

Dogs – Basic Care

- Dogs are social animals and compatible animals can be group housed. Watch closely to make sure that the less dominant animals in the group are getting their share of food and water.
- Most dogs have a mild, even temperament and are eager to please.
- Daily positive contact with animal care and research technicians improve a dog's psychological and physical well-being.
- Dogs that have not been well socialized (accustomed at a young age to interacting with humans) may be timid throughout their life.
- Enrichment should be provided unless specified in protocol and approved by the IACUC.
- Examples of enrichment:
 - Toys: ▪ Nylabones ▪ Balls ▪ Chew ropes ▪ Kong toys
 - Group/companion housing
 - Food: ▪ Dog biscuits
- Good caging/housing systems should provide at least enough space to permit freedom of movement and normal postural adjustments (ability to stand, lay down, and turn around).
- Minimum cage/pan sizes are specified in the Animal Welfare Regulations and the Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals. Exceptions must be approved by the IACUC.
- Dogs housed in cages and pens that do not meet USDA regulations must be provided with exercise. Please refer to the UTK Canine Exercise Plan.
- Dogs should be fed high quality commercially prepared dog diets that are balanced for proper nutrition.
- The proper amount to feed a dog depends on its size, age, health, activity, special research requirements, and whether or not it is pregnant or lactating.
- Fresh, clean water should be available ad libitum.
- The major means of temperature control is by panting.
- The temperament of a dog may change drastically when it is sick or injured. It is far more apt to bite than a healthy dog.
- Evaluate the attitude and disposition of the dog while it is in the cage. Talk to it and avoid sudden movement. Make every attempt to have it come out of the cage of its own will.
- Often just placing the dog on a table reduces its aggressive attitude
- To lift a dog to carry, place one hand underneath the chest and the other hand around the rump, lift in both arms, keeping its side against you.
- The key to restraining any animal is to use only the minimum restraint necessary.
- To restrain, place the dog on a secure surface and hold it in a chest-down position. Place one arm around the neck and bring the head up to your shoulder. The head and neck are held firmly with one arm and the other arm is placed over the body.
- For more specific species information, including physiologic data, husbandry and breeding requirements, and procedural information, please contact the Office of Laboratory Animal Care (865-974-5634).