



LGD guide Gorkhi Terej Park

How to Raise Your Livestock Bankhar

Following these instructions will ensure that your Bankhar becomes a reliable livestock guardian dog. If you do not follow these instructions closely, your Bankhar may become aggressive towards humans and livestock, and your Bankhar may neglect the livestock and not be able to protect the herd from predators. These methods are based on old Mongolian traditions, as well as practices taken from cultures that have been using Livestock Guardian Dogs for thousands of years.

If your Bankhar bonds with the livestock, it will happily and faithfully protect them for its entire life. It is important to remember that, if raised properly, your Bankhar will become a “working” dog, not a pet or guard dog. It will instinctively protect the herd, and will need very little monitoring once it is fully matured. However, for the first 2 years after you receive your dog, a lot of attention to behavior is necessary for it to become the reliable dog that will faithfully protect your livestock from wolves, bears, eagles, and other predators. Included here are instructions on feeding, correcting bad behavior, and socializing the dog to people.

If you are in the South Gobi Aimag, you may not always use your Hashaa or have one at all. Generally we ask that herders use their hashaa to keep the pup situated near the livestock. Obviously if you do not use the hashaa this will not work. So instead we will ask that you either move livestock into your hashaa each night and then place your Bankhar in the hashaa with them. Or we will have to create some kind of pen that can be placed amongst your herd where they sleep. That way your Bankhar will remain with the livestock through the night until it learns to sleep there.

General **do** and **don't** practices for a LGD

- 1.** Your Bankhar must be kept with your **livestock all day and night for their entire life**. This ensures that they will become bonded with your livestock rather than becoming bonded with people or the ger
- 2.** Training is **best done** by telling the dog he or she has done **something RIGHT**. Do not only correct bad behaviors, but reward good behaviors with kind words and a touch on the shoulder.
- 3.** **Never tie or chain up** the dog except for emergencies. However your LGD will not be aggressive to strangers visiting your ger if raised correctly
- 4.** **Never physically (forcefully) hit** your dog, and never throw things directly at the dog with the intent to hit it. There are ways to correct your dog without resorting to this behavior.
- 5.** **Never feed the dog near the ger**. Always feed the dog when it is in the pasture with the sheep, or in the hashaa with the sheep. Otherwise it will leave the herd and return to the ger whenever it is hungry.



- 6. Do not pet or play with your dog too often.** It is not a pet and needs to be treated like a working dog. Praise it for good behavior and touch and pet a couple times a day, but then everyone goes back to work. If you do pet it, make sure it is only when it is with the sheep. Otherwise your LGD will leave the herd and go over to people when it feels like playing. After 4 years of age you can relax this rule as the dog will now know its job very well.
- 7. Keep your Bankhar from interacting with non-Bankhar** so that it does not learn unwanted behaviors. For example, always feed your ger dogs separately near the ger, and feed your livestock guardian Bankhar with the livestock. To keep your livestock guardian Bankhar from learning bad behaviors, use verbal and physical correction if the dogs begin to play with each other, or if the ger dog is distracting the Bankhar from its duties. To prevent your LGD from learning bad habits from your ger dog you must teach it that it is not a playmate. This will involve correcting them when they play, verbal commands and rock throwing near dog, but DO NOT HIT the dog as you will cause it to resent you and fear you. Your LGD must see other dogs as just part of the herd or another working dog. We would like it to ignore the ger dog and take a watchful eye. Deter any and all interaction between your dogs.
- 8. Your Bankhar must follow the herd, not you.** If your dog follows you to herd but does not stay with the animals. It will need to be kept in a temporary pen within the center of the herd and the pen will need to be moved throughout the day to stay with herd.. Each time it strays from the herd it needs to be put back in the pen and praised with positive voice and touch to shoulder. DO NOT punish the dog for leaving as dog love any attention, even bad attention. Punishing like this actually teaches the dog to leave the herd.

Common Bankhar Behaviors

A mature working Bankhar will show the signs of bonding to stock that we list below. If raised correctly we hope your dog will choose to spend all of it's time with the livestock, whether it is in the middle of the herd or watching over the herd from a vantage point. They also tend to patrol the perimeter, hide within the herd, or watch from a distance. These are all normal behaviors of all Livestock Guardian Dogs like your Bankhar. It is not uncommon for your Bankhar to come to you for appraisal or to say hi but they should prefer the herd and be reluctant to leave them. Another common behavior is chasing away livestock that do not belong to your herd. If wild sheep or sheep from another herd wander into your herds grazing area, you may find your Bankhar barking at them to chase them off. This behavior may also occur with horses, cattle and strangers. Pay attention to your Bankhar and they will give you early warnings of a possible threat. If you find your Bankhar has not returned to the Hashaa, it's possible it is out protecting an injured, stuck or pregnant animal. These are an intelligent breed and you should trust their instincts. If you raise them correctly and allow them to do their job they will happily and faithfully return the favor by protecting your herd. Also know that dogs are known to



*eat the afterbirth, lick wounds of other animals and maybe even eat a stock that has been killed by a predator. Pay careful attention and don't jump to conclusions if you think your dog has killed your animal- this almost NEVER happens. If it is well fed it will have no reason to kill one of your livestock. When introducing new livestock, keep a close eye on the interaction between the new animals and the Bankhar. A Bankhar may reject the new stock if not introduced with you around. **Remember.... Praise, not punish.***



Signs that the pup is bonding to livestock

This is good behavior that you can reward your pup for. If you observe this kind of behavior, your dog is on its way to becoming a good Bankhar. If it is not showing these signs, make sure you are following the instructions and take extra care not to introduce anything but livestock to the pup.

1. **Pup stays with livestock** instead of running and avoiding them (play should not be rough, and pup should be submissive).
2. **Pup is licking faces** of livestock.
3. If there is **disturbance, pup will run to livestock** rather than running away. (it is okay for the pup to run away if it is chasing after a predator)
4. The **pup is docile and submissive to the livestock**. Submissive behaviors include; tail down and ears back (calm state), licking faces, rolling over to expose belly or side (very good sign of submission).
5. The **pup is reluctant to leave** the herd.
6. **Pup stays with livestock, patrols** the area they are feeding in and **is alert** to signs of danger.
7. **Pup may walk in front of herd** – the dog is patrolling area the sheep want to move into. Sheep may look like they are following, but really the dog is reading the sheep's wants
8. Often a livestock guardian Bankhar will remain with sheep that stray away from the rest of the herd because of pregnancy or injury. If your herd returns to the hashaa but your *Bankhar* has not, there is a good chance it is with a lone member of the herd.

Undesirable behavior that needs correcting

Below this list, you will find instructions on how to correct your pup's undesirable behaviors.

1. **Pup is chasing livestock.**
2. **Pup is biting livestock.**
3. **Pup is pulling wool.**
4. **Pup is jumping on livestock (unless they small pups are sleeping on the warm sheep which is fine)**
5. **Pup is following people rather than the herd.**
6. **Pup is trying to sleep near the ger rather than with the herd.**
7. **Pup is trying to dig out of play pen or corral to get to people or to get away from livestock (digging out to be with sheep is fine)**
8. **Any type of harassment of the livestock.**

How to correct undesirable behavior



Always perform these corrections immediately after the dog performs the unwanted action. If you wait more than a minute, the dog will not associate the correction with the action it just performed, and will learn nothing. The aim in correcting is to startle the puppy and deter it from using the bad behavior; using these means of correcting too often, or unnecessarily, can create an aggressive and disobedient dog.

1. **1 Praise is worth 20 corrections**
2. **DO NOT hit your dog** or throw objects directly at the dog.
3. **Always use the same term** to correct the dog, so the dog associates this term with bad behavior and punishment. For example, “NO!!!” “HEY!!!” “OUSH!!!” “SHHT!!!”. You can clap once hard and loud. You can also use a noise maker, such as a can full of rocks, instead of shouting. To correct the pup from a distance, toss/throw a can of rocks near the pup to stop the behavior, but do not hit the dog with the can. Just land it close enough to the dog to startle it.
4. A firm and quick touch to the neck along with a verbal **correction** can deter the dog from any unwanted behavior. A quick and firm touch to the neck, mimics how dogs communicate with one another. After the verbal and physical correction, give it a command...For example, if your dog is nipping the sheep; touch its neck, firmly and quickly, and say a verbal command. Watch for the dog to stop and become calm (ears back, tail stops wagging), then PRAISE the good behavior with a nice voice and a gentle touch to the shoulder, then give the dog a command such as telling it to “go to sheep.”
5. Another technique to stop unwanted behavior is a **quick firm touch/tap/push** (NOT A KICK!!!), with your foot to the **dogs rib right before its hip**. Give a verbal correction as well. Watch for calm submission, and then follow up with a command. This momentary touch snaps the dog out of its state of mind, whether its being aggressive or hyper active, you are telling it to stop this unwanted behavior.
6. **Make eye contact with dog** as fast as you can after correcting. Hold eye contact until dog looks away and stops behavior and becomes calm and submissive.

Always try and use a less harsh correction first, such as the methods listed above. If these are not effective, try the methods listed below in numbers 6, 7, and 8.

7. **Pick the pups front feet by lifting from the scruff of the neck**, hold it a bit off the ground, and use a verbal correction while making eye contact. Set the pup back on the ground soon after.
8. Pick the pup up by the scruff of its neck, a bit off the ground, and gently but firmly pinch its ear while saying a verbal command.
9. The following is a last resort and should not be done often. If your pup is being continuously aggressive towards the sheep, roll the pup onto its side or back and



expose its belly while giving it a command. Afterwards, leave the pup alone and walk away but stay within eyesight to make sure the behavior isn't repeated.

Remember – Praise, not punish whenever possible. It is better to praise 5 behaviors than to correct and make a big deal of 20 bad behaviors.



8 - 16 weeks old – Bonding and Care

1. Once or twice a week, **feel over your pup's body**. Feel its feet, check its teeth and gums, ears, rub stomach. This will get the pup used to examinations so that it is easy to do once it is older. Do a health check. If pup is calm praise with a voice, if not wait for it to calm down and then praise it – NEVER punish the dog at this point. If dog is aggressive then a gentle scruff of neck hold to the ground until it gives up will help. Remember praise the dog if it submits and calms down.
2. Until the pups are quick enough to walk with the herd, it will be necessary to **carry the pup to the pasture** and place it in the herd. Once you do this, walk away and leave the pup alone with the livestock. However When you set the dog down amongst the sheep, say aloud, “pup's name - Go to Sheep.” This will train it to recognize this as a command to go to the sheep.
3. **If the pup follows** you when you walk away, pick the pup up **and place it back in the herd**, and say aloud, “Pups name - Go to Sheep”
4. If this does not work after eight to ten attempts, it will be necessary to have a **portable wire pen for the pup that will be placed within the herd**. Place the pup in the pen, and say aloud, “Pups name - Go to Sheep.” Throughout the day, move the pen and the pup to keep the pup within the herd.
5. **Try placing the pup in the herd** without the pen, and if it still refuses to remain with the sheep, continue using the portable pen method.
6. If you use a **motorcycle or 4x4** to check on your herd, it will be **necessary to carry the dog on the motorcycle or in the 4x4**, along with the dog's food, the portable pen and your lunch. You must be willing to put the time in which means bringing your lunch to the herd and staying with your puppy throughout the day. It would be best to walk or ride house with herd until pup can keep up, then return to motorcycle.
7. Once the **pup appears to be able to keep up with the herd**, allow it to follow the sheep out to pasture. If however it does not follow the sheep, you may need to carry it part way. Now **make it walk and run with herd** (NOT with you, try to observe from a distance). If it falls behind and wants to walk with you instead, say “Pups name - Go to Sheep”.
 - a. If pup wants to walk with you, put it back with sheep over and over as you walk or ride to pasture saying “Pups name - Go to Sheep” each time.
 - b. If pup turns around to go back to hashaa, pick up pup and walk or ride out to pasture and place pup in herd like when it was young saying “Pups name - Go to Sheep”. You may have to implement the portable pen again.
2. It is **okay if the pup decides to stay on the outside of the herd**, but it is not okay for the pup to follow you. An effective livestock guardian dog can watch the herd from nearby hill tops or shaded areas, etc, but it must follow the herd.



3. At this age, the pup should **stay** with herd **twenty four hours a day**.
4. **Do not let other dogs approach your dog or your livestock.** If your dog does not chase these other dogs away, you must do it yourself. When the pup is young you may end up chasing the strange dog away together – this is OK. As soon as you see the dog going ahead of you praise it and slow down so the dog stay as lead.
5. If a **predator** approaches the herd, allow the **pup to bark and chase it away**. However, **NEVER force the pup** to do anything. If the pup runs away, call to it and say “Pups name - Go to Sheep.” If you chase the predator, tell the pup to “Get Him” and act aggressively toward the predator. This will instinctually get the puppy excited and aggressive towards predators.
Note that the puppy is **not mature enough** to fend off predators at this age and you must **watch over the puppy**.
6. If you kill a predator, let the pup smell and drag its carcass around. Say “Good – Pups name.” If you skin the predator, let the pup eat it and give it some fur or a piece to play with. Praise the pup for smelling or biting the dead predator. Do this only with predators that **MUST** be killed. **DO NOT kill predators** and bring to the pup. The pup will know the difference. **It is better to teach predators to keep away, than to kill them and allow a new predator to start the cycle over again.**
7. At night, have the **pup sleep** in the hashaa with the weak **livestock** or young livestock. Allow the pup to a retreat area were it may hide if it feels it is in danger.
 - a. If the hashaa has large numbers of livestock, and is dangerous to the pup, keep the pup in a safe strong play pen until it is old and tough enough to be in the hashaa with the herd.
 - i. If the hashaa is too dangerous, place a pile of manure against the outside of the hashaa fence for the dog to sleep on. Make sure it is close to the hashaa, and in a place where the dog can see predators approaching the sleeping livestock.

16 weeks - 6 months – Bonding and Care

1. If the pup is showing corrects signs of behavior, it is **now old enough to stay with the herd** at pasture without the herder present. The herder will still need to monitor the dog a few times during the day, and will still need to correct unwanted behavior (unwanted behaviors can be corrected using the same methods that were previously listed). Remember praise not punish!!!
2. The **dog should be sleeping with the livestock**, or at least no longer sleep in a separate shelter. Normally dogs as they get older will patrol the area around the sheep or sheep and Hashaa. Make sure the dog can leave the Hashaa if it has not already learned to jump the fence or get out somehow.



3. The **dog must not be allowed to sleep near the ger** or against it. Tell it “got to sheep” and put it back onto the Hashaa, or with livestock. If it does not work you must go back to using a play pen.
4. The dog should now be **old enough to follow the herd** out to pasture on its own. The dog should **remain with the herd throughout the day**, and **return** with the herd at the **end of the day**.
5. **Do not forget regular feeding practices**, otherwise your dog may become more interested in feeding itself than protecting the livestock. You do not want your Bankhar coming to your ger looking for food or worse, running away to another ger where it may be fed. Tell your neighbors they can **NEVER** feed your dog and they should “shew” it away and tell you right away of its visit.

Feeding your Bankhar

As we mentioned earlier, your Bankhar must always be with the livestock, including and especially during feeding. You will feed your twice a day, once in the morning/afternoon when the livestock go out to pasture and once in the evening when they return. It is important that your Bankhar be independent, which means it must learn to protect its food from the livestock but no be overly aggressive, especially NEVER to you.

1. During **feeding**, wait until the dog has **calmed down before giving it food**. If it is jumping on you/food, touch its neck while simultaneously giving a verbal command (Oush!??). If the dog continues to jump a tap on the dogs lower ribs with a verbal command should help. Once the dog is calm, **praise** it and give a gentle positive touch, then give the dog its food. But now **practice taking the dog's food away** once it has started eating and then returning it after thirty seconds. This will teach the pup that this is your food and you are allowed to take it. This will prevent future food aggression and unwanted behavior. It is okay for pups to growl and defend their food from sheep or goats - but your pup should not do this to you! If it does, see the “behavior corrections” section.
2. Pups should have **no more than 8 minutes to eat** its food no matter the way you feed it.
3. When in the Hashaa, **feed pups inside of their play pen with sheep**, this will prevent the livestock from stealing the dog’s food.
4. If you do not use your hashaa, feed the dog in the pen we have built for you, or just within the herd. However if you do this you may need to prevent the stock from eating the pups food. Your other option is to use the portable play pen while the dog is feeding
5. Occasionally **give your dog large bones** to eat and chew on. However, **NEVER give** a dog a bone that has been **cooked or boiled**. The heat turns the bone brittle, the bone will splinter and become lodged in its throat. Cooked bones are fatal. and it is very dangerous for the dog. It is also important to give your puppy something to chew on while his teeth are growing. Puppies



- relieve the pain of growing teeth by chewing on things. This could be bones or pieces of wood.
6. If sheep are fed hay or grain, make sure it is done near where the pup is kept and at the same time that **the pup is fed so the pup and the sheep eat close together.**
 7. When **feeding the dog** while the sheep are at pasture, place food so the dog is **near/surrounded by the herd.** . It is fine if the dog protects food from the herd and the herd needs to learn this too. If the dog does not keep livestock away, use the pen until it does learn – you will need to test the dog once every week or so. **DO NOT** praise aggressive behavior towards the sheep, but also do not punish. **DO NOT** stand near the pup when it's eating.
 8. If you try and feed the pup a bit away from the herd, but the **pup still does not eat and goes back to the herd**, put the food away and **feed the dog later** or with his/her normal evening meal.
 9. Feed the pup again in the evening when the sheep return to the hashaa or sleeping grounds near you. Continue **placing the pup's food with the sheep with the herd** like you do in the morning. Never feed it near the ger or near people. Always with the herd. Do not make it too clear that you are watching the pup eat.
 - 10.** It is **normal** and okay for the dog to not immediately **defend its food** from sheep. This just means that the dog is submissive to the sheep but eventually it will be hungry enough to defend what is only far for it to have.

Socializing your Bankhar

- 1. Socialize dog to children.** When the dog is young let your children or someone's children be with the dogs (as long as dog is always with sheep). They can play with the dog some, but it is best to not do too much and instead have children pick the dog up, roll it over, touch its feet, ears, mouth, tail and legs. The dog needs to behave submissively toward ALL children like it does with sheep. **DO NOT** let children scare the dog or over do this at all. Remember to end sessions with children with always a positive praise. If you feel the pup is getting tired of rough handling, then end session early and praise pup before it is scared or tired.
- 2. Once a week,** place the dog on a **leash and walk** it around the pasture the herd is using at that time. After about twenty minutes tell it "Go to Sheep" and bring the dog back into the herd, remove the leash and let the dog continue his/her regular activities. Praise the dog for being with herd. If the dog refuses to walk on the leash, be patient, encouraging and do this in very small steps and a gentle pulling – **NEVER** pull and **NEVER** punish. Start this behavior when dog is very young.. Do not allow the dog to step backwards while on the leash. **ALWAYS** make sure the dog goes back to the herd. This walk should **NEVER** be more fun than being with the herd.



3. Occasionally place your **pup into a vehicle** and drive it around for twenty minutes. This will get the dog used to riding in a vehicle in case it ever needs to be brought to a veterinarian. Some dogs love this, others are very nervous. If you have two dogs NEVER let one chase the vehicle.
4. When you have **guests** bring them to the dog and tell the dog, dog name, "Come Say Hi" or "it's OK". Your dog looks to you for the confirmation of strangers. If you are not there it will greet them much more aggressively. You telling the dog to accept the visitor on your praise will teach your dog to be tolerant of visitors. If you have an excited dog that likes people, then do not bring visitors to the herd and if you cannot control this, have the dog say a fast hello, but then bring it back to the herd with "Go to Sheep". If this does not work make use of the play pen again as when it was young. **REMEMBER praise good behavior over punish bad.** If the dog tries to bite a stranger you brought, then make sure to correct behavior with a physical and verbal command such as we have talked about already.
5. If the dog is too intent on strangers you brought to say hello (either in a friendly way or aggressive way), tell it a strong "OUT" and point to the herd and tell it "Go to sheep". If it does not make it go to the sheep and have the stranger go away as soon as possible. You **MUST end this in a positive way** and the dog with the sheep.