

## **POTBELLIED PIG INFO PUT TOGETHER BY PATTY HILL OF NORTHWEST MINIATURE PIG ASSOCIATION**

Check out our website: <https://nwpetpigs.org>

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## **Welcome to the World of Potbellied Pigs**

Welcome to the world of Potbellied Pigs, or Pot Bellied Pigs, or Pot-bellied Pigs, or even PBP's... which ever you prefer.

You might be a first-time owner, ready for the adventure of owning a pet pig; or an experienced pig person who is seeking to enlarge your pig family or perhaps replace a beloved pet that passed away. Whatever your reason for pig ownership, there will be a time when you will NEED the help and guidance of other pig owners like yourself.

This is where we can help you. We're the *Northwest Miniature Pig Association (NWMPA)*, [www.nwpetpigs.org](http://www.nwpetpigs.org) - a group of over 60 families that own at least one PBP, most of us have two or more, some are outside pigs and some share our homes, we represent them all. (Membership info and form included in this packet)

This packet of pertinent pig information is basic information that was lovingly assembled by a member, Patty Hill, in hopes of making your pig ownership a fun and pleasant experience for both you and your pig.

### Your pet pig will need:

- To be spayed (female) or neutered (male)
- Yearly vaccinations and worming
- Hooves trimmed 2-4 times a year
- Tusks trimmed every 2-3 years (males only)
- Dental checkups at least every 2-3 years

All these services require a Vet that is knowledgeable in PBP's. The *NWMPA* sponsors PBP Vet Clinics once yearly at locations to be announced. Dr. Blake is the Vet that attends these clinics. We enthusiastically recommend him. You may also contact Dr. Blake:

Dr. Blake

[drblakemiller@northwestmobilevet.com](mailto:drblakemiller@northwestmobilevet.com)

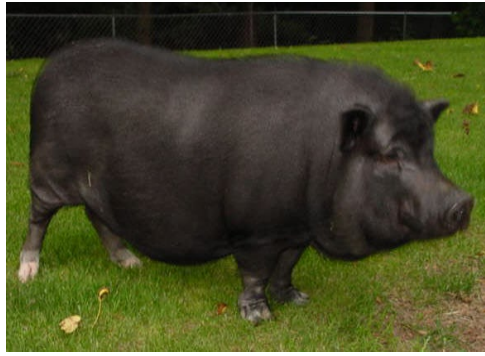
503-765-6702

If you need additional info on any of these or other issues such as where to find a good quality PBP feed, training & behavior, or you need to just discuss PBP ownership with another pig person, please feel free to call:

Patty Hill

(503) 253-8768

[pattyrocs@msn.com](mailto:pattyrocs@msn.com)



# **POTBELLIED PIGS**

***JUST THE FACTS, PLEASE!***

This is excerpted from a brochure written by Helen Morrison, for Pigs As Pets, Inc.



# POTBELLIED PIGS

## ***JUST THE FACTS, PLEASE!***

This is excerpted from a brochure written by Helen Morrison  
for Pigs As Pets, Inc.

Potbellied pigs are clean, intelligent, affectionate creatures. Pigs are the fourth smartest animal group on the planet, following only humans, apes and chimps, whales and dolphins.

Their intelligence, curiosity and charm make them appealing, but it may also make them a challenging pet. Pigs have special needs. They make wonderful pets for those people who understand their special needs and are willing to educate themselves and meet those needs.

They require extra patience and perseverance, but it is more than made up for by their wonderful personalities!

### **SIZE**

All potbellied pigs are miniature in relationship to their cousins, the farm hog. Farm hogs can grow up to 900 pounds or more.

Pigs have dense compact bodies, especially when compared to dogs or people. A 150-pound pig is much smaller than an 80-pound German shepherd or a 100-pound person. A 150-pound pig is not as big as one may imagine!

A typical, full grown, potbellied pig can be anywhere from 100 to 250 pounds. The largest registered potbellied pig is over 400 pounds (not recommend for the health of any pet pig). As with people, the size varies, but the average size is somewhere between 100 and 150 pounds, being less than 20 inches high at the shoulder.

Pigs grow quickly until they are about one year old, then continue to grow slowly until they are between three and four years old. So, that 10-pound baby piglet will grow into a 100-pound or more adult -- don't believe anything else!

### **WATER**

#### **Drinking Water**

Ever hear of the phrase "sweat like a pig"? Well, pigs do not actually have sweat glands. Pigs cannot sweat! This means they need plenty of fresh water available at all times to prevent overheating.

Male pigs can be prone to urinary tract infections and other disorders. Make sure all male pigs have plenty of fresh water available at all times and that they drink it.

If your pig seems reluctant to drink water, add a little fruit juice (like apple juice) or some Gatorade or similar sports type drink to the water. Just enough to add flavor usually does the trick.

## **For Health and Safety**

Pigs keep cool by splashing in water or rolling in mud. Give your pig a child's plastic swimming pool filled with a few inches of water. Some pigs are afraid to step into the pool for the first time, so you may want to throw a few grapes or apple chunks into the pool to entice the pig. Cut a little "doorway" in the side so the pig can step in easily.

## **INDOOR LIVING**

### **Yes, pigs generally make good house pets!**

All pigs root. It's the natural instincts of the pig, it's how they find food in nature. You would not want to prevent a human baby from learning to walk, so why prevent your pig from rooting! It does not mean you allow the pig to root your entire house.

Instead, give the pig plenty of outside time in a secure run or take long walks so they can root outside. Or, make a rooting box filled with rocks or small to medium hard rubber balls. Sprinkle a couple of treats in the box to teach the pig what it's used for. You can also sprinkle some Cherrios or pieces of carrot, popcorn, etc., into a large pile of blankets to teach the pig to root in its blankets.

Pigs are intelligent, curious animals. You will need to pig proof your home, just as you would baby-proof your home for a toddler. Some people will clear off a lower shelf or two, well within reach of the pig's snout and put piggy toys there. The pig will quickly learn to take toys off its shelf only, making a happy pig and happy people. Pigs often watch where their food comes from, so they can learn to open cabinets and even the refrigerator! Plants may also need to be put up in high places, so they are not eaten or spilled all over your floor.

## **Indoor Housing**

Your pig will need a soft bed of blankets or pillows. All pigs need a "place" of their own to hide when they are feeling insecure or want to be left alone. This can be a quiet room, a closet or a large animal crate in a corner. You may also want to teach your pig to sleep in a crate or separate room. Someone once wrote a 10-pound pig in the bed is cute, a 100-pound pig may not be!

## **Potty Boxes**

In cold or rainy weather indoor pigs may not want to go outside to potty. If you choose to use an indoor potty box, select one with low sides or cut down an entrance. Pigs don't like to step up and over something to use the potty. The box must be big enough for the pig to turn around in. If the bottom of the box is slippery put a no slip mat in the bottom, under the litter.

Avoid using clay litter, as pigs may inhale it (causing pneumonia) or eat it (causing intestinal blockages), both which could be fatal. Pine shavings are inexpensive, old



towels can be used, adult diapers or underpads make good box liners too and are easy to wash or dispose of. Cedar is not recommended.

Pigs learn to potty in a particular spot. Choose the potty box location carefully because the pig may not want to change potty spots later. When a pig is very small, take him to the box every hour or at least every two hours when he is awake, as soon as he wakes up and right after he eats or drinks. If you are not home to closely supervise the pig, you can also confine the pig to a small area with its bed and potty box separated as much as possible. The pig will not use its bed as a potty box, so it will learn to use the litter box. Or you can put some of the pig's poop into the box, once the pig smells it; it should start to use the box.

Do not give the pig free, unsupervised run of the house until he is at least 6 months old. Pigs younger than that are prone to accidents!

If the accidents are not caught and corrected immediately, housebreaking will be more difficult. If a pig does something once, he remembers. If he does something twice, it's a habit. If he does it three times, you may be out of luck! Close supervision and proper housebreaking early on will help avoid problems in the future.



**Healthy Pig Poop**

If you catch a pig making a mistake, take him to the litter box and let him finish pottying in the proper place, then praise him. Clean up the mess with a commercial deodorizer made for removing pet odors or vinegar and baking soda. Clean up is important to avoid future accidents in the same spot -- pigs have strong noses and good memories!

If possible, put a heavy piece of furniture in that spot or a bath mat and the pig's food dish and feed him there for a few days. Pigs do not eat and potty in the same places! After a week or so clean the spot again. Wait a few more days and when the pig is not looking sprinkle some food or a couple of treats in the area. The pig will think the treats sprout from the rug or floor and will not want to potty there again.

## **OUTDOOR LIVING**

### **Outdoor Housing**

Outdoor pigs need a sturdy, rainproof shed, barn or doghouse. In cold climates, it must also be wind-proof and have enough room for plenty of straw and blankets to keep the pig warm. Ideally outdoor pigs should be kept in small groups for extra body warmth. Remember pigs need plenty of fresh water at all times. In hot weather they need a small pool or mud puddle to keep cool. In cold weather, be sure not to let their water freeze.

### **Outdoor Runs**

It is not recommended that a pig be kept full time in a run or pen with a cement floor. The pen should give the pig plenty of room to move around, a place for its potty area away from its housing and food areas. We like pens no smaller than 8' x 16', with

access to areas outside the pen for exercise or a 16 x 16 foot pen (which is the length of the standard hog panels!).

Pigs don't jump high, but they do like to root & dig. A 4-foot-high fence will easily keep your pigs in, but will not keep an aggressive dog or other animal out. If you live in an area with stray dogs or other roaming animals and creatures (i.e. kids), you may wish to choose a 6-foot fence.

Hog panel (available from your local farm store) is the best and probably most inexpensive and secure fencing material. These panels are used by commercial hog farmers and are good and sturdy, for making sure the pig stays in its pen.

Chain link fencing reinforced with chicken wire at the bottom may also make a suitable pen, but BE SURE there is no place a pig's snout can get stuck, caught or injured. Pigs are curious and will root and look for holes and ways to move the chicken wire. To be sure the pen is completely secure, you should dig a trench about 1 foot deep just inside the chain link fence. Fasten the chicken wire to the lower 6' of the fence and extend it down into the trench. Fill in the trench, burying the wire. You can also put boards into the trench, bury part of the board, and fasten them to the fencing to secure the bottom.

Picket or split rail fences will NOT keep a pig in, but you can attach a hog panel to the fence to secure it. That makes an attractive as well as secure fence! A board-on-board fence will keep a pig in, but may require reinforcement at the base, so a pig can't dig out beneath it.

## **TOYS**

Whether indoor or outdoor, all pigs love toys, especially any toy with food. Old magazines, old shoes, old clothes (wear them so they have your scent and give them to the pig unwashed), infant toys, dog or cat toys and balls are all good pig toys. Be careful, piglets can get caught in sleeves, buttons, snaps, etc.

Pigs also enjoy "Buster Cubes" (PetSmart.com) and Manna-balls (Pigstuff.com) filled with food or treats. Or you can make your own inexpensive version from a whiffle ball, 2-liter soda bottle or plastic milk jug. Stuff the whiffle ball with plain air-popped popcorn, food pellets, frozen peas, etc. Or, punch holes in the soda bottle or milk jug, making sure they are big enough for the food to fall out when the toy is pushed or rolled. Put the treat in the bottle or jug and the pig will push it around so the treats or food will fall out. For overweight or bored pigs, you may consider feeding the entire food ration this way too - it's good mental stimulus and exercise!

## **HEALTH CARE**

It can be difficult to find a vet willing and able to treat potbellied pigs. Potbellied pigs are NOT farm hogs. There are differences in their medical treatment. Before allowing your vet to sedate your potbellied pig, be sure he knows the types of anesthesia to use and the amounts. The wrong drugs or dosages can be harmful or fatal to your pet. Isoflurane gas is the safest, most effective type of anesthesia for a potbellied pig with

the least amount of side effects. For more information go to our Library or the NAPPA Web site.

Pigs are also susceptible to Porcine Stress syndrome, a condition where the pig is so stressed out that he can literally drop dead. If your pig is "freaking" out for a sustained period of time (not just for a few minutes when you pick him up), stop and let him calm down before continuing with whatever you are doing. Covering him up with a blanket will help to calm him down.

The most common potbellied pig health problems are diet related. Overweight pigs suffer from heart problems, blindness and arthritis. Underfed pigs (often in an attempt to keep them small) usually die from malnutrition or complications from malnutrition.

Pigs need lots of fresh water at all times. Given water and the right diet, good housing and plenty of love, your pig should remain happy and healthy for many years.

## **Vaccinations**

Potbellied pigs are susceptible to several contagious diseases. Even if you and your pig are never around other pigs, you should have your pig vaccinated every 12 months. Your vet should also check you pig's eyes, ears, feet, tusks and general appearance.

Most vets also include a dose of Ivomec along with the vaccinations to prevent worms and mange.

Pleurogard 4 covers: hemophiles, pleuro pneumonia, rhinitis and erysipelas

Respire covers: microplasma pneumonia

## **Spaying and Neutering**

Every pet pig should be spayed or neutered.

Male pigs are fertile as early as 2 months old. Intact male pigs do not make good pets, they tend to "hump" everything. Their mouths will foam constantly and they often "mark their territory" with a pungent smelling fluid.

Intact females often get "PMS" and may forget their potty training while they are in heat. Generally, females go into heat every three weeks. Also, intact female pigs have a very high incidence of life-threatening uterine tumors and infections when older and larger and no longer safe surgical candidates.

## **Eyes and Ears**

Some pigs are prone to eye problems, so check our pigs eyes for irritation or stuck eyelashes, or eyelashes that may curve into the eye and cause irritation (entropion -- a condition that can be corrected by surgery done by your vet). Some pigs have naturally weepy eyes that produce sticky, brownish tears. Wipe away the goo with a soft, warm, damp cloth or baby wipes. You can also use a little Vaseline around the eye to keep the



brownish tears from caking on the pigs face, it will also help to soften any brownish gook already caked there for easy removal.

Pigs sometimes get a brown waxy build up inside their ears - this is normal and does not mean your pig is dirty. Wipe the outside part of the ear gently with a soft cloth. Stay away from the ear canal and inner ear. DO NOT try to clean deep inside the ear. Do not flush the pigs ears out, liquid in the ear can cause deafness and balance problems. These procedures are best left for your vet.

## **Tusks and Hooves**

All pigs grow tusks. Females grow small, sharp tusks that rarely stick out of their mouths. Neutered males will have a set protruding from their lips by age 1 1/2 to 2. Tusks do not have to be trimmed unless there is a reason to do so. For example, if the pig is around small children or if the tusks are bothering the pig. If your pig is calm and will allow it, you can gently file the tusks. If your pig is nervous, you can take your pig to the vet to have the tusks trimmed.

## **Skin**

All pigs have naturally dry skin (remember they don't have sweat glands like we do!) It's not necessary to bathe your pig on a regular basis. However, it is fine to give him a bath when he gets dirty.

Also, good brushing will help. Use any good lotion on your pig's skin as often as you like, which will help to keep the skin soft. Just be sure your pig is not allergic to it.

## **FOOD**

Pigs like to eat! Pigs will do just about anything for food. If left to their own devices, pigs will overeat and quickly become obese. BUT, this does not mean you should starve your pig (see health information above). It means your pig needs to eat wholesome food with limited treats (manufactured just for potbellied pigs, not commercial hog foods, dog foods or table scraps).

A pig's size (height & length) is determined by his genes, not by his diet (unless he is overfed and becomes overweight). Underfeeding a potbellied pig will not "keep him small" and is simply cruel!

Your pig needs a food formulated especially for potbellied pigs, with no more than 14% protein. Never feed a pig dog food - it is too high in fat, salt and protein.

## **Amount**

The proper amount of food for your pig depends upon a lot of different factors: the pig's age, size, activity level and environment, for feeding guidelines go to:

<https://rossmillfarm.com> Feed your pig the proper amount at least twice a day.

## **Size and Age**

The best way to determine if your pig is at the proper weight is to LOOK at him carefully. Make sure you can see his eyes.

Pigs with naturally plump faces overweight pigs may have extra fat deposits around their eyes making it difficult for them to see. Look down at him from above. His body should look like a cylinder or a smooth tube. If he looks like he swallowed a basketball, he may be overweight. Look at him from the side, he should have a nice belly, but it should NOT drag on the ground.

Growing pigs (3 years or less) need more food than mature adults do. Larger pigs (that is, pigs with a naturally large bone structure, NOT overweight pigs with average bone structure) need more food than smaller pigs.

## **Activity Level and Environment**

Active pigs, pigs that travel frequently, regularly go on long walks or practice and perform tricks, need more food than inactive pigs. Generally, indoor pigs get less exercise than pigs that stay outside most of the time. Outdoor pigs with unlimited access to a large yard or very large run generally get more exercise walking around.

BUT, if the pig gets plenty of grazing or access to fallen fruits or acorns (acorns can be toxic to the kidneys when eaten in large doses) and grass, take this into account when determining how much food and treats he needs.

## **Fresh Fruits and Vegetables**

Supplement your pig with plenty of fresh, leafy vegetables. Iceberg lettuce is ideal because it helps the pig feel full, but has no fat and very few calories. Some pigs are picky and won't eat everything.

Fruit and starchy vegetables (peas, corn, potatoes) can be fattening, so keep those to a minimum. Freeze grapes or cucumber slices for treats.

Generally, 1 cup of fresh fruits and vegetables is fine for most pigs. If your pig spends the day grazing on your lawn or eating your flowers, cut back on this amount.

These types of supplements help to add variety to your pig's diet, but are not necessary to be fed everyday as long as you have the pig on a good quality potbellied pig food.

## **Treats**

Pigs LOVE treats! But, be careful not to go overboard on the treats. Pigs will eat, as much as you give them and will act as if they are starving -- if you are feeding your pig properly, this is no more than an ACT - don't give in!

Good treats are plain, air-popped popcorn, carrot slices, individual pieces of dry cereal (Cheerios or Chex). Remember to include the treats fed during training sessions when deciding how much food your pig is getting - those treats can add up!

Some people measure out a set amount of treats (say 1/4 cup for cereal) for a specified amount of time (1 - 2 days). This makes it easier to determine exactly how many treats the pig is getting.

## **Vitamins**

After 9 months of age you can give a Childs chewable Vitamin without iron once a day, but if your pig is over 8 years old you can give them an adult over 50 years of age vitamin, but not gummies.

If you have any questions or problems, contact:

Northwest Miniature Pig Association-NWMPA

P.O. Box 33982

Portland, OR. 97292

[WWW.NWPETPIGS.ORG](http://WWW.NWPETPIGS.ORG)

503-253-8768

[pattyrocs@msn.com](mailto:pattyrocs@msn.com)

Pig Rescue Services and Placement

Patty Hill

9222 SE Mill St.

Portland, OR 97216

503-253-8768

[pattyrocs@msn.com](mailto:pattyrocs@msn.com)

## **Pig Training/Discipline**

The training and discipline are your responsibility. This responsibility should not be taken lightly. Your pig is never too young to begin training. From the very beginning, they must understand the parameters of accepted behavior and be corrected if they don't mind you. Pigs are hierarchal by nature; the owner must always be in charge. Your pig should be taught from the first moment they enter your home that all humans, in all circumstances, are to be respected and never challenged. Never underestimate your pig and always establish yourself as "Top Pig". Your pet pig, who is a living, intelligent and loving creature, is totally dependent on you to give them the home and training they deserve.

## **Potbellied Pig Parenting Book**

Written by Nancy Shepherd.

110 pages with a complete index.

Understand the nature of the potbellied pig.

Socializing and re-socializing the complicated pig.

What to provide, for indoor and outdoor accommodations.

Offering your pig constructive pastimes.

Traveling safely and enjoyably with your pig.

Solving care and management problems.

And much, much more.

**Order now for \$25, includes shipping!**

**Send E-mail to:...** [\*\*pattyrocs@msn.com\*\*](mailto:pattyrocs@msn.com)

## **Toxic Plants -- Beware!**

Some household and yard plants may be toxic to your potbellied pig. Be careful when allowing your pig around the following plants. This list is not exhaustive.

Aloe Vera Amaryllis Apple (seeds) Apple Leaf Croton Apricot (pit) Asparagus Fern Autumn Crocus Avocado (fruit and pit) Azalea	Baby's Breath Bird of Paradise Bittersweet Branching Ivy Buckeye Buddhist Pine	Caladium Calla Lily Castor Bean Ceriman Charming Dieffenbachia Cherry (seeds and wilting leaves) Chinese Evergreen Christmas Rose Cineraria Clematis Cordatum Corn Plant Cornstalk Plant Croton Cuban Laurel Cutleaf Philodendron Cycads Cyclamen	Daffodil Devil's Ivy Dieffenbachia Dracaena Palm Dragon Tree Dumb Cane	Easter Lily (especially in cats!!!!) Elaine Elephant Ears Emerald Feather English Ivy
Geranium German Ivy Giant Dumb Cane Glacier Ivy Gold Dieffenbachia Gold Dust Dracaena Golden Pothos	Hahn's Self-Branching Ivy Heartland Philodendron Hurricane Plant	Indian Rubber Plant	Janet Craig Dracaena Japanese Show Lily (especially cats !!!) Jerusalem Cherry	Kalanchoe Lacy Tree Philodendron
Madagascar Dragon Tree Marble Queen Marijuana Mexican Breadfruit Miniature Croton Mistletoe Morning Glory Mother-in Law's Tongue	Nandina Bush & Berries Narcissus Needlepoint Ivy Nephytis Nightshade	Oleander Onion Oriental Lily (especially in cats!!!)	Peace Lily Peach (wilting leaves and pits) Pencil Cactus Plumosa Fern Poinsettia (low toxicity) Poison Ivy Poison Oak Pothos Precatory Bean Primrose	Red Emerald Red Princess Red-Margined Dracaena Rhododendron Ribbon Plant
Taro Vine Tiger Lily (especially cats!!!) Tomato Plant (green fruit, stem and leaves) Tree Philodendron Tropic Snow Dieffenbachia	Weeping Fig	Yew		



## **Pigs and Dogs - A Bad Combination**

Potbelly pigs and dogs are not a good combination. **Pigs are prey to dogs, which are predators.** If you get a pet pig and have a dog, NEVER leave them alone together. We have heard way too many stories about pigs being attacked by the family dog and being severely injured or killed. Many times, these are animals that have lived together for years. Normally it will be the pig that starts the problem by going after the dog's food, toys, etc.

Yes, there are exceptions to everything, but do not take the chance. Pot belly pig care, and pet pig care in general, requires different treatments and approaches than other exotic animals or more common pets, like cats and dogs.





## **Pig Size**

Pigs are like people. They have a genetic disposition to become a certain size. Pigs are generally around 120 Lbs. to 275 Lbs. at 4-years-old full grown. There is a misconception that there is a "Tea Cup" "MINI" pig. It is unrealistic to expect a pig to stay tiny and inhumane to underfeed a pig hoping to keep it small. Don't be fooled!

## **Pig Sites**

**NWMPA** - <https://nwpetpigs.org>

**SCAMPP** - <http://scampp.com>

**Teacup Pig info** - <http://www.teacuppig.info>

**North American Potbellied Pig Association** - <http://www.petpigs.com>

**Ross Mill Farms** - <http://www.rossmillfarm.com>

**Pigs 4 Ever** - <http://www.pigs4ever.com>

## **Spay and Neutering:**

All pigs should be neutered. Males are extremely rowdy, smelly and aggressive if not neutered. Females can be aggressive and wander away when in season. The younger this procedure is done the better. Boys can be neutered at 2 weeks of age and up. All boys should be neutered by 5 weeks of age as they become fertile at about that time.

Gilts mature at 3 months or sometimes younger. Spay girls at 4 to 5 months (some vets will spay earlier). A litter of babies can be pregnant before it's weaned. Scary thought!!

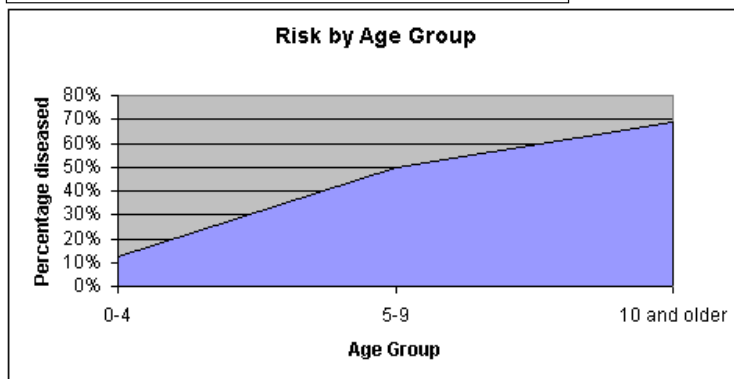
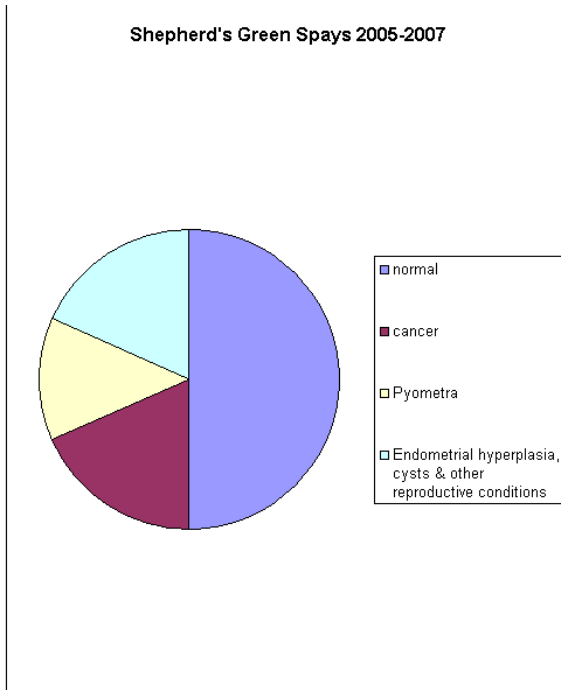
The younger they are done the better. Older girls have a harder time. But spaying is not an optional procedure. Our sanctuary spays have clearly shown that if the girls are not spayed their chances of surviving past 9 or 10 become slim, Cancer and other reproductive diseases take them very young. We have spayed fat pigs and sick pigs and pigs from 3 months to 16 years. We have spayed girls with tumors as large as 30 pounds and cancer that had spread into lymph nodes and other organs. Pigs' ability to recover and live a long life is amazing. Emily, one who had cancer in the lymph nodes and a 28-pound tumor in the uterus, was spayed in 2000. She is quite well today.

9 out of 10 unspayed females will develop cancer and die 5 to 10 years earlier than they should. So, whether you have a boy pig around or not, spay that girl!! There are spay assistance programs available. Contact the sanctuary near you to see what is available in your area.

If you think raising baby pigs would be great, think about all the pigs dumped along the side of the road, "adopted" from Free to good home ads by dog fighting rings who use them as training bait, being turned loose on hunting ranges for target practice, being shot by animal control and all the other horrors for unwanted pigs around the country.

Your pigs, or descendants of them, will end up the same way. If you want a baby pig to raise, go to a sanctuary and adopt one and save its life. And neuter it. Help stop the cycle of homeless pigs before it reaches the proportion of dogs and cats (4 million put to death every year in shelters).

Spay statistics for the period 2005-2007 ytd are below. Don't risk your girl's lives. Many of these spays were pigs who had carried 20 and 30 pound tumors around pressing against their inner organs and causing them great pain for months, maybe years. If you have a pig, spay her immediately and save her the suffering and premature death she can expect unspayed. Uterine disease is the NUMBER one killer of all pigs in the US We can provide information of pre and post-surgical care.



We do hundreds of spay's . We have lost 6 pigs to spaying over the 8 years we have been actively spaying all pigs who enter the sanctuary or who come through us for placements. Consider that 6 against the hundreds that would have been lost if not spayed.

## **Body Language: Aggression**

### **By Pam Munici, NAPPA**

Potbelly and miniature pigs usually start to be aggressive due to inappropriate behavior by their owner. People think having a pet pig is easy, but it requires understanding an animal. Potbelly and miniature pigs might also be aggressive because they protect territory and challenge humans for dominance once they're adults. At nine months of age a pig is an adult and is fully developed sexually.

Pet pigs are herd animals that have a firm pecking order. By pecking order, it means these animals have a hierarchy of status among the members.

For this reason, they can be quite territorial, mostly if they get spoiled by their owners. Further, since they are herd animals, they can be aggressive to unfamiliar people.

They are likely aggressive to guests and even family members they saw for the first time.

Pet pigs can be adorable and sweet pets. Still, it would be best not to spoil them and let them do whatever they want.

Once these animals get spoiled, they even tend to be aggressive to an owner and try to challenge. They also try to take dominance in the area.

As owners, you should train your pet and show dominance starting early from bringing them home. At the same time, please don't spoil them.

How you can tell if your pig is aggressive: Pigs that get aggressive can be quite noticeable. With some gestures and noise, you can quickly tell yourself to be careful with them. First, aggressive pigs have the following gestures:

- Sideway body posture - An aggressive pig faces you sideways, not directly.
- Hackles Up - The hair in their skin starts to turn up as these animals get aggressive.
- Chomping Mouth - Pigs chomp their mouth when they feel angry or aggressive.
- High-Pitched Tones - They make high-pitched tones, not only when they feel threatened, but when they are angry.

These are the early stages of aggression. If it worsens, that's when the biting incident may happen.

The aggressive attitude of pigs comes from territorial instinct. While you can directly prevent it, you can do some things to avoid and control it.

Start when you bring them home. It is essential to train these animals. Although it's quite tempting to spoil them, it would be best to apply discipline. Spoiling them will make them aggressive as they grow older.

The reason is that once they become adults, and they grow up spoiled, they tend to do things their way.

If you want to correct this, start by disciplining them for doing bad things. Ignoring them and separating them into another room by themselves would be your best bet. Avoid touching them and giving a treat, at the same time, talk silently. If they display terrible behavior again, repeat the process and leave them alone.

After some time of training, your pet will eventually learn how to behave well.

Conclusion: Indeed, potbelly and miniature pigs are fascinating and sweet pets. To prevent aggression do not spoil your pig.

## **Weight: How To Weigh Your Pet Pig Without a Scale**

If you cannot get your pot belly pig on a scale, you can still weigh her by using the formula below. You will need a measuring tape similar to those used by tailors. The formula is not exact, but it comes within about three percent of the actual weight. The formula is as follows:

**1. Girth Measurement:** Take the heart-girth measurement. Your measuring tape needs to go around the body just behind the front legs and over the shoulder area. As an example for you I will use the measurements of Flower. Her girth measurement is 43 inches.

**2. Square the result:** (Multiply the measurement by itself). Example: The measurement was 43 inches.  $43 \times 43 = 1,849$ .

**3. Length Measurement:** Measure the length of your pig. Start at the top of his or her head right in between the ears and measure down to the start, or base, of the tail (not the end of the tail). Flower's length is 39 inches.

**4. Girth Result X Length:** Take the girth measurement result (in the example above this was 1,849) and multiply that times the length of your pig. In our example this would be:  $1,849 \times 39 = 72,111$ .

**5. Weight Calculation:** Divide this result by 400, and you'll have a weight accurate to within about three percent. In our example:  $72,111 \text{ divided by } 400 = 180 \text{ pounds}$ . Factoring in the 3% variance (5.4 pounds), this means Flower weighs between 174.6 and 185.4 pounds.

*Credit for this formula goes to the Old Farmer's Almanac 1993*

## **Free Veggies**

Send E-mail to: [pattyrocs@msn.com](mailto:pattyrocs@msn.com)

**I get these kinds of veggies everyday! 1-2 cases FREE!!!**



Wombok



Baby Bok Choy



Baby Choy Sum



Chinese Broccoli



Egg Plant



Choy Sum



Kang Kong



Lotus Root



Pak Choy



Gai Choy

Put wet feed on pig's veggies to make more palatable for them to eat.





## **Walking Pens**

### **Idea Invented by Dr. Cole, Illustrated By Out To Pasture Sanctuary**

We have been using walking pens to move pigs for nearly twenty years. It's the kindest, safest way to keep pigs calm when transport is necessary.

Walking pens are made from cutting up a hog panel and clipping it together to make a portable pen. One side can be unclipped to get the pig inside and then reclipped.

We have seen people chase and try to tackle pigs. Pigs are easily stressed and can actually die from stress. Treats and a walking pen is the way to go.



See a video using a "Walking Pen" here:  
<https://www.facebook.com/OTPSanctuary/videos>



## **Video Links**

### **Patty Hill's Training Videos on YouTube:**

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCinMwgCM1qPTvLpBbnI50vw>

### **Out to Pasture's Hoof & Tusk Trim Video:**

<https://fb.watch/xMP2YIAp8Q/>

### **Burnie's last real show:**

<https://youtu.be/CH1YARXf5zw>

### **Spray & Rub Training -1:**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dcRfgrs60PE>

### **Spray & Rub Training -2:**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hTrc8UBnKwc>

### **Burnie & Peni Daily Routine**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WuSB6GKOT3s>

## **Product Links**

**Completely Fresh:** <https://healthypigs.com/product/completely-fresh/>

**DeOdorase:** <https://healthypigs.com/product/deodorase/>

**Better Hooves & Coat:** <https://healthypigs.com/product/better-hooves-coat/>

**Cytra-Med:** <https://healthypigs.com/product/cytra-med/>

**So-Soft Hair Moisturizer:** <https://healthypigs.com/product/so-soft-hair-moisturizer/>

**Ultra Shampoo:** <https://healthypigs.com/product/ultra-shampoo/>

**Micro-Mist:** <https://healthypigs.com/product/micro-mist/>

**Esprea Aloe Conditioning Spray:** <https://a.co/d/bMpCMuj>

**Spring Valley Biotin 5,000 mcg Soft-gels for Hair/Skin/Hooves:**

<https://a.co/d/4og3hCD>

## **Patty's Pig Depot**

**For purchase or info on any of the following items please contact:  
Patty Hill @ 503-253-8768 or E-Mail: [pattyrocs@msn.com](mailto:pattyrocs@msn.com)**

**If you don't see what you need on the list, just ask - I might have it or I can find it for you**

- NWMPA Club Info: *Club Membership, Pay Dues, Upcoming Events* - \$20.00 year
- NWMPA Tee Shirts: *Promote the club!* - \$12.00 - \$15.00
- NWMPA Window Stickers: *Promote the club!* - \$1.00 members/\$3.00 non-member
- Pig Harness & Leads: *New and used available* - \$22.00 - \$33.00
- Pig Harness Pads: *Colors to match harness* - \$10.00
- Razor Rollers: *Keep your pig busy!* - \$8.00
- NWMPA Fundraiser Tickets: *Current club fundraiser project* - *Varies*
- Northwest Mini Pig Feed - Formerly "Dr. Cole's Mini Pig Feed" - \$45.00 for a 50 lb. Bag (**\*\*SEE BELOW FOR LOCATIONS!\*\***)
- Potbellied Pig Parenting Handbook: *Written by Nancy Shepherd* - \$17.00 members/\$20.00 non-member
- Nancy Snack's: *Tasty Pig Snacks and Training Aids* - \$10.00
- Shake training Jars - \$1.00
- Tips on Pig Training - Free!
- Kennels/Ramps on Request: *Local locating Service, Sometimes in Stock* - Depend on size/Ramps \$45.00 - \$50.00
- Dry Skin Products Many to Choose from - Prices Vary/Sunscreen- \$8.50/Hoof Trimmers-\$6.00
- Children's Chewable Vitamins "Swanson without iron" - \$10.00

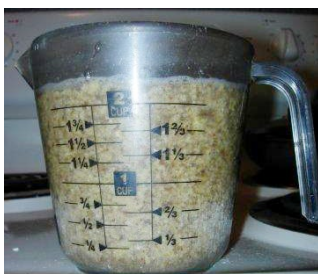
### **Northwest Mini Pig Feed - Premium Feed For Your Pet Pig**

#### **Available at These Locations:**

**More info Here: <https://nwminipigfeed.com>**

- Hillsboro, OR: "Pacific Pets" - 503-336-0092
- Mulino, OR: "Union Mills Feed" - 503-829-2386
- Portland, OR: "Foster Feed & Garden" - 503-777-2967
- Portland, OR: Patty Hill - 503-253-8768
- Oregon City, OR: Alyssa Ledesma - 503-462-5809
- Beaverton, OR: "Western Pet Supply" - 503-297-6644
- Salem, OR: "Pet Etc." - 503-375-3573

**\*delivery available to club meetings and vet clinics\***



This is how I feed after 8 months of age, it still can be different depending on the pig: 3/4 cup Northwest Mini Pig Feed twice daily, add really warm tap water, and add veggies/greens.

**Northwest Mini Pig Feed** is the best for dry skin/hooves and male urinary tracks, you can give a 1000 mg fish oil two a day, after 9 months of age Childs chewable Vitamin. **without** iron once a day, but if your pig is over 8 years old you can give them an adult over 50 years of age vitamin, but not gummies. Avon Skin so Soft bath oil sprayed on the skin but you really have to dilute it, maybe a half inch of oil in the bottom of a 24 oz. spray bottle and the rest water make sure you shake it up before you use it every time. You can also give at one year of age "One Biotin 5,000 mcg Daily for Skin/Hair/Hooves" Any brand will do! Mix in with wet feeding in the morning White pigs will get sun burned very easy, so you need to get sunscreen. Check out the links on **Page 18** for more skin products!

### **Pig's Age to Human Age**

Veterinarians have established a correlation table (**age chart**) to see an equivalence in human age:

<b><u>HUMAN AGE</u></b>	<b><u>PIG'S AGE</u></b>
<b>1</b>	18
<b>2</b>	22
<b>3</b>	26
<b>4</b>	30
<b>5</b>	34
<b>6</b>	38
<b>7</b>	42
<b>8</b>	46
<b>9</b>	50
<b>10</b>	54
<b>11</b>	58
<b>12</b>	62
<b>13</b>	66
<b>14</b>	70
<b>15</b>	74
<b>16</b>	78
<b>17</b>	82
<b>18</b>	86
<b>19</b>	90
<b>20</b>	94

### **Pigs With Other Animals**

Do you have other companion animals? If so, what types? Please make a note of this, potbellied pigs SHOULD NOT be housed with chickens, ducks, horses, goats, sheep, dogs or any other animals, but other potbellied pigs! **Cats are ok!**

## **Vets That Treat Potbelly Pigs (updated April 2025)**

*DISCLAIMER: Word of Mouth Only, you must do your own background check. These references have been recommended by various potbellied pig owners who have used them. Not all NWMPA Members, NWMPA Officers nor NWMPA Board Members can verify their level of expertise in treating potbellied pigs. Ask the Vet for pricing and if they will disclose referrals of potbellied pig owners he or she has had as clients; ask if you can contact the clients. It might be helpful to also check YELP REVIEWS for vets you plan to use.*

**Northwest Mobile Vet**, Dr. Blake DVM, Tel: 503-765-6702, Fax-855-526-4278

E-Mail: [drblakemiller@northwestmobilevet.com](mailto:drblakemiller@northwestmobilevet.com)

Website: <https://www.northwestmobilevet.com>

**All Animal Care Clinic**, 1691 Tucker Rd, Hood River, OR, Tel: 541-386-5735

Website: <https://allanimalhoodriver.com>

**Amazia Vet Clinic**, 12303 NE 152nd St, Brush Prairie, WA 98606, Tel: 360-892-7527

Website: <https://amaziavet.com>

**Crater Animal Clinic**, 665 E. Vilas Rd, Central Point, OR 97502, Tel: 541-779-0951

Fax: 541-779-6498

Website: <https://crateranimalclinic.com>

E-Mail: [crateranimalclinic@yahoo.com](mailto:crateranimalclinic@yahoo.com)

**H&H Veterinary Care**, Dr. Sharleen Henery, 680 Tyler St, Eugene, OR 97402

Tel: (541) 343-3419, Fax: (541) 343-3695

E-Mail: [handhvet@gmail.com](mailto:handhvet@gmail.com)

Website: <https://handhvetcare.com>

**Parkway Animal Hospital**, 2655 NW Edenbower Blvd, Roseburg, OR 97471

Phone: 541-672-1621, Website: <https://parkwayanimalhospitalweb.com>

**Redmond Vet Clinic**, Dr. Terry Cassee DVM, 1785 N. Hwy 97, Redmond, OR 97756

Tel: 541-548-1048

Website: <https://www.redmondvetclinic.com>

**South Clackamas Veterinary Services**, 206 Shaver Ave, Molalla, OR 97038

Tel: 503-829-4428

No farm calls (but they do see potbellies in their office)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/southclackamasvet>

**Stayton Veterinary Hospital**, 1308 North First Ave, Stayton, OR 97383

Tel: 503-769-7387 (PETS)

Website: <https://www.staytonveterinary.com>

**Twin Pines Animal Hospital**, Dr. Liz Hardy DVM Shore Line, WA, Tel: 425-677-3139

E-Mail: [info@twinpinesanimal.com](mailto:info@twinpinesanimal.com)

Website: <https://twinpinesanimal.com>

***If you have had a good experience with a that treats potbellied pigs, please let us know.***

## **Diseases That Pigs Can Catch From Close Proximity To Chickens:** **Leptospirosis and Salmonella**

**Leptospirosis** (also known as **field fever**, **rat catcher's yellows**, and **pretibial fever** among other names) is an infection caused by bacteria of the *Leptospira* type. Symptoms can range from none to mild such as headaches, muscle pains, and fevers to severe with bleeding from the lungs or meningitis. If the infection causes the person to turn yellow, have kidney failure and bleeding it is then known as **Weil's disease**. If it causes lots of bleeding from the lungs it is known as **severe pulmonary hemorrhage syndrome**.

There are ten different types of *Leptospira* that cause disease in humans. It is transmitted by both wild and domestic animals. The most common animals that spread the disease are rodents. It is often transmitted by animal urine or water containing animal urine coming into contact with breaks in the skin, the eyes, mouth, nose or vagina. In the developing world the disease most commonly occurs in farmers and poor people who live in cities. In the developed world it most commonly occurs in those involved in outdoor activities in warm and wet areas of the world. Diagnosis is by growing the bacteria from a blood sample, finding its DNA in the blood, or looking for antibodies against the infection.

Efforts to prevent the disease include protective equipment to prevent contact when working with potentially infected animals, washing after this contact, and reducing rodents in areas people live and work. The antibiotic doxycycline, when used in an effort to prevent infection among travelers, is of unclear benefit. Vaccines for animals exist for certain type of *Leptospira* which may decrease the risk of spread to humans. Treatment if infected is with antibiotics such as: doxycycline, penicillin, or ceftriaxone. Weil's disease and severe pulmonary hemorrhage syndrome result in death rates greater than 10% and 50%, respectively, even with treatment.

It is estimated that seven to ten million people are infected by Leptospirosis a year. The number of deaths this causes is not clear. The disease is most common in tropical areas of the world but may occur anywhere. Outbreaks may occur in slums of the developing world. The disease was first described by Weil in 1886 in Germany. Animals who are infected may have no symptoms, mild symptoms, or severe symptoms. Symptoms may vary by the type of animal.

**Salmonella** is a genus of rod-shaped, Gram-negative bacteria. There are only two species of *Salmonella*, *Salmonella bongori* and *Salmonella enterica*, of which there are around six subspecies and innumerable serovars. The genus belongs to the same family as *Escherichia*, which includes the species *E.coli*. *Salmonellae* are found worldwide in both cold-blooded and warm-blooded animals, and in the environment. They cause illnesses such as typhoid fever, paratyphoid fever, and food poisoning.

*Salmonella* are non-spore-forming, predominantly motile enterobacteria with diameters around 0.7 to 1.5  $\mu\text{m}$ , lengths from 2 to 5  $\mu\text{m}$ , and peritrichous flagella (flagella that are all around the cell body). They are chemoorganotrophs, obtaining their energy from oxidation and reduction reactions using organic sources, and are facultative anaerobes.

The story of the term *Salmonella* starts in 1885 with the discovery of the bacterium *Salmonella enterica* (var. *Choleraesuis*) by medical research scientist Theobald Smith. At the time Theobald was working as a research laboratory assistant in the Veterinary Division of the United States Department of Agriculture. The department was under the administration of Daniel Elmer Salmon, a veterinary pathologist, and that is for whom the *Salmonella* was named.

During the search for the cause of hog cholera it was proposed that the causal agent be named *Salmonella*. While it happened eventually that *Salmonella* did not cause that cholera (its enteric pathogen was actually a virus), it turned out that all species of the bacterial genus *Salmonella* cause infectious diseases. In 1900 J. Lignières re-adopted the name for the many subspecies of *Salmonella*, after Smith's first type-strain *Salmonella cholera*.



# **Arthritis**

by Dr. Kristi Mozzachio

Classic “hunched” posture of an arthritic pig



**1. Incidence:** Arthritis appears to be extremely common and likely will become the number one reason to euthanize an otherwise healthy, older pig. Potbellies, although not bred and fed to gain size rapidly, still seem to suffer from the osteochondrosis dissecans (OCD) problems recognized in commercial swine. Conformation likely plays a role – even a normal pig carries a large amount of weight on short, thin legs, and common “backyard breeding” garners poor conformation to make matters worse. Nutrition can also play a role, with deficiencies and/or obesity resulting from inappropriate diet. Insufficient hoof care, previous traumatic injury, slippery surfaces (such as linoleum or tile) are other factors that may exacerbate the problem.

**2. Clinical Signs:** In an older pig, difficulty rising in the morning, often with atypical vocalization (“crying”), may be the first sign observed by the owner. Initially, the pig seems to “warm out of” the stiffness and can walk better after moving around for a bit. This progresses to difficulty rising and lying every time. As the arthritis worsens, the pig may assume an unusual hunched over position, appearing as if it is having difficulty using the bathroom. The pig may also drop to his knees more often or frequently limp. Ultimately, a significant decrease in activity is noted – the pig doesn’t move around to lie in the sun anymore, doesn’t wander off to graze, doesn’t root as much, lies down to eat meals rather than standing at the bowl.

**3. Diagnostics:** Diagnostics are similar to those used in other animals. History is important, and owner perceptions are often correct. Although the problem generally starts subtly, the pig usually has obvious difficulties by the time the veterinarian is called. An orthopedic examination such as that performed on a dog is generally not feasible; a pig will not allow itself to be placed on its side while bones and joints are examined, range of motion tested, etc. Radiographs (x-rays) can be performed to assess the degree of damage to the joints. However, the findings on an x-ray won’t necessarily correlate with the severity of the problem. For example, a seemingly normal pig may have obvious abnormalities on an x-ray, even though they are not showing signs.

**4. Treatment:** Treatment options include those used for dogs and/or humans, and dosages are usually derived from information in these species. Glucosamine or chondroitin sulfate dietary supplements are a good idea for pigs of any age and are available at local drug or grocery stores as well as from your veterinarian. These supplements help to keep joints healthy and slow down the degenerative process but are not pain relievers – so an obvious improvement may not be observed in an arthritic pig.

Carprofen (Rimadyl®) & etodolac (Etogesic®) are pain relievers/anti-inflammatory drugs commonly used in dogs and appear to work well in pigs for relieving arthritis pain. Recently, a new product called meloxicam (Metacam®) has become available in a honey-flavored liquid that may be better tolerated in finicky patients. Alter medications as needed – dry, hot weather may not require medication or may allow reduction in dose and the opposite holds true for cold, damp conditions. Note: Although these pain medications may be given along with glucosamine/chondroitin sulfate supplements, they should not be given with any other type of pain medication (such as aspirin, ibuprofen, Ascriptin, etc.). Potential side effects include GI upset, nausea, vomiting, or stomach ulcers, but these are very uncommon.

Other suggestions: Hoof trims may need to be performed more frequently (every 3-5 months, rather than once or twice a year). Maintenance of a reasonable body weight is essential as is appropriate footing (dirt, carpet, rubber mats). Avoid stairs or inclines.

Results? Some pigs have managed well for years. Others may develop fused joints – these pigs do not maneuver as well but seem to be free of pain. Others will eventually develop severe pain and a poor quality of life as a result, and owners elect euthanasia. Assume arthritis is in the future of any pet pig and inform owners about appropriate diet, exercise, weight management, hoof care, and dietary supplements such as glucosamine.

### **Additional Information from CPPA:**

Presently many of our members are giving their potbellied pigs 1/2 to 1 oz daily of a product called "Next Level®" equine joint fluid as a source of glucosamine and MSM. This is as a general joint treatment whether signs of arthritis are present or not, and is available at most feed stores or through the Internet.

If arthritis is present, we have found that long term use of Rimadyl® (Carprofen-a non-steroidal anti-inflammatory) works well on potbellied pigs without the side effects often associated with its use in dogs. We have also recently switched from Rimadyl® to Deramaxx® with great success. We switched at our vets suggestion as he felt that after 5 or more years on Rimadyl® a different drug might be more effective. The only problems we saw in the switch is that you have to remove them from the Rimadyl® for a few days before starting the Deramaxx®. In that few days we saw a noticeable decline in our pigs health (which told us that the Rimadyl® had been working). Within a few days of starting the Deramaxx® our pig had fully recovered from the change and was better than he had been after 5 years on Rimadyl®.

If additional pain relief appears to be necessary, we have had success with the addition of up to 400mg of Tramadol® (hydrochloride tablets-centrally acting analgesic for pain). Consult your veterinarian before using either Rimadyl®, Deramaxx® or Tramadol® as these drugs require a prescription.

Many veterinarians have started prescribing Prednisone® (sometimes spelled Predizone) (a synthetic corticosteroidal) instead of Rimadyl® or Deramaxx® with good results. Another veterinarian has prescribed chewable Previcox® 227mg as a pain relief and

anti-inflammatory drug with good results. These drugs are not advised for pigs with infections (tusk, teeth, chin abscesses, masses, etc.), as they might cause the infections to grow and spread. Again always seek medical advice before using any of these prescription drugs on your potbellied pig.

*Note: If arthritis medications prescribed by your veterinarian do not seem to be having any effect, the problem may be something other than a arthritis such as a bone or joint infection. These infections can be treated with certain antibiotics. However, a veterinarian may be required to do x-rays or bone scans to get a proper diagnosis. These infections are not uncommon in potbellied pigs and can exhibit the same symptoms as arthritis.*

*Additional supplements that have been recommended are "B-L Solution®", an equine vitamin B-12 supplement available at most feed stores. There have also been reports of good results from the use of (DE) diatomaceous earth as a feed additive.*

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## **Stairs versus Ramps**

[http://www.pigs4ever.com/pot\\_belly\\_pig\\_information/stairs\\_versus\\_ramps.php](http://www.pigs4ever.com/pot_belly_pig_information/stairs_versus_ramps.php)

### **Stairs/Jumping**

Yes, pigs can do stairs. At least younger pigs can. Carpeted stairs are the best for them. Make sure they have plenty of good lighting to see and there is no rush or bickering at the steps if you have more than one pig.

Personally, I don't like steps at all. If a pig is midsize and not overweight, they may be able to do it okay. But if they are 'weight challenged' they will not be able to see well. Remember: Their eyesight is not the best in the world to begin with. Steps that are 6-7 inches deep may look like a canyon to them. Also, stairs can eventually cause leg and joint problems for the pig as it gets older. So, your pig may be able to do stairs when young, but will not be able to when she gets older.

Doing steps can put an enormous stress on their joints, which can produce hairline-size cracks at the elbow joints. Those little cracks can sometimes make the pig lose footing and fall to one side often resulting in a pinched nerve. This could be temporary, if you are lucky, or it could cause permanent damage.

Pot belly pig's skin is so tight it compresses the pinched area and when the nerve gets pinched it will generally swell up in that area. This is very painful for the pig. This is another reason you should not let or encourage your pig to jump off and on furniture. Not only could they end up with a pinched nerve, they might end up with a broken leg or back. This has happened many times before and is very sad.

When Ziggy and Flower were younger and a bit smaller, they loved going upstairs and getting into trouble. Well, when Flower would come down the steps she would almost every time skip the last step and jump to the floor below. We were very lucky and there were no pinched nerves or broken bones here. We no longer have to worry about them going upstairs. They have decided on their own not to do them and we don't even have to gate it off when we leave the house.

Bottom line: Pigs are not really made for jumping or climbing stairs (they do not jump or climb stairs in the wild). Try not to encourage this, particularly if they are adult pigs.

## Ramps

This is the front of our house where Ziggy and Flower must come in and out. The one to the left is the one Ziggy uses. Flower will use either one.



To get in and out of our house here there are two steps that surround the front door. To the right is a picture as it is hard to explain. We have two ramps now as sometimes Ziggy isn't fast enough for Flower and they both get to the ramp at the same time. This is a recipe for an accident, ergo the two ramps. They are not fancy, but made nice and strong, which is good as Ziggy will freak if the ramp moves just a millimeter.

I highly recommend that if your pig must go up and down a few steps to get in and out of the house that you build a ramp. Teach them now while they are young and get them used to it. They might also need a ramp to get in and out of your car.

The most important thing to remember when buying or building a ramp is to make it sturdy. Flower isn't too bad if it moves (bounces) a little, but Ziggy will not get on it if it moves or bows at all. If it does that, that's it. They need to feel secure on the ramp. Our ramps are wood, hand-made and very heavy. You can either make your own or buy one. If you choose to buy one check places like Home Depot. Someone once recommended the RC Steele catalog. These are usually for dogs and may not hold the heavier pigs. Make it as fancy or simple as you want. Just make it sturdy. You can try putting some carpet on it, non-slip tape, diving board materials or slats.

When first training your pig to use the ramp just lay it flat on the ground and get your pig used to walking on it. Teach a command, such as "up ramp," "down ramp." Keep it simple.

Some recommend treats only when the pig has reached the top or bottom of the ramp. We taught our pigs by putting a treat every few slats and then rewarding at the top and bottom. Once they were comfortable doing the ramp we stopped putting treats on the slats and only rewarded at the top or bottom of the ramp.

If you stop using the ramp for an extended period of time you may have to retrain your pig. Never punish him for this. He will only regress. There were a couple of years when we used to take trips that we had to retrain Ziggy and Flower to use the ramp in and out of the car. This is because we wouldn't take them anywhere during the winter. Then come spring we were ready to go again, and they weren't. They just had to get used to doing it at such an incline again.



**Below are a few more photos of ramp usage:**



This is Ziggy coming out of our vehicle and down the ramp. We always had to retrain him after each winter.



This is Seamus using his ramp up into the van. It has just a little carpeting on it to help with any sliding.





Seamus would get so excited when he figured it out again and would go up and down with ease, for treats of course!



Here we have Porgy and Bess with their mom Sandy. They are going up the folding ramp that their dad made just for them.

The information presented within our information and resources section has been collected from what we consider experts and various reputable persons including vets, sanctuary owners, and private pig owners among others. Information shown is the latest available. Although we have had pet pigs for 20 years and consider ourselves quite knowledgeable, we are by no means veterinarians. Any health-related information presented below should be checked out with your personal veterinarian.

## **Hoof Trimming/Tusk Trimming/Trimming Tools Needed**

### **Introduction:**

Always have your pig in a confined area with crowding boards handy, straddle the pig and grab behind the front legs like giving him a hug, lean back and a person will put a chair behind you so you can sit, at the same time there will be a stool being put under the pig's butt, lean back in the chair so the pig is leaning back with you; this makes it easier on your back! When the hoof trim is finished, lean to one side just a bit and put the pig down easy. Have 4 people to help: a holder, the person that's doing the hooves, a person to hold the nose, and a person to put the chair under the holder and the stool under the pig's butt, make sure the pig's tail isn't bent on the stool. Never pull or grab legs!

***This is how we "Hold Pigs" We call it "The Cole Hold."***





***These are the tools I use for trimming hooves.***



***Pig Holding Stuff Needed.***

Folding Chair Plastic Stool 2-Old Towels

- 1) Chair is for the holder
- 2) Stool is for the pig's butt to sit on
- 3) 2-old towels: 1- is for the pig's snout--the other is for the top of the stool
- 4) Please don't hold or grab pig's legs

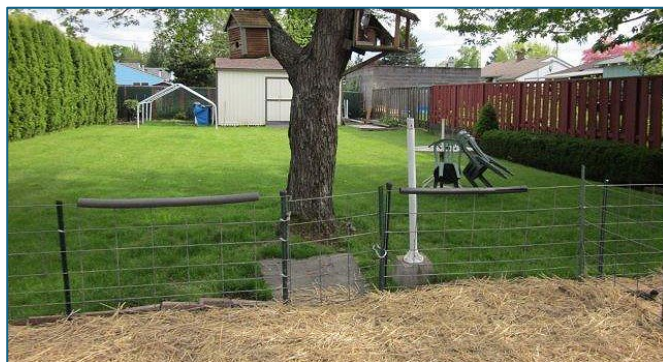


***Brush and hoof trimmers I sell,  
both work great!  
Brush:\$2, Hoof Trimmers: \$6***

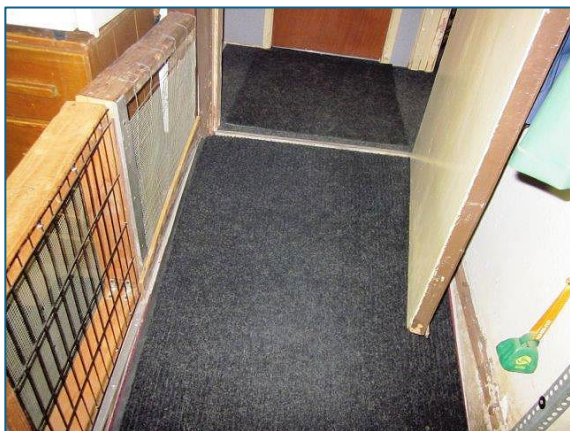




## Outdoor Pig Area Ideas



## House Ramp Ideas





## Hog Panel Fencing/Gate Ideas





## **Training Your Pig**

A well-trained pig is a happy pig. If you have children that might be challenged by your pig, have them teach the pig a trick. With supervision from you in the background of course.

Step in and anticipate what your pig may do and be ready to say "NO!" repeatedly. Say "NO" in a firm, strong voice, but not screaming. Push him by the shoulders to the side and divert him from his intent. This is how two pigs normally fight. They push each other around from the side at the shoulders.

Another way to push them backwards is by grabbing them near the top of the neck behind their ears with your hand in the shape of a "C" and pushing. In other words, imagine your hand around a large mug, with your thumb on one side and your index finger (and other fingers) on the other side. That is how your hand will look on the pig's neck. You do NOT squeeze the neck, just a firm grip and you push the pig backwards. This is a very effective method.

Try clapping your hands. You are communicating that this is not allowed behavior. Break the behavior when you see it forming in their minds. Yes, there are times when you can see them thinking/getting ready to charge. Also keep in mind that some pigs are more territorial or assertive than others.

Try changing the tone in your voice. Sometimes a simple change in the tone of your voice can work.

A sorting board or trash-can lid works good too. A sorting board is usually just a piece of plywood with holes cut out for hand grips. You hold the board in front of you like a shield, as you make the pig go backwards a few strides. This will give you some security and confidence while dealing with your pig, and a non-aggressive way to back the pig out of his space. The trash-can lid also works well. Plastic is best.

Some pig owners have also found that stamping your feet hard and as you do this, it seems to give a very clear message to the pig that you are serious, and not to be messed with.

Any of the above suggestions will work. You just need to find the one that works best for you and your situation. Make sure that the person being challenged is the one attempting the correction. Even a child can do many of these techniques with the proper instruction.

If the situation happens that you feel visitors are in jeopardy of your pet and the pet is not hitting it off well, then we suggest you put them in their own spot for everyone's safety. A small room or, when the weather is good, an outdoor area. The best would be a room where they can go and not be disturbed. Hopefully that will not have to be the case, but at least you know they have a safe place for them if the case arises. This is for everyone's protection, including the pig. A place where they can still see and hear what is going on would be ideal.

### **A Biting Pig**

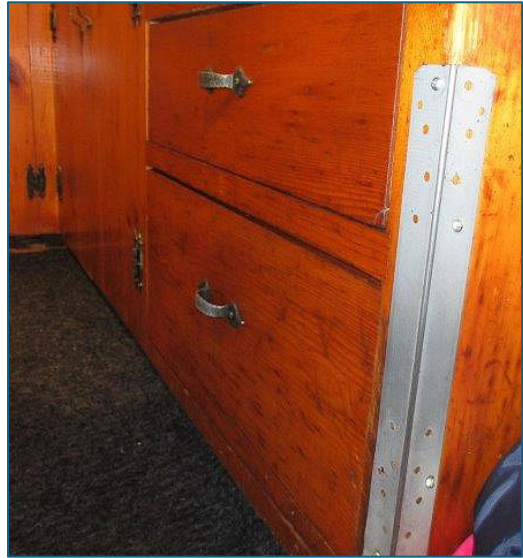
Most times when the pig is a biter, it is not their fault, but ours. This happens because we are constantly giving or offering food without making them work for it. Other than their meals, they should only be given a treat when it is earned, not because you happened to go into the kitchen!

If you have a pig that is biting or nipping stop ALL food by hand. Treats MUST be earned, and it must be placed on the ground or in their bowl. They will not be happy campers at first, but this does work and must be kept up. If you let up and they see an opportunity, believe us they will take advantage of it and you will have to start all over again.

For those of you with new pigs, offer treats from a flat hand with the treat sticking up between two fingers. This teaches them to use their lips and not their teeth.

## **Pig Damage**

We fixed the booth. Some of this is before and after. Ideas how to protect your house before it happens! ~ by *Patty Hill*





## **My Pigs: Burnie and Peni**

Went for a ride and a walk at my parent's condo.





