

HOW TO TRAIN YOUR PUPPY

Training Basics

- Don't feed your puppy before training.
- Find out what motivates your puppy to work – what treats catch his attention.
- Training treats should be tiny and easy to swallow.
 - Use kibble for simple exercises or in low-distraction areas, like at home
 - Give yummier treats for new exercises or in areas with more distractions
- Rewards can be anything your puppy likes – treats, praise, petting, your attention, toys. **Be careful what you reward!**
- Always start in a low to no distraction area, then work toward more distractions.
- Set the criteria for success low. Reward small baby steps. We want to see puppy succeed more than fail. **If he is failing, make it easier!**
- If he takes a treat like a shark, say “easy.”
- Don't reward for starting at the treats – **IGNORE THIS!**
- If using a clicker, give one click per behavior.
- A click **ALWAYS** gets a treat!
- Be consistent and have patience.
- Repetition is how they learn.
- If you are frustrated, train later.
- End on a good note.
- **HAVE FUN!**

Summary

Control the environment

Don't give puppy a chance to practice unwanted behaviors. Use supervision, crate, or gated area.

Remove Rewards for unwanted behaviors

Rewards are anything your puppy likes – treats, attention, petting, praise, toys

Reward Desirable Behavior

Give rewards for any behaviors you want to see repeated.

Setting Rules

- Every puppy needs rules.
- Don't punish puppy for breaking rules they don't know exist.
- Puppies do not come into the world knowing polite manners – training takes time, patience, and consistency.
- Don't add confusion by having different rules for different people.

Whatever rules you decide, the **whole family needs to agree and be consistent** or your best training plans will unravel.

Job of a Pack Leader:

- Decides where the pack will go (*who walks who*)
- Decides when the pack will eat (*I'm hungry now!*)
- Decides who is allowed to bark and when to stop
- Decides when the pack is allowed to play (*nudging you to play*)
- Decides what the pack is allowed to play with
- Decides how other members of the pack must behave
- Decides who owns what (*guarding bones and toys*)
- Always walks in front exception is sled dogs but they are working / out doors
- Can take anything away from a dog in his pack and claim it as his own.
- Never says he is sorry; this shows weakness (*this will make your puppy insecure*)

The rest of the pack is not resentful of how this works. To them, this is normal.

When pack leaders correct they are rarely aggressive, but just assertive.

Calm assertiveness.

- ✓ No jumping means no jumping on **anyone** or grandma may get knocked down.
- ✓ No begging means no one gives food at the table.
- ✓ To be or not to be on the couch: it can't be ok one day and not the next.
- ✓ Pick up shoes or items that you don't want chewed by puppy
- ✓ Decide on one Potty area
- ✓ No rough housing if puppy is really nippy
- ✓ No food left out on counter to tempt puppy

Behavior Modification

While trying to **correct your dog's bad habits**, remember that many factors will influence your chances of success. Your dog's age, breed, and character will play a role in determining how likely each problem is to occur. Bad habits are much easier to resolve quickly when they are new and **haven't been established**. If your dog has been performing the undesirable habit for a long period of time, then you will have to be prepared to **be patient and very consistent** with your methods. It is important that you **work steadily** and **don't try to take short cuts** since this often leads to a problem reoccurring. Spend time making sure that you correctly diagnose why your dog is behaving badly, as this makes it easier to achieve success.

Try to **minimize the opportunities** for your dog to repeat the unwanted behavior since this will help to speed up the development of the new habit that you are encouraging.
