

Puppy Training

House training your puppy Puppies instinctively do not want to go the bathroom where they live. As a result, once the puppy understands where it's territory is, house training should come naturally and quickly. The key is to be consistent and patient. Vets often recommend that training may begin any time after five weeks. Establish the pack pecking order Dogs are pack animals and it is important to establish their place in the pack early on. You need to be the alpha male or female. Reward good behavior with praise and/or petting. Puppies demand a lot of attention, and you should reward good behavior. However, it is important to establish you are the teacher and the puppy is the student. Some, particularly certain breeds which value independent thinking, will challenge you and test your place in the pack. You need to be consistent in reinforcing that you are the pack leader. Whenever your puppy wants to be scratched, respond by holding your hand above his nose and say, your dog's name, then "sit". By moving your hand back over his ears as you speak, it makes him look up, which is a component of sitting. Keep repeating "sit" until he or she sits. Then pet and praise your puppy as a reward. It may take a few tries, but keep at it. After your puppy sits for a few seconds, release him by saying "OK" or "up", then pet and praise him again. Gradually increase the sitting time. Be sure others who handle the puppy also use the same commands, for consistent messages to the puppy.

Where to go to the bathroom

You should feed your puppy inside the house. Dogs do not like to relieve themselves where they eat, so this reinforces the house training. If your dog is relieving itself in a certain area, feed him or her on that spot. Immediately after your puppy finishes eating, take it outside to his or her bathroom area. Letting the dog outside or walking him or her regularly lets him or her know that it can wait and there will always be opportunities to go to the bathroom outside. Dogs quickly learn and remember your routine. After your puppy goes to the bathroom, reward him with praise. Look right at it, not at the dog. If your dog sniffs it, praise and pet him enthusiastically. We estimate after around 4 days you can expect your puppy to automatically head for his correct place whenever the urge strikes, or wait until your regularly scheduled walk. It may take longer. Just be patient.

When to go to the bathroom

It is best to keep feeding and walk times generally consistent. Most of us do this naturally due to our already structured schedules during the week, but it is best to try to keep the schedule close on the weekend too. This consistency will encourage self control in your puppy. Dogs can "hold it" for up to 13 hours, and sometimes longer, if necessary. You should try to let your puppy outdoors only at times when you are ordinarily home to do so. Ideally, have your puppy sleep in a room with people. It will be inclined to learn your sleeping times and there will be less accidents and late night wake ups. Use a puppy bed or blanket for your puppy to sleep in, and most will learn to sleep through the night. Punishing mistakes Well established training methods suggest grabbing your puppy, sticking his nose in the mess, and punishing him or her. However, many now believe this is not necessary and may even be harmful. Alternatively, just say grunt and act disgusted and take puppy out to his or her bathroom area. Leave the puppy there while you clean up. Make sure the puppy cannot see you cleaning up. Some dogs apparently enjoy watching their owner clean up and sometimes leave another gift to enjoy the same experience. It is OK to have them watch you clean up after they go in the correct place. Accidents should be cleaned up well enough to eliminate the odor. You would generally strive to accomplish this for your own benefit, but it also makes it less likely the puppy will again soil the same spot. There are some great spot cleaners available at the grocery with simple instructions. Your puppy is part of the family

Dogs are social animals by nature, one reason they are such GREAT pets. Being part of the pack is at the top of their priorities. Whether you have a large family or it is just you and the puppy, to be happy the puppy must feel secure about his her place in the group or pack. When you watch play, you can see them already deciding who is going to be the alpha or pack leader. Something very much like this play fighting is happening between your puppy and the rest of the family as well, although most people don't realize it. What puppies need most is a master they can depend on. At least one person in your family must become such a master. Dogs do not understand the concept of friends or equals. Somebody has to be boss. More dominant puppies will try to be boss, challenging your authority. A more submissive puppy may spend its entire life fretting and worrying, never sure what is expected. Everything usually works out just fine. Your puppy will eventually find its place in the family. If on you have a overly assertive or submissive puppy there are some things you should consider.

Assertive puppies

Assertive puppies tend to immediately investigate new people and things. They are quick to begin play fighting activities. They are very insistent and demanding when they want to be pet. These puppies often quickly take on the role of protector. They think the people belong to them. This is fine, but can result in trouble. They may try to defend you from everyone, and biting strangers who come in your yard is not good. The most serious problems happen when grandchildren are involved. They can be perceived as a threat or competitor. Grandchildren can be badly injured by assertive dogs. The training techniques used to establish your teacher-student relationship are especially important with assertive dogs. It is especially important for you to be the master, in charge. Do not allow your dog to nip or bite at you in a friendly way. Try not to become what your puppy perceives to be an equal and competitive playmate. You are in charge. Submissive puppies Submissive puppies tend to "shy away" from new people or things, either by lying down or running away. Most puppies tend to be slightly submissive. They wish for nothing more than to please you and this makes them easy to train. Try to provide a peaceful environment and a dependable schedule that includes exercise and reliable feeding times. Submissive urination Many puppies and young dogs can urinate in response to new or exciting situations. This shows your puppy may be uncertain about what is expected. Never punish the puppy when this happens.

The puppy is trying to please you. Try to calmly reassure the puppy, ignoring the urination. Clean up later, in private.

Destructive chewingPuppies naturally chew, especially when still teething. Try to keep chewable valuables out of reach and provide good alternatives like a chew toys they know are OK to chew. Chewing is a way to work off excitement, relieve frustration, and sooth teething, not a plan to get even with you. When you leave home in the morning, don't make a big deal. This can build stress, which can result in destructive chewing while you are out. Simply leave your home, while trying to ignore your puppy. Arrive home in the same way. Ignore your puppy at first. If things are a mess when you get home, don't let puppy know you care. Behave calmly. Clean up later when your puppy can't watch.

Fear bitersWhen puppies don't know what is expected, they may react inappropriately to strangers. The puppy is afraid, but unable to be completely submissive. They usually show signs of fear and try to run away from what they perceive as a threatening situation, but when they cannot, they can bite. This often happens when children insist on petting a frightened dog, particularly small submissive dogs. These puppies need firm leadership and reassurance, which can be achieved through high quality training.