



## TRAINING

### House Training

Following these basic guidelines as soon as you bring your puppy home will help to ensure a positive house-training experience for you and your puppy. The guidelines may seem strict at first, but the sooner you and your puppy master the basic rules, the sooner your puppy can safely have the run of the house. This program can also be altered for adult dogs.

### Crate Rules

- The most common mistake puppy owners make is to give too much freedom too soon.
- The crate is your #1 management tool for potty training and house manners.
- This tool alone can make or break house-training success!
- Don't let a crying puppy out of the crate unless the puppy is injured, ill, or suspected to be in distress.
- The puppy should be in the crate unless you are actively playing with her. Actively playing with your puppy means never leaving her to her own devices.
- Feed your puppy 2–3 times per day. Leave food out for 15–30 minutes, then remove any leftover food. Do not leave food out for puppy to eat at will. This helps you determine when she will have to go potty, making it easier for everyone to succeed!
- Don't leave puppy unattended. This includes play time in the house and yard. Not only will it prevent accidents, it will help your dog bond with you!
- Always reward your puppy for going to the bathroom outside with a soft, small, food treat.
- Consistency is key, so do your best to maintain a set schedule. The more consistent you are, the faster your puppy will catch on.
- Play time in the yard should be kept separate from potty time. Play can be used as an incentive, but no fetch until your puppy has gone to the bathroom.

### House-Training Schedules

Typical crate schedule for puppy 12 to 16 weeks of age.

**6:30 AM** Puppy wakes up in her crate. Take her outside to go potty.  
Praise her with small, soft treats and verbal praise.

**6:45 AM** Playtime inside or out — fetch, chew toys, chase, etc.

**7:00 AM** Feed puppy in crate. Leave her for 20–30 minutes.

**7:30 AM** Take her outside to go potty. Praise her with small, soft treats and verbal praise.

**7:45 AM** Playtime inside or out — fetch, chew toys, chase, etc.

**8:00 AM** Give puppy a treat in her crate — Kong, everlasting ball, etc. Leave her for 30 minutes.

**8:30 AM** Take her outside to go potty. Praise her with small, soft treats and verbal praise.

**8:45 AM** Playtime inside or out — fetch, chew toys, chase, etc.

**9:00 AM** Give puppy a treat in her crate — Kong, everlasting ball, etc. Leave her for 30 minutes.

**9:30 AM** Take her outside to go potty. Praise her with small, soft treats and verbal praise.

**9:45 AM** Playtime inside or out — fetch, chew toys, chase, etc.

**10:00 AM** Give puppy a treat in her crate — Kong, everlasting ball, etc. Leave her for 30 minutes.

**10:30 AM** Take her outside to go potty. Praise her with small, soft treats and verbal praise.

**10:45 AM** Playtime inside or out — fetch, chew toys, chase, etc., for 15 minutes.

**11:00 AM** Give puppy a treat in her crate — Kong, everlasting ball, etc. Leave her for 1 hour.

**12:00 PM** Take her outside to go potty. Praise her with treats and/or verbal praise.

## Crate Training

Crate training is not difficult if you do it right. You will need a few simple things:

**The Crate.** Your dog should be able to stand up comfortably and turn around. With puppies, be sure that the crate is not too big, as this may tempt them to potty at one end and sleep at the other.

**The Comfort.** You can spend a fortune on bedding for your dog's crate. A small blanket or thick towel is just as good. Keep an eye on puppies to be sure they don't eat the bedding.

**The Toy.** An indestructible toy to chew on. If your puppy is teething, this is a must. It's also nice for all dogs to have something to keep them from getting bored.

**The Treat.** Use a portion of your dog's daily amount of kibble and stuff a Kong toy for crate time. You can get creative and add yogurt or a little broth and freeze it for a longer-lasting treat.

**Patience.** Your dog may test it, so be prepared.

### Day One

Choose a central area in the house to place the crate. Your dog will want to be near you; he won't want to be in the crate if it's in an area where you are not. Once you have the crate set up with the bedding, allow your dog to explore. If he goes in right away, celebrate like he's just discovered a new world! If he seems nervous, practice some sits near the crate and then toss some treats into the crate. Don't rush him, he will find his way in. Do this periodically throughout the day.

If your dog is noticeably tired, you can coax him into the crate and sit nearby while he falls asleep. Do not shut the door. Be sure to praise him anytime he wanders in.

Feed your dog inside the crate. You want to establish that the crate is where good things happen. Use a Kong or other durable food puzzle toy. This keeps him happy and occupied, burns energy, and is great for teething pups. While he is working on his Kong, close the crate door (you don't have to latch it) and be sure that you open it up before he is finished eating.

### Day Two

Spend some time practicing your cue for entering the crate. Start with some tiny, high value, soft treats and let the games begin. Simply toss a treat into the crate. When your dog enters the crate, give verbal praise and introduce the cue, "Good Crate!"

Once your dog gets it, hold out on tossing the treat. He will be looking for more. Eventually he will realize that going into the crate will make the treat appear. Play the game two or three times during the day. Also feed your dog in the crate and allow him to nap in the crate if he likes.

## **The Basics: Sit, Down, Stay, Leave It, , Recall, and Polite Greetings**

### **Sit**

Hold a treat at your dog's nose to lure the head up and back. Keep the food lure close to his nose. As the dog's head goes up and back, their butt will go down. Your dog may try to back up. If so, stand near a wall and shorten the distance between your dog and the wall. As soon as the dog's butt hits the floor, verbally mark the behavior and give a soft, small, food reward. Once your dog has completed this 4 or 5 times, you can introduce the verbal cue, "Sit." Eventually, you can switch hands so that you can use the hand signal for sit with your "lure" hand, and treat with the other hand.

Always require a sit before leashing up and before going outside. Sit is one of the most basic and important things a dog can learn. The ultimate goal should be for the dog to default to a sit whenever he encounters people. You can practice this by playing Round Robin. Bring the dog into a large room and have a few people stand in a large circle. Ignore the dog until he approaches and sits. Be sure to have various treats for rewarding this behavior. This exercise helps the dog generalize the behavior.

### **Down**

Begin with your dog in the sit position. Hold a treat to the dog's nose and lure it down. Some dogs may need to have the treat brought down in front of them and then around towards their shoulder, making a C curve. The turning of the head is sometimes the trick to getting the dog into the down position. As soon as the dog is down, mark and treat. As with sit, let the dog complete the task 4 or 5 times and then introduce the verbal cue. Eventually switch hands and introduce the hand signal. Your goal is to get the dog in a down without bending over to lure into place. Ideally, teaching a down cue should be first taught in a location where the dog feels comfortable.

### **Reality Check**

When dogs don't do the things we ask of them, many people insist or think their dogs "know" these cues and are just being stubborn. In reality, if they are not reliably offering a sit or down regardless of location, there may be some fine tuning to do. A few minutes each day before a meal will help your dog to generalize their behaviors. When asking for new behaviors, or going into new environments, be sure to use higher value food rewards.

### **Stay**

The secret to teaching your dog to stay is to take baby steps. Make sure your dog is consistent before you try to add difficulty. By being patient and building on successes, you can teach an extremely reliable stay. With practice, your dog should be able to stay in a number of distracting circumstances and environments.

### **Training Stay in Five Minutes a Day**

- Start with your dog in a sit or down position.
- Hold your hand up, palm out as if telling someone to stop. Tell your dog to "Stay."
- After 1 or 2 seconds, say, "Good!" and reward your dog with a soft, small treat.
- Repeat 3 times.
- Back up a few steps and call your dog to you. Reward them for coming, and ask them to sit and or lay down.
- Hold your hand up, palm out as if telling someone to stop. Tell your dog to "Stay."
- After 2 or 3 seconds, say, "Good!" and reward your dog with a soft, small treat.
- Repeat 3 times.

- Each time you and your dog are successful, add another 1 or 2 seconds to the time until you build up to 10 seconds and eventually longer.
- Once your dog is staying consistently, you can add distance and distraction.

### **Adding Distance**

- Start with your dog in a sit or down position.
- Hold your hand up, palm out as if telling someone to stop. Tell your dog to “Stay.”
- Take 1 small step backwards, then quickly return to your dog. Say “Good!” and reward your dog with a soft, small treat.
- Repeat 3 times.
- Add a little more distance each time.

### **Adding Distraction**

- Start with your dog in a sit or down position.
- Hold your hand up, palm out as if telling someone to stop. Tell your dog to “Stay.”
- Clap your hands. Say, “Good!” and reward your dog with a soft, small treat.
- Repeat 3 times.
- Add a little more distraction each time. You can raise your arms up, turn in circles, or sit down and get back up.

If ever your dog seems overwhelmed, go back to something simple, like a sit, and reward that behavior and end your training session on a good note.

### **Build on Success**

Keep treats hidden until you walk in to reward your dog. You don’t want to taunt the dog by holding the treat in your hand and asking her to stay while you walk away.

If your dog breaks the stay, simply reposition and try again. If she breaks 2 times in a row, next time go back a step and make it easier. Make sure it is consistent before adding difficulty.

Release your dog between stays so she doesn’t get tired and walk away.

Do not try to add distance and length at the same time. Your dog will be more successful if you break the tasks into smaller, more manageable, pieces.

Have fun! Once your dog has a great stay, you can play games like Hide and Seek!

### **Leave It**

Teaching your dog to leave an object can be important to your dog’s safety. Imagine if you dropped medications on the floor, or were on a walk and passed by garbage on the ground. Teaching a dog to leave something alone is extremely useful in the real world.

If you are on a walk, and your dog pulls towards something, do not yank or pull on your dog’s leash. If your dog needs to depend on a correction to leave an object alone, has the dog truly learned what you want her to do? What will happen if your dog is off leash?

Chances are slim she will listen to you. This exercise is to teach your dog two things: to choose to leave something alone, and to check in with you willingly.

- With your dog on a loose lead, drop a piece of kibble and quickly cover it up with your shoe. In a firm voice say, “Leave it.”
- The second your dog moves away from your shoe — or stops sniffing or pawing at it — say, “Yes!” and deliver a soft, small food treat.

- Repeat this until your dog is no longer going towards the kibble, and is waiting patiently for the treat from your hand.
- Now, try leaving the kibble uncovered by your shoe. As soon as your dog goes for the kibble, say, "Leave it." If the dog leaves it alone, say, "Yes!" immediately and reward. If your dog still tries to go for the kibble, simply cover with your shoe and start again.
- Once you are able to drop the kibble on the ground and say, "Leave it," without covering the kibble with your shoe, challenge your dog. Some options to try: drop more than one piece of kibble, or drop a more exciting treat, or walk by food on the ground in a pile while on loose leash (you may need a second person to cover this pile with his or her shoe, if needed).
- Teach this behavior in a variety of situations, always starting at the beginning in new environments.

## **Recall (Come when Called)**

A good recall is an important obedience skill that, at some time, may be crucial for your dog's safety. We often expect too much too fast from our dogs where recall is concerned. When there is fun to be had, it can be a challenge for our dogs to pay attention.

If your dog ignores you when she is called, but eventually returns, do not punish her once he or she comes back to you. Why would you return if, when you were called back, the fun ended or you were punished?

Let's say your dog is playing with another dog. When your dog is called and she comes, the fun ends and she is brought back inside. Not very motivating! A better solution is to interrupt play frequently, give her a reward, and then send your dog off to play again.

You need to be more exciting than whatever is going on around your dog. Calling your dog in a monotonous or stern voice while standing still is not going to entice your dog to come back to you. Instead, show some enthusiasm and give lots of praise when she starts towards you.

Start in a location with minimal distractions. This could be your fenced yard, inside your home, or anywhere else your dog is comfortable. If you are just starting out, your bathroom is a good place to start! Have the toy or treats hidden from view. These items will be a surprise reward, not a bribe to lure your dog close to you. A long lead can be used to maintain control of your dog until her recall is strong. Allow your dog to wander off. Call your dog in a very happy, excited voice. "Puppy, come!"

You may need to move backwards and crouch low to the ground. If you are not good at calling your dog in a high-pitched, loud, happy voice, take a squeaker out of a toy and use that while you call your dog.

When the dog returns to you, say, "Yes!" and then pull out the toy and initiate play for a full 20 seconds or, if you are using treats, begin continuously feeding for 20 seconds.

After the 20 seconds, release your dog. Repeat this several times and then add more distance. As your dog responds well to this and has a pretty reliable recall without distractions, you can add distractions into training such as: a ball rolling across the room, a different environment, or anything that may take attention away from you.

The more you practice, the more distractions and distance you should be able to add. If they are doing well and you are in a safe, contained area, you can remove the long leash.

## **Polite Greetings**

A common training problem that people typically face is that many dogs try to jump up when greeting people. Many times, dogs receive attention for jumping up. Even if the dog is told, "No," or is pushed off, she is still receiving attention. The lack of attention from the person is a better way to teach your dog than trying to correct her.

This is a perfect opportunity to start thinking about using foundation behaviors to your advantage. If your dog knows how to sit, simply request this behavior. Sitting is incompatible with jumping.

As with all behaviors, teaching your dog to greet people politely relies on consistency. If you want your dog to greet people politely with reliability, have a strict "Four on the Floor" policy, meaning all four feet should be on the floor when greeting anyone.

Invite a friend over to help with this exercise. Have your dog on a loose leash and have your friend enter the room. As long as your dog has four feet on the floor, sitting or standing, have the person approach and reward with verbal praise and a soft, small, food treat. If your dog is jumping, request a sit. If your dog is too excited to sit, start over and try to keep your dog in a sit by rewarding every few seconds until your friend can approach without being jumped on.

If your dog is struggling, have your friend rub a treat on his hand. As he approaches your dog, have him extend his hand. Because of the scent, your dog will likely sniff your friend's hand. When she does, reward her with "Good!" and lots of verbal praise and soft, small, food treats.

As your dog gets better at this exercise, practice in new locations with different people. You can work off-leash, introduce new people and distractions, and even other dogs. Remember, the excitement of a new guest can cause even the most well-behaved dog to act out. Nobody, human or dog, is perfect.