

NEW PUPPY GUIDE

Learn how to settle, socialise & train your puppy



Congratulations

Well done for taking the first step towards responsible dog ownership and embarking on your first puppy training session. We hope to help you to develop a well-mannered sociable puppy.

Puppy training is something that will be ongoing for the next 18 months or so until your dog matures. Even then, it is in your best interest to keep up with training throughout their lifetime.

It is important that, as a puppy owner, you recognise the fact that everything you do with your puppy is a training exercise. It is unfair to expect them to do something that they have not been trained to do such as walk on a loose leash.

Furthermore, homework is very important. We expect you to do small amounts of training each day to reinforce good behaviour. In this leaflet we will cover;

- The first few nights
- Crate training & settling overnight/ when left
- Toilet training
- Mouthing/Teething
- How your puppy learns

The first night

Ideally your puppy will sleep in a crate; this provides a safe & secure environment much like a den. You will find your puppy may cry for the first few nights, remember they have just left their mother and siblings so this is a big change for them. Some people prefer to sleep in the room with them to start off. We advise you to put the puppies' crates in your room for the first few nights, it's very likely they will need to go to the toilet at some point so if you can hear them you can let them outside and avoid accidents. You can then start to move them further away from you, onto the landing or the edge of the room. Try to keep a good routine for bedtime to help them adjust quickly. Some puppies will be okay with being left alone straight away so it's really trial and error for the first night but it's good to have a plan.

Make sure the crate is positioned in a quiet area of the house and cover at night to block any light out. It can be helpful to have a blanket/towel that has their mother scent on (speak to the breeder about doing this for you) and leaving the radio on low as a background noise. A big soft toy (use dog toys only so no choking risks like buttons/eyes) will give your puppy something to cuddle into that will mimic his siblings lying close.

How does your puppy learn?



Your new puppy has no idea about the rules in your house or how to get things right. They rely on you to teach them what is right. Puppies learn mostly by positive association and reinforcement for the behaviour. For example, if every time your puppy goes in their crate you reward them with a treat they will start to learn that the action of going to the crate brings the reward. As your puppy will be more likely to repeat the behaviours that they are rewarded for we need to focus on doing this a lot. When you are first starting to teach your puppy something they may get frustrated so you need to be patient and make sure you reward as soon as they get it right, timing is everything!

Some tools for training

You can use various different things as a reward for your puppy;

- treats
- toys
- attention/praise from you
- chance to do the thing they want

Using treats to reward a behaviour is a quick and easy way to let your puppy know they've got it right. With a toy you can reward something like a recall, when the puppy comes to you you whip out the toy and have a playtime. Some puppies prefer affection over everything, giving your puppy lots of praise for doing the right thing is a good reward. The chance to do what they want is a powerful motivator, have you ever been told 'eat your greens and you can have dessert'? This works the same for your puppy, even simple things like when the puppy sits by the door you let them out to play outside. I would recommend using a mix of all of these rewards to keep it exciting for the puppy

Clicker training

Lots of people like to use a clicker to train their dog. If you fancy giving this a go then I suggest you do some research on how to start.

Firstly the puppy needs to understand what the click means, you can't just point & click. You need to 'proof' the clicker first which requires a little bit of work on your behalf to be consistent with it.

REMEMBER

Punishing your puppy and using negative methods will only scare them & put them off working for you. Keep your sessions fun, quick & rewarding to get the best from them.

Settling in the crate

We want your puppy to see their crate as a safe space that they are happy to be in.

Make sure you never use the crate as punishment.

The first thing to consider is the location of the crate. You want the crate to be in quiet area, somewhere that they aren't going to be disturbed by street noise, excess light etc. The kitchen is usually a good option, floors tend to be easy clean for any accidents and near to the back door for quick toilet trips. You want your puppy to be part of the family and be able to see you all going about your daily routine but also have enough peace to settle. Covering your crate, leave one door side open, with a crate cover or heavy blanket can also help to make the crate snug and block out any light.

Most puppies will sleep for 18+ hours a day so having a cosy den is essential.

If you're lucky the breeder will have already had your puppy in a crate so they will be used to them. To start your puppy off put a nice soft bed in and a blanket from the breeder if you have one, this will have familiar scents on for your puppy. Get one large dog toy, you can get great ones with a heartbeat in which gives your puppy the feel of a sibling next to them. Put treats into the crate and encourage your puppy to go in and find them.



Trouble Shooting

Not all puppies will settle in their crate straight away. If your puppy is struggling to settle try these tips:

- Take the crate into your bedroom for a few nights, once the puppy is sleeping begin to move the crate further away. Just move them gradually until they are used to sleeping alone.
- Leave the radio on low volume so your puppy has some background noise,
- Use a calming plug in, I like Pet Remedy, these can help to calm your puppy down.
- Get a good bedtime routine, make sure puppy has had some calm time before bed so they aren't over stimulated. Make sure they have been to the toilet before you settle them down.
- Make sure they aren't hungry, a hungry puppy will not sleep as well as a puppy that's got a full tummy.
- Get your puppy used to being in the crate through the day for short periods. Put them in when they are sleepy or give them a treat such as a king to keep them busy while they are in there.
- Start to leave the puppy for short periods, get them used to being left asap so they get used to it. Don't make a fuss when you leave or return, try to do this when they are sleepy.
- Hide treats in the crate so the puppy will find them if they go in on their own.
- Don't panic, just like babies some puppies are better at settling than others.
- If you are really struggling book a home visit so we can get your routine back on track.

Mouthing & Teething

Mouthing in puppies only becomes problematic if the puppy has not learnt that humans dislike being chewed. They must learn that the slightest pressure from their jaws causes pain. All dogs have the ability to bite, so it is important that they are taught to be gentle with their mouths. Your puppy will have started to learn bite inhibition from an early age when puppies play with each other, if puppy (A) bites on puppy (B) too hard, puppy (B) will yelp. If that does not work, puppy (B) will get up and walk away. This tells puppy (A) that if it bites too hard the game will stop. Therefore, puppy (A) will learn that in order for the game to continue, it needs to be gentle”.

We can do this by teaching our puppy that ‘nipping’ turns off all attention or interactions. When the teeth come into contact with your skin, let out a high pitched ‘yelp’ and if necessary, get up and walk off. This signals to the puppy that nipping or biting will cause play to end. This needs to be consistent for the message to get through to the puppy, as with all training.

If the puppy persists with biting then you can stand up and walk away, it's counter productive to try and stop them, you just become more exciting and they get worse.

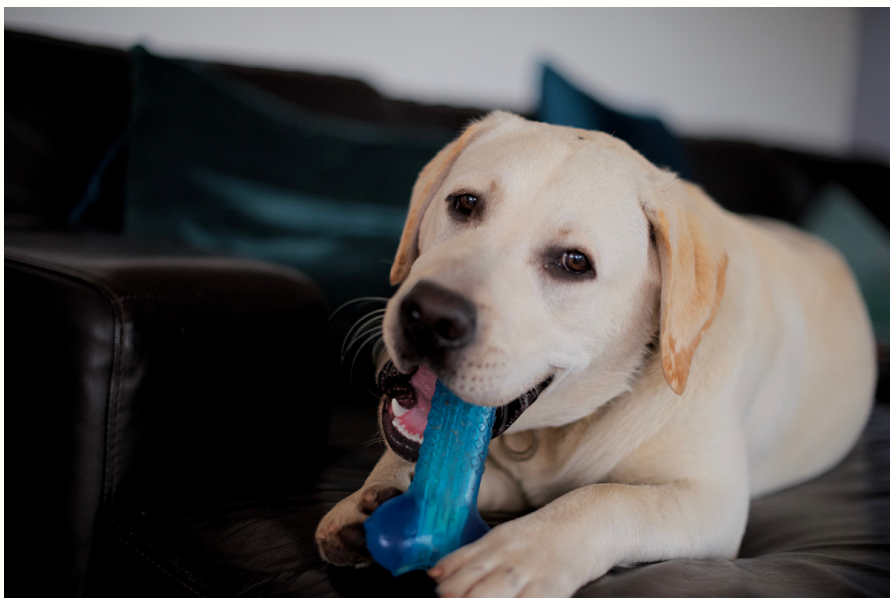
Don't give your puppy all of their toys at once, leave them a couple of different ones with different textures, this means the toys will hold more value if they don't have constant access to them. When your puppy gets over excited and is biting you can get a toy that they haven't had for a few days and redirect them to bite that. Preempt the times your puppy is going to be worst, usually the evening when they are over tired. Have something like a lick mat ready to offer your pup before they start getting over excited.

Teach children how to deal with puppy biting, running and screaming will only make the puppy more excited.

Teething can be a painful experience and your puppy may get very frustrated and seem almost aggressive. Have some suitable chews/toys ready for them, again, trying to offer something before the problem starts is more productive than trying to stop the biting.

Some ideas for teething toys/treats;

- Kong toys, these can all be frozen
- Carrots, chilled or frozen. Use long sticks/batons not rounds for choking risk
- Frozen treats, banana, mashed sweet potato etc can be frozen into ice cube trays
- Lick mats
- Teething toys, check your pet shop, some can be frozen
- Chew treats, ask your pet shop for age appropriate chews



Toilet Training

Teaching your dog to 'go' in all the right places!

Sometimes housetraining a puppy can seem difficult and be very frustrating.

The key to housetraining your puppy well and quickly is to give him as many opportunities as possible to get it right. **The more times he is rewarded for going to the toilet in the right place, the quicker he will learn.**

Find somewhere that you can confine your dog where you don't mind 'accidents' happening when you cannot supervise him during training. This could be a crate or an area penned off. It should be a relatively small area, which will discourage him from going to the toilet there but where he will still feel part of the family. Place his bedding and water in his safe area and also use this space to feed him in.

In the morning, take your dog outside, stand with him and wait for him to go to the toilet. When he 'goes', give him lots of praise as he finishes (being careful not to interrupt what he is doing) and give him a treat. He should need a wee and a poo. When he has gone to the toilet, you can take him back inside and have a play. Let him have full access to the room that you are in – as long as you can give him your full attention and watch him.

Take your dog out every hour on the hour from morning to last thing at night, to give him the opportunity to go to the toilet.

You will also need to do this after exercise or play and after meals. If he goes to the toilet, praise and reward him and then write down the time of day that he went and what he did. If you keep a note of this every day, you will find that a pattern of when he goes appears. You can then use this to predict when he'll need to go to the toilet, so that after about a week you shouldn't have to take him out as often as every hour.

Any time that you cannot watch your dog, place him in his safe area with something to do with a chew toy for example. You should also put him here when he is sleeping or resting during the day. It is far kinder to put him in his safe area when you cannot watch him, than to tell him off if he toilets in the wrong place.

If you put him in his indoor kennel/crate in the bedroom with you overnight, he'll let you know when he needs to go out and this will help speed up the process.

What if accidents happen?

Remove any smells left by accidents by cleaning with a purpose made cleaner from a pet shop. This will take away any smells and stains. Make sure that you do not use cleaning products that contain ammonia as this smells like urine to dogs and will encourage them to use the same spot again and again.

Don't make a fuss – your dog has not done it on purpose. It may be because you are not watching him carefully enough. If you can't watch him, he should be in his safe area. It is not fair to let him get it wrong.

If you find an accident, then quietly secure your dog away from it whilst you clear up the mess. The fastest way to get toilet training sorted is to let your puppy out often and reward when they go outside.

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