



A Human Guide Puppy Training



This Guide

This handy guide for humans will give you advice on training your dog at home, as well as some tips to ensure it's an enjoyable experience.

Obedience Training

Dogs are a pack animal and need authority. From the very beginning they will need a single person who can be their teacher.

Don't shout when you call your puppy - they are sensitive to variations in your voice, and will understand different tones very well, such as short and sharp for commands, happy to congratulate them and severe for a reprimand.

Always use the same words for the same orders.



Commands

Come

You can begin teaching your puppy to 'Come' from their earliest days. They will learn from your cheerful or enthusiastic tone of voice when addressing them by name that you are happy with them.

Their reward can be an enthusiastic stroke or pat and praise. If you repeatedly congratulate them, they will soon associate 'Come' with attention and praise. You can then introduce some basic training instructions.

Bear in mind that it isn't the actual words that they will understand but the sound and whatever actions or events that are immediately linked to them.



Sit

Using a food reward, hold the food over your puppy's nose and slowly move it up and back, over your puppy's head. When your puppy follows the food with their head, it will sit down. When your dog does this, say the word "sit" with the action.

As soon as your dog sits, say "good sit" and give them the reward. Many repetitions will be necessary for your puppy to learn to associate the reward with the sit.

Start off with 3 short training sessions lasting just 5 minutes a day, and extend the sessions little by little as your puppy gets older.

Your puppy will understand instructions such as 'Sit more effectively when giving in a low-toned voice. If you hold your hand up in front of you with a treat, they may naturally sit back in the hope of obtaining food. This is the moment to say 'Sit' and to congratulate them and give a food treat.

The timing of this interaction will encourage them to respond next time they hear the word 'Sit' If your puppy avoids sitting when instructing, they may be challenging your control.

Lie Down

Once you have taught your dog to come and sit, you can start teaching the "down" command. Get them to sit first, and then encourage them to lie down by holding the reward, lowering it between their front paws and pulling it forward (away) at the same time, while saying "down". When they lie down, give them a reward, and plenty of praise.



Positive Encouragement

Your puppy will always learn best if training sessions are enjoyable. If they sense that you are angry or disappointed with them, they will soon be discouraged from responding.

It can take a number of attempts for a puppy to learn from a new instruction. They may not always understand exactly what you require of them and any frustration or disappointment on your part will only confuse them further. Always reward them with a food treat, praise and a stroke when they respond correctly.

It is vital that you don't shout aggressively at your dog or smack them, as these interactions will be interpreted as a conflict within the pack. In some instances, it may even encourage mistrust, aggression or nervousness. Always signal problem behaviour with a sharp, low toned 'No' or with training discs.

Training Devices

There are various devices that can be successfully used in training sessions to interrupt or change your dog's behaviour in various ways, such as by positive reinforcement or negative association.

Clicker

A dog training sends out a double click sound when pressed. Initially linked with food treats, this sound is used as a signal for reward, to reinforce your dogs good behaviour.

Clicker training is known as 'classical conditioning' and can be introduced in a brief training session at home.

Reward Whistle

A dog-training whistle can be used to attract your dog's attention and help them respond appropriately to your instructions.

There are different types of whistle, silent and audible

Training Discs

Dog training discs consist of 5 brass discs on a cord.

The discs are used as a sound signal and is associated with the removal of a reward, opposite to the clicker and whistle.

Once your dog has associated the sound of the training discs with the withdrawal of a food treat, they can easily be used to deal with simple problem behaviours.

Scent Collar

Dog scent collars are used as an aversion to problem behaviour. The scent collar establishes an association in your dog's mind between a negative event and undesirable action.

The collar sends out a beep, followed by a citrus scent to interrupt your dog's behaviour.



Socialisation

Give your puppy lots of new experiences. Once your puppy's vaccinations are complete (this usually happens by the age of 13 weeks), you can start puppy socialisation. Take your puppy to lots of new places, walk on different surfaces (grass and sand, as well as tarmac), and try out different types of transport. Your puppy also needs to safely meet different dogs and people they don't know.

Proactivity is key here and will form the habits of a lifetime. When you start to socialise after the first few days, remember that dogs need positive association with things, places and people, not just exposure to them.

Don't forget to introduce new sounds. Your puppy should become comfortable with the sound of the vacuum cleaner, hairdryer, telephone, TV and kids' toys.

House Training

Your puppy will most likely not be house-trained when you bring them home and so accidents may occur in their first weeks. Often, a puppy will have an accident in the home because they are given too much freedom, too soon, and are unsure of the appropriate place to urinate.



To avoid this, there are a number of steps you can take:

- Ensure your puppy only has access to one or two rooms in the house, where the family spend the most time
- Crate the puppy when you can't supervise them. Puppies are less likely to soil their sleeping area as they see this as their safe space and want to keep it clean
- Have regularly scheduled feeding times. This will allow you to monitor the puppy more closely, as they are more likely to need to be let out soon after they've eaten
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- To make sure you can give them immediate praise, it's a good idea to go outside with your puppy
- Never punish or reprimand a puppy who has had an "accident". Instead, find ways to prevent your puppy from ever having the need to urinate indoors
- Don't wait for your puppy to signal that they want to go out. Most puppies will not learn to signal their need until they first learn to "hold" in the house. Take them out on a regular schedule

Take them out frequently, after every meal and nap, before bed and as soon as you get up in the morning so they get used to this routine. At the beginning, take them to the same place every time, so they can recognise their own scent.

If you notice your puppy turning round and round, or sniffing the floor indoors, this is a sign that they need to go. In the event of an "accident", don't scold your puppy, but disinfect the spot to remove their smell. Don't clear it up while they are in the room and don't use bleach, both to avoid stimulating their interest.



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