



# INFO SHEET: BUYING A PUPPY



Loving Danes Loving Life

**The Size  
The Slobber**

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**Diet  
Exercise  
Health  
Training**

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**Associated  
Costs**

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**Have I Got Room  
For A Dane?**

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**Dos and Don'ts of  
Owning A Dane**

## **DON'T FORGET**

Being informed is crucial when buying your Great Dane Puppy, but it should always be fun so if you have any questions or concerns, just ask!

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### Before You Buy

The Great Dane is by far not a standard dog. Many people first fall in love with the size of the Great Dane and decide the breed is right for them. Before you decide the Great Dane is the right breed for you, there are a few things you should consider

### The Size

The Great Dane grows into a massive dog which should be considered before purchasing the breed. A Great Dane can grow well over 1.8 mts in height, when stood on their hind legs, so is capable of peering over any garden fence. Prospective owners need to think about fitting the dog & the family in the car, how much room there is for the dog to lay on the lounge room floor when the children want to play, that a Great Dane can 'counter-surf' the kitchen with ease and a Great Dane dog door is big enough for an adult to get through

The 'happy tail' of an excited Great Dane is a perfect 'neck height' for toddlers and can be quite dangerous. Tiled floors for an excitable, growing Great Dane puppy could mean at least a fall and vet visit and at worst, a cruciate ligament repair costing many thousands of dollars. One other very important issue is being able to control your 70kg + dog when walking down the street or at the beach. Spending time with Great Danes before deciding to purchase one is a really good plan. Some Danes are given up for rehoming simply because 'it got so big'....they are a Giant breed and they will get big!

### The Slobber

All Danes slobber, some more than others. There is a gene in their makeup which causes excessive slobber, some Danes have it, some don't - it is the luck of the draw! Some of the Danes with a finer head shape and tighter lower jowl will slobber less in volume but there is no guarantee. It is usually while they are exercising or overheating. Get used to carrying a 'slobber' cloth.

### The Diet

Every Dane owner or breeder will give you different advice on what is the best diet for your Dane. A good breeder will provide you with a diet sheet when you pick up your new puppy. Despite the different opinions on diet, there are a few points that all Dane lovers agree on:

**Puppy Food:** Many Large Breed puppy foods can be too high in protein. As the Great Dane grows at such a rapid rate, too much protein can force unnatural growth. Overfeeding chicken mince and high protein biscuits can cripple a Great Dane when they are young. The generally held belief is that you should stay within the 23-25% protein level. Too low and too high both can cause problems. A good quality premium dog food within the stated protein level for Large & Giant Breeds will be an excellent investment in your dog's long-term health and give a strong bone growth foundation. Eagle Pack as a brand for example was researched and created specifically for Great Danes and has been consistently popular and proven for many Dane owners and fits the protein level perfectly.

When using a Premium Food, you need to know your dog's weight. Use the dog's weight and age to determine the suggested feeding guide which is usually shown in 'cups'. Take that amount as a daily guide and split the total daily amount into the dog's daily meal load. EG: Young pups need small frequent meals such as 3-4 a day so if the daily guide is 3 cups, it would be 1 cup per meal 3 times a day.



There is nothing wrong with adding to your dog's diet when using a Premium Food but reduce the biscuit load to match. You can add fish (tinned sardines, tuna, and mackerel), vegetables, purchased puppy meat rolls, home prepared meals, tinned food or raw meats but go lightly on chicken mince. Raw bones such as chicken frames, chicken necks, brisket bones etc., can be added to the diet but should always be supervised until you know your dog's eating habits and the effect these bones have on their digestive system. In essence a good quality, suitable Premium Food will be a balanced diet in itself and contain all essential nutrients and adding other foods is optional and it is the total calorie load and type or quality of the protein that is important in a growing Great Dane. Not all foods suit all dogs. A totally raw diet is an option but would take considerably greater volumes of meat and other ingredients to get the same and correct balance of nutrients. There are many varieties of Raw Diets available with access to books or even pre-packaged serves from many pet supplies providers in stores or via the internet.

Adding treats to your Danes diet can be good fun for them, great to use in training and another enjoyable part of spoiling your dog. Packaged treats, pig's ears & rawhide or fruit and vegetables are great chew things, particularly for puppies but keep track of not overloading the calories. There are many human foods that are dangerous or fatal to dogs and all of them apply to Great Danes in the same way as any breed. Lists of these foods are readily available on the internet.

Generally Great Dane owners break their dog's daily intake into two small meals as an adult, and more frequent as puppies up until around 6-8 months. This is usually done to prevent bloat. The evidence is still divided on whether feeding high or low is safer, and actually prevents Bloat.

Nutrition is a cornerstone of a Great Dane's health and feeding everything it needs but not more than that, will keep your Dane lean & athletic, healthy of frame & heart and assist them to fight any of the Dane prevalent diseases they face.

### Exercise

Great Danes need controlled exercise when growing and most, a moderate level when adults. With your young pups of less than six months, walks & plays with other dogs are fine and important for their socialisation but no jogging or running with bikes at this fragile age.. Too much exercise puts extra strain on the Dane's growing frame which can lead to developmental problems when older. It is also recommended that you do not take your dog jogging until at least 18 months. Every dog is different and there are livelier Danes and total couch potatoes. The exercise limitations are all about protecting your Giant dog from harm or damage but let them be a dog. They were once hunters!

A Great Dane doesn't have as much stamina as many breeds so although they need regular exercise to keep them fit, if you want a running partner; consider another breed like a Border Collie or Kelpie.



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### Do I Have Room For A Great Dane

Great Danes do not require a large amount of room and many Danes live indoors all day, As long as the Dane gets enough daily exercise, they are quite happy in a smaller area. Great Danes are people dogs and are quite happy curled up on their bed within the vicinity of their family. A Great Dane can live as an outside dog but cannot be people deprived. They will seek the company of their humans and if it is not available, may show signs of anxiety or destructive behaviour. A naughty Great Dane doesn't chew the chair leg, it chews the table!

Great Danes feel the cold and heat much more than many breeds due to their short coat so protection from the elements or being locked in somewhere that it cannot get cool or warm is dangerous. Your Dane will also need a bit of room when they play or do 'the Zoomies' so be prepared to let them have that space and lift your ornaments.

As far as other 'space' issues, there needs to be room for large, highly padded cushions to prevent elbow & joint damage and trampoline beds for outside to deter the dog from laying on pavers or tiles. The car needs to have height for a Great Dane to stand or turn but consider the 'jumping' up or down height as well. A 4 Wheel Drive might seem perfect until your Dane is older and has arthritic knees and cannot leap from an 800 mm height on top of its 1 m leg length. Lifting a Dane in and out of the car is not easy.



## Puppy Hints

### Do

- 🐾 Remember unlike smaller breeds Danes are puppies until 18 months of age.
- 🐾 Basic obedience is important – An untrained Dane can be more than a nuisance once fully grown.
- 🐾 Vaccinate puppies.
- 🐾 Consult your vet about worming and heart worming treatments.
- 🐾 Do feed a good quality biscuit.
- 🐾 Always have fresh water available.
- 🐾 Provide soft thick well padded bedding to support your puppies elbows and joints.
- 🐾 Remember puppies chew. Supply enough safe toys so they are not eating your furniture.

### Don't

- 🐾 No forced exercise – No jogging or road work until 2 years and bones are set.
- 🐾 Do not feed standard puppy or performance food as they are high in calories and promote accelerated growth. It is important these dogs grow slow and even, so that the bone develops at the same rate as the muscle. High protein/fat/calories food does not mean a bigger dog.
- 🐾 Do not encourage jumping on your shoulders as it is damaging to the dog's legs and muscles.
- 🐾 Do not exercise for 1 –2 hours after meals.
- 🐾 Do not feed chicken mince for the first 12 months because it is too high in protein. The occasional wing or neck is acceptable.
- 🐾 Do not play tug of war games, no chasing games or wrestling on the floor games with your puppy, their bones are more delicate than you would think.
- 🐾 Don't put your Great Dane in the backyard and forget about him/her.
- 🐾 **DANES NEED HUMAN COMPANIONSHIP.**
- 🐾 Do not let young puppies climb up and down stairs as it is very hard on their shoulders and can cause serious injury.
- 🐾 Do not overfeed. Dane puppies need to be on the lean side.

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