# *How To Train*
# YOUR PUPPY

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# You and Your Puppy

Getting a new puppy is a fun and interesting time. You probably went to a breeder or pet store or maybe just saw an ad on the Internet or the newspaper, for puppies, and decided just to check it out. Before you knew it those little eyes and fluffy puppy fur had your heart melting and you were headed home with him or her in your arms. If you are like most new pet owners you had visions of playing fetch with your dog, of watching him frolic at the lake, and of cuddling up on cold nights.

However, you probably failed to realize that the behaviors you dream of in a dog do not come naturally. In fact, the more natural behaviors for most puppies include lovely little things like chewing up your favorite shoes, barking every second of the day, and peeing wherever they are when the mood strikes them. These behaviors might seem cute at first, or even manageable but, if left unchecked they can lead to a very bad adult dog.

The problem with puppies that are not trained is that they grow into untrained dogs. An untrained dog can be a nuisance. All of that cute little yipping can quickly become loud barking that keeps you and your neighbors up for nights on end. The little teeth marks in your shoes can turn into destroyed furniture and a destroyed home before you know it. Likewise, those cute little puppy poops are not so cute when the dog is 75 pounds and has the excrement to match.

Untrained dogs can also be very dangerous. All dogs can bite. It is in their nature to defend with everything they have, including their teeth. You have to teach your dog not to use their teeth so that no one winds up hurt, at least not when they are playing with them. While we all expect our dog to protect us in a worst-case scenario

situation, you should train your dog to be non-confrontational. Dogs that pose a danger to the community are at risk of being put down.

In addition dogs that are problematic for any of the reasons listed above often wind up homeless. People grow tired of dogs that never grow up, and then they take those dogs to the shelter. We all know how sad life can be for a shelter dog and the end that many of those dogs meet. If you really love your new puppy and intent to have a long and happy life with it, train her. By training your dog you teach her how to live in your world and increase the likelihood that your life together will be long and happy for the both of you.

Dogs have been domesticated around the world for more the 15,000 years. Because of this long term of human companionship the puppy that you adopt today needs you. Dogs are not truly able to live by themselves in the wild. They are not adapted to living outside and foraging for food. Indeed the dog you adopt today needs you and years to please you. That desire to please their master is the reason that dogs are so easily trainable.

The dogs that we have as pets have what is called social intelligence. This enables them to read your visual and verbal cues and adapt their behavior to it. While each dog will train at a different pace and through different ways, nearly all domestic dogs are trainable.

Just like humans, dogs go through a series of cognitive development. Puppies, like babies, learn to interact with the world around them at around eight weeks of age. They will also mimic behaviors early in life, so if you have one well behaved dog your puppy can learn from it.

If this is your only canine do not worry, they will also learn by watching you. Just like parenting, dog training is something that

often happens while you are paying attention to other things. So, those first few months that you have a puppy are an incredibly important time to really focus on training your dog. It can be a lot of work but in the end both you and your dog will be happier.

# Housebreaking Your Puppy

Easily the most important and first thing you will do is potty training. Your dog knows no difference between the inside of your house and the backyard. As far as they are concerned there are very few places that are not acceptable place to pee or poop. You probably have very different ideas. It should be relatively easy for you to train your dog to go outside if you are willing to follow the steps given here.

As you begin this process you may have to cut those close and cuddly ties you have already established with your puppy. To housebreak a puppy you will need to keep him confined to a small area, not your lap, in the home. While this may seem like punishment remember that dogs were once den dwelling animals. They like their crate or doghouse it makes them feel secure. They also want your praise, so by training them you will be able to give them the praise that they desperately want.

## Puppy Housebreaking Step By Step

- Get a crate or kennel for your puppy. When you are not actively engaged in playing with or walking your puppy he should be in a crate. This includes overnight and while you are not home. The puppy should not expect, nor should he be given free run of your home. This will give him an early sense of dominance and make it harder to train him. In

addition, most dogs will not eliminate in their kennels, so you reduce the risk of an in home accident. The crate should be large enough for your dog to sit up, stand, and turn around. Too large of a crate is not going to make your dog feel secure and too small will be uncomfortable. Since your dog will likely get larger you may have to invest in successively larger kennels. Maintain them well and you should be able to sell them online or at a yard sale. Your local dog shelter would probably love a donation of an old kennel if you are so inclined.

- Plan to have someone with your puppy most of the time. You should not get a puppy the day before you leave on a two week vacation. The best time to get a puppy is Friday after work so you have at least two full days to spend solely on housebreaking. Most of your time should be spent around the house with your new dog making him feel comfortable and getting him on a puppy schedule.

- Purchase training supplies. You will need treats, and lots of them for housebreaking and other behavioral training. Buy a large supply and a wide variety of treats. There are all sorts of different kinds available, make sure to get ones that your little puppy can handle chewing up. You might even cut up the treats into small, bite sized pieces. There are treat bags that you can purchase that will clip to your belt or pocket, but a sandwich bag that is sealed works just as well. You probably do not want to just keep them in your pocket because the dog will smell them and will not leave you alone.

- When it comes to potty training you will also want a stopwatch or timer, if there is one on your oven or cell phone that will also work fine. Some people, especially apartment dwellers with small dogs use pee pee pads. It seems a little

gross, but can be a necessity if you live in an apartment where going downstairs constantly can be a hassle. There are some good grass beds available that are an alternative to pee pee pads. They are much more appealing to look at and to smell. This is also a good choice if your puppy will use your balcony to relieve himself. Neither of these are good options if your puppy will eventually be a medium to large sized dog. Big dogs equal big puddles and big poops, the pads and grass beds are not large enough to handle it.

- Come up with a schedule. The rule of thumb is that a puppy can hold it for one hour for every month of age plus one hour. If your dog is two months old he should be able to hold it for three hours. However, this does not mean you should wait three hours before taking him out. Instead you should start feeding and watering the dog at the same time every day. Some people choose to feed dogs twice a day, some once. Your dog will let you know which it prefers. Each time you feed the dog he should be given a set amount of time, maybe fifteen to thirty minutes to eat and then the food should be taken away.

- After the dog has eaten he should immediately be taken out to go potty. YOU choose the area of your lawn that you want him to use as a toilet and take him to that area. Walk the dog around the area and use a cue phrase that suits you like "Go Potty" or "Do Your Business." These cues will get engrained in your dog and he will react to them throughout his life. Make sure that everyone in the household who will take the dog out uses the same cue phrase.

- Continue using your cue phrase while the puppy goes potty, until he is completely finished. Once he is done praise him and give him affection and a small treat. If he does not go

potty within five minutes take him back inside and put him in his kennel. Wait fifteen to twenty minutes and try it again.

- Throughout the day you will need to repeat this process once every hour, even when your puppy has not eaten. Each time your puppy has s successful potty venture praise him and allow him to have some supervised play time.

- At bedtime your puppy should be locked in his kennel. While he is still young you might want to move the kennel into your bedroom at night, to make both the puppy and yourself feel more secure. Do not feed or give and water to your puppy near bedtime and try to get him to go potty before you turn in. However, when he is small you may want to set an alarm to go off at least once during the night so that you may take your puppy out to the potty area.

With few exceptions this plan should work to have your puppy trained within a few days. If you still have problems you may need to adjust your schedule so that it better suits his needs. Remember that even the best trained dogs have accidents while they are young, so be patient. Keep a good supply of floor and carpet cleaner on hand to deal with any messes the puppy might make in those first few years. Also, never demean or punish your puppy for accidents. They are just that, accidents. He is not purposely disobeying you. All he wants is your love and approval, the more of that you are able to give to him the more he will behave in a positive manner.

## Kennel Training Your Puppy

As you are housebreaking your puppy you will also be training him to stay in a kennel or crate. A lot of people think the kennel is

a punishment for a poorly behaved dog, but that is not at all the case. The kennel is his very own space. He will enjoy it and probably spend time in the kennel even when the door is open.

Training your dog to stay in a kennel when you are not home or are asleep saves a great deal of anxiety for both you and your new pet. As stated before, dogs are den dwelling animals. The feel of a small space is comforting to them. You may even want to cover a wire cage so that he feels even more secure inside it. Dogs also have no sense of time. That is why they are always excited to see you, whether you have been gone ten minutes or ten hours. When they are in the kennel all they will do is sleep. When you are not home and they are out of the kennel they will either sleep or get into trouble. Putting the puppy in a kennel saves them from getting into trouble.

Kennel training your dog is also a great step in avoiding unwanted behaviors like digging in garbage cans, chewing on non-toys, and climbing on furniture. It also protects him from getting in a dangerous situation in your home. Dogs will eat things they are not supposed to eat or get trapped in small places very easily. Puppies are in even greater danger because of their small size and lack of depth perception, so a kennel is really a safety precaution.

There are two standard types of dog kennels, the wire mesh ones and the plastic kind. Both are good choices for your dog. If you plan to travel by plane with your puppy you might want to invest in an airline approved crate, which typically is the plastic kind. The wire mesh ones are collapsible which makes them easy to move and to clean.

When you first bring the puppy home he might not readily go into the kennel. Make it appealing by placing treats or toys inside. Again, use a simple command like “inside” or “kennel up” repeatedly until your dog goes in the kennel. Once he is inside

reward him with praise and a treat. You will be surprised to find that after a while you will not even need to give the command. Your dog will pick up on cues like putting on your coat, or grabbing your keys and purse and go into the kennel on his own.

Do not be alarmed if your dog whines a little bit when he is inside the kennel. It is not because he wants out, rather because he wants you inside with him. Dogs crave your constant attention, but he needs to learn to be comfortable by himself and in his own space. You might go over and offer him a few comforting words, but do not sit nervously by him or let him out when he behaves this way. Doing that will only enforce the whining and he will train you instead of you training him.

Some people choose to place a dog bed or blanket inside the kennel to make him more comfortable. As your dog gets older and larger he might not need the blanket, especially if you live in a hot climate. But, while he is a puppy it is a great comfort item. You might even put in a piece of clothing that smells like you to give him more comfort. Some people recommend keeping water in the kennel or feeding the puppy in it. The choice is up to you, but be aware that both of these have the potential to create quite a big mess.

One of the best ways to make sure your puppy is comfortable is to keep him near you. The kennel should be strategically placed in an area that the family hangs out in most of the time. The family room is a good choice as opposed to a bedroom that is often empty. Having the kennel in the family room will encourage your puppy to sit in there while the rest of you are watching television or having other family time. If you do not like the look of a kennel consider dressing it up so that it fits with your decor better. You can easily cut a piece of wood to fit the top of it and then place a tablecloth or other fabric over it. Then it simply looks like an end table and not a dog kennel in your living room.

A puppy should never be in the kennel for more then eight hours at a time. If this means that you have to come home at lunch or wake up during the night to let the dog out, then you must do those things. Think about that time commitment before you bring the dog home. Also, the kennel should never be a place of punishment. When your dog is put in the kennel he should go in happily, knowing that you will be back and that he is not in trouble.

## Clicker-Training Your Puppy

Training your puppy with a clicker is one of the most effective and easy ways to teach him how to behave. It is also the most humane way to train a dog because it centers on positive reinforcement rather then punishment. The process is a fairly simple one of clicking when your puppy exhibits the behaviors that you request and then rewarding him with a treat and positive words.

Clicker training has been used on a wide variety of animals, beginning with pigeons and including dogs, whales, bears, lions, and even cats. For all of these animals the process is the same a verbal command is added to a click and eventually the animal does not need the click anymore, just the verbal cue. It is a form of conditioning your dog to do the things that you want him to do and to avoid behaviors that you do not like. The clicker is a tool that helps to train your dog; it does not do the training for you. However, the use of a clicker over other forms of training has been shown to reduce, by about a third the amount of time it takes to train.

The clicker is a tiny toy that you can purchase at any pet store. They are very inexpensive, so buy a few and keep them on hand at all times. Teach each member of the family how to use the clicker

properly to train your puppy. Other then the clicker you will need a steady supply of treats to help get your training off the ground.

Clicker training can be used to teach any sort of behavior. Here is an example of how to train your puppy to sit with a clicker. Teaching a dog to sit is an essential part of helping him understand who is in charge in the household and how he should behave to get your attention.

## Training Your Puppy To Sit With A Clicker

- Choose your cue word or phrase and a hand motion that will accompany it. 'Sit' is a good phrase, for obvious reasons. You will also want a hand motion, perhaps and open hand, with your palm facing down making a downward, gentle motion.

- Give your puppy the command and the hand motion at the same time. You will probably have to do this repeatedly to get the puppy to actually sit. He may even need some gentle assistance placing his hind on the floor.

- As soon as your puppy sits, click the behavior and then give him a treat. The click indicates to him that he has done the right thing. He hears the cue, does the behavior and hears the click, and gets a treat.

- Repeat the training with your puppy regularly for several weeks. He will not get it the first time and will need it to be done repeatedly until he understand the verbal and visual cue to sit.

- After several days of training, do not always reward him with

a treat. Sometimes just give him verbal praise and some love in the form of a pat on the head and a ‘good boy.’ He has to learn to do the requested behaviors even if he is not rewarded with a food treat.

- Eventually you will be able to request behaviors without the clicker. Your dog should quickly learn to respond to your visual cue. He will even learn to respond to just your physical cue as long as you have maintained consistency in those cues.

Clicker training can be used to teach your dog all kinds of tricks and behaviors. Your dog will be able to sit, lie down, and even go inside the kennel with the use of a clicker. It can all be accomplished without ever having to punish your dog or to hit or otherwise demoralize him. Dogs, like children react to your attention whether it is negative or positive reinforcement. When your puppy does well he is rewarded with affection and a treat. When he does not do what you want he gets nothing. When he exhibits behaviors that you do not want, ignore him and those behaviors will go away.

Puppies are like sponges, you can train them to do anything you want. Some people train their dogs to ring a bell when they want to be let out or let in to the house. You can train him to sit next to his food and wait until you give him permission to eat. The more time you spend training your dog the more he will enjoy learning new things because he will know that he has pleased you.

## Walking Your Puppy

Teaching a dog to walk on a leash is not always an easy task. It is in the dog’s nature to want to wander off and sniff everything that comes in his path. However, this behavior is not conducive to a

pleasant and athletic walk. You, his master, have to strike the balance between allowing him to explore his world and walking in a controlled way.

The first thing you will need to do is purchase an appropriate leash for your dog. Make sure that it is the right weight according to how much your dog weighs right now. Even if he will eventually be 75 pounds, he will not be able to handle a heavy leash while he is still small. The next thing to choose is a collar for walking. Some people use harnesses are leaders that attach around his head and snout. Both of these products can help you better control your dog in a humane and safe way. Choker collars are not recommended for any breed of dog, as there is significant danger of hurting the animal. If your dog is small a simple collar and your leash might be plenty. However, you will want to use the same type of device, like a harness or leader, which you will use when he is bigger.

One of the important steps to ensuring that your walk is pleasant is to try to get your dog to do his 'number two' business before you leave your home. If he learns that the walk is the time to go to the potty then you will almost always be stuck carrying around a bag of his waste on your walks. He should learn to potty in a specified spot in your yard. Of course, to be on the safe side you should always carry a bag with you for picking up any potential dog droppings.

The part of the training process is time consuming and requires a great deal of patience. Do not expect your first walk to be a long one, distance wise at least. Think of it as a training session that requires lots of stopping and starting to get it right.

## Training Your Dog to Walk On a Leash

- Choose a side that you want your dog to walk on. He should always walk on the side that you choose, either right or left, Keep in mind that this behavior will stay with him so make sure that you are comfortable with the position of the leash and your arms.

- Take a few steps with your dog, when he begins to pull stop and make him sit. Reward him with praise for sitting and then start again.

- Each time he begins to pull on the leash, repeat the stop and sit pattern. This might mean you only manage to take a few steps before you have to stop and begin again.

- Allow your dog to veer off the path, as long as he does not pull and smell things. He or she will also occasionally mark with their urine, this is normal behavior, allow them to do it as long as it does not become constant.

- When your dog stays with you, at your side and keeping pace reward him with praise and a treat. Remember he wants to please you; he just has to be taught how to do that.

- When you come upon other people or dogs your puppy may experience anxiety, which will cause him to pull or bark. Reassure him with affection that he is ok and that you are there with him. If he gets too excited have him sit and wait for people to pass.

- Children are always especially interested in puppies and it is in your best interest to teach your dog how to interact with them. But, you have to be in control of the situation. If you are comfortable with it you may allow others to pet your dog, but make him sit and behave while they do it.

- You should walk your dog at least twice a day, if not more while he is young. This will help him get used to walking and allow him to burn energy.

As your dog gets older you may consider allowing him to walk off leash. Do this with great care, especially when cars are around. Even the most well trained dog is still an animal and as such, is unpredictable. You would not want anything bad to happen to your dog because he was off leash in an unsafe area.

## Barking and Your Puppy

Dogs like to bark, it makes them feel powerful and in control of their surroundings. However, barking can be a nuisance that you need to control in order to keep a happy dog and household. By training your dog to ‘speak’ on command he will be less likely to do it without being instructed to do so. Barking is your dogs' warning system, so when he barks when he wants in or to warn you, praise him for one bark. This should teach him that barking once gets your affection but barking excessively only gets him ignored.

Dogs should not be left outside unattended. While a lot of people see nothing wrong with leaving a dog in a fenced yard while they are at work or away from the house, it is not the best choice for your dog. Your domesticated dog needs you, when you are not around he will feel anxious which will cause him to bark excessively. He might even exhibit other behaviors like digging or finding ways to escape your yard. A dog that is comfortable and loved is not left outside unattended.

One of the easy ways to manage your dogs barking is to

understand why he does it. Many people experience the problem of their dog barking whenever someone walks by the front window of their home. Dogs do this because they are territorial, when they bark at people walking by their intention is to scare them away. Any person who is just walking by your house will continue their walk because; obviously they are not scared of a dog that is inside the house. Your dog does not understand this concept. He thinks that because the person continued to walk, that he must have scared them away. This enforces his idea that the barking works, so he will continue to do it.

The best way to manage this behavior is to teach your puppy that his barking, in fact, does not work. You will need to enlist the help of some friends who are not familiar with your dog to teach him not to bark. Have those people walk by your house when the dog is looking. When he starts barking they should stop and continue standing in front of your house. The dog will quickly realize that his barking did not work, but also that someone on the sidewalk is not a threat.

Training a dog not to bark can be tricky, since dogs are also a good warning system should someone come into our home uninvited. There is a fine line between teaching your dog to behave and still allowing him to be protective of you and your home. When the puppy exhibits behaviors that are meant to protect you and your family, or his pack, reward him with praise. He should learn the difference between this and unwanted behavior fairly quickly.

# Conclusion

Now that you have taken the time and spent the money to get a new puppy you should also take the time to train him. A well-trained dog makes for a happy home. Your dog does not have to do a bunch or tricks nor does he have to be perfect. You are probably not training a show dog or a guide dog so you do not have to stress out about making him behave perfectly.

Try to focus your energy on key behavior like housebreaking, responding to commands, and waling on a leash. As you get to know your dog better you will find out what he is good at and can expand on those good behaviors and learn to manage the unwanted behavior. Most puppy training can be done on your own, right in your own home. There are dog training classes that you can take to help you get started. These can be good, but are only the beginning of the training process. Your new dog will need to continued attention and behavior in order for him to be the best dog that he can be.