

If your puppy sits or lies down during a walk or wanders off during playtime and looks as though they want to take some time out, give them a rest.

If you're out on a walk, you could carry them (not easy with a growing Basset Hound puppy) or you could give them time to recover some energy and finish the walk, but perhaps reduce the length of walks for the next week or so. If you find your puppy seems to lack energy or to get tired very quickly, it might be worth having a chat with your breeder just to make sure there's no underlying reason.

Puppies have soft paws (pads) and it will take time for their pads to toughen up. Be sure to keep an eye on them to make sure they aren't getting sore, and vary the surfaces when the time is right.

All dogs especially Basset Hounds need to be fully grown and fit before they can undertake sustained exercise, a softly, softly approach to exercise in the beginning will pay dividends in the end if adhered to.

**More Information and leaflets available at:  
[www.bassetrus.co.uk/downloads](http://www.bassetrus.co.uk/downloads)**

Lots of people today enjoy taking their dogs with them when they're running or off-road cycling. Not an exercise to consider with a scent hound as they are known to weave on a route and could easily cause you to have an accident, be warned!!

IF CONCERNED, ALWAYS CONTACT YOUR OWN  
VETERINARY SURGEON FOR ADVICE ABOUT THE  
HEALTH OF YOUR BASSET HOUND

## Moving Forward

Although no longer on the Category 3 List, we must not be or, become complacent about our position understanding it is still a very important issue. Having succeeded in moving away from the unwanted exaggerations for which we were criticised, we have to stay constantly vigilant and make sure they are not revisited.

Judges also have to take some responsibility, they should judge with the Kennel Club Breed Watch in mind and penalize anything they see in the show ring appropriately.

Please do not let us return to the overdone, exaggerated specimens of the past with little or no ground clearance. The Basset Hound needs to be "Fit for Function". If you judge the breed please keep this in mind and penalize if necessary.

We ask you to adopt a fundamental approach, whether it is exhibiting, breeding or judging.

Our breed is in your hands!

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WORKING TOGETHER FOR A BETTER FUTURE WITH  
The Kennel Club



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**The Basset Hound  
Puppy Care  
Bone Structure  
Exercise**

**This information leaflet has been produced to help you to understand what exercise your puppy needs during the time its growing and while joint are at risk, more leaflets to download can be found at [www.bassetrus.uk/downloads](http://www.bassetrus.uk/downloads)**

## **Exercise can be an emotive issue at the best of times . . . . .**

The Basset Hound Health Group has undertaken two Breed Health Surveys in recent years. The first 2014 included questions on “lameness” and the second 2020, was more concise asking questions on specific conditions, treatment and outcome. The data is conclusive young puppies are having too much exercise, too soon and it could cause damage to their developing skeletal frame.

There are lots of views on this, because puppies have been brought up with all sorts of approaches to exercise and have grown up healthy and sound. However, the more we understand about our breed, dog health and physiology and as more evidence is uncovered by research, some general advice becomes easier to offer.

**Reputable breeders know only too well, too much exercise, too soon can be catastrophic to the bone structure of a Basset Hound Puppy, and it's the reason they explain and give you an information leaflet which covers all things including exercise, diet etc.**

Young Basset Hounds have enormous stress on their joints as they grow quickly. So how do you gauge your puppy's exercise? And what forms of exercise are appropriate for young pups? As a general rule of thumb, the BHHG and the Kennel Club recommend five minutes of exercise per month of age twice a day. This means a four-month-old puppy should get about 20 minutes of exercise at a time. Short walks, brief training sessions and play with other pups is often sufficient for young pups.

A question to ask yourself would you walk a human toddler for miles? The answer is NO, because they just aren't up to walking great distances at an early age, it's the same with all young puppies but, especially a Basset Hound!

They shouldn't be going out until they are fully vaccinated and prior to that exercising in the garden is as good as anywhere. Don't forget during this initial time you also have toilet training going on, so you are in and out of the garden anyway. All this should be taken into consideration. Like human toddlers they also have a nap and play, nap and play ritual and when they wake they need to spend a penny so outside they go?

Try not to walk them on unforgiving surfaces such as tarmac or concrete these surfaces are hard and unforgiving for the puppy's young soft bones. It is far better to walk them initially on grass, in the previous leaflet 13 Puppy Bone Structure we introduced you to growth plates and how easy it is to cause them damage. Puppies grow so quickly and these special areas the “growth plates”, where new bone is laid down. Growth plates stop making new bone, or ‘close’ at set times and become strong bone, but until they do, they are fragile and can be damaged by trauma, such as falls from furniture or hard bumps.

It is a fact, puppies have a lot of energy! It could be tempting to try to tire them out by running around and playing with them until they're tired and needing a nap, but did you know that you can overdo it? You can over exercise puppies giving them more than is good for them and then unwittingly damage developing bones and joints

Although structures such as bones, together with muscles, tendons and ligaments (what we often call ‘soft tissue’) need to be trained for their jobs in life through normal movement and physical activity, they also need plenty of time to grow and repair. Too much physical activity and not enough rest-and-repair time can have a detrimental effect on their health and development

You'll have noticed that puppies seem to be awake and running around for a little while and then they have to go off to sleep to recharge. As they get older, they spend longer awake and shorter periods asleep. They only play until they're tired and then they rest.

When we're playing with puppies, or training them, or taking them for a walk once they're old enough, we have to decide on their behalf when it's time to rest, because puppies like to do things with us and it's easy to let them overdo it.

Exercise for puppies doesn't always have to be a walk. High energy play also counts as exercise. However, high speed turning and stopping isn't great for any dog's joints, but especially not for the growing joints of a Basset Hound puppy. Try to find other games to play until your puppy is fully grown.

Even then, it's much better for dogs who like to chase and retrieve toys, to teach them to wait until you've thrown the toy and it's stopped moving, before you let them run out to get it.