

ROUTINE

Create a routine for your puppy that schedules approximately the same times daily for feeding, playing, training, toileting and rest. Get the whole family involved in this and decide who does what jobs, and when.

TOILET TRAINING

This need not be a long drawn out process and there are some basic rules:

If your puppy goes where you want him to; praise him
If he makes a mess and you're not there; don't reprimand him

Create a routine by always toileting your dog:

- Upon waking
- After playing
- After eating
- After crating

Take your puppy out to the same area and give a short command such as "be quick", "hurry up" or "go now" if he toilets at this time praise him immediately.

TOILETING AIDS

Crates

Crates are the fastest way to ensure that your puppy develops good toileting habits. Puppies try not to urinate or defecate in their own den, so using a crate at night can help to prevent accidents. See the *Puppy Crate Training Care Sheet* for further details.

Puppy pads

These are absorbent sheets impregnated with a chemical that attracts your puppy to them for urinating. When you see your puppy displaying its pre-toileting behaviour such as sniffing and walking in circles then pick him up and place him on the puppy pad. Gradually the pad can be placed closer to the door and then to the place outside where you would like your puppy to toilet.

SOCIALISATION

Puppy Playschools is a great arena for puppy socialisation. This allows your puppy to interact with other puppies of a very similar age in a safe environment. Socialisation at an early age is very important to your puppy's development.

Once your puppy is fully vaccinated you can invite friends with friendly vaccinated dogs over to play. This will allow your puppy to interact with other people and other dogs.

Don't let them play in or around your dog's den. This is your pup's safe area and needs to remain so. These experiences need to be positive for your puppy and it needs to feel safe. Vary the route that you walk each time initially as this will expose your puppy to a variety of experiences including traffic noises, other dogs and other people. If your puppy is approached by people during this time then teach him to sit when they want to pet him.

This will prevent the "jumping up at strangers" habit. It takes time, patience and love to train a puppy properly. What you put into your puppy in its first year will be a major investment for his future.

COME

- Keep your puppy on a long lead initially. Let him have a wander on this long lead
- When you want him to come hold a treat at his level and say the word "come"
- Praise him, give him a treat and a gentle pat. You don't have to reward with a treat every time; eventually a pat or a praising word will do the trick
- Make the word "come" sound more interesting than anything else in your puppy's environment
- Practice

SIT

- Hold a treat over your puppy's nose and slowly move it above his head
- Your puppy will tilt his head back to follow the treat and probably sit himself
- Give him the treat
- Repeat and add the word "sit"
- Practice.

STAY

- This is best taught once your puppy has mastered the sit command
- Use a light, long lead and ask your puppy to sit
- Step backwards away from him one step
- Place your palm out in front of the dog and say "stay" or "wait"
- If your pup stays then reward him
- Now try again with two steps
- Repeat over time moving further away and losing the lead
- Practice

PREVENTING JUMPING

- Don't encourage your puppy or dog to jump, don't pat or praise him when he does this
- Turn around and ignore this behaviour
- Don't look at your puppy
- Use the "sit" command to stop him carrying on
- Praise and pat when he sits
- Be consistent

GOOD TRAINING PRINCIPLES

Consistency and patience

Decide on what you want to teach your puppy, but these basic commands are the handiest:

- Come
- Sit
- Stay
- No
- A "to bed" and "toilet" command

Ensure the entire family is using the exact same words, don't let one member say "come" and the other say "here" as your puppy will just get confused.



Puppies respond to voice tone, so use a happy, light one to praise and a deep voice to reprimand.

Timing and duration

Set aside "training time" every day. This is not play time with the rest of the family, but a concentrated effort between you and your dog.

Keep the sessions no more than 10 - 15 minutes in duration.

Plan your sessions when your family is at its quietest, perhaps when your children are at school. Make sure that it is not your puppy's normal feeding or resting times.

Control and calmness

If you stay controlled and calm during your training sessions they will go a lot smoother and both you and your puppy will be happier.

Keep talking to a minimum during the training session and stick to the commands you would like your puppy to learn.

Effective praising

Praise is important but should be used when your puppy does what you have asked such as coming when you say "come" or sitting when you say "sit".

If your puppy sits on command and then stands and gets rewarded, he will think that the reward is for standing. Your puppy needs to recognise that the praise and treat are associated with the behaviour that you want him to perform.

Over-praising and over-treating will make your puppy forget what he has just learnt and turn the training session into a giant play session with food!

A very small treat or a single food kibble, a gentle pat and a praising word are ample.

End positively

Always end your training session on a positive note. Choose an easy command that the puppy can complete, such as coming towards a treat when asked to "come". Not every day will go according to plan, but you want your puppy to feel really happy about these sessions and look forward to the next one.

To complete the training session move somewhere else for some relaxation time.

Practice correction rather than discipline

There is no point in disciplining a dog for something that has already happened. If your puppy urinates in the house and you find it, there is no benefit in punishing him at this point. Your puppy will not know what he has done wrong.

If you see your puppy start to urinate inside then say "no" and take him outside. He will recognise the tone in your voice.

Time out is also a good form of "discipline". Use an area that is not your puppy's crate or den. You don't want to turn his resting area into a punishment arena.

So work on the areas you would like to improve in your puppy or dog during your training sessions, create a routine and don't discipline past deeds.

The best form of discipline is the withholding of praise! Reward good behaviour and ignore the bad!

