



# EXPOSURE TO SURFACES

The first few months a puppy's life are the most influential. Most of what is learned during this early period becomes the foundation for adult behavior patterns. To lower the possibility of behavior problems in your pup later on, including fear, anxiety, and stress, puppies should be exposed to as many experiences as possible during this core socialisation period. It is essential that this is done in a fun and positive way.

Positive exposures need to include new surfaces and textures, too! In this video, we demonstrate how to make exploring to new surfaces enjoyable and rewarding. This can be done both inside and outside the home by creating fun obstacle courses for your pup to investigate at their own pace.

Be sure to not place your pup on the surface and instead let them explore as much as they are comfortable with. Be generous with your treats and toy rewards and never coax your puppy into a situation where they are uncomfortable.





# FIELD TRIP TO THE PARK

This week your field trip is to go to a park with your puppy. If they are old enough you can let them walk on the ground and explore the different textures, such as grass, gravel, metal grates or concrete. You are likely to see other people and dogs as well as novel transport like scooters or skateboards. Give your puppy space and time to explore at their pace. Bicycle racks and benches make great obstacles to have fun exploring and you might find tree trunks or low walls to climb onto as well.

If the park is surrounded by roads you will also be able to introduce your puppy to the sounds and sights of traffic at a distance they are comfortable with.

There are so many fun things to see and do at the park.



**HAPPY TRAINING!**



# PHYSICAL EXERCISE

There are some elements which need to be incorporated into your puppy's day. One of these is physical exercise.

Physical exercise can be human play, playing with toys, going on a walk or playing with other dogs.

It's important not to overdo physical exercise whilst your puppy is still growing as this can cause damage to their joints. Too much exercise will also build an athlete who is unsatisfied unless they get more and more exercise which is not a road you want to go down with your puppy.

Typically 5 minutes per month of age, twice a day is recommended until your puppy is fully grown.

Often people exercise their puppies to try to tire them out so they rest better. Whilst some exercise is needed, physical movement increases adrenaline in the blood stream and can lead to your puppy settling less well if they spend a lot of time doing physical activities. Instead get your puppy engaging in mental activities and enrichment games to help them relax and settle more easily.

When your puppy is physically mature (which could be anywhere from 12 months to 3 years depending on their breed) you will be able to enjoy many physical activities together - like agility, canine parkour, canicross or long woodland hikes.



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# ENRICHMENT PROJECT TRASH BAG CHALLENGE

This week's enrichment project is called the trash bag challenge. Simply take a medium sized paper bag and lace it with treats. Add other items from the recycling like toilet roll tubes, plastic bottles, and food packaging as well as some of your puppy's favourite puzzle feeders, like their stuffed Kong.

You can add some scrunched up paper and lace with more of your puppy's food or treats before placing it down on the ground for your puppy to enjoy.

Watch as they start to unpack the bag and shred the items to access their food. This is a great way to make sure your puppy uses their brain and is a fantastic outlet for natural puppy behaviours too.

Always supervise your puppy with their enrichment and when they are finished put the rubbish into the recycling again.



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# CHEWING PREVENTION

Puppies will naturally put everything in their mouth. They want to learn about the world around them and use their teeth to explore. Up until the age of about 6 months puppies are also teething which means that their gums are sore and they will chew on things to soothe the discomfort.

To prevent puppies from chewing your furniture or favourite shoes we need to set up management like puppy pens or tethers to prevent access and make sure to tidy away everything you don't want your puppy to get hold of.

Make sure to have lots of different toys and objects that your puppy is allowed to chew.. These can include soft plush toys, rope toys, buffalo horns/yak bars and stuffed kongs. You can also freeze a carrot or fleece rope toy soaked in chicken broth to give your puppy to soothe their gums.

If you notice your puppy chewing something you don't want them to, interrupt them by presenting a toy that they can have and wiggling until they show interest. Toss the toy away to encourage your puppy to move away from the item they were chewing. Praise them lots when they get the toy and break into a play session together. It's a good idea to save some toys for this that your puppy loves and doesn't get constant access to.

If they are not interested in the toy, you can always use food instead and play 'get' to move them away from the area where they were chewing. You need to prevent your puppy returning to the same spot to chew again. You can pop your puppy into their pen or safe space or use a tether to restrict their access.

Be consistent and always redirect your puppy onto a suitable chew object any time they are chewing something undesirable.

Prevention is better than cure and excellent management goes a long way.





# INTRO TO CRATE TRAINING

A crate is a great management tool for puppies and introduced correctly will become a space your puppy enjoys spending time in and actively seeks out when they want to rest or have some time away from the rest of the household. Crate training can help speed up the process of teaching your puppy where to go to the toilet, how to relax when you leave them and prevent them from chewing furniture, electric cables or other items if you need to leave the room to go to the bathroom, answer the door or make a coffee.

In this tutorial you are going to learn how to introduce a crate to your puppy and ensure that they LOVE going into it.

To prepare make sure that your puppy's crate is lined with something cosy and soft, like non slip bedding so that it's inviting and warm.

**Step 1** is going to be to have the crate on the floor with you sitting on the floor close by. Allow your puppy to choose to come over and investigate. If your puppy sniffs it or moves to investigate, praise them and reward with some tasty treats too. If your puppy is hesitant don't worry, give them time to go at their own pace and reward them where they are comfortable being. Play is a great way to boost confidence. Either play with their favourite toy nearby the crate or if they are more food motivated you can play with food too, by tossing it to one side for your puppy to go get and when they come back toss a treat to the other side of the crate. At this stage all movement is outside of the crate.

## Step 2

is getting your puppy to happily step into the crate. You can either sprinkle some treats just inside of the crate and let your puppy approach to eat them, or an alternative if you're playing with toys is to toss the toy so it lands partly in the crate and your pup gets to lean inside the crate a little to pick it up.





# INTRO TO CRATE TRAINING

## Step 3

is all about building up **duration**. As your puppy goes into the crate to get a treat they will turn around inside before coming out. At this point meet their nose at the entrance and feed them a bonus treat before they leave. This will extend the time they are in the crate by a second or two. Gradually you can start to feed a couple of treats, one after another in this way to increase duration further. You will find that your puppy chooses to hang out in the crate for longer hoping more treats will be delivered. Continue to build duration in this way using up to 5 small treats each time. You can start to lengthen the time between delivering treats so your puppy remains happily in their crate for longer each time until your puppy is choosing to stay in their crate for 30 seconds.

## Step 4

is all about getting your puppy used to the crate door being moved. To start with you're not closing the door at this stage but simply moving it a little when your puppy is happily eating treats inside the crate. They'll be aware of the sound, vibrations and sight of the crate door moving and should be relaxed throughout. You can then start to close the door over more and practice closing the catch or doing up the zip a little if you have a canvas crate. If your puppy starts to panic or tries to leave it just means you're going too quickly. Drop back a step and help your puppy to build up their confidence more before proceeding.





# INTRO TO CRATE TRAINING

## Step 5

Once you've build up to your puppy being happy to be in their crate whilst you close the door the next stage is building duration so your puppy is happy to relax with their crate door closed. Throughout this stage you are going to be right next to the crate to support your puppy. Set your puppy up with a long lasting chew to enjoy inside the crate, like a bully stick, yak milk chew or a stuffed Kong. Whilst they're settled in their crate you can sit on the sofa next to the crate and either pop on the tv or read a book. You'll want to practice this on several occasions before moving to the next stage.

## Step 6

is all about you moving away from the crate whilst your puppy is relaxing with their chew and it not being a big deal. Whilst your puppy is busy chewing, start to get up and move around the room before sitting back down on the sofa again. Move to different areas of the room and back each time. You don't need to say anything to your puppy as you do this. Pick up a magazine from the table, turn the lights on, switch the tv on or tidy away items. If your puppy watches you at first they will soon get used to things happening around them and go back to their chew instead.

## Step 7

is where you can start to leave the room with your puppy settled in their crate with something to do. Start with short durations, like going to the bathroom, or taking a quick shower and then build up to longer durations. If your puppy can happily settle in their crate for a few minutes, move to 15 minutes, then 30 minutes. Practice increasing the duration gradually in 15 minute intervals and if you're leaving your puppy for any length of time ensure that they have eaten, exercised, had a chance to toilet and are relaxed before you go. We will cover this more in the preventing separation anxiety module.







# INTRODUCTION TO TUG

Playing tug with your puppy can provide a wonderful outlet for their natural desire to grab and pull. You can also use tug to exercise your puppy or as a reward instead of food when training.

Some puppies will happily play tug with any toy, but to start with choose something soft and inviting to chew. Fleece toys are a great choice. Make sure that the toy is long enough for your puppy to feel comfortable playing with and give them plenty of toy to get hold of. 1-3ft is recommended.

To start, get down to your puppy's level and wiggle the toy around or drag it along the floor to spark your puppy's interest. Pretend the toy is alive and it's trying to escape your puppy. Praise and encourage your puppy when they grab the middle part of the toy so they avoid catching your skin accidentally.

If they grab the toy close to your hand, simply grab the other end of the toy to continue play. Be gentle and let your puppy lead the session. Move with them when they tug so that they decide how hard to pull. This is important to prevent injury to their teeth and neck, and it also boosts confidence.

Play for 10-20 seconds at a time and let your puppy win the toy often so that they enjoy playing and want to continue the game. Any time your puppy grabs human skin or clothing— even by accident - the game comes to an end . You can pair the phrase 'tug' or 'get it' with this game so that you can cue them to start tugging. Playing tug is a great way to strengthen your relationship with your puppy.





# RECALL - HIDE AND SEEK

One of the best ways to build a reliable recall is to make it fun, and what better way than to turn it into a game?!

Here you are going to learn how to play hide and seek with your puppy, to strengthen your relationship and boost your puppy's recall.

Start off by distracting your puppy whilst you run off and hide behind a counter, table or door. Call your puppy's name and see how long it takes them to find you...

When they find you, celebrate by rewarding your puppy with treats, fuss and praise, before running off and hiding again. Call out to your puppy and wait for them to come and find you.

Vary your hiding place each time as your puppy will remember! Get creative and involve all the family. This is a great game to build a lasting relationship with your puppy and it's great for making recall exciting.

When your puppy is excellent at this game, start to practice in a larger section of the house. Have different members of the family hide at the same time and have fun calling your puppy between you. Learning should always be fun!





# SETTLE ON A MAT

Often puppies get really excited when they go to new places with interesting distractions or when visitors come to the home. This can lead to some unwanted behaviour like barking or jumping up at you when you're dining out together. The good news is that we can teach your puppy to reliably relax in these situations so you can enjoy going everywhere together.

All you need to do is teach your puppy to go to their mat/place and settle. Settle is where your puppy will lie on the floor in a relaxed down so that their hip touches the ground for a long duration. Your puppy will relax and maybe even fall asleep.

Eventually your puppy will be a master at this and able to settle anywhere including when out at the shopping centre, having dinner at the restaurant, relaxing at the park and even settling around other dogs.

To start with though you're going to train in a quiet area of your home, away from distractions. Grab a soft mat/blanket, some treats and your marker.

When your puppy looks at you, place the mat on the ground in front of you and when they come over to investigate, mark and reward as soon as they show interest. Throw a treat away each time to reset.





# SETTLE ON A MAT

Next mark and reward when any of their paws touch the mat. Initially you can feed them on the mat before throwing a treat away to reset them for the next repetition. If your puppy is struggling, make sure you position the mat directly between you and your puppy as they will be more likely to step on the mat to get nearer to you.

Next wait until 2 paws touch the mat before rewarding, then 3, then 4. Soon your puppy will be running to the mat each time and standing with all 4 paws on it.

Now wait and see if your puppy offers a sit or even a down when they arrive on the mat. If not you can always cue for a couple of repetitions before letting your puppy offer it on their own.

When your puppy is rushing to the mat and automatically going into a down each time you can add the cue 'settle' or 'bed' as they are running towards the mat.

Next you can start to build duration by rewarding your puppy after they have remained in position for a couple of seconds, before gradually lengthening it further. You can start to move a step away before returning and rewarding your puppy if they remain settled. Build up the distance in stages as well as adding in distractions to make sure your puppy's new found skill is reliable everywhere.



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# INTRO TO EYE CONTACT

There are lots of distractions out and about in the world and getting your puppy to want to pay attention to you is so important. One of the games you can play to increase your puppy's focus on you and enable you to get your puppy's attention is the 'Watch Me' game. In this game you are going to learn how to teach your puppy to make and hold eye contact so that they can engage with you, even when there are big distractions around.

To start with show your puppy a tasty treat and hold it to the side of your head. Make sure there is enough of a gap between the treat and your eyes, so that you can tell if your puppy is looking at the treat or gazing at you. Wait for your puppy to look away from the food and towards you before you mark and reward them with the treat in your hand.

Soon your puppy will realise that to unlock the treat all they need to do is look at you and make eye contact. When your puppy is making quick eye contact every time you can start to introduce a verbal cue - 'watch me'. Say the cue just before you raise your hand. When your puppy makes eye contact, mark and reward.

After several repetitions your puppy will understand that the cue 'watch me' means make eye contact. At this stage you don't need to continue using your hand signal and you can start to test your puppy's understanding when you don't use a visual prompt.

Start to encourage your puppy to hold eye contact for a longer duration, by waiting for longer before marking and rewarding. Your puppy should keep eye contact until you mark. It's ok to drop back to an easier step if your puppy is struggling at any point. If they do well with this, try it when they are facing away from you. In real life situations your puppy will be looking at something else when you cue them to watch, so be sure to practice in a variety of scenarios and reward your puppy generously, every time they are successful.

