recommended. Not only will it aid in housebreaking, but it will prevent destruction from chewing, provide a secure place for your Dane to sleep, let him get away from the activity of the kids, and can keep the dog from being underfoot when you are busy or have non-doggy company. Dane sized crates are expensive; but I feel they are worth their weight in gold. Information on crate training can be obtained through the Nicki Meyer Educational Effort. Vari Kennels, suitable for small puppies, can be rented. Full sized Dane crates can be purchased through dog show concessionaires or through larger pet stores, such as PetsMart. (*See back page for more information.*)

Housebreaking can be accomplished in a very short time, as Dane puppies are usually very clean animals. However, the key is that you **MUST** be consistent, diligent, and very watchful. Again, many puppy care books cover housebreaking--it would be worth your time to read one! A crate, properly used, can be an invaluable tool in housebreaking. A few things to remember; *never* rub the puppy's nose in the accident, *always* praise for eliminating in the proper area; and take a baby outside frequently! Remember, sudden diet changes, either in the form of a different food or

schedule, can upset your housebreaking routine. Any changes of diet should be made gradually over the period of one week. Be consistent about mealtime; and take the puppy outside immediately after eating and upon waking.

If you work and must leave your puppy home alone for portion of the day, try to arrange for someone to come in a couple of times a day to let him out to go potty, feed him his lunch, and to play with him for a little while. If that is not possible, be prepared for housebreaking to take much longer--and also be prepared to spend extra time with your puppy in the morning before you go to work and in the evening when you get home, no matter how tired or busy you are! Be sure to leave the radio or TV on for company while you are gone, and leave him with plenty of Dane-proof toys to occupy his time. *Never* give a Dane puppy or adolescent full run of the house while you are gone--you will be very sorry you did! Crates were made for a reason!

Take some time to learn about the breed you have chosen. Know what the breed characteristics are, and what you can expect at certain ages in a dog's life. Read books about puppy socialization, and make every effort to follow through with this *very important* aspect of puppy training. The more varied the sights, sounds, and experiences you expose your puppy to, the better! Of course, if your puppy has not had all of his vaccines, care should be used in frequenting areas that have had high dog traffic.

Begin training your puppy from day one. This is very important. Puppies can learn amazingly fast--in fact, they have all of their learning ability by 12 weeks of age. After all, the fact that he knows what the sound of a cookie box opening is proves that. Go to a Puppy Kindergarten—it's fun, rewarding, and a great way to start your puppy out right.

Do not let children play roughly or tease your Dane puppy--it may make him dislike kids. Kids often do things that aggravate dogs. Some of these things would include staring a dog in the face (*bad idea!*), barking at him, teasing the dog through a fence, poking or pulling at the dog, waving arms and screaming, or teasing the dog with a toy or food. Pouncing or jumping on a dog while it is resting or sleeping is also a very bad idea. Danes are not horses and should not be expected to give "horsy rides". Teach your children how to properly behave around dogs; and teach your dog how to behave around kids! And, although Danes are generally very good around children, they should always be supervised when playing with kids.

Remember that your Dane puppy, for all of his size, is really a baby and should not be left outside in the cold or hot weather for long periods of time. **NEVER** chain or tie up a Great Dane as a means of confinement; and never allow the dog to free roam.

Love your puppy, be gentle, and take time with him. You will be rewarded with a pet that will give you many years of pleasure.

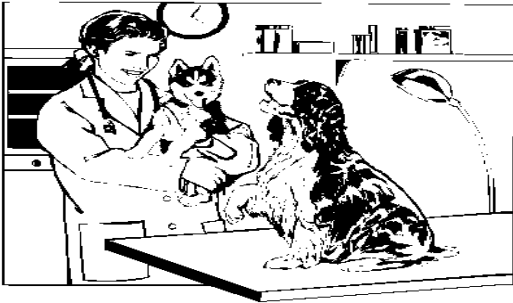
Below is a list of items that you will need for your new puppy or adult:

- stainless steel feeding dishes
- a feeding stand
- buckle collar
- ID tag and dog license
- six foot leather leash
- sturdy dog toys
- crate
- information on training classes
- food as recommended by your breeder, veterinarian or qualified person
- brush and currycomb
- nail clippers
- bedding (old blankets work well)
- first aid kit



*Proper use of a crate will prevent destruction from chewing and help speed housebreaking!*

## VETERINARY CARE



The first step of quality veterinary care for your Great Dane is choosing a vet. Ideally, your vet of choice should be very familiar with Great Danes and the problems that can be specific to the breed. Ask other Dane owners and breeders what vet they use or contact your local Great Dane club for suggestions. Ask the vet if he has a large Dane clientele. Your vet will be a key person in the care of your new pet.

No matter where you obtained your Great Dane from, be it a breeder, a rescue or a private party, you should immediately have it vet checked. This applies to both puppies and adults. You want to make sure your new friend is indeed healthy and happy and that any potential problems can be caught and treated early. Also, at that time, you should review what vaccines and wormings your Dane will need. If you purchased a puppy, you should obtain a list of what vaccines and wormings the puppy had prior to purchase.

### **Vaccines**

Normally, puppies begin a series of vaccines starting at about six to seven weeks of age. Vaccines termed "puppy shots" are usually given in a combination. It is *very important* that the complete series be given as recommended by your vet. If this is not done, the puppy may not receive complete immunity from infectious canine diseases and could be in danger of contracting a virus, getting ill, or even dying. If you obtained an adult whose inoculation record is unknown, consult your vet and begin a vaccination schedule immediately. Be sure to ask your vet when boosters are due. Until a puppy has received his complete series of vaccines, caution should be used when taking it out in areas that have seen a lot of dog traffic, like parks, etc.

The first rabies vaccine is usually given at 4 months of age, with a booster at one year. Then, the dog needs to be revaccinated once every two to three years, depending on the type of vaccine used. However, not Dane breeders feel that the rabies vaccine should not be given that young, instead waiting

until six months of age or so.

A vaccine for "kennel cough" (*Bordetella*) is highly recommended. Kennel cough is highly contagious and this vaccine should be given especially if your Dane is to be boarded. Many vets and breeders feel the type of vaccine given nasally is the best.

Adults need annual boosters on their vaccines, too. For information on a booster schedule, please consult with your veterinarian or visit the American Veterinary Medicine website for vaccine protocols.

Vaccines should be given only by a qualified vet or under the direction of one. Vaccines, given improperly, may not provide adequate protection and leave the dog open to disease.

*Note: Some vets and Dane breeders feel that vaccines should not be given in combinations; and that adequate spacing should be given between different types of vaccines.*

### **Worms**

Puppies should be checked frequently for worms, as they are sometimes very hard to get under control. Often, several wormings are required before the problem is under control. The most common type of worm infestation puppies have are roundworms.

There are many different types of internal parasites, and different medications can be required for each type of worms. The novice person should never attempt to "blind" worm his dog without knowing positively what type of worm he is dealing with and what type of medication should be used. Do not administer worming preparations without the advice of a veterinarian. These medications are poison, and given incorrectly, can make your puppy ill or even kill him.

Both puppies and adults should have regular fecal checks done every six months to one year. If infestation is apparent, take a sample into your vet so he can determine what type of worm the dog has and what medication is needed to treat it accordingly.

### **Fleas**

Fleas *can* be controlled, but you, as the owner, must be on top of things. A

serious flea infestation can be very difficult to control. Beside being an irritating presence on the dog, fleas can cause severe skin problems and are the intermediate host for tapeworm.

First, consider putting your Dane on an oral flea control program. Many people seem very happy with it. Ask your vet.

Then, take steps to avoid contaminating the house and dog area. When your dog comes back from an area where there has been a lot of dog traffic, spray him down with flea spray.

If you have a serious flea problem, you should discuss with your vet the best way to go about treating the problem. The following suggestions may help those who are battling a severe flea infestation:

- place a couple pieces of cut-up flea collar in your vacuum bag
- when you flea bomb the house, also be sure to do the car
- to completely control fleas, on the same day you need to flea bath and dip the dog, bomb the house and car, wash all dog bedding, and spray the yard
- consider using one of the flea control services; some of them guarantee their work

Remember that fleas are the host for tapeworms.

### **Regular Checkups**

Regular veterinary check-ups are very crucial to the well-being of your dog. Besides boosting for annual vaccines as recommended by your veterinarian and doing a fecal check, the Dane should be examined from head to toe. The vet should listen to the dog's heart and lungs, check for any unusual lumps, bumps, or swelling, examine the mouth and teeth, and check out the eyes and ears.

Young and healthy Danes should receive an annual check-up once a year. Older or ill Danes may need to be examined every 6 months or more.

## **COMMON DANE PROBLEMS**

### **Tonsillitis**

Yes, Danes can have problems with tonsils! Usually affecting "teenagers", signs of tonsillitis can be subtle. Poor appetite, appearing hungry and not eating, and severe red throat are all signs of this disease. A dog with

tonsillitis should be put on antibiotics. If treatment does not clear up the problem, surgery would be recommended to remove the tonsils.

### **Thyroid Problems**

A very common problem in the breed. Signs can include poor coat, coat thinness, weight gain, and a desire to sleep on the heat register. Diagnosis is done by a blood test and affected individuals can be placed on medication.

### **Growing (Bone) Problems**

Dane puppies sometimes have growing problems what can often be attributed to a dog food with too much protein (sometimes termed "growth" or "puppy" foods) and an incorrect ratio of calcium and phosphorus. As a generalization, it is usually considered a *bad* idea to feed a Dane puppy a diet high in protein. (*For more information on feeding, please refer to the diet section of this booklet.*)

Growing and bone problems have symptoms such as lameness in the shoulder or limbs (often reoccurring), exceptionally large joints exhibiting swelling and soreness, a high fever, excessive stiffness, and sometimes an instability or "wobbling" gait when moving. Any suspicion of a bone problem should be referred to your vet immediately. Any lameness that is severe, lasts more than two to three days, or is reoccurring, should be investigated. A couple of the growing problems are not seen frequently in other breeds, so you must deal with a vet familiar with Great Danes. Some of the problems seen are self-limiting (they go away with a lower protein diet), but others can be quite serious, causing permanent bone changes and crippling. Some of the bone problems seen in Danes are HOD, OCD, panoesitis, and wobblers. Surprisingly, hip dysplasia is not as common as many people think. All dogs in a breeding program should be OFA certified against hip dysplasia (a crippling disease of the hip joint) before they are bred.

### **Bloat**

Danes, and other large-chested breeds, can be prone to a condition often referred to as "bloat". Explained simply, the stomach expands with gasses, and for some reason, the dog cannot expel the gasses contained within. Sometimes the stomach actually twists on it's axis, further complicating things. A dog suffering from bloat *must* have immediate veterinary care and it will most likely require an expensive surgery to correct the condition. Immediate action is required if the dog is to be saved. Bloat is something

that all Dane owners should be familiar with.

Symptoms of bloat include attempting to vomit with no results, or vomiting and producing a thick white frothy substance similar to egg whites, distinct discomfort, swelling in the stomach area, excessive drooling, and the dog appearing ill and uncomfortable. The dog may be reluctant to lie down. Many people seeing bloat for the first time assume their dog has been poisoned.

The cause of bloat is still unknown, despite various studies by Purdue University and Morris Animal Foundation. Dane owners should always feed frequent, small meals instead of one large one. Food should be moistened prior to feeding. A quiet time of one hour before and one to two hours after is necessary. Danes have been known to bloat in stress circumstances, such as in boarding situations, etc.

The concerned Dane owner would be well advised to discuss bloat with their veterinarian to get a clearer understanding of the disease. Some Dane owners elect to have a preventative surgery, called gastropexy, done. A copy of the Great Dane Club of America's bloat pamphlet can be obtained by calling the phone number in the front of this booklet.

### **Those Darn Tails**

Happy Danes, or Danes that are confined to a small area (be it a crate or room) may bang their tail and open it up. If not allowed to heal properly and happens frequently, the tail can become infected and may, in extreme cases, develop gangrene and have to be amputated.

Tails *can* be treated, but it takes a bit of work and diligence on the part of the owner. The following suggestions may be helpful. However, if you have a Dane who refuses to leave anything on their tail, you'll have difficulty treating it.

For small wounds on the end of the tail--clean the area thoroughly and treat with a medicated powder. Wrap the area loosely with gauze and secure with a piece of masking tape. Do not wrap too tightly--you want to allow the wound to "breathe". Take a large foam hair roller and split one side lengthwise. Open up the curler at the insertion and wrap it around the tail. Secure with tape. Be sure to change frequently. An application of Bitter Apple may prevent the dog from chewing the roller off.

For larger wounds--clean and treat as above. If the tail is severely infected, veterinary attention should be obtained as oral antibiotics might be needed. Follow the above procedure using the curler. A large syringe cover can also be used if additional protection is needed. When using the syringe cover, be sure to poke several holes in it with a nail to allow for ventilation. After the curler or syringe is in place, take a long knee sock and put it on the tail. Be sure it comes all the way to the base of the tail. Secure it with tape-*snug but not too tight!* Tie a soft belt or similar object around the dog's waist. Bring the tail between the legs and attach the end of the sock to the belt. If you use a good, sturdy safety pin you can easily undo it when the dog has to go outside for exercise duties. Apply Bitter Apple or Veriform spray to prevent chewing.

Another method that can be used to protect the tail while the dog is in the house is to put a pair of sweat pants (the type with a draw-string waistband) on the dog. *Do not* cut a hole for the tail. Of course, you will have to remove the pants when the dog goes outside.

In severe cases the tail must be amputated. If your veterinarian feels this is the only option available, it would be suggested that the tail be docked short so the problem doesn't reoccur.

### **Other Dane Problems**

Other Dane health issues include heart problems, Addison's Disease, Wobblers and cancer. For more information on Great Dane health issues, please visit the Great Dane Club of America site at [www.gdca.org](http://www.gdca.org).

### **Odds N' Ends**

A normal canine temperature is 101<sup>0</sup>, with a slight variation in either direction. If you suspect your Dane is sick, the first thing you should do is to take its temperature. Use a rectal thermometer, apply Vaseline or K-Y Jelly and insert into the rectum. Wait about three minutes to get a reading. If the temperature is over 102<sup>0</sup> or persists; or is accompanied by vomiting, lethargy or diarrhea, consult your vet.

Any lumps or bumps on an older Dane should be immediately investigated, as Danes can be prone to certain types of bone cancer. Also, shortness of breath and swelling of the front legs could be a sign of heart problems. Some young Danes can be prone to tonsil problems, resulting in poor eating

habits. Thyroid problems are also common in the breed.

There are many excellent books on the market for generalized canine care and first aid. The Dane owner should have one of these books around, along with a canine first aid kit. Knowing your Dane, being prepared, and having a good vet will go a long way in assuring a full life span for your Dane.

Some items to consider for your Great Dane's first aid kit:

- rectal thermometer
- Vaseline
- rubbing alcohol
- antibiotic ointment
- Panalog ointment
- Maalox (liquid and tablet) and Gas-Ex
- bloat tube
- buffered aspirin
- Kaopectate or similar medication
- tweezers
- bandage scissors
- gauze
- vet wrap and ace bandages, cloth-backed adhesive tape



*Take Your Pet To The Vet.*

## EAR CROPPING

The majority of long-term established Dane breeders in the Northwest sell their puppies with their ears already cropped. However, if you purchased an uncropped puppy and you wish to have it cropped, you must be informed about the procedure and what it involves.

Cropping is a highly personal choice. People for and against cropping all have valid reasons whether to crop or not. If the puppy you purchased was uncropped, and the breeder did not specify that it must be cropped, the decision is up to you.

Ear cropping began long ago when Danes were used for hunting wild boar. The ears were cropped very short so the boar's sharp tusks would not rip the long hound-like ears off. As boar hunting declined, the custom of cropping continued. Today's ear crop is much different from the ones of the past. Cropping is an art; and those considering to having their puppy cropped should deal only with a veterinarian who deals with Dane ear crops on a regular basis.

Cropping is most usually done between the ages of eight and fourteen weeks of age. Most breeders opt for the younger side of the spectrum. Most vets will not crop a puppy past the age of sixteen weeks. It is this author's opinion that puppies should not be cropped after 10 weeks of age. Younger puppies tolerate the cropping procedure quite well and go through very little discomfort. However, the older the puppy, the tougher it is on them. On older puppies, surgery can be more difficult, healing time longer, and the whole ordeal harder on the puppy. Puppies cropped young seem to deal with the cropping and aftercare much, much better. Some people are of the opinion that ears are harder to get to stand if they are cropped later. An adult Dane *should never* be cropped.

If the person you purchased the puppy from is unable to recommend a vet who does Dane crops, consult a member of your local Dane club or an established breeder. Cropping Great Danes is a very specialized art, and just because a vet does Boxers or other cropped breeds doesn't mean he does a nice Dane crop! In the Northwest, show people (who are very picky about their ear crops) feel there are only two or three vets in our area who do nice Dane crops. I cannot stress the importance of going to a qualified vet

familiar with Dane crops, cropping at the optimum age for the puppy, followed up by proper and diligent aftercare.

Before the puppy is cropped, it is very important that he is in good condition, in good weight, worm free, and has had the proper vaccines for his age. An ill or sickly puppy should never be cropped.

Most likely, the vet will have you bring your puppy to his office the evening before cropping. He will check the puppy to make sure his health is good, and make sure he doesn't eat anything that night (to assure he will not vomit, and possibly choke, during surgery). You can probably pick your puppy up the next day. The puppy's ears will be stitched along the cropped edge, and taped, or supported, in an upright position. There are a variety of methods for supporting ears after cropping; many breeders prefer ear racks, a light framework that holds the ears up with a minimum of tape. Another method consists of using Styrofoam cups.

After cropping, the puppy may shake his head or scratch at his stitches. He should be discouraged from doing so. Some puppies can be distracted with toys and chew goodies. If the puppy is adamant about bothering his stitches, small baby socks can be taped to his rear feet. He will spend more time trying to get them off than worrying about his ears! In extreme cases, a "bonnet" can be fashioned out of an old dish towel. Cut slits in the towel for the ears to go through, than fasten the towel under the chin.

Follow the directions your vet gave you for aftercare. Some vets give antibiotics; others don't. Pain medications are strongly suggested. Some will have you apply ointment to the cropped edges. Be sure to check the ears daily and keep them clean. Any signs of excess swelling, discharge, redness or foul smell should immediately be brought to the attention of the vet who did the cropping.

In about ten days to two weeks the stitches can be removed. Once they are out, the ears will have to be taped on a regular basis until the cartilage has formed "memory" and the ears stand. If the ears are not taped and positioned properly, they will not stand correctly. The best crop a vet does will be a failure if the taping is not done correctly. Cropping alone will not guarantee that the ears will stand. Many people make the incorrect assumption that failure of cropped ears to stand is the fault of the vet. This usually is not the case. Most likely, the dog's ear leather was too soft, or the

owner was not diligent enough about proper aftercare.

Ears *must* be taped on a regular basis. For ears to stand correctly, the cartilage has to form “memory” and to do that, the ears must be taped correctly. There are many different methods to use. If you are having a vet do the ear taping, be sure to follow his instructions. Some breeders, for a small fee, will do the taping or show you how. Most breeders’ feel that the less tape on the ears the better, allowing them to “breath”.

When do ears stand? When they are ready. Some puppies manage to get their ears up by five months of age-but it can take up to a year for a dog with a long crop. If the ears are not standing at all, or tip in badly after one year of age, a re-crop can be considered. It is this author's opinion that recropping is very hard on a dog and should only be considered if absolutely necessary.

Again, I cannot stress how important it is to be diligent about retaping and aftercare. If you are not going to take the time to find a vet who specializes in Dane crops and do the resulting aftercare properly, please don't bother cropping your puppy. Cropped ears that don't stand, or stand badly, are distracting to the dog's appearance. Don't make the puppy go through with the procedure if you're not serious about keeping up with the work involved.

In closing, cropping should be done only on a healthy puppy by a qualified vet familiar with Great Danes, at the proper age, and the owner should be willing to provide the required aftercare.

## FEEDING YOUR DANE

Ask ten different breeders about what to feed your Dane-and you will get ten different answers! Feeding Danes, especially puppies, seems to be a highly individual matter. What works for one breeder may not work for another. However, you will find that breeders and vets familiar with the breed will agree on certain items.

Young puppies need to be fed about three to four times a day. As they become older, the number of meals can gradually be dropped to two times a day. Continue feeding twice a day for the rest of the Dane's life. Meal time should be at a set schedule, especially for puppies during the critical housebreaking stage. Danes should never be free fed (leaving food out at all times). Give the dog about 20 minutes to finish eating his meal. If he hasn't completed it by that time, remove it and do not offer any food (not even treats!) until the next meal. Young puppies, like kids, need to be taught proper eating habits. Danes can become very picky if you let them.

Danes can be fed "up" about chin or chest level, on the floor or in a crate, whichever works best for your dog. A specially built stand can be used, or even a chair. Some people use a dish holder set in eye bolts attached to the wall. For a puppy, a cardboard box can be used with a hole cut for the dish. Be sure to block the box with something solid so it doesn't move around when the puppy eats. Note that one study on bloat indicates that dogs fed "up" are actually more prone to bloat.

Feed dishes should be made of stainless steel. Durable and easy to clean, these dishes are not prone to developing small scratches like their plastic counterparts can. Scratches in the bottom of the dish can irritate the dog's chin and aggravate or cause a staph infection.

*Never* allow your Dane to exercise heavily before or after a meal. Do not allow him to consume large quantities of water with a meal, either. A quiet time of one hour before and at least one hour after a meal is a "must" for Danes. Allowing a dog to exercise after a meal, or gulp large amounts of water, may contribute to causing bloat.

Always use a quality brand of dry dog food. Stay away from in-house or generic brands of food. They are not a proper diet for any Dane. Some brands to consider would be the adult formulas of Eagle, Nature's Recipe,

Iams, Nutro, and Sturdy, to name a few. There are many other good brands available on the market today. The addition of canned food (adults and puppies) or meat (adults only) can be done in moderation but is not necessary.

The addition of wheat germ oil, salmon oil or a vegetable oil to the food will also help to maintain a nice hair coat. Dry dog food does not contain enough fat for the coat and usually supplementation is needed.

Dane puppies have special feeding requirements. A diet too high in protein and/or calories can cause or contribute to certain bone and growing problems. Many long-term breeders and vets feel that a protein level of between 21% to 23% is optimum for a Dane puppy. Many puppies cannot tolerate a diet of 100% puppy food, and can get into trouble if allowed to continue eating such a diet. Additionally, puppies should *never* be given supplements of calcium or vitamins, meat, cottage cheese, or eggs. Adding these items causes an imbalance which can lead to problems. If you purchased your puppy from an established breeder, you should have received a diet sheet with the puppy. Follow those directions and do not change the diet unless under the direction of a knowledgeable person. Do not allow puppies to become too fat. A word of warning- quite often a pet store employee or a vet not familiar with Danes will suggest a high quality protein food or vitamin and/or mineral supplements. These people will say that this supplementation is needed because of the excessive growth a Dane goes through. Wrong! This type of feeding forces too much growth too soon, and that's where the puppy can run into problems. Feeding a lower protein food will assure your puppy simply grows at a slower rate. Don't worry- as long as you are feeding a quality brand of food he will reach his genetic potential. Any question on diet should be directed to a vet who is very familiar with Danes and their specific needs.

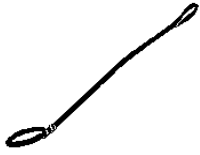
The amount your Dane will eat will vary greatly, depending on age, life style, activity level and health. A Dane should never be rib-thin. The back, ribs, and hip bones should be covered. Puppies and young adults should not carry too much weight, as it can cause undue stress on growing bones. A good way to determine if your Dane is in the proper weight is to see just the silhouette of the last rib. As a general rule, Dane bitches will eat about six to eight cups per day and males about eight to twelve cups. However, since each Dane is an individual, body condition should be the key and not the actual amount of food consumed. Food should always be moistened with

warm (not hot) water before feeding.

Many Dane breeders feel that dry foods made with corn or high amounts of soy can contribute to bloat. Also, many dogs are allergic to corn-based foods. For more detail on feeding your Dane, please consult an established Dane breeder, your veterinarian, the Great Dane Club of Western Washington or one of the Dane Outreach representatives.



**A proper diet is very important for a Great Dane. Puppies should never be fed a puppy food.**



## TRAINING

Training-it's never too late or too early to begin-but do it! A vast majority of Danes find themselves needing new homes because of training problems that could have been solved by a commitment on the part of the owner to work with the dog. A young untrained Dane puppy is a pain--an untrained teenager is impossible.

If you purchased a young puppy, you can begin training him as soon as you get him home. The "can't train him until he is 6 months old" mentality is outdated, old fashioned, and allows the dog to learn a whole host of bad habits before his six-month birthday! A twelve-week-old puppy has the same learning power as his two-year-old counterpart. The only difference is that he has a shorter attention span-and hasn't had a chance to learn bad habits yet!

Remember, it's easier to set good habits than to break bad ones. Most Dane puppies are smart and easy going. Using common sense, consistency, patience, and a gentle touch, you can teach your baby to walk on a leash without pulling, sit, down, wait, leave it, and stay at a very young age.

I **strongly** recommend enrolling your new Dane puppy in a "puppy kindergarten" class, provided it is given by a qualified individual. This low-keyed, easy-going and happy training will teach you how to teach your puppy the basics. It will also provide much-needed socialization. Owners who do not take advantage of the trainability of young puppies are missing out on an excellent opportunity of teaching the puppy the "rules" of the human world.

I'm not going to go in great length about the training of puppies, as there are a number of excellent classes in the Northwest area. Just remember to never reinforce a negative behavior, set your "rules" early and stick by them, and be consistent. In training, correct the unwanted behavior, show the puppy what you want, and praise. Food training works very well with Dane puppies. Part of the pride in Dane ownership is knowing that you have a dog you can count on to behave in public.

The same applies for an adult--even if you obtained an unruly teenager that has had no training-you CAN train him. You might have to work at it, maybe go through several sessions of classes, but the work will pay off in a dog that you can enjoy and take for walks without fear of being pulled down the street!

Most Danes simply need what I term as "house manners"-how to walk on a leash without pulling, coming when called, lying down and sitting on command, and to be quiet when told. Start your training, be persistent and consistent, be patient and gentle, and all of your hard work will pay off in a well-behaved pet you can be proud of!

When training, be sure to correct the unwanted behavior, show the dog what is correct, and praise for that correct behavior. Never reinforce any type of behavior you would consider negative, such as being fearful or shy\*. **Never** allow aggressive, territorial or over-protective behavior. Nipping, snapping, growling and biting should be dealt with firmly. If you have specific training problems consult with your trainer or call the number listed in the front of this booklet.

A word about crates, since they can be used as a training aid - I really recommend them to help with housebreaking. Several pet stores in the area sell large crates, and they are worth their weight in gold. They can prevent destruction of household items by chewing, speed up housebreaking, and simply be used to get the dog out from under your feet when you are busy. They also provide a secure place for your dog to sleep. Consider purchasing a crate-this will be a decision you will never regret!



*Your Dane must learn how to behave around small dogs and other animals.*

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\* Many people inadvertently reinforce shy or fearful behavior by telling the dog "it's okay" and petting the dog when he exhibits this type of behavior.

## OWNER RESPONSIBILITY

**All dog ownership entails a responsibility.** Owning a giant breed like a Dane is a GREAT (no pun intended!) responsibility. The breed requires financial responsibility--everything with Danes is just going to cost more. Large crates, sturdy toys, big dishes and other supplies are just going to be a bit more expensive. Trips to the vet that require medication will be more expensive, too, as the large size necessitates higher doses. You need to make sure the dog is properly trained and has good manners. Socialization of the puppy, a very important part of puppy training, takes time and work. You also need to respect other people's rights and make sure your Dane doesn't "step on any toes" so to speak.

Many people are very frightened of dogs in general-and of large dogs in particular. Although most Danes are very gentle and friendly by nature, the person scared of big dogs only sees a potential dog bite. With dogs receiving so much bad publicity it is doubly important to always keep your pet under control and insist he behave in a comely manner.

When you take your Dane for a walk, make sure he is fitted with a proper collar and leashed and under control at all times. This means walking nicely at your side on a loose leash. Do not allow him to lunge at other people or dogs, even in play. The other dog may see his friendly gestures as aggressive and a fight may ensue. Allow him to go up to strangers only if they initiate the contact, and only as long as your Dane is of stable temperament. If you are letting your dog off leash for a romp in the park, keep an eye out for people who seem nervous about your dog. If needed, call him back to you and leash him until the people are gone. Do not let your Dane off leash in a public area unless you have good voice control over him. Be careful of other people with loose dogs who may not have as much control over their dog as you do yours. A growling, snarling dog coming towards your dog is perceived as a hostile action, and a dogfight could occur. Your dog, being the biggest, is going to inflict more damage and you could be held responsible. Legal and civil action could result, especially if humans are bitten trying to break up the fight. It's not fair, but the larger dog will always get the blame. Remember, a certain percentage of the population will assume your dog is mean just because he is big. Always act in an appropriate manner to protect you and your pet.

Try to encourage people frightened of dogs to act in a responsible manner.

Carefully and tactfully explain to them that screaming, yelling, running away, quick motions, strange actions and other abnormal behavior may set them up for a dog bite. After all, to the dog they are behaving in a very suspicious manner. Do not allow people to stare eye level at your Dane or hover over him. Explain to them eye-to-eye contact is considered a sign of aggression in the canine world; and "hovering" can be considered an attempt at dominance.

***Never, ever*** let your Dane free roam. Even if you have acreage, you must confine your Dane to his own property. Loose roaming dogs cause many problems; from chasing and killing livestock (which a Dane can be prone to do), getting into garbage, defecating on property other than your own, adding to the dog over-population problem, and just be a general nuisance. A free-roaming dog is more prone to a short life span. Cars kill, garbage poisons, and angry neighbors shoot roaming dogs. Roaming dogs form packs, and become territorial and aggressive. A Dane should be confined in either a dog run or fenced yard. Chaining or tying out is unacceptable for this breed. I fail to understand how a person allowing their dog to roam can claim they "love" him. A concerned owner would never allow his Dane to free roam.

Barking can be a problem and you, as the responsible owner, must take steps to control it. Big dogs have big voices that can be most irritating to neighbors. If the dog is alarm barking for a reason, you should be able to stop him with a command. Continual nuisance barking because the dog is bored or just feels like it should not be allowed. Early training will help teach your Dane when barking is allowed-and when its not. Owners with Danes who bark continually in their absence may need to resort to the use of a bark collar or other means to control such needless barking.

***Always*** clean up after your Dane. Your yard at home should be picked up on a daily basis to keep it clean. If you confine your dog to a run, bleach it weekly to keep odors down. When taking the dog for a walk, always carry clean-up supplies and use them! (In Seattle and some other areas there is a \$500.00 fine for not picking up after your dog.) A plastic bag works well, and most pet stores also carry supplies for clean up. Be sure to properly dispose of the waste.

Owner responsibility also includes taking care of your Dane. Providing proper food, water, shelter, routine and emergency vet care and training are

all a requirement of dog ownership. Hopefully you have given it some thought before you obtained your Dane and are able to provide these necessities.

Ownership also includes a commitment to the dog for its entire life. If, for some reason, you cannot keep the dog, it is *your* responsibility to make sure a suitable home is found. Seattle Purebred Dog Rescue, Inc. and Dane Outreach can assist you if this should ever be the case. *Never* take your Dane to an animal shelter. The chances are very slim that he will be adopted out. People go to shelters for cute fluffy little puppies, not Danes. If you choose to place your Dane yourself, be careful. There are people out there who want to get free and cheap Danes and turn them into puppy mills. These people will not give your dog a good home. Instead, they will discard them as soon as their productive years are over. For this reason, I strongly suggest that you spay or neuter your Dane prior to placing it. Also, Danes placed into new homes because of any temperament problem such as shyness or fearfulness should never be bred. Spaying or neutering prior to placement will avoid a litter of puppies that may have the same problem.

If you have a problem dog, think very seriously before placing it into another home. No matter what caused the problem, you are unhappy with the dog. Would another family truly be able to cope with the same problems? If they are serious problems like excessive fearfulness, biting, over-protectiveness, aggression towards humans and major health issues, you should consider euthanizing the dog. How would you feel if you placed your dog and later found out it caused serious injury to somebody or created a financial hardship? If you had prior knowledge the dog was a biter and placed it into a new home, you could be held liable in the event it caused injury to some other person.



**Allowing your dog to nuisance bark is unacceptable!**

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## BIRDS AND BEES



Your male Dane will reach sexual maturity at about nine months to 14 months of age. The onset of sexual maturity in a male is usually heralded by the typical canine male habit of leg lifting and marking and some behavioral changes.

A Dane bitch can come into season anywhere from 6 to 18 months of age. Seasons last about 21 days and occur once every six months. Seasons in Dane bitches can be very messy. Your bitch will need to be locked up securely when she is in heat, as she will attract males of any breed from all over your neighborhood. Accidental breedings should be avoided at any cost. A fenced yard or dog run is not secure enough-the bitch should be kept under lock and key inside the house! Small dogs are just as much of a threat to your girl's virtue as large ones-the ladies have been known to lie down to accommodate the males!

People with pet Danes would be well advised to have their dogs spayed or neutered prior to sexual maturity. An altered Dane will make a much better pet, focusing his attention on the family members instead of searching for a mate. Altering a dog does not "deprive" them of sexual experience. Dogs react sexually by instinct. If the hormones aren't present to drive that instinct, the dog knows no differently. It has also been proven that altering before sexual maturity can significantly increase the life span of your Dane. The surgery will greatly reduce the risks of certain types of cancer of the reproductive organs\*. Neutering will prevent prostate problems in males-a very common difficulty in older Danes. A bloat study by Purdue University found that altered Danes had a slightly less chance of bloating than their unaltered counterparts. Altering will help avoid some unwanted behaviors such as marking, mounting, excessive aggression towards other dogs, etc. ***However, altering needs to be done prior to sexual maturity to have a large***

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\* Spaying a bitch before her first heat will dramatically decrease her chance of getting breast cancer. Even allowing her to go through one heat will significantly increase her chance of getting breast cancer.

*effect on behavior.*

If you are considering breeding your dog, please first talk to several experienced breeders who are truly "into" the breed. If you really care about the breed, you will want to do it the right way-and that way is very expensive, a lot of hard work, and very time consuming. Don't confuse love of your dog with love of the breed. If you love the breed you will research before you attempt raising a litter.

## BREEDING

It seems at some point every person with an unaltered pet thinks of breeding. Dane Outreach takes the stand that only those with a number of years experience in the breed, who actively show or work their dogs, should breed. Canine over-population is a very real problem. Dane Outreach receives over 200 calls per year from people in the Northwest alone who can no longer keep their Danes. These are dogs that will need new homes. Any rescue group will tell you that the majority of Danes they receive come from casual, novice, private party, or backyard breeders-people who will not or cannot take dogs of their breeding back. Good breeders *always* take dogs of their breeding back in the event the purchasing party can no longer keep them. If you cannot be responsible for the animals you produce you should not breed.

Before breeding your Dane you should carefully consider your motives. Do you have the knowledge to properly raise a litter? Very few people do. This is a special breed with unique needs. Raising a litter of puppies is a whole lot more work, expense, and possibly heartbreak than you can ever imagine. Raising a litter properly is simply not a moneymaking venture. The only people who make money on raising Dane puppies are those who are doing it incorrectly and with no real thought to the welfare of the puppies or responsibility to the purchaser. It would be assumed that if you love your dog and the breed, you would want to do it right. Are you going to be able to provide your purchasers with correct information on how to take care of the puppy? It is the breeder's responsibility to give vet, feeding, care, housebreaking, and training information to the new purchaser. Are you going to be able to guarantee the puppies you sell? What if there is a problem and you have to replace a dog? Are you going to be able to take the dog back if the new owner cannot keep it? Are you qualified to properly screen your prospective homes and place pet puppies on spay and neuter contracts? How are you going to sell your puppies? Established breeders often have a waiting list for puppies based on their good reputation. You have none. Are you prepared to deal with a litter of nine-week old puppies and no prospective sales? Each puppy needs individual time and training. Care and clean up is monumental!

If you think you can be responsible, then consider what your actual knowledge of the breed is. Do you know the breed standard? Breeding

mediocre to mediocre soon results in puppies that lack in breed type. Breeding dogs together with similar faults can produce serious problems. Do you want to be selling puppies that look more like Lab crosses than Danes? Is your Dane indeed of breeding quality? This should be verified by a breeder or a handler with extensive experience in the breed. Does your dog have any disqualifying faults? Do you know what color-family your dog can be bred to? Does your Dane really have a nice, stable temperament? Danes who have questionable temperaments should never be bred.

Is your dog registered? Although AKC registration papers are not a guarantee of quality, they are proof that the dog is purebred. No ethical breeder would dream of breeding unregistered dogs. What about health issues--have you done all the appropriate health screenings such as OFA hip x-rays, eye CERF checks, OFA Cardiac and thyroid checks, brucellosis testing, etc.? Often, when these issues are brought up the comment sometimes is made that "I'm only breeding for pets". Well, whether that's the case or not, puppies need to start with healthy parents!

Do you understand how much work is involved? The litter needs to be born in the house, not a garage or barn. The bitch must be attended to during delivery. The new mother and puppies must be watched over carefully for the first two weeks. In fact, many good breeders sleep in the puppy room for a week or two. C-sections and mastitis are not at all uncommon, and can require hand-feeding puppies. Newborns have to be fed once every two hours around the clock in order to thrive. Once the puppies begin eating you have very time consuming clean-up duties. Sick or fading puppies require extra work and diligence. Can your schedule allow for such a work intensive project?

Bitches should *never* be bred before they are 18 months old; or before their third season. Breeding a Dane bitch earlier is like letting a 12-year-old girl have a baby. Yes, they can do it but their health and that of their puppies may be jeopardized. Also, at least one heat period should be skipped before breeding another litter.

Please, before you breed your Dane, give it very careful thought. Danes are a lovely and wonderful breed, but they are not for every family. Breeding requires time, work, knowledge, money, and responsibility. Breeding should never be done to make money, teach the kids the miracle of birth, or even to "replace" your existing Dane. It's far cheaper and easier to buy a

new puppy from an established, reputable and long-term breeder! Dane Outreach receives countless unwanted Danes that are the result of careless breeding. Remember, if you produce a litter of puppies you are responsible for them for life!

## GROOMING



Danes are very easy to groom and keep clean. A few minutes each day will keep your dog's coat and skin healthy and keep shedding to a minimum.

On a daily basis, a brisk brushing using a rubber currycomb, followed with a bristle brush, will remove dead hair and dirt. Complete the daily grooming by wiping the dog down with a damp rag. Visually check for any problems or skin lesions while doing your daily grooming.

Weekly, your Dane should have his nails trimmed, ears cleaned, and teeth brushed. All Dane owners can learn how to clip or grind the nails on their dog. The nails are an important part of grooming your Dane; if you let them become too long they can actually damage the dog's foot! Ask your breeder, vet, or Dane club member how to clip nails if you are unsure on the procedure. Ears need to be cleaned, using a preparation such as Oti-Clens or something similar. Follow the directions. Diligent ear cleaning will help prevent chronic ear infections-very difficult to treat. Teeth cleaning are important-they should be attended to weekly using a canine tooth paste. Failure to properly care for the teeth can result in costly cleaning later on--and also serious mouth problems that could jeopardize the health of your dog.

When needed, bathe your Dane. Teach them early in life how to get into a tub to make the chore easier for you. Be sure to use a canine shampoo. Human shampoo has the wrong pH for dogs. There are many excellent types on the market. For "everyday" bathing this author prefers Lambert Kay "Fresh N' Clean Flea and Tick" shampoo. Dogs with excessively dry coats may need special shampoos or a hot oil treatment.

If you are having problems with fleas, discuss the proper control procedure with your vet. He can recommend shampoos, dips, bombs, and yard sprays.

Generally, to control fleas you need to shampoo and dip the dog, bomb the house and car, and spray the yard-all on the same day! You should also discuss putting your Dane on "Program", an oral flea preventative.

Any skin sores, cuts, or lesions should be checked out and treated immediately. Hot spots and staph infections can quickly get out of control and be difficult and expensive to treat.

If you are considering showing your Dane in conformation, you will need to know how to prepare your dog for the show ring. Getting a Dane ring-ready includes clipping the face whiskers, ears, flanklines and hindquarters. Any experienced Dane breeder or handler will usually be happy to assist you in grooming your Dane for a small fee.

## EXERCISE

An adult Dane does not require as much exercise as many people believe. In fact, some older Danes are quite content to become first-class couch potatoes, and must be encouraged to go out for a daily walk or romp.

How much exercise your Dane needs depends on his age, temperament, and your lifestyle. Although Danes are considered in the "moderate" exercise category, it must be remembered that a puppy or young Dane who does not get enough exercise to burn off excess energy may be prone to destruction, boredom barking, and a variety of other unpleasant habits. Dane puppies are actually more active than most people think.

Puppies have periods of great activity followed by long periods of sleeping or rest. The best rule of thumb with a puppy is to let him get as much free exercise as he wants. A word of warning--romping is for outdoors only! If you let the puppy tear around the house as a youngster (often called "air on the brain") you are asking for havoc! Puppies can also go for walks, but keep an eye out so they don't become over-tired. Another suggestion--make sure your puppy has had a chance for a good romp before bedtime as it will help him sleep through the night. Puppies and adolescents should *never* be roadworked--this includes jogging or trotting along side a bicycle--until their growth plates have closed. Growth plate closure usually occurs around 12-to-18 months of age, sometimes later. Jogging can cause problems in fast growing puppies by causing undue stress on developing bones. Basically puppies get along just fine with several sessions of free play during the day. Of course this should be in a fenced yard or under direct supervision.

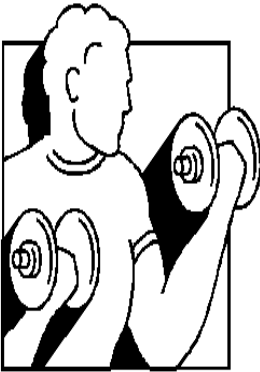
Adults can pretty much follow the same plan. Most adults, if left in their yard for a period of time, will get enough exercise on their own. Many Danes are very good at keeping themselves amused if the owner has supplied plenty of toys and items for them to play with. Be warned--if you don't, the Dane will find something--maybe your prized rose bush--to play with.

If the owner likes to jog, the adult Dane can be taken with him. Be sure the dog is totally leash trained and under control. As with any exercise program, build up duration gradually.

If the dog is going to be shown and needs more conditioning, a program of

controlled roadwork might be needed. Most people will roadwork their adult Danes while on a bicycle, as it is very important the dog work at the proper speed. Make sure your Dane is well trained before you attempt this as it can be dangerous. Never wrap the leash around your handlebars. Before you start a structured exercise program for your Dane you should consult your breeder for suggestions, and your vet to be sure the dog is sound and has no problems that might be aggravated by such exercise.

Dogs who are exhibiting any sign of lameness should never be exercised heavily or roadworked. The feet and legs should be examined after exercise to make sure the paws are free of cuts, stone bruises, and thorns.



**All Danes need exercise on a regular basis. The puppy not getting enough exercise will often “burn it off” in destructive ways, like digging, barking, and chewing.**

## IDENTIFICATION

While your Dane is at home or in his yard, he should wear a flat leather or nylon break-away collar with his dog license, ID tag and rabies tag attached. This collar should be considered his "everyday" wear and should be on him at all times. Should he become lost this information will enable him to be returned to you.

As an added precaution you might also want to consider tattooing and microchipping your Dane. If you tattoo your Dane, do it on the inside on the tummy area and never an ear. Use an easily identifiable number, such as your drivers license number, phone number (as long as you don't plan to move) or the dog's AKC number. It is not a good idea to use your social security number as it cannot be traced readily back to you due to the privacy act. There are also a number of national tattoo registries that can be considered.

Microchipping is becoming more and more popular. This method entails injecting a small alpha-numerically coded object (about the size of a piece of rice) under the skin between the dog's shoulder blades. This number then can be scanned using a scanner. The number retrieved is traced back to you and you are then contacted. Most of the larger animal shelters in Western Washington are equipped with scanners. The most popular type of chip in this area seems to be Avid. Note that not all scanners read all types of chips. If you would like more information about micro chipping consult your vet.

*Never, ever* leave a choke (or training) collar on your Dane when he is unattended. This carelessness has caused many deaths when the collar becomes entangled in something and chokes the dog to death. A tragedy can also happen when two playing dogs become entangle in the collar, resulting in one choking to death and the other breaking his jaw.

Always keep a few current pictures of your Dane on hand, along with a written description. It is not unknown for somebody to attempt to claim your dog as his or hers; have proof of ownership available.

If your Dane does become lost, using the following steps might enable you to find him quickly;

- Call your local sheriff or police department (a loose Dane is scary to some people and they will call 9-1-1).

- Call Dane Outreach and let them know the dog is lost. The dog may show up at a local shelter and Dane Outreach may be contacted.
- Contact all of the animal shelters in a 100-mile radius.
- It's not uncommon for dogs to be picked up in one area then dumped in another. Call daily! Insist they check!
- Have flyers printed and post them in a 10-mile radius.
- Contact people who are routinely in the area, such as UPS drivers, mail carriers, school kids and local businesses
- Run ads in your local paper along with the Times and PI
- Send notices to all of the veterinarian offices-especially if the dog is micro-chipped.
- Place ads on various internet sites such as Craigslist.

Of course, wearing a collar will not prevent your Dane from being stolen, but keeping him in his own yard with the gate locked, tattooing him, micro-chipping him, and making sure the yard is secure will certainly help a lot!

## HOUSING, KENNELING, AND FENCING



You *must* have the proper facilities to keep your Great Dane confined to his yard. There are many different types of fencing and dog runs you might want to consider-but a method of confinement other than chaining is a must!

**Confinement by chaining is cruel and very unwise to do with a breed such as a Great Dane.** Allowing your Dane to run loose in the neighborhood-even in the country-is a very bad idea. He could be hit by a car, get shot, be poisoned, and in all likelihood is a nuisance. Danes running loose can learn the bad habit of chasing stock, and becoming excessively territorial. You could open yourself up to a lawsuit by being party to letting your Dane roam free.

The ideal choice for confinement to your yard is a sturdy fence. A distant second choice is a dog run, or kennel. Dog runs are suitable for the owner who has the dog in the house the majority of the time, and only needs to put him in the run for toilet duties. If a dog run is to be considered as a means of confinement it must be of a size suitable for a Dane *and* the owner must be willing to make the commitment to take the dog for walks and romps.

As a rule most Danes are not jumpers, but a fence should still be at least 6 feet tall. A solid board fence will give privacy, but can be chewed on and even have the boards removed by an industrious Dane. Chain link is tough and durable but does not offer any privacy and is expensive. To get more ideas on the various types of fencing to consider that would fit into your budget, your Dane's needs, and your house, you might want to consult other Dane owners and see what works for them.

It is this author's opinion that the "underground" fencing is not suitable for a Dane. First, it allows other dogs to come into your property. This access to loose dogs can allow sick animals to come on your property and infect your Dane, cause fights and possible injury to your dog, allows kids and other people access to your dog--and the biggie--some dogs just do not respect these type of fences. Ask any animal control officer!

If you build or install a dog run, it should be at least six feet wide, wider if possible. Thirty to forty feet in length would be nice if you have the space. Cement runs, although very easy to clean, are very hard on Danes, especially puppies, and therefore not recommended. Most people use a small to

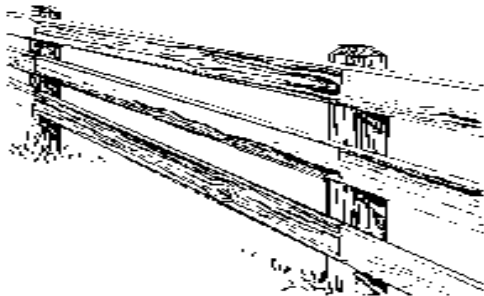
medium sized pea gravel for the run surface. This can be bleached on a regular basis to keep the odor down. Some Danes climb so a top of some sort on your run might be a good idea. Other Danes are really good diggers so you should consider ways to prevent from digging under.

When you leave your Dane outside for any period of time, you must make sure he has adequate shelter. His shelter must be warm in cold weather, dry, and wind proof. There are many different designs that might suit you. Again, talk to various Dane owners to find what has worked for them. Remember-it must be sturdy!

The biggest problems I usually have with my Danes is their digging under fences. It might be worth the extra effort to face the bottom of your fence with something that will prevent this. A hot (electric wire used for stock) wire works well. Also, some Danes will jump on the top of their fencing and eventually drag it down. Again, hot wire will work in this case. Be sure to check with the regulations in your area before you do this.

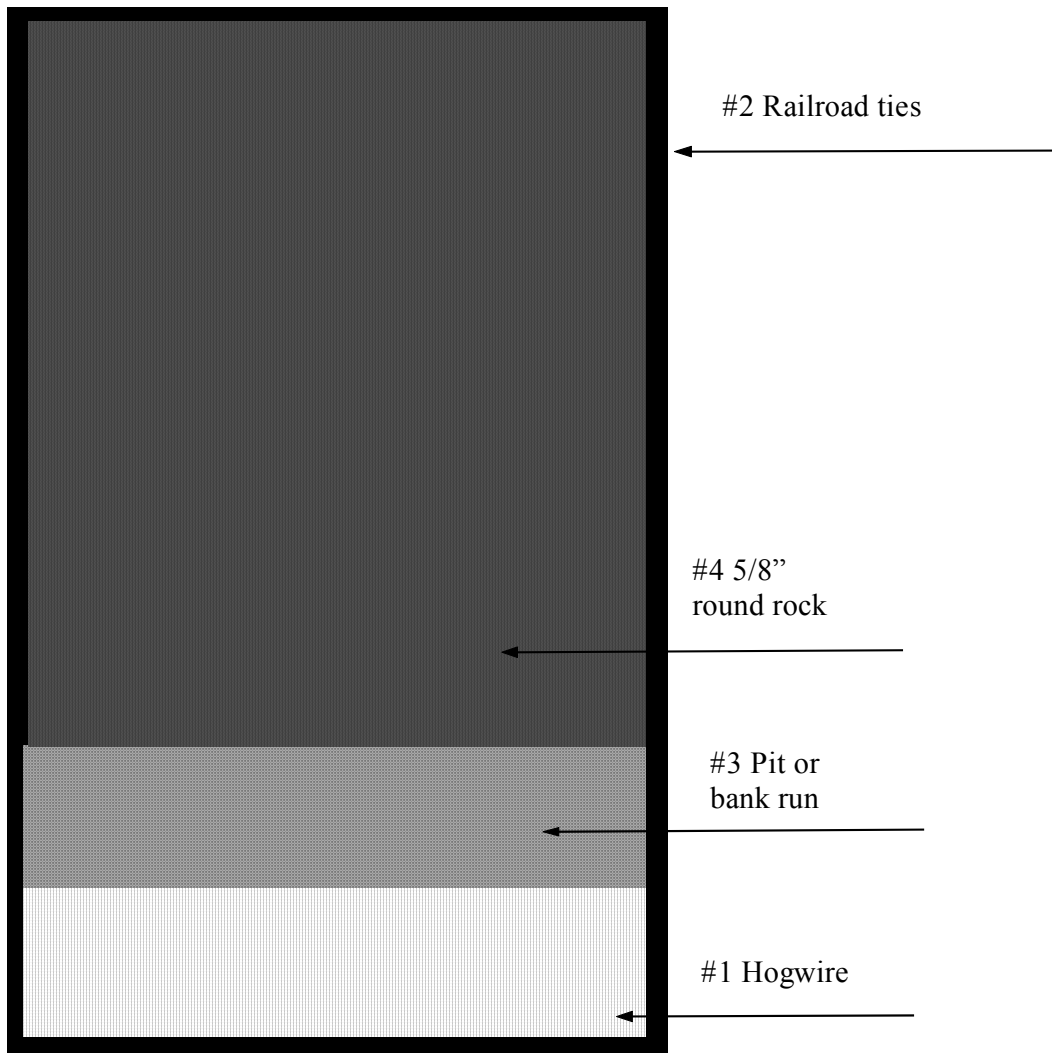
Danes are rough on the yard. If your landscaping and plants are important to you, be sure to fence an area off for the dog away from your favorite vegetation. Grass can quickly become mud in our Northwest winters, and there are times you will think your Dane wants to become a gardener. Trees are pruned, holes dug, and plants unearthed. Invisible fence, as a boundary around important landscaping, can work well.

Proper fencing will ensure your Dane does not meet with misfortune. Samples of how to prepare a surface for a portable dog run are shown on the following page.



**Suitable fencing is a must with Great Danes. Fences need to be sturdy, well-built and well-planned.**

## PREPARING THE SURFACE FOR A KENNEL RUN



#1. First lay down hog wire. Measure so the end of the hog wire will be under the railroad ties.

#2. Place railroad ties along the perimeter of the hog wire.

#3. Place bank run or pit run over the top of the hog wire. Pack down firmly.

#4. Top entire area with 5/8" gravel.

#5. Install portable chain link run panels on top of railroad ties. Use plumbing strapping to hold together.

## AKC REGISTRATION

If your dog was sold as AKC registered you should have received the registration papers at time of sale. If the dog was a puppy you probably received the "litter registration". If an adult, you probably got the actual registration on the dog.

If the litter registration is not available when you get your puppy, you should receive a promissory note stating that you will get the registration within a reasonable amount of time. This note should include the registered name of the sire and dam, along with their AKC numbers and name of owners. If there is any question at all, request a copy of the registration on the sire and dam. In order for a litter of puppies to be registered with the American Kennel Club, the papers must be in order on the sire and dam. If the breeder (owner of the mother at the time of birth of the puppies) and the stud owner don't have their paperwork in order you may just end up with a puppy that is unregistrable. Any questions regarding registration matters can be directed to the American Kennel Club at [www.akc.org](http://www.akc.org).

When you received the registration form, the breeder or actual owner of the dog needs to properly complete his section of the form. Once that is done, you as the new owner need to complete your portion and mail it off to the AKC as soon as possible. If you have any problems with receiving your registration, you can contact the AKC representative in your area. Most kennel clubs will be able to supply you with this information.

For people who are unfamiliar with the registration process, a brief outline may help.

- Only puppies with AKC or Canadian Kennel Club (and some foreign) registered parents may be registered with the AKC. The registration papers of the parents must be in order before the resulting litter can be registered. Be cautious of a breeder stating, "they can get the papers". Registration is much like car titles-if you don't have it in your hot little hands it's no good!
- If the registrations on the parents are in order, the breeder (owner of the dam) can complete a litter application once the puppies are born. This form is available from the AKC, and must be completed by both the breeder and stud owner. The breeder submits this application to the AKC with the appropriate fee. In about four weeks the breeder will receive a

litter registraion for each puppy in the litter. The entire litter will be covered by one registration number and each individual puppy will be numbered according to how many there were in the litter. The litter registraion needs to be matched up with a specific puppy. The AKC is very adamant about a breeder being able to properly identify puppies. Fines and retraction of AKC privileges can occur if proper record keeping has not been done.

- At the time of sale, the breeder will sign off the litter registration and transfer ownership to the purchaser. This must be done properly or the registration will be returned or denied.
- The purchaser sends in the completed litter registration. In about four weeks the actual registration will arrive. When it does, take a moment to review it and make sure all of the information is correct. The AKC, like me, can make typo's if they cannot read the information on the slip.
- The AKC prohibits the "sale" of AKC registration papers. For example, if a breeder has a litter of puppies, and is selling some of them as unregistered for one price; and selling the other littermates for a higher price with the registration, it is considered "selling" the registrations. This is forbidden and should be reported to the AKC.
- If you obtained a dog with the promise the seller or breeder could "get the papers" you may have difficulty in receiving them. Many people are under the mistaken impression that all you have to do is call the AKC and the registration will automatically appear! Remember, for a litter of puppies to be registered the paperwork on the parents must be in order at the time of the breeding. You cannot register puppies out of parents who are not registered.
- People who obtain an unregistered adult and wish to compete in AKC licensed obedience trials may do so by requesting an ILP (indefinite listing privilege) from the AKC. The ILP will enable the dog to compete in obedience only. To obtain an ILP number, the dog must be spayed or neutered and the AKC must receive documentation that the dog is purebred.

If should also be kept in mind that an AKC registration is not necessarily a guarantee of quality, only that the dog is purebred. Those considering breeding would be well advised to have their dog evaluated by a reputable breeder first. For any questions on registration, please see the AKC's site at [www.akc.org](http://www.akc.org).

## DOG SHOWS AND OTHER ACTIVITIES

If you are interested in showing your Dane, or would just like to find out more about them, consult your local Dane club or visit the American Kennel Club site. They can tell you what shows are coming up in the area, who the local show superintendents are, and where you can go for handling classes (show training). Your breeder should also be able to assist you in this.

There are two basic types of events at AKC licensed shows, conformation and performance. In conformation the dog is judged on how well it adheres to the breed standard. It can be likened to a beauty contest. The judge will examine the dog, and watch its movement. Considerations will be how the dog is structured, its condition, temperament, attitude, and a variety of other factors. An owner considering competing in AKC shows would be well advised to first learn about shows, how they work, what the rules are, and if indeed their dog is of show quality.

Performance is based on a dog's performance in executing certain commands. At shows, there are three different types of performance events: obedience, rally and agility.

There are also a large variety of events your Dane can participate in. These would include agility, tracking, flyball, weight pull, and visitations to retirement homes. Your Dane is capable of doing a lot more than sitting on the couch!

