



PUPPY PLAY

Giving your puppy the chance to interact with other dogs is important if they are to grow up well adjusted and not over-excited or fearful around them. Seeing your puppy play happily with others can be a wonderful experience. However there are a few things you will want to look for to make sure that it is a good experience for everyone.

Make sure you have a secure area where your puppy can interact off the lead safely. Have objects of interest in the area so that puppies have a chance to explore other things if they'd prefer to, and the focus isn't only on the other dogs.

Watch for your puppy's body signals - are they enjoying the interaction? Can you see a loose wiggly body, lolling tongue and lots of role reversal in play?

Sessions like this will help your puppy to learn good social etiquette and ensure you also know how and when to intervene to keep your puppy and others safe and happy throughout. You want to have a selection of playmates of all ages for your puppy to get to know but don't be tempted to let your puppy interact with every dog they see.

It's important to also make sure that your puppy practices being around other dogs that they don't get to play or interact with. This will prevent them building an unrealistic expectation that all dogs are playmates, which could lead to unwanted behaviour like excessive barking and frustrated lead biting when they can't play.

Remember, always actively supervise play between dogs and be ready to intervene if you need to.

Keep sessions short (1-5 minutes) and fun for all.





HANDLING & HUSBANDRY

It's really important to get into the habit of checking your puppy's body regularly and that your puppy loves being handled all over. In this tutorial you are going to learn how to get started.

Make sure that your puppy is comfortable and relaxed on a soft bed/blanket. Gently stroke and touch your puppy all over their body. Start with the areas your puppy likes to be touched the most, like their chest, back and belly, before moving towards other parts of your puppy's body. Move your hands slowly, almost like giving them a massage.

When you come to more sensitive areas start by feeding your puppy treats from one hand as you touch them with your other hand. Check their paws, tail, ears, eyes and teeth.

Always go at your puppy's pace and if they are unsure about you touching any part of their body, give them some space and time to process before coming back to it another time.

Keep sessions short and relaxing.

When introducing a brush to your puppy practice with the back of the brush first and when your puppy is used to that you can start to brush them gently with the bristles too. Aim to brush one side of your puppy each day.



Get your puppy used to all grooming equipment you will use throughout their lifetime, from different brushes and combs to nail clippers, towels and dryers. Make sure your puppy is enjoying the experience and is relaxed throughout.

By putting the effort into this now, you will have a dog who loves to be groomed throughout their entire life.



PET STORE FIELD TRIP

This week's field trip is to take your puppy to a pet store. You can carry your puppy or walk them on lead if they are old enough. Go along each aisle and allow your puppy plenty of time to sniff and take it all in. There will be lots of exciting smells, different textures to walk on, food packets and toys to investigate.

If your pet store has other animals, like birds, rabbits or rodents, be sure to stop and let your puppy watch from a safe distance. If your puppy shows any sign of being worried, or won't take treats, back away to a further distance again.

Your puppy might see other dogs and people during their visit too. If you need to pick up any new equipment for your puppy give them plenty of time to investigate and pair with treats and praise too.

Make sure to come back with your puppy often so that they will be confident and relaxed in the store.



HAPPY TRAINING!



ENRICHMENT PROJECT PLASTIC CUPS

This week's enrichment challenge involves plastic cups. It is great for getting puppies using their nose and problem solving skills.

Start by laying out a few treats under a plastic cup before inviting your puppy to investigate. They might knock the cup over with their nose or paw to get to the treats underneath.

From here you can make it more of a challenge by adding in more cups for your puppy to knock over. You can even set out some dummy cups which don't have treats in to get your puppy using their nose to find the jackpot cups!

You can also make it easier by having your puppy's kibble laid out in upright cups around the room or in the garden. Puppies love the challenge of getting their food out of cup puzzles and at the end of the fun, just pop any broken cups into the recycling.

#DITCHTHEBOWL



HAPPY TRAINING!



TOILET TRAINING

When you bring your puppy home, one of the first things you're going to want to work on is toilet training. Young puppies will need to go to the toilet every 30 minutes or so. Decide where you want your puppy to go to the toilet. Choose an area which is secure and away from distractions that you can easily get to throughout the day. To one side of the back door is a great option most of the time but if you have children make sure it is away from anywhere that they spend time playing.

You're going to need some supplies - Firstly the surface you would like your puppy to toilet on. This can be a zone of real or artificial turf, gravel, bark or any other surface type. You can even set up a toilet zone indoors or in your puppy's pen for when you leave your your puppy on their own to prevent them getting stressed or having an accident if they need to go whilst you're not there. You'll also need a weather proof container of treats that can be stored by the door for easy access rewards whenever your puppy toilets in the right spot.

Have poo bags and a bin close by to immediately dispose of your puppy's waste. And an enzymatic cleaner in a spray bottle to clean up any accidents and fully remove the scent, reducing the likelihood of your puppy having another accident in that location. Lastly you'll want wipes for your puppy's paws in case they step in anything.

Before you start training you'll want to make sure that your puppy isn't afraid of your toilet zone. Don't wait for your puppy to cry or whine to let you know they need the toilet, instead set your alarm to take your puppy out routinely throughout the day. Take your puppy to the same place to toilet every single time. You can walk them there on a lead or carry your puppy to their toilet station.

When they toilet in the right spot, reward and praise them generously. You'll also need to take your puppy out to the toilet whenever they wake up from a nap, eat something, have a drink, do training with you or play.

If your puppy toilets outside but not quite in the toilet zone, still reward them but be sure to spray the area where they toileted, with the enzymatic cleaner to remove the scent, making it less likely your puppy will toilet in that spot again.

As always, be consistent, actively supervise and reward the right behaviour, and your puppy will make great progress.



PREVENTING PUPPY BITING

Puppies explore the world around them using their mouth. This can lead to your puppy mouthing or biting you. It's really important that your puppy learns to keep their teeth away from human skin.

To help your puppy to learn this you are going to start by instigating a toy play session with your puppy.

All the time that your puppy is making good choices - keeping their paws on the ground, and grabbing or pulling on the toy - you are going to praise them lots, pet them and continue playing. You can even reward your puppy with treats for playing nicely.

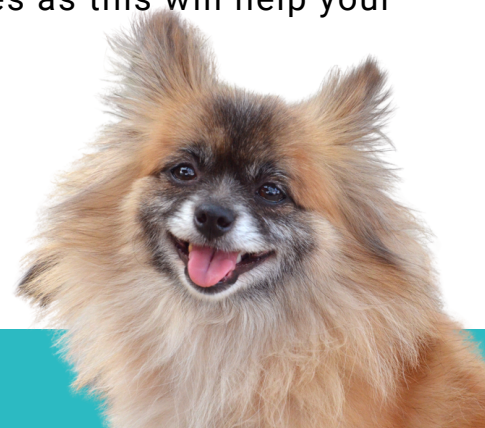
If at any point your puppy catches your hands or jumps up to pull at your clothes you're going to disengage from your puppy a little. Start by sitting back a bit and folding your arms. If your puppy persists, stand up and turn away from your puppy. You can walk further away or go beyond a baby gate to prevent your puppy from continuing to practice unwanted behaviour.

Try to avoid yelping or making a sudden sound, as this often backfires when your puppy thinks you have become a human squeaky toy, and gets very excited!!

As soon as your puppy makes an alternative choice - for example putting their paws on the ground, or letting go of your clothes, you are going to praise and reward them generously.

If you find that your puppy is getting a bit stuck and continues to bite, jump and grab your clothes, it's likely that your puppy needs to get some more sleep and have a nap. Settle them down with a calm enrichment activity to help them relax before they fall asleep.

Always remember to reward everything good your puppy does as this will help your puppy to make better choices in the future too.



HAPPY TRAINING!



SCATTER RECALL

Recall is when your puppy comes running back to you when you call them. The end goal behaviour is that your puppy rushes to you as soon as they process the cue, no matter the distractions in the environment. Eventually you may add in a sit as well as a collar hold whilst you clip on their lead.

To build a really reliable recall it's essential that coming back is ALWAYS fun and never leads to a negative consequence for your puppy.

To begin with it's important to keep it simple, so to start you are going to reward any movement your puppy makes towards you.

A brilliant game to start with is scatter recalls. In this game you start out by showing your puppy a tasty treat and then placing it on the floor for them to eat. This will keep your puppy engaged for a moment, during which you will move a few paces away and wait for your puppy to catch up. When they start to move closer, you're going to mark and place a treat by your feet, before moving away again.

After a few repetitions you will see that your puppy predicts what is coming next and starts to run to you more quickly. You're now going to wait until your puppy reaches you before marking and placing their reward on the floor at your feet.



HAPPY TRAINING!



SCATTER RECALL

At this point your puppy is not only coming to you through choice, but rushing as fast as they can to get back. This is EXACTLY what we want recall to look like.

Now you can add a cue word to call them to you. Common cues include come and here, but you can choose any word you'd like. To teach your puppy the verbal cue, you're going to drop a treat to the floor to keep your puppy busy and then move away. As they finish eating, but before they start to move closer, say your chosen cue word. Wait for your puppy to come over before marking and rewarding them. Don't forget to also praise and fuss them each time for doing a great job!

After a few repetitions you can test your puppy's understanding of the cue word by saying it when they aren't looking at you. Wait and see how long it takes them to respond and come over. When your puppy is really quick to respond you are ready to take their training to different environments - like your garden, neighbourhood, quiet public places and eventually busy environments too. When you are generalising your puppy's skill make sure to build up gradually so you are both successful.



HAPPY TRAINING!



GET IT

Get it is a great game to play with your puppy that will increase your bond, add fun to your training, supercharge your puppy's rewards, enable you to reset their position as well as direct them away from entrances and exits for management purposes.

For this game you'll want to have treats that are large enough for your puppy to see easily. You're going to show the food to your puppy close to their nose and when they show interest simply say the word 'get' and throw the treat about 1-2 feet in front of your puppy where they can see it.

You will repeat this several times, throwing the treat in a different direction each time. The word 'get' should predict you throwing the food, so be careful about the order - say the word then throw the food. As your puppy gets good at this you can increase the distance away from your puppy, you throw the treat.

After several repetitions your puppy will acknowledge the word 'get' and turn to you to see where the treat is going to go.

This is a great way to get your puppy to move quickly behind a gate or barrier when you need to answer the front door and can even be used to redirect excitable puppies away from you if they are running towards you and you think they might jump up. How many uses for this game can you think of?





INTRO TO DOWN

Learn how to teach your puppy to lie down on cue. The final position will be your puppy in a down and resting onto one hip. This will be incredibly useful when you want to go to lunch together and have them settling under the table or when you visit friends and would like them to relax calmly with you. We are going to show you how to lure this position but you can also capture any moment that your puppy naturally offers it by marking and rewarding throughout the day.

To begin, take a treat and hold between your thumb and first 2 fingers. Offer towards your puppy and when their nose gets close slowly move the food towards their front paws and hold still. Your puppy will lean to follow the food with their nose and as they do their elbows and bottom will drop to the floor. The moment this happens mark and reward your puppy between their front paws.

When your puppy remains in position you can reward them multiple small treats in the same fashion before releasing your puppy by saying 'free' and rolling a treat away for them to go and get. This will reset your puppy and allow you to practice the down again.



HAPPY TRAINING!



INTRO TO DOWN

When this becomes fluent for your puppy we want to start to encourage them to rest onto one hip. After a couple of goes see if your puppy will naturally relax onto one hip themselves. From here on you will always look for hip contact with the floor before marking and rewarding. The next stage is to repeat your hand movement for down, but this time without food in your hand. When your puppy's belly touches the floor and they rock onto one hip, mark and reward as before.

Now we get to gradually transform the visual signal so that you don't need to bend and touch the floor to ask your dog to lie down forever. To do this you will move your hand as before but stop above the ground by a few centimeters. When your pup is successful, progress to ankle height, then calf height, then knee height. Until eventually you can cue your pup to lie down using only a hand signal at hip height whilst standing up!

At this point when your pup fully understands the small visual signal you can go ahead and add a cue word. Say 'down' just before giving your hand signal, wait for your pup to respond and when they are lying down on one hip, mark and reward.

After several repetitions your puppy will start to offer a down as soon as you say the cue, before you move your hand.

Remember to practice in lots of locations to generalise your puppy's new skill.



HAPPY TRAINING!



TEACHING NOSE TARGET

A nose touch is a simple, fun behaviour where your puppy bops their nose to the palm of your hand and is useful for keeping your puppy engaged with you around distractions, guiding them to specific locations or teaching them new behaviours.

To start with present your hand towards your puppy and wait for them to investigate. Mark and reward as soon as their nose makes contact with your hand. Repeat this a few times before making it more difficult by holding your hand further away.

If your puppy struggles to start with, you can always rub a treat on your hand to get them interested. After a few repetitions you won't need the scent of the food anymore.

When your puppy is doing really well and stepping to make contact you can roll their reward away from you so that they can come running back to you for the next repetition. Dogs love this fun game of dash and it helps to add more momentum to their nose touch.

You can even use nose targeting to teach new behaviours like spin and down.

How many ways can you think of to use touch?

