



CAR & VEHICLE EXPOSURE

Socialising your puppy to the sight and sounds of cars and traffic is really important whether you live in the city or countryside. Take your puppy to a quiet street or car park and watch the passing vehicles. Make sure you are at a distance your puppy feels relaxed and safe.

You can spend time searching for treats as cars go by, or just sit together and watch as they pass. You can feed them a treat every time a car passes to build up a great association. As your puppy gets used to the sound, sight and smell of the traffic, you can start to venture to busier locations and along roads where the cars travel faster and make more noise.

Another aspect of introducing your puppy to cars is to make sure they experience plenty of short and happy car rides with you. Your puppy will need a safe travel area in your car which could be a crate or seatbelt harness. Settle your puppy into the car and head out for a mini drive together. Make sure to keep it short to start with and you can build up to longer drives over time. Whenever you are able to, drive to fun places to explore together. Take things steady and build up at your puppy's pace.



HAPPY TRAINING!



OUT FOR LUNCH FIELD TRIP

This week's field trip is to take your puppy out to lunch. They will get to experience lots of interesting things, such as people walking by, the sounds and smells of the restaurant as well as the different floor textures, glass doors, sounds of cutlery, laughter, clinking glasses and kitchen noise.

Getting your puppy used to the hustle and bustle of a restaurant is essential if you want to be able to take them with you for meals out with friends instead of leaving them at home. There is no better age to start this than when your puppy is young and happy to investigate new places and experiences.

If this is your first visit to a restaurant, choose somewhere to sit that is near the outside of the room, so that your puppy won't feel overwhelmed by things happening on all sides. If they do show signs of concern, increase the distance further or consider coming back at a quieter time. Bring something fun and relaxing, like a stuffed kong for your puppy to do whilst you are eating.



HAPPY TRAINING!



SLEEPING & NIGHT TIME ROUTINE

Puppies need to sleep for approximately 18 hours a day. If puppies don't get enough sleep you will start to see unwanted behaviour like increased mouthing and biting, barking and zoomies.

Make sure your puppy has a safe space to relax away from the busy areas of the home and prevent people from disturbing your puppy while they are resting. It should be warm and cosy, with soft blankets inside. If using a crate cover with a blanket too, to make it like a den.

Always make sure your puppy has access to fresh water throughout the day and night. When it comes to a night time routine, it is important to set your puppy up for a restful night's sleep. You want your puppy to be relaxed and ready for sleep and having a bedtime routine can really help. The first step is to do some calm training with your puppy that gets them using their brain without moving about too much. Great options include teaching sit, down or a hand target.



HAPPY TRAINING!



SLEEPING & NIGHT TIME ROUTINE

Next take your puppy out to toilet before settling them down in their sleeping area with a chew item. This will relax them so they'll drift off to sleep in no time.

For the first few nights when your puppy comes home you will need to be with them throughout the night. This can be you sleeping by their pen or they could sleep in a crate/soft bed next to your bed. Either way you need to be on hand to comfort and support them through the first nights in their new home. Never leave them to cry it out as this can be very damaging. Having a blanket that smells like their littermates can help them to settle, as well as a worn t-shirt that smells like you.

Whilst very young your puppy will probably need to go to the toilet in the night. Set your alarm and take your puppy out to toilet before going back to bed again. If you are unable to get up and take your puppy out, you need to provide them with an indoor toilet zone in their pen so that they can go if they need to. Setting things up right will make such a difference.



HAPPY TRAINING!



ENRICHMENT PROJECT

THE BURRITO

This week's enrichment challenge is called the burrito! A great way to get your pup thinking and trying something new, this enrichment game is perfect for teaching your pup to problem solve whilst making mealtimes more fun and enjoyable.

To start, get a small towel and some of your puppy's food. You want to sprinkle the treats across the towel as you roll up. Make sure some of them are near to the edges to help your puppy get started.

When you've created your burrito simply give to your puppy on the floor or in their puppy pen and watch the fun unfold. Remember these activities are also great to set up outside of meal times. Enrichment games are perfect for keeping your puppy occupied and happy when visitors come over, when you're sitting down to a meal and at other times when your puppy has a bit of extra energy.

To make it more of a challenge you can fold the burrito up or place it in another container for your puppy to pull it out of. There is so much fun to be had with enrichment!



HAPPY TRAINING!



PREVENTING FOOD BOWL GUARDING

In this guide you are going to learn how to prevent your puppy from feeling the need to guard their food bowl. Sometimes dogs can become fearful of losing access to things they value the most and this causes them to become defensive. A dog who guards their food bowl might start to freeze position, growl, snap or even bite if you come too close. This behaviour is a result of feeling anxious and worried about losing something important to them.

In order to prevent this ever occurring with your puppy there are a couple of things you should do. At mealtimes when your puppy is eating, practice sitting with them. The aim is to hang out together nice and calmly. You can feed your puppy their food in multiple smaller portions so that when their bowl is empty you can lift it up and add more food before giving it back to them. This will help your puppy to see it's great to have you nearby at mealtimes.

You can even teach your puppy to have good manners around the bowl. To do this just wait until your puppy sits before lowering the bowl to the ground. Your puppy should stay sitting until you release them to eat their food. Having your puppy nice and calm around their food bowl will also lessen the likelihood of bowl related issues developing.

When your puppy is relaxed with you being nearby at mealtimes you can also start to approach them whilst they are eating and add extra bonuses to their bowl each time. This will teach them that people approaching is never something to be worried about. These tips will help ensure your puppy never becomes concerned about people being nearby when they're eating.





INTRODUCTION TO LOOSE LEAD WALKING

Teaching your puppy to walk nicely on a loose lead is really useful, whether you live in a busy city environment, or the rural countryside. Walks are so much more enjoyable when your puppy is relaxed and focused and you're not being pulled down the street. Before you get started, decide which side you would like your puppy to walk on, and which hand feels the most natural to hold the lead.

Set yourself up with treats on the same side as your puppy, so that you can deliver them with the hand closest to them. Whenever you reward your puppy, make sure it's in the zone right beside your leg, where you want your puppy to be the most. Creating a zone where you reward every time will make your puppy more likely to remain in this place right beside you.

To start with, you're going to turn away from your puppy, and take a step. As your puppy turns and steps with you mark for a loose lead and reward beside your leg. Be generous with your rewards so that your puppy loves playing this game. Next you're going to start moving forward together, reward for every step to begin with, and gradually increase the distance you walked together before rewarding.



HAPPY TRAINING!



INTRODUCTION TO LOOSE LEAD WALKING

When your puppy is doing really well with this, they will start to hang out next to you more. They will anticipate rewards being delivered and this will cause them to look up at you. Mark and reward for eye contact, every time your puppy offers it.

Now that they're doing really well with their loose lead walking, you can start to add in turns. Practice first turning away from your puppy, as you're moving and reward them in position. Next, introduce turns towards your puppy too. These are harder as your puppy has to really watch where you're going. When your puppy is doing really well with this, you can add the next stage.

You're going to teach them to stop and sit, when you stop moving. Practice asking your puppy to sit as soon as you come to a halt. Mark and reward every time they do it right. After a few repetitions, see if your puppy offer a sit when you stop.

When they get really good at offering a sit as soon as you stop moving you can start to practice in more distracting environments. Reward them for remaining focused on you throughout. You can start to practice in different locations, with more and more going on around them.



HAPPY TRAINING!



INTRODUCTION TO LEAVE IT

Leave it is a great behaviour if you drop something on the floor which you don't want your puppy to pick up, or if you'd like them to look at you instead of staring at another dog. The long term goal is that your dog looks at you instead of going after whatever has gotten their interest in the environment.

To teach your puppy this game you are going to start out with a piece of your dog's regular kibble in one hand and a higher value reward in the other. Have your clicker in the high value treat hand or use your verbal marker in this game. Make a fist with your palm facing upwards and the kibble inside. Offer towards your puppy and let them investigate. They will sniff, lick nibble or paw at your hand but wait until they make even the slightest movement away from your hand. Mark and reward with a high value treat from the other hand.

Reset your hands and repeat the game. Reward your puppy every time they move away from the kibble hand. Soon your puppy will realise that the reward for moving away is far better than the kibble and they will be quicker every time. If your puppy chooses to stay away from your hand when you offer it, this is a great sign your puppy has gotten the idea. The next stage is to bring your kibble hand in front of you and open it slightly - like a cage around the food. Your puppy can see the food but if they try to come and take the food simply close your hand. If they stay where they are, or back away from the kibble, mark and reward with a higher value treat.



HAPPY TRAINING!



INTRODUCTION TO LEAVE IT

From here progress to having your hand open fully. As soon as your puppy sees the food, if they remain where they are or back up, mark and reward. If they try to approach, close your hand quickly to prevent them taking the kibble.

Gradually, you can start to lower your hand with kibble to the floor in stages, marking and rewarding your puppy for choosing not to approach the food each time. Progress to putting the kibble on the floor with your hand close by- cover up if your puppy approaches, and reward your puppy where they are, with a high value treat if they stay away.

When your puppy is really good you can add a cue word if you'd like to. Say the cue 'leave it' as you place the kibble on the floor, before rewarding your puppy with something better if they stay away from the food on the ground.

Don't rely on the cue word too much - you want your puppy to offer to leave things through choice as much as possible. You won't always be aware of things in the environment that could be dangerous so teaching your puppy to naturally avoid them and look to you is the best option.

Set them up to make good choices and manage situations so they can't pick up undesirable objects or food throughout the day. Let them know what they can have by pointing it out and encouraging them to investigate. This skill can totally save your puppy's life one day, so make sure you practice lots and make it easy and fun so that your puppy LOVES to play this game!





INTRODUCTION TO STAY

In this guide you are going to learn how to teach your puppy to hold a position for a period of time. This is useful if you want to take your puppy to a café and have peace of mind knowing that they will stay on their bed whilst you collect a coffee from the counter. Although it's not a separate action you can still teach your puppy a cue for this to give them context and build up the expectation that you are moving away for a while but will be coming back.

To begin, cue your puppy to do a sit or down. Mark and reward them when they get into position. To build up duration you can reward multiple times. Gradually start to increase the duration between each treat being delivered until your puppy can remain in position for several seconds.

Now start to increase the difficulty. Turn your body in one direction and back again between treats. If your puppy is still in position, reward again when you are facing them. Make sure to feed them in the same position each time, rather than getting them to get up between each repetition. Step this up to turning further away and back before rewarding, until you can fully turn on the spot and your puppy stays where they are.

Now you can start to practice taking one step away before returning and rewarding if they stay. Change the direction you step away each time. You can start to move further away or add extra distractions like jumping on the spot or picking up and placing down objects. Reward your puppy generously every time they get it right.

When they are able to stay in position with you moving in different directions even with distractions you can add the cue 'stay'. Simply say the word before you go and when your puppy is successful, reward them when you get back. If your puppy is struggling at any point you can drop back to an easier stage again.





POLITE HUMAN GREETINGS

When it comes to greeting people, puppies often become very excited. This can lead to them jumping up at strangers, which is easily rewarded accidentally by people who continue to pet your puppy. Instead of having your puppy practice undesirable behaviour you can teach them to greet people by keeping their paws on the ground, or even sitting calmly throughout.

To do this you first need to get the person approaching your puppy to stop and pay attention. When they call out to see if they can say hello to your puppy, tell them to stop using a visual signal as well as calling out to them. This is really effective at getting them to stop approaching. Say that your puppy is in training and you need to get them to focus on you first.

Decide if you want your puppy to interact. Look at your dog to see if they are calm and focused, or if they are too excited and wiggly. If they can sit and focus on you, ask them and then continually reward them whilst you explain to the person what to do next.

Get the person to approach slowly and let them know where to pet your dog and that they should move away if your puppy gets up at any point. Continuously reward your puppy by letting them nibble on a treat in your hand throughout. Keep it really short and turn your puppy away as the interaction finishes before moving away, to prevent them jumping up at the person when they leave.

Practice a lot and your puppy will get really good. You can then start to have short breaks between treats so that your puppy has a chance to choose how to interact. You want to avoid getting other people to feed your puppy as this will only make people more interesting and for a social puppy this could cause them to become overexcited around strangers.





PUPPY PUSH UPS

Now that your puppy has been introduced to a few different behaviours you can start to test their understanding of the cues and mix things up a little.

Choose 3 behaviours your puppy knows really well, for example sit, down and nose target. You are going to cue each in turn and reward your puppy every time they get it right.

Mix up the order so your puppy can't guess what is coming up next. If you have taught a hand signal and separate verbal cue for each behaviour, practice each separately and see how reliable they are.

If your puppy is doing really well, get them to do more than one behaviour in a row before rewarding. Be sure to take their training out on the road too, to help your puppy generalise their skills.



HAPPY TRAINING!