TABLE OF CONTENTS

About this series - 3
What you should know - 4
Online resources at AKC.org - 9
Other books in the series - 10
ABOUT THIS SERIES

At the AKC, we know better than anyone that your dog can't be treated like a car or an appliance, but we've named this series “An Owner’s Manual” because sometimes you probably wish your lovable companions came with one.

These concise guides give you the tools, tips, and direction to be a responsible and confident dog owner who brings out the best in your dog. Give them a test drive!
CHAPTER ONE

CREATE A BUZZ

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW
what you should KNOW

If you’re an urban or suburban dog owner, you’re likely familiar with the local dog park. It’s a canine oasis, where your leash-less pet is free to sniff, run and socialize with other dogs. The parks vary in size and shape. Some are simple fenced areas of turf. Some are dog playgrounds with inclines, platforms and small water pools.

Still, there is one characteristic common to the best dog parks: conscientious dog owners.
what you should know

You and your pooch will be welcomed at any dog park if you practice basic dog-park etiquette:

HEALTHY DOGS ONLY

Should your pet show signs of illness or a contagious disease, don’t bring him/her to the park. Make sure your dog is up to date on vaccinations. Keep in mind that a dog park is really no place for a puppy less than 4 months old. It’s also no place for a female dog in heat – but that’s just common sense, right?

NO BULLYING

Keep an eye on your dog! Don’t let your dog be aggressive with another dog. If your dog is being bullied, politely ask the owner of the offending dog to intervene so you can safely take your dog to another area of the park. Don’t be offended if someone asks you to restrain your dog.
what you should know

KEEP IT CLEAN

Obviously, you should pick up after your dog. It’s another reason why you should be focusing on your dog and not on your text messages or romance novel. And consider cleaning up after a negligent owner’s dog because it protects you pet’s health and makes the park a more appealing place for everyone.

FOOD AND DRINK

Don’t bring food for yourself or your dog to the park. If you feel inclined to give your dog a treat, do so when other dogs are off in the distance. It’s a good idea to bring a portable water bowl for your dog – water bowls at dog parks carry the risk of communicable illnesses.

THE LITTLE ONES

Keep your small dog in the designated small-dog section of the park – even if he/she enjoys hanging out with the big dogs. There’s a greater risk of injury for a small dog playing with a group of active big dogs. Owners should also be mindful of a seldom-seen, but dangerous, behavior known as “predatory drift,” in which a dog “drifts” from play into a predatory instinct.

TOYS

Bring a ball, but be prepared to lose it. In urban dog parks, the ball you toss might be chased by several dogs. Needless to say, the dog park is no place for your dog’s favorite toy.
what you should know

BE AN INTERVENTIONIST

Don’t let your dog run in a pack. Intervene when play starts to get too rough. Give your dog an occasional “time-out” by calling him/her to you and rewarding with a treat. Be willing to leave the park if your dog appears uncomfortable.

A FINAL POINT

Dog park etiquette is actually all about safety. Dog owners want their pets to socialize and play in a safe environment. A clean, safe dog park is an ideal place for dogs, as well as dog owners, to make new friends.

DON’T HAVE DOG PARK? WHY NOT START YOUR OWN?

With cities becoming more and more crowded and leash laws becoming more restrictive, many concerned dog owners are creating dog parks to have a place to spend quality time with their pets. But just what is a “dog park,” and what benefits can one bring to your city or town?

Check out our e-book, How to Start a Dog Park in Your Community
The AKC is a not-for-profit organization and the largest purebred dog registry in the world. We are the sports-governing body for over 22,000 dog events a year, including conformation (dog shows) and exciting sports like agility, obedience, rally, tracking, lure coursing, earthdog, herding trials, among others.

But the AKC is so much more. Here are just some of the ways we support and enrich the lives of dogs—purebreds and mixed-breeds alike—and their families.

**AKC Humane Fund** supports breed rescue activities, assists shelters that permit domestic-abuse victims to bring their pets, and educates dog lovers about responsible dog ownership.

**Canine Good Citizen®** program: A 10-step test that certifies dogs who have good manners at home and in their community. Over 600,000 dogs across the United States have become Canine Good Citizens, and 42 states have passed resolutions recognizing the program’s merit and importance.

**AKC Reunite** has brought more than 400,000 lost pets back together with their owners.

The **AKC Canine Health Foundation**, funds research projects and clinical studies. Since 1995 the AKC has donated over $24 million to the CHF. (The AKC is the only registry that incorporates health-screening results into its permanent dog records.)

**AKC** conducts thousands of kennel inspections annually to monitor care and conditions at kennels across the country and ensure the integrity of the AKC registry.

We offer the largest, most comprehensive set of DNA programs for parentage verification and genetic identity to ensure reliable registration records.

AKC supports one of the world’s largest collections of dog-related fine art and artifacts at the **AKC Museum of the Dog**.

We have the world’s largest **dog library** at AKC headquarters in New York, both of which are open to the public.
THANK YOU FOR READING

We hope this information was valuable to you in helping your puppy live a long, healthy, happy life. Below, find additional books in our Owner’s Manual series designed to strengthen the bond between you and your furry family member.