

## Caring for your Cavalier

The basic needs of a Rescue Cavalier are no different to any other, but a little extra thought may be needed to ensure he settles in to his new home quickly.

### House training

Your dog may have been perfectly housetrained in its previous home, but you may have the occasional 'accident' until he becomes familiar with his new surroundings and routine. A little patience may be needed and your encouragement and praise when things 'go right' will speed this process up. He shouldn't be chastised for mistakes and once he is used to his new home, should once again, become clean.

### Feeding

It will help your dog to settle in quickly if you feed him the same food as he was having previously. A rapid change of diet may lead to an upset tummy, especially when he is feeling insecure from the change in home. After a few weeks you may gradually alter the diet over a period of about a week. Directions on how best to do this are usually found on the food packet. This usually entails mixing a small amount of the new food in with the old, and gradually increasing amounts of new whilst decreasing the other. After about a week the dog should be having the new food alone with no 'tummy' problems.

### Grooming

All dogs like to feel well groomed and a thorough weekly grooming session will keep your dog's coat in good condition.

A good bristle brush will remove dust and dirt from the coat and also massage the skin keeping it healthy. A comb will be needed for the feathers especially behind the ears where the coat grows fine and can knot easily.

Eyes should be wiped with damp cotton wool to remove excess tears and gentle wiping around the ears will keep them clean. The ears should be checked after a walk in grass as their seeds can lodge in the ear and cause discomfort if not removed. A dog's teeth can be cleaned much like ours, using one of the special doggie toothpaste available in most pet shops.

Regular exercise on roads should keep claws trim but if the dew claws have not been removed, these may need regular clipping.

### Other animals

If there are other animals in the family care with introducing them to the newcomer will lead to a happy household.

It is understandable that you will want to give a lot of time and affection to your new dog to help him settle, but this should not mean the others are ignored. They will not appreciate a stranger coming into their house and stealing all the limelight. The arrival of a new baby can make an older child jealous and the care you would take to alleviate this is similar.

### Children

Cavaliers are usually very good with children. They are an ideal size and temperament. Your dog may not have lived with children before and he must get used to their size, noise and little mannerisms. Sudden screams may alarm or frighten him. He may not be used to the over exuberant hugs and loves a small child can give.

The child should be taught to respect the dog and until the dog is completely relaxed in the child's company, their time together should be supervised.

This is an ideal time for teaching the smaller child to put their toys away after playing. The dog will not realise what are his toys and which belong to the child. Tears will be saved if the child tidies up. If the dog does start to chew something it shouldn't, take it away but give him one of his own toys. This way he will soon learn what he can and can't touch.

### Exercise

Everyone likes seeing their dog running round the park having fun, but until your dog has completely settled in, walks should be taken on the lead. The extending leads give the dog freedom but you are still in control.