

## A NEW OWNERS GUIDE TO THE BASSET HOUND

### Character

The Basset Hound is an old breed originating in France in the 15th Century. They were bred as hunters with a good and persistent nose, and dwarfed to make them slower and more manageable on foot. The origins of the breed must always be remembered, as it still dominates their characters. They are pack animals. Their owners are regarded as members of the pack and it is natural for a Basset to try and work his way up in the pecking order, hoping to become the leader. This is tried out in various ways, and part of their charm for many is in their stubborn disobedience. This is especially true of dog hounds, and owners should always be firm with a puppy - if you give in to those appealing eyes when he misbehaves, you will have a hard job later on. On the other hand, Basset Hounds are quite a sensitive breed and any heavy handedness should be avoided.

### Socialising and Play

The young Basset Hound should be introduced to many experiences in the outside world, without overtiring him. Meeting lots of people is important and play every day is a must. During play you can establish the trusting relationship of years to come and gently establish your dominant position. Give all youngsters the security of a regular routine with plenty of rest. Make sure there are plenty of toys to play with, especially things to chew -this will save the furniture with the puppy teethes. Suitable toys are hard rubber rings, good sized balls, specially treated bones from pet shops.

### House Training

Basset Hounds can take a little more patience to houstrain. This is not because they are dim! Always be alert with a young puppy and put him outside after a meal, first thing in the morning and last thing at night. Putting the puppy in a pen at night can help, as he will not like to soil his bed. Remember that young puppies eat a lot but only have small bladders! Give lots of praise when "the business" is done in the right place. Leave an outside door open as much as possible.

### General Care

#### **Grooming**

The short coat of the Basset Hound is easy to manage and a quick brush every day is all that is required, but dry the ears when wet.

#### **Ears**

These should be checked each week and any wax deposits cleaned out with cotton wool. Benzyl Benzoate (from your chemist) helps clean extra dirty ears. Put a little on some cotton wool and wipe out gently. **ONLY** clean where you can see, **DO NOT** poke about in the ear.

#### **Nails**

Check the nails each week, especially the dewclaw, if it is left on. If long, clip with recommended nail clippers. In light coloured hounds you can see where the quick (a small blood vessel) ends. Clip back to this. In dark coloured nails trim a little at a time. Do not worry if you accidentally nip the quick and it bleeds. Press with cotton wool until it stops.

### Exercise

The Basset Hound is a heavily built hound with joints that should not be strained while the

puppy is still growing. Up to about eight months a play in the garden and a five-minute walk on the lead is quite sufficient. From eight months it is recommended that walks are no longer than 15 minutes, increasing to 30 minutes at a year. Also during the first year discourage the puppy from jumping on and off furniture and running up and down steps, AH fully-grown hounds (at about a year) can be exercised as much as you want, and at least one good walk a day.

### **Inoculations**

Please visit your vet as soon as possible after collecting your puppy and arrange for inoculations against distemper, hepatitis, leptospirosis and parvovirus. Course of inoculations vary, some vets giving two inoculations and some three,

### **Insurance**

It is worth considering insuring your puppy against veterinary treatment, which can be expensive, and loss. Several breeders give cover for the first few weeks when they sell a puppy.