

Kootenai Kangal's Puppy Pamphlet for New Owners

1. Feeding Schedule & Other Care
 - a. Recommended Feeding Schedule
 - b. Grooming
 - c. Vet Needs

2. Training & Advice
 - a. Food Aggression & Resource Guarding
 - b. Introduction to Livestock
 - c. Introduction to Chickens
 - d. Introduction to People
 - e. Introduction to Other Pets
 - f. Perimeter/Fencing/Boundaries
 - g. Recall
 - h. Basic Commands
 - i. Barking
 - j. Car Rides and Car Sickness
 - k. Spaying or Neutering
 - l. Anesthesia Sensitivity

3. Resources
 - a. Books
 - b. Websites
 - c. Facebook Forums

New Puppy Parent Information Pamphlet

Welcome to the wonderful life of a Livestock Guardian Dog owner! You are about to embark on a grand adventure full of extreme challenges and great joy. Please know that we are always available to answer any questions you may have, provide advice, support, recommendations, a sensitive ear, or a shoulder to cry on.

This pamphlet has been put together to provide you with some valuable information about how best to raise and train your dog to get the most joy with the least about of heartache. At this point, it is assumed that you have read through all the information provided in the Kootenai Kangal Puppy Purchase Questionnaire, the Kootenai Kangal Puppy Sales Contract, and the Kootenai Kangal Website (www.kootenaikangals.com). If you have not already done so, it is a good idea to start with those three resources before proceeding.

This pamphlet contains the following information:

1. Recommended Feeding Schedule
2. Regular Care and Maintenance of Your Dog
3. Training Advice for a Variety of Situations
4. References and Other Available Resources

This pamphlet is not meant to be all-inclusive, but, rather, is a starting point to help you on your way and to provide you with basic direction. We do not at any time imply that we are experts with the breed or professional dog trainers. This is only our attempt to be helpful by sharing things we have learned through our own experiences with these dogs.

Feeding Schedule & Other Care

Recommended Feeding Schedule

These dogs are quite large once they reach adulthood and can range from 120-180 pounds. They are not done growing until approximately 36 months. There is some risk in the puppy growing too rapidly, which may result in health issues. To help minimize the risk of rapid growth we are providing our recommended feeding schedule and average growth rates.

From about 8 weeks to 28 weeks they grow at a rate of approximately 2.5 pounds per week, averaging 70 pounds at 7 months of age. This, of course, is average. They tend to grow upwards and then lengthwise, then bulk a bit, then go through the whole routine again.

Between 28 weeks and 52 weeks, their growth slows to a rate of around 1.25 pounds per week, averaging about 100 pounds at one year of age. This is the norm, and it is a safe guideline to ensure you are not having rapid growth, although, of course, every puppy is different.

Until one year of age (12 months or 52 weeks), we feed three times a day, smaller portions. At 12 months we move to twice daily feedings and maintain that schedule for the life of the dog. We recommend keeping them on a high-quality, large breed formulated puppy food until 24 months of age.

In year two they get really lean and lanky and often look underfed because they are doing a lot of upwards and lengthwise growing without any bulking up. This is when you will get the true “size” of the dog, but that last year from two to three is when they fill out. From 1-2 years of age they grow another 10-40 pounds, and then that last year of growth from 2-3 years old they gain another 10-40 pounds.

One thing about these dogs, we have NEVER heard of anyone having an issue with them overeating. It is most often a case of trying to get the dog to keep weight on.

From 1-3 months we give approximately 1 cup of kibble per feeding (3 cups of kibble per day total). For 4-6 months we bump it up to about 1.5 cups (4.5 cups of kibble per day). From 6 months to 9 months we go up to 2 cups per feeding (6 cups of kibble per day) and 9 months to a year we give 2.5 cups (7.5 cups of kibble per day). At 12 months we switch to twice daily feeding of about 4 cups (8 cups of kibble per day) and adjust upwards to 5 cups (10 cups of kibble per day) if they start acting hungry, look too ribby, or are actively working and patrolling.

At two years of age (24 months) we transition to a high-quality adult large breed formulated dog food and feed twice daily, between 2-4 cups per feeding (4-8 cups per kibble daily.) As adult dogs, we have found that, in the Spring and Fall when the predator load is naturally higher as animals are breeding and then preparing for Winter, the dog tends to be far more active and

thus has a greater appetite, which means that you may find yourself adjusting your feeding amounts at various times throughout the year to accommodate their energy demands.

At no time should our recommended feeding schedule negate the advice of a veterinarian or dog dietician or nutritionist. This is solely provided as a guideline in both average growth that we have seen with our dogs and litters and what feeding schedule we have used that has worked to produce healthy dogs that are highly active and maintain a relatively ideal weight.

For Dexter and Lumen, we supplement their morning meal with an addition of two farm-fresh scrambled eggs each. They also each get between two and four large Milk Bone Biscuits a day. And, for chewing we give raw beef marrow bones.

Grooming

These dogs have minimal grooming requirements. Usually once a week we brush them out to remove any burrs or thorns they may have picked up during patrol. I also take this time to do a brief health check and look them over for any wounds, sores, scrapes or bruises. We have never bathed them, although this is a personal preference as we do not want to mask their scent or create an unnatural scent that may alert predators to their whereabouts in the field. Once a month we check over their feet and claws and do any maintenance toenail trimming that is needed. Keep in mind that many LGDs are polydactyl, meaning they may have more than the normal 20 toes. Once a month I also look in their ears and check the health of their teeth.

Vet Needs

These dogs have very few genetic health issues. Some breeds may show hip or elbow dysplasia, but that is generally the only noted medical concern. I take each dog for an annual exam and have any vaccines updated at that time. The pups will have been started on their puppy series vaccines but will need the final dosage and their first-year rabies vaccine.

Training & Advice

Food Aggression and Resource Guarding

Resource guarding and food aggression occur when a dog starts exhibiting behavior such as growling, lunging, or biting over food or toys. It may occur in any breed of dog. It can become a serious matter, leading to fighting or attacks upon livestock, other dogs, and even people. Do not take this matter lightly!

We make sure to never feed our dogs around the livestock and to separate them from one another when feeding by placing their individual food bowls in two separate locations. We have been able to avoid most food aggression and resource guarding issues by being proactive in this manner.

Here is a link to a great explanation about resource guarding:

https://www.academyfordogtrainers.com/blog/vet-talk-resource-guarding-in-dogs/?fbclid=IwAR0J_MEWQamJwv-AiLK2tTs92cchi_Eq6xaf4ODoRZ3WqAAGBQDdDeXRY1w

Here are two links to more in-depth discussion about resource guarding and solutions.

https://www.training-your-dog-and-you.com/Resource_guarding.html?fbclid=IwAR0Wg6EaJ5d12beTzGW0x4IN9xTNV8_9J8N0LOCzS5-TDI73t_wZ7NWBdk8

<https://dogmantics.com/resource-guarding-protocol/?fbclid=IwAR2tOffY1-QNqM4ITSAfUpO7k1A2nMpn-sVocFz7n2ftaBAQCmXfEmPiedM>

This is a wonderful article about teaching your dog to trade items, which can be extremely helpful for dealing with resource guarding.

<https://www.whole-dog-journal.com/training/how-to-teach-your-dog-to-trade/>

This article about teaching a dog to share, especially regarding resource guarding.

https://grishastewart.com/resource-guarding/?fbclid=IwAR1_SRhk9YEr-Pu0ibTtyL4o9SCyEyhK-ETFQyAaS_G-tzg-YHHgb3ACKBw

Introduction to Livestock

You have brought your little fluffy puppy home and now you are ready to put him or her to work. It is imperative that the introductions to livestock are a positive experience for the dog and the livestock. Your pup has spent its entire life, up to this point, living outside. Whether

you now choose to bring the dog inside and bond with it or continue to have it be outside is a personal preference.

If you are going to leave the pup outside it is important that they have a safe, contained run, pen, or enclosure to live, eat and sleep in. You do not want the pup to be killed by a predator because they are too small to fight and protect themselves. You do not want to just put the pup in the barn or pasture or enclosure, alone, with livestock and leave it unattended. Goats, sheep, llamas, horses, cows, and other livestock are large animals that can accidentally (or intentionally) step on, kick, headbutt, or roll on and seriously injure or kill your pup.

You must also understand that these dogs will not be solid and trustworthy to be left alone with their wards until about two years of age.

It has been our experience with introductions that the pup must be able to see, hear and smell the animals it will be living around and protecting, but not be able to get to them. We advise either building a fully enclosed run for the pup or the livestock. If you build an enclosed run for the pup you want it to be close enough to the livestock so there are interactions occurring through the gate or mesh, but that the enclosure is strong enough to prevent escape. When you are available and out interacting with the livestock you should have the pup on a leash or lead line connected to you so the pup is able to get close and check out the other animals, but is still fully under your control.

Now, as both Dexter and Lumen are mature dogs, when we bring a new animal (or animals) to the farm it is the animal(s) that goes into a secured 10x10 run in the middle of the yard for 3-7 days. This allows Dexter and Lumen to see, smell and hear the new animal and familiarize themselves with their new ward. Anytime we walk by the run we point at the new animal and say "Mine". This lets Dexter and Lumen know that we are claiming the new animal and asking them to guard it as a ward. Once they start completely ignoring the new animal, we know it is safe to let it out.

You want to be mindful that, for many livestock animals, a dog is a potential predator to them. It is not just introducing the dog to the livestock that is important, but also how you introduce the livestock to the dog. Be aware that some livestock will kick and buck and roll and make loud noises, possibly charge the dog, headbutt, rear up, etc. This is a normal response to a potential threat, but it means that your livestock may inadvertently hurt the dog you have brought to keep them safe. It is important to be patient and take things slow to ensure that all animals involved are secure and comfortable.

You also need to understand that they will go through a puppy phase and a teenage phase.

Livestock Guardian puppies are prone to a puppy phase between approximately 12-24 weeks. Some of the behavior they may exhibit at this time includes intense chewing, destruction of your personal property (shoes, walls, baseboards, windowsills, doors, clothing, etc.),

stubbornness, ignoring you and your commands, chasing livestock, and/or wrestling and roughhousing with other household pets.

Livestock Guarding Dogs are also prone to an intense “teenage” phase which can start as early as ten months and last up to approximately 18 months of age. During this phase you now have a potentially 100 plus pound puppy that may cease to listen to you, chase and potentially kill livestock and other animals, attempt to escape (whether through digging, climbing, jumping or physical destruction of barriers), alert/bark/growl or portray other aggressive behavior towards guests and strangers, and attempt to establish dominance with other pets (or people) within the household.

These are normal phases the dog will go through, and it is during these phases that you will need to reiterate all the things you have already taught them. It is also because of these two phases that we do not recommend leaving your dog unsupervised around livestock until they reach approximately two years of age.

Here is a great article about introducing your new LGD to various animals.

<http://www.luresext.edu/?q=content/introducing-your-new-lgd>

Introduction to Chickens

Introducing the LGD to poultry can be a bit challenging. To the dog you have presented them with a real live feathered squeaky toy that runs and squawks when they chase it. And, because of how small a chicken is in comparison to the dog, any untoward puppy behavior can lead to death for the chicken. These introductions are by far the hardest and take the most work and patience, but the end reward makes it worth it.

Here is a link to a great step-by-step guide to introducing your LGD to chickens.

<https://www.forloveoflivestock.com/blog/training-livestock-guardian-dogs-to-chickens-a-step-by-step-guide>

Introduction to People

LGDs are creatures of habit and routine. They are pack members. They are aloof to strangers. It is not uncommon for them to be reactive around strangers who are not part of their “household”. After all, part of their job is to guard the humans on the farm as well as the livestock. If you are going to have people over it is important to perform purposeful introductions and to establish a routine for how you will welcome guests and introduce the dog to strangers.

For us, we ask any visitors to wait at the front gate and we lock the dogs up in the house so we can meet the person or people and escort them into the yard. Then, one of us will stand with the stranger(s) while the other goes and lets the dogs out. Dexter will be the first to approach and he will generally do an entire circle around the person and then stop in front of them and stand on his back feet to stare into their eyes. If Lumen attempts to approach before Dexter has fully vetted the stranger(s) he will lunge at her and growl and snarl. Once he determines that they are not a threat he will allow Lumen to approach. She usually just sniffs them once or twice and walks away.

Visitors should not wear hats, hoodies, scarves, sunglasses, masks, or any other item that may obscure their facial features, especially their eyes. Visitors should also be informed that they need to just stand still and remain calm until the dog has had a chance to smell them and inspect them. You should also let them know that the dog may not want to be pet or rubbed and to just leave the dogs be unless the dog approaches them for attention or affection.

Introduction to Other Pets

Because you are bringing home a puppy, it is important if you have other pets in the house that you are mindful and purposeful in your introductions. Ideally your LGD will live and work outside and your other pets will be mostly indoors. However, you want everyone to get along and be familiar with each other.

Words of caution: If you have an intact male or intact female at home, please be aware that once your LGD reaches sexual maturity they may start displaying signs of aggression towards the other dog(s). LGDs are best being the dominant dog and are very intolerant of other dogs that do not cede this position. It can lead to brutal, and potentially deadly, fights. Male LGDs will fight and establish dominance, but I have heard several stories of female LGDs who will kill another female. And, we lived through a battle between Dexter and one of his 15 month old sons, Riddick, that was one of the most brutal fights I have ever witnessed and that led to us rehoming the two male pups we had kept from the first litter.

Second word of caution: Your LGD should be fine, if introduced properly, with cats and other dogs. However, once your LGD has bonded with its wards and is fully and actively working, if the house cat or dog threatens his or her wards you may have a fight on your hands. You cannot ask your LGD to guard the chickens and then not expect the dog to attack or kill the cat that is stalking and chasing the chickens, even if the cat is one the pup has grown up with.

Here are some links for step by step introductions to household pets:

<https://www.clickertraining.com/marlin-meets-tulip>

<https://www.mlar.org/media/1630/5-dog-dog-introductions.pdf>

https://www.whole-dog-journal.com/care/proper-dog-to-dog-introductions-in-the-home/?fbclid=IwAR00UY6K-DEBDK_sRybOMgBz9bQiuJYBaSKLa_xlh8FEvlKzZrMY3_OIOYg

And another link that talks specifically about introducing a puppy to an already established adult dog.

<https://www.clickertraining.com/what-to-expect-introducing-a-puppy-to-your-adult-dogs>

Perimeter/Fencing/Boundaries

LGDs can be prone to wandering. They can easily jump a six-foot fence (or higher) and may dig, climb, or jump out of their enclosure. Proper fencing is important for not only keeping your livestock safe and contained, but also your LGD. A wandering LGD can be a nerve wracking experience, as you don't know where they are, what threats they may be fencing, if they will be shot, hit by a car, poisoned, or stuck in a trap or if they will be able to find their way home. It is best, for all involved, to make sure you have an LGD-proof perimeter fence and to teach your dog from an early age to respect the boundaries.

In our personal experience with LGDs, Dexter is a master escape artist and we have yet to build a gate he cannot get out of. He does not attempt to climb or jump any of the fencing, but the gate that leads from the fully enclosed acre up to the unfenced property, he can climb anytime he wants, and he does so whenever there is a predator out on the property that he can hear or smell. Lumen has never attempted to leave the enclosed acre and only goes up on the property with a human escort.

If I had known in the beginning the things I know now, I would never have taken Dexter off the acre to do patrols. Because I introduced him to that space, he added it to his property that must be patrolled and defended. Twice a day I take him and Lumen up and we patrol. If, while on these patrols, they pick up the scent of a predator they will take off to ensure the threat is run off. Sometimes they will disappear for upwards of two hours.

The point being, be mindful of the space you train them to patrol and be sure it is a sufficient amount of land for them to keep exercised and challenged, but not so large that you run the risk of them getting themselves into trouble where you may not be able to get to them and assist. If I had the funds to redo everything, I would put in 8-foot perimeter fencing and 8-foot gates and possibly even run hotwire across the top and bottom. I would also extend the fencing from the one acre to include five additional acres of our property and then cease the twice daily patrols.

Here are some links to helpful articles about fencing, roaming and escape artists:

<https://predator-friendly-ranching.blogspot.com/2018/06/fence-training-for-your-lgd.html>

<https://predator-friendly-ranching.blogspot.com/2018/04/some-reasons-for-roaming.html>

<https://predator-friendly-ranching.blogspot.com/2016/02/jumpers-fence-crawlers-diggers-escapees.html>

Recall

This one cracks me up! An LGD is truly the most stubborn dog you will ever encounter. It is honestly like talking to a rock sometimes. At the end of the day, it does not matter how hard you try or how much you train them, if they are working, they are going to do what they think is best. If Dexter and Lumen are actively running a threat there is no amount of calling, whistling, clapping, screaming, or yelling I can do to get them to come back.

Here are a few links to some basic recall training:

<https://www.akc.org/expert-advice/training/reliable-recall-train-dogs-to-come-when-called/>

<https://www.preventivevet.com/dogs/how-to-teach-your-dog-to-come-when-called>

<https://www.whole-dog-journal.com/training/teaching-a-reliable-recall/>

Basic Commands

There is great debate as to whether you should train an LGD with basic commands. This is a personal choice. You want a working LGD to be independent and to problem solve. You do not want them to look to you for guidance or to tell them what to do. One group says that training an LGD to basic commands reduces their ability to think independently. Another group will tell you that you want the dog to have basic commands, and thus some manners, since it will make your life as a dog owner easier. And to be fair, it will probably make going to the vet a little easier as well!

Here is a helpful link specifically for training livestock guardian dogs.

https://www.forloveoflivestock.com/?fbclid=IwAR3LeZov3xIfTpUt5lwQfT_9ZLHz7X5iqkLgKBKzYcilP_GJpgDKdxTh8so

Here are some books on basic training of dogs:

The Other End of the Leash by Patricia McConnell, Ph.D.

Culture Clash by Jean Donaldson

Reaching the Animal Mind by Karen Pryor

The Power of Positive Dog Training by Pat Miller

These are two links for the Association of Professional Dog Trainers recommended book and DVD lists:

<https://apdt.com/resource-center/recommended-books-dvds-pet-dog-owners/>

<https://apdt.com/resource-center/recommended-reading/>

Barking

LGDs bark. It is part of how they do their job. You cannot expect your LGD to only bark in the daytime when it is convenient to you and your neighbors. In fact, since most predators are active at night, this is when your LGD is most alert and most likely to bark to alert and deter threats.

There are three main types of barking.

*Patrol barking – this is generally to let predators know the dog is out and about and on duty. It is a generalized warning to any potential threats and the LGDs first line of defense. I have honestly never heard Dexter or Lumen do this bark. When they are on patrol and actively working, they are generally extremely quiet.

*Alert barking – this bark is to notify the human that the dog has seen, heard, or smelled something unfamiliar or threatening. Dexter will usually let out one or two sharp barks if he catches the sight or smell of something. Lumen, on the other hand, can alert bark to the point of being obnoxious. She will usually stop once one of us humans investigate. She will alert bark at anything, from a person walking along the trail across the road to a car parking at the neighbor's house. Dexter is far more discerning and generally only alert barks if someone pulls directly into our driveway or if he sees/smells/hears an honest threat.

*Call to Arms barking – this bark lets the human and any other LGD around know that a threat has been discovered and the dog is in pursuit. This is a very distinct sound and is usually accompanied by raised capes and bared teeth. When Dexter or Lumen issues this bark the other is quick to drop everything and join their packmate.

Young dogs tend to bark more than older dogs as they are still learning what constitutes a threat and what is a sound, sight, or smell that they can ignore. The more mature and experienced the dog, the less alert barking you will hear. Patrol barking stays about the same and a call to arms bark only occurs when there is an immediate and obvious threat. This is one of the biggest reasons people advise staggering the ages of your LGDs, so the mature dogs can teach the pups. Generally, though, anytime you hear your LGD bark it is worthy of investigating.

If you are concerned that the barking might cause problems with your neighbors, one of the first steps is to “make nice”. Sometimes all it takes is a conversation where you explain that you know your dogs bark at night and why they are barking. Most rural people, especially those with pets, children, and livestock, may appreciate that your dog is keeping the predators at bay.

You also want to research the local Right to Farm Act. Most farms are protected from certain nuisance laws due to the very nature of farming. Strong odors, machinery noise and working dogs are often covered under this act. This means, even if your neighbor complains to authorities there really is not any legal action they can take. However, this is only in respect to barking. Be aware that there are specific laws protecting livestock and that, if you have a wandering dog that is killing someone else’s livestock they can, in many states, shoot and kill your dog. In any case, it is important to know your rights.

Car Rides and Car Sickness

Many dogs are prone to car sickness for the first several car rides. It is generally something they outgrow. It is recommended that, until you know how your pup is going to react when being in a moving vehicle, you have plenty of towels or old blankets on hand to clean up any potential accidents or messes that may occur. There are over-the-counter items you can purchase that will help calm the motion sickness such as Ark Naturals Happy Traveler or Pet OTC Nausx (both available on Chewy.com) or using essential oils such as lavender or peppermint as a diffusion in the vehicle may also help.

Spaying or Neutering

As with any large breed dog, it is not recommended to spay or neuter your pup until they have reached their full size, generally between 24 and 36 months of age. Altering of a dog is a personal choice and one you should invest serious thought into. If you are going to have a working female, it is important to note that, during her heat cycles (females can have a heat cycle anywhere from once every six months to once every 18 months) you may need to contain her to keep her from being bred by neighborhood dogs. A female in heat can also become moody and temperamental and may become more or less interested in guarding her wards. Average heats last three to four weeks. With intact males, you also need to be aware that they may disappear if they scent a female in heat somewhere.

Anesthesia Sensitivity

Some livestock guardian dog breeds are known to be sensitive to anesthesia. It is important to understand the risk you may be taking when you opt to have your dog put under any form of sedative or anesthesia. Be sure to discuss the risks with your vet and understand what precautions should be taken.

In closing, we wish you the best in training your new puppy and we hope that you enjoy their loyalty, intelligence, and strength. They can be a challenging dog to raise for the first few years, but once mature, they are an amazing asset for any working farm. My advice would be to be patient and to always remember “this too shall pass.”

If you ever need any help or advice or have questions, please never hesitate to reach out to us via phone or email. We will do everything we can to ensure a happy, healthy life for the puppy you have chosen.

Resources

Books

There are many books out there on raising and training a livestock guardian dog. The two that I have found to be the most helpful are:

The Way of the Pack: Understanding and Living with Livestock Guardian Dogs by Brenda M. Negri

Livestock Protection Dogs: Selection, Care and Training by Orysia Dawydiak

(Both books are available on Amazon for purchase.)

Websites

Here are a few helpful articles for preparing for your LGD, and tips for early training and raising a successful LGD:

<https://www.premier1supplies.com/sheep-guide/2016/04/12-keys-to-raising-successful-livestock-guardian-dogs/>

<http://www.luresext.edu/?q=content/preparing-your-igd>

<https://hoeggerfarmyard.com/early-training-of-livestock-guardian-dogs/>

Facebook Forums

There are many wonderful and helpful forums on Facebook that you may consider joining. I have found them to be an invaluable resource for asking questions, seeking advice, and sharing our experiences. Here is a list of some of the Groups and Forums that I have joined:

- Anatolian Shepherd Dog Mix breed and Kangal – Owner Support
- Modern Livestock Guardian Dog Raising and Training
- Livestock Guardian Dogs & Training
- Learning About LGDs
- LGD World and Predation Control
- Small Acreage Livestock Guardian Dogs Pacific Northwest

- [Anatolian Shepherd Dogs \(Working LGD\)](#)
- [Learning About LGD's USA](#)
- [Learning About LGD's](#)
- [Livestock Guardian Dogs – All About Health](#)
- [Training Support for Livestock Guardian Dogs](#)
- [Livestock Guardian Dogs Worldwide](#)
- [Livestock Guardian Dog HELP!](#)