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Thank you~

~for welcoming one of our GSP puppies into your home and your family. We hope that he or she will enrich your life with many, many years of devoted, loving companionship. Please remember we are **not** sending you off with your pup and the expectation of never hearing from you again, but rather look forward to getting pictures, hearing of milestones and answering any questions you may have along the way. Please do not hesitate to reach out if we can be of any assistance with training, health or anything else. While there is plenty of information on the internet and social media, we find it is often contradictory and not always correct.

Our greatest desire is that your pup grows to be a much loved and cherished member of your family, but please do not expect this to happen overnight. There will be plenty of trials and tribulations in the near future. However with clear expectations and the dedication this breed needs, you will have an amazing dog before you know it. That being said, we are the first to admit the GSP is not the right type of dog for everyone. We ask you to be certain NOW that you are ready for this commitment, rather than deciding 6 months or 6 years down the road that a GSP does not fit your lifestyle.



Reminder!

If you have not scheduled your veterinary appointment, please do so ASAP! Very often it takes a bit of time to get an appointment and you do not want to be late getting pup's booster DHPP.

The booster should be given somewhere between 28th and August 4th.



Mouthing

Puppies are like toddlers without hands, everything goes in the mouth. They jump on their people and mouth them – biting and snapping, it simply is what puppies do just like they did with their littermates. Of course, those needle-sharp teeth hurt! Initially, your reaction should be a loud screech, just like another pup would do. This startles them and usually they let go. Immediately redirect that mouth onto something appropriate for them to chew on – a toy - and say “YES”! It is a stage that seems to last forever, but it does eventually stop. Pup just needs to learn what they can and cannot chew on and it is your job to teach them.

Some pups get pretty intense with mouthing and play biting, even snarling, which can be misconstrued as aggressive behavior, it is normal puppy development behavior. If the above does not work, simply stand up and turn away, disengaging and sending the message that such behavior is unacceptable. Do not EVER hit pup on the nose or face – doing so will produce a head shy dog. At the very most, grab pup by the collar and give a strong verbal correction in a deep, growling voice.

Mouthing is usually play behavior, but can also be connected to teething. Puppies have 2 sets of teeth just like people. The first set of 28 erupts at 2 weeks old and then begins to fall out around 10-12 weeks old. By the time pup is 6 months old, the baby teeth should be out and the complete set of 42 adult teeth come in.

Routines

Puppies and dogs thrive on routine and it may help pup the transition by knowing the routine they have been accustomed to here.

Our day starts at around 5:30AM. Pups come out of the pen and are run outside to potty. Breakfast is then served. They do eat it completely dry, but some seem to prefer a bit of warm water mixed in. Offer pup approximately 3/4 of a cup at each meal. If pup is not finishing it, offer less. If he/she eats it all and still seems hungry, offer a bit more.

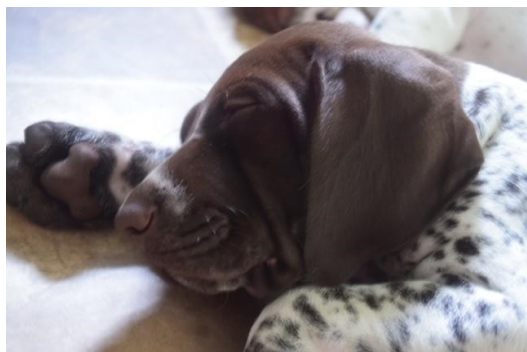
Pups play and play hard for at least 30-45 minutes after eating. You and your family will need to take the place of their littermates for playtime :) After about 40 minutes they begin to tire and go back in the pen for a nap. I would suggest taking pup out after eating, then again after playing and then several times throughout the day. As days progress, you will notice naps get shorter and awake time longer.

Since the weather has been so nice, we have had them out in the yard around 11 and then offer lunch at 12:30PM, once they are tired they come in for a nap. As I have often mentioned, I recommend getting pup tired and as he or she is falling asleep, put them in a crate. I would not close the door initially. I also suggest offering meals in the crate, putting the bowl in the back of the crate and again, not closing the door.

We have them outside again in the late afternoon and also do one on one work where they get a significant amount of treats making it an afternoon snack. They get their evening meal at 6:30, play for a while and then back in the pen and settled by 8:30. I try to get them outside one last time between 9:30pm and 10pm. They are quiet until we start again the next morning, however you should expect pup to get you up at sometime during the night if pup is crated. Let pup get you up, do not set an alarm-you want the middle of the night outings to diminish, getting pup up at a specific time every night is going to set a habit.

You should work with your pup teaching manners, cues and tricks throughout the day. Training starts as soon as pup arrives home and really never ends. Mental stimulation from working is as tiring as physical play and exercise. The bonus is a well behaved and cooperative dog later on.

I urge you to keep pup's crate by your bed so you can reassure him or her that you are close by putting your fingers through the bars if anyone is to get any sleep at night. Pup is accustomed to snuggling with littermates all night and we are suddenly expecting them to be totally alone-imagine how stressful this is for a baby. Please have patience and compassion.



Fear Periods

Many pups go through phases where he or she suddenly exhibits a concern of new items or situations, perhaps even of things he or she has been exposed to before. These fear periods commonly occur in the 8-11 week (regrettably right about the time pup leaves the security of the litter) and 6-14 month spans. These are a natural part of development and there is no way to avoid them, even with a lot of socialization. How you handle these periods can be critical, though. Forcing pup to engage with something they are extremely frightened of can create a long lasting fear. Give pup some space and let him or her explore on their terms - be a confident leader. Take a step back to where pup was comfortable and let him or her just observe. Praise and reward pup for engaging or even looking at the fearful object, or for looking to you for guidance. Try to arrange short training sessions involving the fearful object at a comfortable distance, make them fun with toys and treats. Pup may never completely overcome the fear, but always ending the training sessions on a positive note will be helpful in the long run.

Separation Anxiety

GSPs are very much prone to develop separation anxiety. Some can't stand to be a room away from their people, much less left home alone for any significant amount of time. Being separated from their people causes serious stress for many dogs with reactions such as howling, barking and most commonly-destructive behavior around the house.

The best way to deal with SA is to avoid it in the first place by encouraging pup to be independent. The crate is the very best tool to do this. Unfortunately, making a pup comfortable in a crate can be a bit of a lengthy process. It is ideal if you can have a fair amount of time to work on it before having to leave pup alone for hours at a time. Unfortunately this is not realistic for many of us. Therefore, you have to expect that there will be crying, whining and barking until pup is comfortable being locked in the crate.

- * As encouraged in the house-training article - work hard at making the crate a positive place-feed pup and encourage pup to nap in the crate with the door open. *See **Crate** tips below
- * Build up the time pup spends in the crate while also conditioning pup into thinking your leaving is a good thing – he or she gets food, treat or better yet-a food/treat dispensing toy by going in the crate and pays little attention to you leaving.
- * Do not make a fuss about leaving, quietly walk out the door as quickly as possible after giving the food or toy. Your leaving should be a good thing , not a stressor.
- * Make your return no big deal either, quietly come in and do not immediately rush to the crate. If you can, do not take pup out of crate if he or she is crying or making a fuss, try to wait for a moment of quiet. You want to reward the quiet behavior, not the screaming, whining, barking.
- * Ensure pup is getting a significant amount of exercise, both physically and mentally in the way of training. This is very important! It is helpful if pup is already quite tired when you put him or her in the crate.
- * **Try not baby or coddle your pup too much. Keep pup safe, help him or her to develop confidence, but also let him or her develop independence. Be your pup's confident leader, do not carry pup everywhere or always hold him or her.**
- * Extreme cases of separation anxiety are sometimes prescribed medication, both traditional and herbal/homeopathic medications. I prefer preventing it in the first place.

Make the Crate a Fun Place!

Play a game with gradual steps towards closing the crate door and conditioning pup to thinking the crate is a great place to be:

- * throw treats into the crate and have pup run in and eat them
- * teach pup to sit or lie down in crate while giving treats
- * while pup is sitting or lying down, quickly close and open the door and then give a treat, slowly increasing the time you keep the door closed-5 seconds, 10 seconds etc.
- * close the door, stand up, kneel back down and open door; or drop treats through the top bars of crate
- * close door, stand up and back away a step and return, either giving treat through bars of crate or opening door and treat. Increase the steps you move away from the crate
- * Graduate to giving a stuffed Kong or food dispensing toy. If pup is engaged with the Kong, close the door and step away from the crate. Quickly return, open the door and take the Kong away while pup is still very engaged and wanting more. Increase the time you leave pup with the Kong.

I am sure you get the picture-BABYSTEPS-with the intention of conditioning pup to the fact that the crate is a good and safe place to be.

Pick up Day!

The big day is now just a couple days away! Since we have several pups to send off, I try to provide you with as much information and paperwork ahead of time making pick up rather brief so you can begin your journey. I will email the contract and some other info a few days before, if possible please print, fill out what you are able to and bring it all with you. Cash or check is preferred for final payment. PLEASE do not hesitate to ask any questions!!

Some other things to bring with you:

Crate (if room allows and you have a long drive)

Old towels and/or paper towels

Leash and Collar (I recommend the adjustable web kind of collar that starts at 10")

Water and small bowl (if long drive)

Do not be surprised if your pup gets carsick, it is very common for dogs when they are not acclimated to traveling by car. If the trip is long, try to make as few stops as possible and walk pup in places where it is unlikely any dogs have recently been.

Please take pup directly home, do not go visiting, there will be plenty of time for that later on once pup has bonded with you and knows you will keep him or her safe. This is a stressful time for pup and he or she will be vulnerable both mentally and physically.

Local Clubs

Local German Shorthaired Pointer Clubs, kennel clubs and NAVHDA chapters can be helpful resources. The clubs generally host specialty shows, hunt tests, field trials, obedience, handling and puppy kindergarten classes. Some, especially NAVHDA chapters hold field training days that can be fun and beneficial. Here are some in the areas I believe will be helpful.

Long Island, NY—Long Island GSP Club <https://ligspc.com/> and Long Island Pointing Dog Field Trial Club <https://www.lipdc.com/>

PA—Schuylkill Valley German Shorthaired Pointer Club <https://svgspc.org/>

NJ— Eastern GSP Club <https://www.egspc.org/>

New England—Nutmeg GSP Club, Katahdin GSP Club

NAVHDA - NJ/PA - www.delvalnavhda.com

NY - www.rocktaavernnavhda.com

Local kennel clubs are often great resources for training classes. If you need help locating one near you, please let me know!

