

# House Training

Perhaps the most important of all the information I have provided you!

Puppies have a strong natural instinct to avoid soiling their own area. If you are consistent and patient, this natural urge for cleanliness makes house training fairly easy. You can begin training any time after five weeks of age. A little extra effort and patience in puppy-hood will make the difference later on between a happy, cooperative pet and one that causes problems for you.

## Establish a teacher-learner relationship

Use two types of rewards-praise and petting. When your puppy asks for attention, you probably respond by petting, which is only natural. Begin using these requests to show that you are the teacher and your puppy is the learner. It may sound silly but it's important to establish this relationship early in puppy-hood.

Puppies need to make the connection that outside is where they 'go'. Do not play with your puppy outside for the first few weeks. Outside is for 'potty' only. Once you see the light go on that the pup is making that association by going to the door and immediately relieving themselves, then you can spend some fun time out of doors. Until then refrain from confusing the message.

Consistent treatment from the whole family makes for a better adjusted, happier pet. Insist that your pet *earn* praise.

## Teaching where to go

At first, feed at least three times a day. All dogs do not have the same digestive rates-you may need to feed your puppy as often as five times a day in order to avoid overloading his system and causing loose, difficult-to-control bowel movements. When you find the right schedule, the result is a dog that eats and then has a bowel movement within a few minutes.

Feed indoors. In a crate. Remember, dogs do not like to eliminate where they eat.

Right after your dog finishes eating, take him to his toilet area, enthusiastically! Have him go ahead of you if possible. Then let him sniff around for a good spot. I usually use a 'phrase' Go Potty..Go Outside...whatever you want. I do not play with them only encourage the function. After he goes to the bathroom, crouch down and praise the puppy. "good girl/boy". If your dog sniffs it, praise and pet him enthusiastically and immediately go in the house.

Take your puppy outside

- After waking up, even from a nap
- After extreme excitement
- After drinking water
- After prolonged chewing on a toy, etc.

If he starts sniffing around the house for a good spot

In about four days your pup should automatically head for his proper place after meals or whenever the urge strikes. If it takes longer, be patient.

After this stage of house training, your puppy knows where to go, but not when to go. Do not try to teach self-control (the "when" part) until you can be sure he will always head for the door when it's time to go.

### **Teaching when to go**

To teach self-control, you must keep feeding times consistent. Don't feed at 7:30 a.m. on weekdays and then sleep in on Sunday--you'll ruin the whole program. Dogs can control their urine for as long as thirteen hours when they need to as ADULTS, puppies will go much more frequently. To teach self-control, you should try to let your dog outdoors only at times when you are ordinarily home to do so and start to cut back water after a certain time in the evening.

Given a little blanket as a bed, most puppies soon learn to sleep through the entire night.

### **How to deal with mistakes**

Old fashioned house training methods tell us to grab the puppy, show him the mess and punish him. This is not necessary and probably harmful. Instead, if you discover an accident, just say "ugh" disgustedly and whisk puppy out to his proper toilet area. Leave him there while you clean up the mess. Make sure he cannot see you cleaning up. Strangely, many dogs find it rewarding to watch their owner picking up stools or cleaning urine, and often leave another such gift as soon as they can. Because puppies seem to enjoy this game, it is a good idea to have them watch you clean up after they go to the bathroom in the correct place.

To discourage repeat visits, accidents must be cleaned up well enough to completely eliminate odor. After blotting and cleaning as best you can with paper towels, soak the stained area with an enzymatic cleaner. Let it remain on the stain 30 minutes or longer, blot up the liquid, and if still necessary, use regular rug cleaner afterwards. To work properly, the enzyme cleaner must be used before using regular rug cleaner.

**Taking your new puppy home** is very exciting. Here are a few reminders of what we talked about today.

**Do not** change your puppy's food. If you must, wait at least a month or so after he/she has settled in and do it gradually.

Make your veterinary appointment for the health exam, it should be done within 48 hours of taking the pup home. If you will be using Dr. Bill Patterson, of Patterson Veterinary Hospital, it is not necessary to do the 48 hour exam.

I know it is tempting to want everyone to see your new puppy. But remember this is an

INFANT dog. Let it get settled in before you start taking him or her out to visit and limit the amount of visitors to your home in the first week.

You should however, socialize your puppy continuously, do not keep him locked in the house with the only trips out of boundary are the vet or the groomer. Utilize daycare and take the pups for walks. This will make leaving your pup in the care of others during vacations or emergencies a routine experience. As a boarding kennel and daycare operator I see what a HUGE difference it makes in pets!

**Your puppy is going through many changes.**

He is now separated from his sibling's; learning to sleep alone, this is a big adjustment it will take 3 nights to get over the crying at night.

You are teaching him 'potty rules'.

He is learning a new name.

He is learning about each of the family members, just like you are learning about him.

He is learning a new 'routine' of eating and sleeping.

He is going outside, he may have never been outside before you took him home, depending on the time of year.

Maintain as much consistency as you can during his first few days at home. Keep things steady and calm.

Remember he is a BABY and needs his sleep time. Explain this to young children.

**ALWAYS monitor young kids and puppies; someone may unintentionally get seriously injured.**

Young children should be taught to sit on the floor to interact with the puppy. They should not be allowed to pick them up and carry them around. We do not warranty puppies dropped on their heads! It has happened.

And finally if you have ANY questions whatsoever please CALL me...my job does not end when you walk out the door. I am available to help you work out any issues you may have.