

UNLEASHED UNLIMITED
presents

the
Puppy Manual

the instruction book your
puppy should have come with



potty training | play biting | handling skills | leadership drills | socialization | and more

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	3
Avoiding the Mistake Most New Owners Make.....	4
Leadership: Controlling the Resources.....	6
Food.....	8
Water.....	12
Space.....	14
Toys.....	18
Affection.....	22
Potty Training for Life.....	24
Crate Training.....	32
Socializing Your Puppy.....	43
New Places.....	44
New People.....	47
New Dogs.....	50
Rewarding Behaviors and Marking States of Mind.....	56
Handling Skills and Building Tolerance to Touch.....	59
Dealing with Play Biting.....	62
After Puppyhood.....	67
Terms of Use.....	70

A Short Introduction



Welcoming a new puppy into your home can be a very exciting time! It's always fun to get to know your new puppy's personality, quirks, habits, and favorite games.

As you and your family get to know your puppy, your puppy is also getting to know you. Even at this very young age, your puppy is seeing what works for him and what doesn't. In other words, he is already pushing the limits, testing his boundaries, and "taking notes" along the way.

From the first second your puppy sets foot in your home, it's so important to start teaching and shaping him to be the great family companion you are looking for. Starting to train your puppy now is important, it's much easier to prevent problems than it is to fix problems.

Avoid the Mistake Most New Owners Make!



Many new puppy owners are in such a rush to teach their puppies basic obedience commands. While those things are essential skills for your dog to have, you can teach those skills at any time.

Although you can start to give your puppy some basic understanding of simple obedience commands, obedience should not be the focus of your efforts right now, as there are much more important skills that need to be addressed **NOW**. Puppies between the ages of about 7 to 16 weeks are at a crucial time in their lives.

This is the time where we can make or break them socially, a time where we can encourage desired behaviors or inadvertently encourage unwanted behaviors, and a time where we can teach them to be brave or shape them into nervous and fearful dogs. This is so important because often times you cannot go back in time and address certain issues.

It's very common to look at an older dog that has fear issues, human aggression issues, nervous behavior, or any of the other handful of common dog issues, and assume that the dog was abused when they were younger. I have heard many people ask, "I wonder what happened to that dog when he was younger that can explain these behaviors."

It may very well be a case of abuse that can be responsible for these behaviors, but more times than not, as a trainer, I find myself asking, "I wonder what **didn't** happen to that dog when he was younger that can explain these behaviors."

Lack of exposure to any variety of things often explains a lot of our dogs' undesirable traits, fears, and problematic behaviors. As responsible dog owners it's our job to prevent these issues and work through issues that arise so that our pets remain in our homes and don't get surrendered into shelters or put down for preventable issues.

We are all aware of the extremely large numbers of dogs that are currently in shelters. It doesn't matter if you adopted your puppy from a rescue organization or if you purchased your puppy from a breeder, but now that you are a new puppy owner, make sure you and your family do



everything possible to ensure that your new puppy has a forever home with you, and don't get surrendered into a shelter.

If you take only one thing away from this e-book, it should be this:



Obedience can be taught at anytime. It is more important to address other skills now. It is very difficult to undo things later in life that are not addressed at the right time - that right time is NOW!

Alright, now that we have gotten that out of the way, let's move on and explain exactly what you and your family should be focusing on right now with your puppy.

Leadership: Controlling the Resources



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Wolves in the wild have an obvious ranking order; dogs are pack animals and have the same mentality. No, I am not going to suggest that you get on the ground and growl at your dog, but we can take away valuable information from the natural leadership structure of other pack animals.

Having an established pack structure in your house is crucial in order to have a well balanced dog. Puppies and dogs without leadership are left to make their own decisions, and 9 times out of 10 those decisions are going to be the wrong ones simply because a dog's agenda is usually very different from ours.

Leadership does not mean that your puppy should be afraid of you, leadership does not entail us being mean to our dogs, and leadership does not involve forcing your dog to submit to you. Leadership simply means that your puppy looks to you to provide them with them will all of the important resources that they need. These main resources include **food, water, space, affection, and toys.**

Establishing leadership should begin as soon as your puppy sets foot into your home and should be an ongoing process with your family and your puppy. Let's take a look at each resource individually and discuss the importance and details of each as it relates to leadership.



Controlling Resources: Your Puppy and Food



Food is one of the most important resources to any living thing, and it's one of the most important things we need to control. There are just so many different aspects of feeding your puppy that are essential to control, and feeding times should be a scheduled and interactive experience between you and your puppy.

Hand feeding is a great way for your new puppy to learn that you provide and control the food. During hand feeding your dog will be eating directly from your hand and he learns that you are in control of the food. Only let your dog have possession of the food when they are in a somewhat calm state of mind. If your puppy is jumping at your hand, simply pull your hand away and wait for him to relax a bit. When he has calmed down, present your hand again and let him eat. You will soon see that your puppy will start to look at you, asking for permission to proceed.



I know that all puppies get very excited about food, and we are not looking for a perfect sit or a stay right now, simply teach them to look to you for the “good stuff!” You can continue to hand feed your new puppy until he looks to you for the next handful of food on a regular basis, you can then think about switching to a more traditional food in a bowl situation.

Preventing food guarding is also a huge step you should be taking with your puppy from the very first meal you feed him. A common mistake many new pet owners make with their puppies is to constantly take their food bowl away and then give it back. This step is usually repeated over and over again with the intentions that the dog should be non reactive to a human taking away the food bowl. Doing this drill time after time is often creating the very issue they are trying to prevent.



Instead of creating a puppy who is always expecting a hand to come down and take away their food, we can instead teach them that every time a hand comes down, more food gets dropped into the bowl! So instead of taking away the food bowl and messing with the puppy during meal time, here is a better solution.

Separate your puppy’s food into two piles, one pile can be put into his bowl, the other pile should be kept aside in a different bowl.



Present your puppy with the food in one of the bowls and while he is eating, take handfuls of food from the other bowl and drop it into his



bowl while he is eating. Again, this will teach him that when a person comes near his food bowl it means he gets more food!

Holding the food bowl when your puppy is eating is another exercise you can practice with your new puppy. What you are actually doing is not giving them full possession of the resource but allowing them to eat while the bowl is still in your possession. This teaches him that the food belongs to you, therefore guarding is not appropriate.

Don't let them dig in. Teach your puppy to wait while you are presenting their food and to wait for permission from you to eat. Not only is your puppy learning to work a bit for his food but learning that he needs permission from you to proceed before digging in.

Food guarding is also very common in multiple dog households. If you do have another dog, don't let your other dog or your new puppy float back and forth between bowls while eating. It's generally a good idea to separate the dogs during mealtime to prevent any of this unwanted behavior.

Free feeding (food remains in your dog's bowl at all times, dog can eat whenever he wants) is one of the worst things that you can do to your dog. Not free feeding goes way beyond putting unhealthy extra weight on your dog, but it also makes your roll in their lives much less important, as they cannot make the connection that you are the one filling the food bowl hours before they decide to eat.



Regardless of if you are feeding your puppy two or three times a day, set up general feeding times (morning, noon, night, or whatever works for you) and present your dog with the opportunity to eat. If there is any food left in the bowl after about 20 minutes, pick it up and your puppy does not get a chance to eat again until the next scheduled feeding time.

This may be very difficult for some puppy owners as we sometimes let our emotions take over. But once your puppy catches on to the rules you are providing, they will eat at meal times. At the same time, it's important to be fair to your puppy with your new policy. To be fair, it's important to not try to feed your puppy while there is a lot of commotion or excitement in your home. Set your feeding times for when things are generally calm and give your puppy a chance to actually be aware that it's feeding time.

Not only will scheduled feedings get your puppy on a more regular potty schedule, but it will definitely help them make the connection that you are the greatest thing on earth because it always comes from you!

In addition to hand feeding and scheduled feeding times, interactive toys are also a great way to feed your puppy. There are a variety of interactive toys available, but one of our favorites is the [Tug-A-Jug](#).

Tug-A-Jug (pictured below) is a great interactive toy because it really forces your puppy to problem solve and figure out how to get the food out





of the jug. Not only will interactive toys like this make your dog work for his food, but he will be exercising his mind as well.

As you can see, properly feeding your puppy involves so much more than just throwing food in a bowl; it's about leadership, respect, self control and discipline. I strongly encourage all members of the family to be a part of your new puppy's feeding routine, you will be glad you did.

Controlling Resources: Your Puppy and Water

Water is another resource that we should get in the habit of controlling with a young puppy. While controlling water may not seem as important as controlling food, it still remains a valuable resource to your puppy.

Just like with food, water is not something you want your puppy to have free access to initially. As your puppy matures and gets older you can ease up on the water restrictions, and of course we are going to be fair





and let our pets consume plenty of water throughout the day, but let's discuss why it's so important to control the water at this stage with your puppy.

Potty training is going to be one of your main areas of focus during the first few days and weeks of welcoming a new puppy into your home. I think we can all see the value in keeping tabs on how much our puppy is drinking because it directly relates to when and how frequent your puppy will have to go potty. If we know how much and when our puppy consumed water, we can be proactive in our potty training issues.

We will get into potty training in much more detail in an upcoming chapter, but the success rate is crucial in potty training and having more information available to us will only speed up your potty training efforts.

Controlling Resources: Your Puppy and Space



Although on the surface space may not seem to be an obvious resource that needs to be controlled, controlling space is absolutely a huge benefit for you and your puppy. At this young age, your puppy simply can't be trusted with the run of the house, that's when they seem to get into the most trouble! All of the common puppy problems owners typically experience like destructive behavior, having potty accidents in the house, eating things they are not supposed to have, and digging can all be avoided by controlling space. Although controlling space to some degree is a life-long duty, you can ease up on the restrictions as your puppy matures and when he is taught how to behave in all situations. However, at this stage in your puppy's life his space definitely needs to be controlled.

When we talk about controlling space, we are simply controlling the areas in which we keep our puppies. Controlling space can be anything from closing bedroom doors to putting up a gate to the stairs, crating our



puppies, not allowing them on the furniture, and keeping them on a leash. Let's take a few examples of controlling space and discuss how we can benefit from each.

Crate Training - We will completely discuss the benefits of crate training in an upcoming chapter of this book, but for now let's just breeze over a few of the highlights because crate training your dog is one of the best ways to control space with our puppies. Not only do crates offer our puppies safety, familiarity, and aid in potty training, but they also act as "puppy sitters" when we're not home.

Baby gates - Baby gates, closing doors, or some other type of boundary, allows our puppies to be contained in a larger space when we are interacting with them. Blocking off stairways or entrances into other rooms will help keep our puppies safe and out of trouble, and at the same time we should have enough room to still play fetch or other games with our puppy.

No furniture - Although they are cute, cuddly, and warm, I would not recommend allowing your new puppy on the furniture initially. In a dog's mind the leader always gets the best sleeping spot (your bed, the couch, etc.). By allowing your puppy onto the couch or bed with you are putting them on the same level as you and the rest of your family, this can confuse your puppy or help them to think that they are equals with you, or perhaps even above you! There is nothing wrong with inviting your puppy onto the couch as he gets older, but for now - no furniture.



[Use that leash inside too](#) - When you and your family are at home relaxing or watching a movie we of course would love to have our puppy with us so that he can feel like a true member of the family and not be trapped in a crate or behind a gate secluded away from the rest of us. When you are in situations like these and are entertaining or simply have your main attention focused somewhere else, I would highly recommend tethering.

Tethering is the act of keeping your puppy on his leash and wrapping it under your foot giving him enough room to turn around and get comfortable without giving him too many other options to find trouble. Depending on the size of your puppy, about 2 to 2.5 feet of leash should be enough for him during tethering. The main thing that we are doing by tethering our puppies is to simply keep them in one location and teaching them to chill out when you and the rest of your family does the same.

Initially your puppy may get frustrated about being on the leash and not being able to travel freely, you may also see him start to bite and chew at the leash. While these behaviors are completely normal for a puppy, you can interrupt them and redirect him into something more desirable. To help decrease the desire to chew or bite the leash you can give your puppy a toy to chew on or interact with during tethering. Remember, tethering is not a punishment, but simply a way to control space. As you continue to practice tethering your puppy, you will see that after a few minutes of playing with his toy or biting on the leash he will start to simply relax, calm down, and go to sleep. Not only will you have an easy way to manage your puppy but you are also teaching him that when the rest of the family is relaxing, he should be relaxing too!



In addition to tethering, keeping your puppy on a leash in the house will also be a great aid in controlling space. While you don't have to keep the leash in your hand at all times, there is nothing wrong with having your



puppy drag his leash behind him when in the house. Having a dragging leash acts as an easy tab to guide them away from hazardous things, helps us direct them outside when it's time to go potty, and simply allows us to more easily manage them. Be aware that a dragging leash can get caught on furniture, get stuck in doors, and is very tempting for your puppy to chew on. As always, I urge you to keep an eye on your puppy at all times, and the same definitely applies to when his leash is dragging behind him.

As I stated in the beginning of this section, you can relax on some of these restrictions as your puppy matures and can be trusted with more and more space. But for now controlling space is a crucial step in teaching

your puppy how you would like him to behave in your house and around your family.

Controlling Resources: Your Puppy and Toys



Toys can prove to be a valuable resource to your puppy, after all, they are a heck of a lot of fun to play with! I am sure we have all seen the huge selection of toys out there; anything from rope tugs, soft toys, squeaky toys, bone shaped toys, chew toys, and the good old fashion tennis ball and frisbee. Even though there are tons of toy options available, we want to be sure that we are providing our puppies with appropriate toys.

One thing to keep in mind is that all puppies love to chew, and your puppy will soon be teething. Without an outlet for all of that chewing, puppies often take advantage of our furniture, moldings, blankets, and other readily accessible items. When shopping for puppy toys, make sure to get plenty of toys that are meant for chewing.



Chew toys are usually made of a very hard and dense rubber or plastic-like material. Many toy companies are also providing a chew indicator that gives you an idea of how tough this toy is compared to other products made by the same company (this will usually be on the package). While it's not necessary to only get toys that are specifically designed for puppies, it may be a good idea to have at least a few on hand at all times. A few examples of some great chew toys are Puppy Kongs, Nylabone Puppy Keys, and the Nylabone Dental Dinosaur; all of which can be found at any major brand pet store.

Another type of toy that you may want to purchase are softer squeaky toys, as they provide an entirely different experience for your pup. You don't have to get fancy when it comes to these types of toys, chances are they won't be around for too long before they get destroyed.

While rope toys and other tug toys usually go over fairly well, I would recommend staying away from these toys for now. There is nothing wrong with playing tug with your dog, but it does promote mouthiness. Tugging will also quickly lead to more frequent and intense play biting and it will be harder to curb that behavior.

One of my favorite types of puppy toys are the ones that are interactive. Interactive toys offer some type of experience that makes your puppy to think and problem solve in order to get a reward, which is usually a piece of food. Take a look at the [Twist and Treat](#) below.





The Twist and Treat, and other similar toys, can be stuffed with treats, kibble, or peanut butter and can be adjusted to make it more or less difficult for your puppy to get to the treats. In addition to teaching your puppy to think and keeping them busy for a while, toys like this one can also be used as entertaining fetch toys because they always take weird and unpredictable bounces when you throw them.

Now that we have discussed a few fun examples of puppy toys, let's also remember that toys are a very essential resource that a leader needs to control. I think it's important to realize that although you purchased the toys for your puppy, they are still YOUR toys. Many owners shop for new puppy toys and chew toys, bring them home, toss them on the floor and let the puppy have immediate possession of whatever they want.



While this sounds like a good idea, I highly encourage teaching your puppy to learn to share his new toy with you. For every new toy brought into the house it's recommended that you remain holding one end of the toy while allowing your puppy to chew on the other end. When



you take the toy away, immediately replace it with another toy or treat, teaching your puppy that they will get something in return for giving up what they are currently in partial possession of.



When you allow your puppy to have full possession of the toy, trade off by taking the toy away and immediately replacing the toy with something else, and make sure you are making the trade within 2 seconds so they can make the proper association. These drills will help your puppy understand to give up their toys when needed, and will help to avoid guarding and possession issues.

Another aspect of toys that you will want to control is when you allow your puppy to play with them. I would highly recommend storing all of your puppy toys in a bin and handing them out as you see fit. Remember, all good things come from you; besides, not all toys are appropriate for your puppy at all times.

While those soft and fluffy squeaky toys are great, that's not something you want your puppy to chew on when you are not present. The last thing you want to find is your puppy choking on the stuffing or swallowing long threads they have managed to pull apart. On the other hand, Kongs or Twist and Treats are more safe for our puppies while they are unattended because the material they are made of is more durable. Although these toys are generally safer, keep tabs on any wear and tear as your puppy plays with them more and more.

Controlling Resources: Your Puppy and Affection



Controlling affection can be difficult for some dog owners, simply because all puppies are so very cute and it's normal to want to hug them, kiss them, and shower them with all kinds of affection. While this type of behavior is completely natural and we all want our puppies to be friendly, loving, and affectionate, it's important to remember that affection is a resource that a leader needs to control.



Being a bit obnoxious, pushy, and not respecting personal space are common behaviors that puppies learn when raised in a household where the affection has never been monitored or controlled. Imagine that every time your puppy approaches you he started immediately jumping on you, licking your face and putting his paws on your lap; alright maybe that doesn't seem like such a bad thing!! But now imagine that your full grown 80 pound Labrador does exactly the same things not only to you, but also your friends, relatives, and every other person he meets. It gets old real fast, trust me!

Many of these behaviors are learned at early ages because owners immediately pet their puppies when this happens. Without the intentions of the owners, these puppies are being rewarded for these behaviors and are in total control of the affection. The puppy learns that jumping up, incessantly licking your face, and jumping onto your lap are ways to get affection from you.

A better way is to be affectionate with your puppy on your terms. Encourage your puppy to come over to you, when he gets there, hug and kiss him, pick him up and squeeze him when you feel like it, when your dog does something good or simply makes you laugh, pet him! Remember, the whole point of leadership is that we want our puppies to look to us for things that are important to them. Handing out affection on your terms will quickly have your dog looking to you for the affection, not demanding it.





In addition to treats and toys, we have to remember that affection is also a reward, it can be used to encourage behaviors and mark a particular state of mind. Never pet your puppy, pick him up, or praise him unless he is in a desirable state of mind. In other words, do not pet your dog or tell him “it’s ok” if he is nervous, fearful, if he is hiding, barking, or doing something similar. Marking that unstable state of mind will only encourage those behaviors to come out more often in your puppy. We will cover this in more detail in an upcoming chapter.



So instead of using affection to reward and encourage unwanted behaviors, let’s use it to reward using the potty outside, being brave, bringing a toy back to you, and to show them that you love them. Remember, always use affection to mark the right state of mind and hand it out on your terms.

Potty Training for Life

There is nothing worse than a one year old dog (or older) that is still going to the bathroom inside your home. The constant cleaning, mopping, deodorizing and bathing get old very quickly. There is no reason why after a few weeks of focused efforts your puppy shouldn’t be well on his way to becoming potty trained.

Potty training a new puppy can be a difficult challenge for some owners and their puppies, and based on your pup’s early life experiences it may be easier to potty train some dogs compared to others. Let me share an example: Let’s take a puppy that was purchased from a pet store for





our first example. Due to the scheduling and demands of the employees most puppies are spending a lot of time in their crates where they are essentially encouraged to eliminate in the crate because they have no other option. Although your puppy may have only spent a few short days or weeks in this situation, they have already learned and successfully practiced this routine - remember, they are taking "notes!"

On the other hand, let's discuss a puppy who has been living with his breeder for the first few weeks of his life. To some degree the breeder has already started potty training your puppy. Whether it's the trips outside to play with his siblings, or pressure from the mother, these pups are most likely starting to understand that eliminating where they sleep and eat is not a good option. Regardless of your puppy's previous experiences, potty training requires discipline, effort, timing, and supervision on our part. And again, there is no reason why your puppy can't be potty trained.

Let's now briefly talk about newspaper and potty pads. These items have been around for years and many people have used them as aids in



potty training, and they seem to be very popular. Here is my advice when it comes to potty pads and paper training - throw them away, just get rid of them! The only thing that you are teaching your puppy with paper training and pads is that it is okay to go to the bathroom in your house. Potty pads can serve a purpose and they are very useful for those dogs who live on the 78th floor of a downtown high rise, but unless you're in that situation, get rid of them!!



I do however understand the logic of some people that newspaper and potty pads are a transitional step to complete potty training, but that logic comes with a flaw. The more often your dog eliminates inside your home, the harder it is to extinguish the behavior later in life. If you put the work in now and do it right the first time you will enjoy the benefits of your efforts for years to come.

Alright, here are the actual mechanics behind potty training, it's really very simple. The first thing we are going to do is put our puppy on a leash, this allows us to direct them into one location in your yard, and also keeps them focused on the task at hand. Secondly, you are always going to take our puppy outside through the same door in your house. This will create a routine for your puppy, and as he gets further along in his training, you will see him start to go to that door automatically when he has to potty.

Once you get outside, take your puppy to the desired spot where you want him to eliminate. I would recommend taking your puppy to the same spot each time you go outside, this again plays off of the routine of the





entire exercise. As you reach the spot, give your puppy about 4 to 6 feet of leash and you are simply going to stand still and anchor yourself like a fence post.

By being anchored and not moving, your puppy has no choice but to eliminate in the area you choose for him. Make sure he still has the ability to circle around you and have enough freedom to potty (remember, 4 to 6 feet of leash). As your puppy is smelling the ground and circling around, we can start to overlay a word or command that will eventually be his cue to potty.

Repeat your "go potty" or whatever word or phrasing you prefer, until your puppy starts going potty. I know that it may be common to start getting all excited and praising your puppy when he starts to potty, but **DON'T!** He will absolutely get all the praise in the world, but that praise should be delivered as soon as he is **finished going potty**. Early praise often breaks a puppy's concentration and leads to the puppy getting so excited that he doesn't actually finish going potty, which means he will probably finish going potty as soon as you take him back inside.

Once your puppy has successfully gone potty outside, make sure that you provide plenty of praise! Praising your puppy can be anything from hugging and petting, high pitch "good boy", or a treat. Regardless of your preferred method of praise, make sure you implement it within a second or two of him finishing his potty. This is important because his attention span is so short right now that he won't make the connection if you wait to treat or praise him once you are back inside of your home.



Now, if you follow all of the above steps and your puppy doesn't potty after about 5 minutes or so, take your puppy back inside and put him in his crate (we will get into a lot more detail on the importance of the crate in a bit). Keep your puppy in the crate for about 10 to 15 minutes, and repeat the process of taking him out again.



The amount of time required to potty train a puppy totally depends on the success rate of your efforts. Meaning if your puppy quickly reaches the point where he is eliminating outside of your home 80% of the time, his is obviously still having accidents inside the home 20% of the time. While an 80% success rate is great for a young puppy, we have to get to the point where we are reaching a 100% success rate. When we reach and stay at 100% consistently, we can then consider our puppy potty trained.

So, in order to be as successful as possible, I highly recommend that you have your puppy in 1 of 3 places **at all times** during potty training.





Those three places are in his crate, in front of you, or on the grass. Let's me elaborate on each of these.

In his Crate - Assuming your puppy has been properly introduced to a crate and the crate is set up correctly, you will see a greatly reduced risk of a puppy eliminating here. Don't worry if your puppy hasn't yet been properly introduced to a crate, we will cover that in an upcoming chapter.

On the Grass - This one should be a no brainer. The entire goal of potty training is to have our puppies potty on the grass, so as long as their feet are on the green stuff, life is good!

In Front of You - This one can be the trickiest for a lot of new puppy owners as we face constant distractions all of the time when we are at home. The reason that it's so important to have eyes on your puppy at all times is because it never fails - as soon as we take our eyes off the pup, he has an accident. However, if your puppy is in front of you, you still have to know the signs that your puppy has to potty, we will cover those signs shortly.

If you and your family members can stick to this outline of keeping your puppy in one of three places at all times, the likelihood of your puppy having an accident is greatly reduced, making your efforts more successful.

Now is a perfect time to discuss a few signs and situations where your puppy is going to have to potty.



Situations When Your Puppy Should Be Taken Outside To Potty

- ✓ First thing in the morning
- ✓ Before a nap
- ✓ After a nap
- ✓ Regular intervals during the day
- ✓ After a lot of excitement (playing, meeting new people)
- ✓ Shortly after drinking water
- ✓ Shortly after eating a meal
- ✓ Right before you leave the house
- ✓ Last thing before bed

Signs That Your Puppy Has To Go Potty

- ✓ Your puppy's nose is to the ground and is "following" a smell
- ✓ Your puppy suddenly stops interacting with you to sniff around
- ✓ Puppy hangs out somewhere near the door that he is usually taken out
- ✓ Slight staring at you (more likely in an older puppy)
- ✓ Slight whining (more likely in an older puppy)

While these signs and situations will vary slightly for all puppies, but use them as a guide and start to notice the unique signs that your puppy shows you. Again, because potty training largely depends on your success rate, follow this motto: **When in Doubt, Take them Out!** It's better to be wrong then it is to miss a sign from your puppy.



Of course even with the best intentions and efforts, your puppy will have the occasional accident in the house. If and when you see your puppy eliminating in the house or stumble onto a pile or puddle left by your puppy, I want you to take the following actions. Take a heavy magazine or newspaper and roll it up nice and tight, then smack **yourself** in the head! Of course we're not going to hit our puppy, the point I am making is that in order for your pup to have had an accident it means that we were not doing our part in supervising them!

But on a serious note, if you do see your puppy going to the bathroom in the house and they are still in the act, simply scoop them up and take them outside as fast as possible. If you find evidence of an accident after it has happened, do not rub your puppy's face in it, yell at them or anything along those lines; your puppy has a very short attention span right now, they will not make the connection. The best bet here is to simply clean up the mess and move on.

I've said it before and it's worth repeating - potty training takes a significant amount of effort on our part. Even on rainy nights, cold days, and times where you're not feeling well, your puppy will still have to go out and potty! Trust me, putting the work and effort in now will quickly get your puppy potty trained, then you can sit back and enjoy the fact that your efforts have paid off and you are the proud owner of a dog that knows the proper place to go potty.



Crate Training



Alright, right off the bat I want to discuss the popular notion out there that crate training is cruel. Simply put, it isn't. Although we love our puppies, it is crucial to remember that they are dogs, not people. It's so important to remember this because if we treat our pets as people, we are not giving them what they need to flourish, and that's just not fair to the dog. Also, always remember that we have to train our puppies (and dogs) from the dog's mentality, not our own.



In some people's minds, a crate is the same as jail! Jail keeps us separated from our loved ones, it has bars, it is tight, confined, and most people realize that jail is a consequence for certain people who have proven they can not handle living in a society. But that is us

attaching our human mentality to something that a dog views as something completely different.

When introduced correctly, your puppy will view his crate as a safe spot, his den, his sleeping quarters, and they will often go into the crate on their own when they are just looking for their own space.

These two perspectives are completely different, but remember – we are not asking YOU to stay in a crate. We are simply using the crate to manage our puppy, ensure his safety when not around, and control resources.

I strongly urge everyone, not just puppy owners, to crate train their dogs. Having a dog that crates well is a huge advantage that comes in handy in so many situations both now and in the future. Let's take a look at some of those advantages:

Safety - Leaving a puppy unattended in the house (or gated off kitchen, bathroom, or other small space) leaves them with access to a variety of dangerous temptations. Whether that means they get into the trash and eat something toxic, or they chew apart a pillow and choke on the stuffing, or they get into the household cleaners, or they jump on the kitchen chairs and they fall and get injured, the list just goes on and on. One of our jobs is to keep our pets safe, a crate can help us do this.

Potty Training - Controlling space while we are not interacting with our puppies is very important. In a large space like a gated off kitchen, a



puppy can casually eliminate in one corner of the room and simply lay down, play, or nap on the other side of the room without consequence. A properly fitted crate will not allow your puppy the luxury of doing this and allows all of your potty training efforts to be reinforced and practiced while you are away.

Traveling - A crate will provide something familiar for your dog when traveling to new places. Whether it's a friend's house for the night, relatives home for the weekend, or a week long vacation with your dog, the crate will always be something that your dog understands and can instantly relate to, making traveling and other types of transitions less stressful for your dog.

The list of advantages goes on and on, and hopefully you can see the benefit of having a dog that is crate trained. Starting to train your puppy to understand the crate should start as soon as your dog steps into your home. But before starting training your dog to behave in his crate, let's make sure you are working with the right equipment.



There are two main types of crates that you will want to choose from, wire crates and plastic crates. There are many advantages to each type of crate, but I would recommend a wire crate in most situations as it is a better overall crate.

When selecting a crate for your puppy, you will want to get a crate that is appropriate for the size that your dog will be when full grown, not the current size of your puppy, and a wire crate can easily be made larger as your puppy grows. So when purchasing a wire crate, make sure the model you buy comes with a divider panel. The removable divider panel is what's going to allow you to adjust the size of the crate, ensuring that it's the right size as your puppy grows and gets larger.



A wire crate will also allow your puppy to feel less closed in or secluded initially because of the open feel of this type of crate, which is something a plastic cargo type crate cannot provide. Additionally, the plastic pan can easily be slid in and out when cleaning up the occasional accident. Ultimately it is up to you, but again, a wire crate will be a better choice for your puppy, in my opinion.

Alright, now that you have your crate you are going to want to stuff it full of cushions, blankets, stuffed toys, water bowls, and other accessories, right? Wrong! When beginning to potty train and crate a puppy you really shouldn't have too much inside the crate with your puppy. Your puppy is very likely to chew on the blankets, drink too much water, shred those stuffed toys and who else knows what kinds of trouble they can get themselves into.



During the beginning stages of crate training the only things that should be in the crate are your dog and some “safe” toys. By safe toys I mean hard rubber toys or toys that are designed to be chewed on without small pieces that can be torn off and easily swallowed. Initially keeping blankets and other bedding out of the crate will simply allow for easy clean up if and when your puppy has an accident.

The next step is to figure out exactly how much space your puppy needs. When determining where that divider panel should go in the crate follow this general rule: the crate should only be large enough for the puppy to be able to stand up, turn around, and lay down comfortably. An area larger than this will only allow your puppy to potty on one side of the crate and lay down on the other side, defeating one of the useful advantages of using a crate to help potty train your puppy. Be sure to remember to adjust the divider panel in the crate and give your puppy more space as he gets larger.

After you have the crate sectioned off, you will want to find a spot for your puppy’s crate. The location of the crate is totally a matter of personal preference, but there are some guidelines I would follow. First, do not put your crate in your bedroom or the bedroom of any other family members. In addition to needing our own space, your puppy has to start learning to function out of sight from your and other family members. Now is a perfect time to have your puppy understand that they do not always have to be within touching distance of you; independence is a good thing. I would also avoid putting the crate in a garage, basement, or any other



location that is not climate controlled; extreme heat and cold are not good for your puppy. Some people place their crates in living rooms, laundry rooms, spare bedrooms, or other areas of their homes that are suitable for their dogs and family, the choice is yours.

Food and treats can be great tools to use when first introducing your puppy to his crate. Laying out treats in a trail-like fashion leading to the crate can be a great first step to getting your puppy into his crate. When you are making the first introductions to the crate you will want to leave the door open at all times and just get your puppy used to traveling in and out of the crate on their own. As you continue to practice this drill you can be verbally overlaying a “crate” or “kennel” command.

As you continue with this drill you can start offering your puppy more treats when they are inside the crate, again leaving the door open. Do not try to block their path if they try to leave the crate, instead simply lure them back into the crate with more treats. I would also suggest leaving the crate door open, even when you are not actively practicing these drills. Providing your puppy with access to his crate will often encourage curious behavior and you will see him wander over to the crate on his own time to investigate.

As you continue these drills it’s important to start leaving your puppy in his crate with the door closed for short periods of time. Even if you are not leaving the house, start teaching your puppy that small increments of time spent in the crate is just something he is going to have to get used to. There is nothing wrong with initially sitting next to the crate and continuing



to offer treats to your puppy for a few minutes at a time. Just be sure to eventually start walking away from the crate for a few moments at a time.

Although we do not want to make a big fuss about putting the puppy into his crate, providing your puppy with certain interactive toys during crate training sessions are absolutely allowed! Filling a [Twist & Treat](#) with some peanut butter or some kibble is going to keep your puppy busy for a while and he will not concentrate on the fact that they are out of sight from you. As your puppy finishes interacting with his treats and toys it may be common to hear some whining or barking. Although your puppy is vocalizing that he wants out of that darn crate, it's important to not let him out and to not mark that type of behavior.



If we immediately let the puppy out of the crate while he is barking and whining he will quickly learn that this behavior is what gets that door to open. Also, if we run into the room and cuddle the pup at the first sign of whimpering he will also learn that this works for him also.

So, if and when your puppy cries, screams, barks, or whines in the crate, simply ignore him. This can be very emotionally trying for some owners and it can get very annoying, but we have to overcome this hurdle if we want the crying and barking to ever stop. Even in the middle of the night, **DO NOT** let your puppy out when he cries (aren't you glad the crate isn't in your bedroom?).



If a behavior like barking and crying works for a puppy, they will continue to practice it. When behaviors don't work for dogs and puppies, the behavior extinguishes itself. Your puppy has to learn that the only time and the only thing that gets him released from the crate is him being quiet. Even if you are ready to let your pup out but he is crying, wait for a brief pause and then let him out. It's very important to realize that crate training will happen a lot faster and your puppy will be better behaved in the crate if you can follow this concept.



Just like not making a big production of putting a puppy into his crate, it's also important to not make a big fuss about letting him out of the crate either. When your puppy is quiet, simply open the door and immediately head outside to potty. In addition, be sure to never use the crate as punishment, the crate should be a happy, safe, and quiet spot for dogs.

Although it's important to introduce your puppy to his crate with short incremental drills like these, there are going to be times when you have to close the door and leave your puppy for extended periods of time, quite possibly before they are ideally ready. Turning in for the night or leaving the house for work are times when your puppy is simply going to have to learn that they need to remain in their crates. Remember, don't let your puppy out until he is quiet.

So how long is too long to leave puppies in their crates? Well in a perfect world we would all quit our jobs and crate train our puppies until they are totally comfortable. However, in reality we have jobs,



commitments, obligations and social lives. So to answer the question, your puppy has to learn to adapt to your schedule; if that means they are going to be in the crate for 4, 6, or 8 hours at a time, then so be it. I know we



all love our puppies and dogs, and I promise you they will be fine with being crated, provided they have the correct introduction.

In all fairness, dogs and puppies must be exercised physically and mentally. So when your puppy has been in the crate for extended periods of time make sure you are still giving them more than enough of an outlet for all of their energy. Taking your puppy on walks, playing fetch, puppy play dates, and other games are absolutely required; there is no getting around this.

So let's say you get home from a long day at work and you see that your puppy has eliminated in his crate, what should you do? Well you should definitely not punish your puppy or do anything at all really. Simply



let him out of the crate and take him outside to potty again. At these young ages some puppies will have no choice to eliminate in their crates when being crated for a long period of time; their little bodies just may not be able to hold it. As your puppy gets bigger and older this will no longer be an issue. In order to help decrease the likelihood of an accident in the crate, be sure to feed your puppy with enough time to eliminate before being crated for long periods. The same goes for water, cut the water off a few hours before bed and before leaving for work.

Also be sure that you are crating your puppy at the appropriate times, it's not only when you leave the house. Below are some guidelines of when your puppy should be crated.

Overnight - When we are sleeping our puppies could be doing almost anything if they are not in their crates. Also, we want them to know that everyone sleeps at night, crating will help make that association.

When no one is home - This should be a given; for safety reasons and the main fact that no puppy has earned the right to wander freely throughout the house. Even when we are not home, crates can act as an extension of our rules, boundaries, and regulations.

Nap time - Crating your puppy at times where they are most likely going to "pass out" will stack the deck in your favor and your puppy is much more likely to have a calm and peaceful experience in the crate.



[When you are not directly interacting with your puppy](#) - It's prime timing for puppies to potty in the house or get into other trouble when we are cooking dinner, working on the computer, or putting away our laundry. The crate acts as a "babysitter" for times when we cannot monitor and interact with our dogs.

[When coming inside from a potty run without eliminating](#) - As we discussed in the potty training section, crating your dog for those 10 to 15 minutes after coming inside from an unsuccessful potty trip is important. The crate will act as a preventative measure for an accident in the house until we can take the puppy outside again.

[Random times through out the day](#) - Doing this will help create an association with your puppy that just because you are within site and in the house, the rules of the crate still apply.

[Other times that are unique to your life](#) - If you feel that your puppy needs to be crated, follow through on that idea. If crating your pup prevents a potty accident, keeps your puppy safe, or provides some other solution for you, go for it.

I've said it once, and I'll say it again - crate training your pup can be one of the most beneficial things you can do with your puppy. Although emotions and guilt can sometimes take over when crate training remember that those are **OUR** feelings, not the feelings of your puppy. Sometimes you simply have to remove our emotional ties in order to do what's best for your puppy. Easier said then done, I know, but trust me.



Socializing Your Puppy



In order to help ensure that your puppy turns into a well-mannered and stable dog, socialization needs to begin as soon as possible. Without proper socialization puppies often grow into dogs that become reactive to other dogs, show signs of fear around people, shut down in new environments, and are even scared of simple everyday items such as mailboxes and bicycles. It's very difficult to extinguish behaviors like these later in life, and in many cases dogs end up in shelters because of behaviors that result from a lack of early socialization.

Socializing your puppy simply means exposing him to a wide variety of people, places, dogs, sounds, smells, sights, and everything else that exists in the world outside of your home. **A general rule for young**

puppies is 7 new places, 7 new people, and 7 new dogs each and every week.

Due to lack of proper immunizations and other shots, you may initially have some limitations on exactly where you can take your puppy and you will be limited as to meeting other dogs, but you can still start the socialization process as soon as possible. These limitations will be later lifted as soon as your puppy goes through his second and third round of shots, but consult with your vet about the exact limitations of your puppy at this time.

It will take a big commitment from you and your family in order to meet the 7,7,7 requirement, and even exceed them, but hopefully you can see the importance of putting in the effort. Let's take a look at each socialization category in more detail.

New places - Many dogs do not like riding in the car because they only do so when going to the vet for those painful shots and invasive procedures. If this is their only experience in the car they will quickly make the unpleasant connection between the car and the vet. Also, it's common for dogs to get car sick or anxious if they didn't experience riding in cars at early ages.

In order to get your puppy exposed to as many new places as possible it's a good idea to start taking them on short trips in the car with you. Even if your puppy doesn't get out of the car on short trips there is still a huge benefit of bringing them along for the ride. Taking him along



for trips to the bank, picking up the kids from school, and grabbing some take out will get him used to riding in the car and seeing more of the world. Riding in the car allows them to see new things, smell new smells, hear new sounds and avoid that unpleasant connection between the car and the vet.

Now of course you will want to get out of the car in order to fully socialize your puppy. Taking him to friends' homes, shopping centers, pet stores, parks, children's sporting events, and other appropriate locations are great opportunities for socialization and learning. In addition to specific locations, you will want to seek out locations with certain attributes that are sometimes intimidating to puppies, some examples include:

- ✓ Locations with shiny floors
- ✓ Places with steps and staircases
- ✓ Doors that open automatically
- ✓ Homes with different types of plants and landscaping
- ✓ Places with the occasional loud noise
- ✓ Locations with a constant flow of people
- ✓ Locations with a constant flow of cars and other traffic
- ✓ Places with high ceilings

Be sure to let your puppy potty outside prior to entering an inside location as nerves might take over and result in him having to potty.



When you arrive at a new location, let your puppy sniff around, check out the new location, and soak it all in. In most cases, it may be the first time he is seeing certain things that you and I simply take for



granted; it's all new and exciting with a twist of scary thrown in too! Don't force your puppy to do much, simply follow them around on their leash and let him explore without interfering in the process too much.

Be sure to let them walk around on their own, as opposed to being carried or put in a shopping cart. When a puppy is the on ground walking on his own he is learning to be brave and explore, he is also smelling all of the new things that different locations offer. When puppies are always carried around they don't get the full experience of being in new locations. Remember that he needs to be learning and soaking it all in right now.



In addition to getting in the car and going to new places, don't forget about the good old-fashioned walk. While he is on his walk he is going to smell a whole bunch of new things, see and hear new things, and possibly see new people and dogs as well. During a walk your puppy is most likely

going to pull on the leash, don't worry about that right now, let him; the purpose of the walk is to socialize him.

While it may be tempting to take your puppy absolutely everywhere with you, it is not the best idea. In addition to certain places simply being not appropriate for your puppy, he also has to learn how to function and exist when he is home alone. There is definitely a balance here, on one hand you want to socialize him, but on the other you don't want to create a clingy and needy dog. Simply use your best judgement and make sure there is a balance of socialization and independence.

New People - If possible, you will want to introduce your puppy to every person he sees. Although it's not realistic to do so, you are going to want to make an effort to meet as many people as possible. Inviting friends and family members to your home is an easy way of getting your puppy around new people.

The best way to introduce your puppy to new people is to bring him up to your friends and family, as opposed to them approaching your puppy. This is very important because puppies and dogs can be easily intimidated when one or more people are approaching them if they are a bit nervous to begin with. Bringing your puppy closer to friends and family will also give him an added sense of confidence as well. Although most puppies will be more than happy to interact with people, still bring your puppy up to the person.



It's best to have a leash on your puppy during new meetings, even if they are occurring inside your home, the leash just gives us a bit more control at this point. If possible have a bag or dish of treats near your front door because you will want new people to offer your puppy treats during initial greetings.

As you bring your puppy up to new people have them hand your puppy a treat and pet him on the shoulder or under the chin. You want to avoid petting them on the head because standing directly in front of a dog and reaching over their head can sometimes be intimidating for them. This mainly applies for initial greetings, but it's still something to consider for later as well. We are going to use a lot of treats during greetings for now because we want to create an association that all new people have something to give to your puppy! This can be cut back a bit later, but remember the whole point of socialization is to create associations and avoid behavior issues.

You are also going to want to make an effort to have your puppy meet a wide variety of people in addition to your immediate friends and family. This is very important because the world is full of people that look, act, smell, and behave very different from those closest to us. Your puppy has to be exposed these people as well. Be sure to seek out certain types of people that appear different when you are out and about with your puppy. Some examples can include:

- ✓ Children
- ✓ Teenagers



- ✓ Adults
- ✓ Elderly
- ✓ People of different races and ethnicities
- ✓ Tall and short people
- ✓ Men with facial hair
- ✓ People wearing hats, sun glasses, backpacks
- ✓ Men with deep voices
- ✓ Women and children with high voices

Although these people may be strangers, having a cute little puppy often breaks the ice very quickly. If anyone shows an interest in your puppy or smiles when they see you coming, ask them if they want to pet your puppy. Most people will say yes! Just like with your friends and family, have them give your puppy a treat and pet him on the shoulder or under the chin, the same rules apply.

When your puppy is meeting new people, he will most likely jump all over them, he may actually mouth them a bit also. Although this is something that we are going to want to change as he gets older, don't sweat it for now. Simply use your leash to put all of his paws back on the ground if he is getting carried away, but don't punish him or not introduce him to people because he jumps. I often just make a joke out of it and announce something like "Oh he's a real jumper so watch out" as we are approaching new people.

So whether it's someone new, or someone you know or someone you and your puppy are meeting for the first time, have them give your puppy



a treat, pick them up, pet them and gush all over your puppy. You are going to have a very social dog if good things like these continue to happen throughout your puppy's life, and that's the whole point!!!

New Dogs - Introducing your puppy to other puppies and dogs is also going to be one of your main areas of focus right now. Just be aware that not all dogs and puppies are going to be appropriate playmates for your puppy. You also need to be careful of dog to dog introductions at this point because your puppy is most likely not going to have all the necessary shots and vaccinations for another few days or weeks; always consult with your vet first.

Not all dogs are good with puppies or well socialized with other dogs. It's not enough to simply get your puppy around a lot of dogs at a young age, it's more important to get your puppy around a lot of **the right dogs** at a young age. This is very important because we need all of your puppies experiences to be pleasant and proper in order to assure that he will grow into a dog that is good with other dogs. So how do you tell which dogs are going to be good with other dogs and puppies? Well, here are a few pointers on that topic:



- While on a walk, if you see an owner with his dog's leash wrapped around his arm and hand about six times and he is getting pulled down the street, that might not be a dog you want your puppy to meet.
- You will want to avoid someone if you ask them if their dog is good with puppies and they reply, "Um, yeah, most of the time."

- Avoid introducing your puppy to barking and lunging dogs behind fences.
- I would also avoid dog parks for right now. Large groups of dogs that you don't know very well is probably not the best position to put your puppy in right now.

Instead, try to find friends that have dogs that are tolerant, well-socialized, extremely playful, and just go through life looking for the next



play session. Try to find large, medium, small, short haired, long haired, old, and young dogs that have these types of personality traits; you always want to look for a wide range of dogs.

Also, because young puppies are less likely to have behavior issues, you may want to seek out some other puppies that are in the same age range as yours to be a potential playmate. If you are not good at reading other dogs it can sometimes be a bit hard to tell if a dog is going to be a

good playmate for your puppy or not. Here are some tips to further help you select the proper playmates for your puppy.

- Enroll in a puppy pre-school class that is offered in your area. While I wouldn't take the education part of the class very seriously in some cases, it's a great opportunity to get your puppy around other dogs in the presence of a knowledgeable person.
- Even if you're not going out of town, consider taking your puppy to doggie day care every so often. Make sure you select an organization that screens all dogs before allowing them into their program.
- Find a local social meet up group that focuses around puppies and dogs. These groups are usually made up of dog lovers who tend to have very social dogs.

Alright, now that you have found some appropriate playmates for your puppy, you are going to want to take some things into account. It can be very difficult to introduce dogs when they are on leashes. Leashes often prevent a dog from being able to move freely during an introduction. When a dog's ability to move freely is taken away, it may be common for a dog to get a bit snippy if he feels he doesn't have any other options. So when at all possible, try to introduce dogs in a safe area without leashes. If you must introduce two dogs while on leash, be sure that both owners always keep moving and adjusting themselves so that the slack always remains in the dogs' leashes.



Also, you are going to want to keep everyone moving during initial meetings, even if that means you constantly walk around in a small area. Having humans and dogs remain moving simply dissipates stress and decreases any nervousness that may build and escalate. Movement is just a much better alternative to stillness and also helps prevent feelings of being trapped. Also be sure to pick up all of the toys before allowing your puppy to meet a new dog or have a play date. Puppies and other dogs are more likely to have a disagreement or argument if there is something (like a toy) around to fight over. Let the dogs concentrate on getting to know each other, not the toys.

When your puppy is interacting with another dog or puppy, there is probably going to be some wrestling, chasing, play biting, and maybe even some growly noises; all of which are acceptable forms of play. It's not uncommon for some owners to confuse certain types of play with fighting because dog play is actually a form of play fighting. Be careful not to correct your puppy for appropriate play because it will confuse him about proper interactions.

During the play sessions you will want to look for opportunities for the dogs to shortly break off of play for a few seconds and go right back to it. These breaks are initiated by the dogs as a way of making sure each dog is still in the mood to play and it hasn't escalated too much. After the confirmation has been received, they pick up where they left off. You can go in and separate the puppies if you are not seeing any natural breaks in your puppy's play sessions, this will keep things from escalating.



By letting your puppy meet and play with other dogs you giving him the opportunity to learn from the other dogs as well, which is why it's so important that the other dogs are well socialized. Some of the typical things that puppies learn during early social sessions are listed below:

- ✓ How to take a proper correction when it's justified
- ✓ How to properly greet a dog
- ✓ How to properly be greeted by another dog
- ✓ How to respect personal space
- ✓ Bite inhibition and appropriate levels of play mouthing
- ✓ How to pick up on body language cues from other dogs

It's crucial that your puppy learns these skills at an early age. Things like these are best taught by other dogs because they can communicate certain things much better than we can. Again, hopefully you can see the value in getting your puppy around the [right types of dogs](#).

As I mentioned earlier, I would stay away from dog parks for now. Although that is my advice, if you must go to a dog park, consider the following things:

- Observe the dogs from outside the fence before entering. Get a sense of who the playful dogs are and who is doing some of the bullying. Pick out a handful of dogs that you want your puppy to play with and see if their owners are up for maybe going off to the side for a "private" play session.



- Keep moving when you are in the dog park. While most owners may be standing still or not even watching their dogs, make sure you keep moving and your dog stays moving as well.
- Stay off to the side or away from the main “pack” of people and dogs. Remember, the chance of a scuffle increases when there are a lot of people and dogs huddled into one place with no easy escape routes or movement.



Although we can't guarantee that all of our puppy's experiences are going to be totally pleasant, proper, and peaceful, taking these precautions can help add to the chances. Although it's nice to have repeat play dates with friends' and neighbors' dogs, remember that getting your puppy around [large numbers](#) of well-socialized dogs is extremely important, not just a handful.

Rewarding Behaviors and Marking States of Mind



While on your outings to new places and meeting new dogs and people, it may be common for a young puppy to show signs of uncertainty and fear in a few situations. Some signs of uncertainty or fear may include hiding behind you, trying to get in between your feet for comfort, barking, and you may even see your puppy back up and try to escape from certain situations. Although this is common at young ages, it's definitely something that you want to address right when it's happening and not allow it to continue.



If you see your puppy exhibiting these or other similar behaviors, it's crucial not to pick up your puppy, pet him, allow him to hide behind you, or assure him that it's ok. Although these are all attempts to comfort our puppies, they are actually receiving a different message from us. Let me use a very common example of thunderstorms to elaborate on the point I just made.



We all know that many dogs dislike thunderstorms, they're loud and can be scary for some puppies. Often puppies and dogs will cry, whine, bark, and panic during the storms. Many owners try to comfort their dogs during these times by picking them up, petting them, and verbally praising them. Like I said, we all know that the intentions are to comfort the puppy, and that's what you would probably do for a child in the same situation, but our puppies think differently than our children.

Instead of the message of comfort being received by the puppy, they are receiving the message that you (the owner) likes what they (the puppy) are currently doing. He may be thinking, "Mom and Dad like when I whine and cry, I'll do it even more the next time I'm scared or insecure." Constant repetition of these type of behaviors reinforce them and encourage them to come back more intense and more often.

So when your puppy shows signs of insecurity or fear, redirect them into something more productive to take their minds off of the source of those feelings. As your puppy gets older you can use obedience as a redirection tool, but for right now you can simply play a game of fetch, take them on a walk around the inside of house, play a game of hide and seek with a treat, or anything else that takes their mind off of the loud noise from the thunderstorm. [Always remember to reward bravery, not insecurity.](#)

The same principles apply to when you are socializing your puppy out in the world. So if your puppy hides behind you when you go somewhere



new, step to the side and let him realize that he doesn't need you as a security blanket. When your puppy sees something that looks unusual to them (a shopping cart, a bag blowing in the wind, or anything else), [take them up to that item](#) and let them figure out that the blowing bag is nothing to be afraid of.

If they are intimidated by a new person wearing sunglasses or a hood, if possible, have the person remove their sunglasses and offer your puppy a treat. If your puppy accidentally gets rolled or stepped on by another dog during play, don't dwell on it or shower your puppy with attention. Simply make sure he is not injured and move on, make sure he gets back into the play group and doesn't remain focused on that one experience.

Always be aware of the state of mind your puppies and dogs are in before offering praise and reward. A lot of behavior issues result as a lack of exposure to different things, but I've also seen a lot of owner created issues as well. These behaviors are learned by dogs as a result of consistently poorly timed praise and affection; remember that puppies and dogs are learning 24 hours a day, it's up to us to make sure they're learning the right things.



Handling Skills and Building Tolerance to Touch



I've never met a dog that actually likes having his nails trimmed, but it's important that they learn tolerance to this and being handled in certain situations. These situations are unavoidable in the lives of all puppies and dogs, some examples include everyday interactions such as having their ears cleaned, being examined at the vet, wiping their paws off after a romp in the mud, and being bathed. Puppies do not come out of their mothers' wombs being ok with these things, we need to teach them, and the earlier you start the better.

The exercises that we are going to examine are designed to help prevent behavior issues later on in life. It's quite often that some or most dogs will not ever experience this portion of training, and it's unfortunate because it's one of the most important things you can do with your puppy right now. Without training, lack of tolerance to touch can prove to be



challenging as the dog matures and in some cases the effects, or shall I say “lack of” can be irreversible, and often leads to unnecessary surrenders to shelters. I recommend that these exercises continue for several months and should be performed at least once a day. Your puppy will thank you for it!

I usually start handling exercises in a kneeling position with the puppy in between my legs in a sit, facing away from me. This position is important because it’s a bit less invasive for the puppy and easier to perform. Start with your hands under your puppy’s chin, you are basically going to give your puppy a mini massage.

Work down toward the paws, in between the pads, toughing his nails, ears, over the head and neck area and down the back. Practice the motions associated with ear cleaning, even if it’s just with a plain cotton ball. You can also mimic wiping “gooies” from his eyes by starting at the corner of the eye with a gentle movement toward the nose.



Practice checking his teeth by lifting the upper lip. These types of activities are exactly what happen at the vet.

If your puppy is squirmy, which indicates a sign that they are uncomfortable, gently but firmly, pull him close to you just as you were giving him a hug. Once he stops squirming and relaxes, you can continue with your massage. What you are actually teaching him is tolerance and also that the squirming does not stop the interaction. It’s also crucial to always keep your hand(s) moving and on the puppy at all times. One hand

may be still while the other is moving but both hands should always remain touching your puppy.

Continuing your touch is essential in the learning process. Make sure you repeat these exercises until he understands and starts to enjoy the interaction and touch. I would recommend starting out with short, frequent sessions and always end on a good note, with your dog relaxed; remember to always finish what you started.

Another useful handling position is tucking your puppy under your arm securely, supporting his chest with your forearm and hand. Your hand should be resting in between his two shoulders on his chest. The exercise and the principles are the same as the above exercise, and I usually prefer this body position of the pup while teaching tolerance to having his front paws touched.

Building tolerance to having your puppy's paws touched should be started and performed often before it's time for that first nail trim. If they only time you touch his feet is to trim his nails, that association may set in.

When teaching tolerance to having paws touched, you should keep movement in and through the pads. If your puppy tries to pull his feet away he is telling you that he is uncomfortable with the exercise and that is normal at this stage and to be expected. If he tries to pull his feet away you will need to apply gentle but firm pressure to the paw, making sure to not let go. Remember, squirming does not stop the interaction and neither does pulling away. In some cases, the slightest touch will cause an over



reaction in the puppy sending owners into a frenzy thinking they have hurt their dog. These are the pups that need these drills the most!

Although your puppy will most likely not enjoy these drills initially, you should definitely stick with it and should be seeing some improvement as your efforts continue over time. However, if you think that your puppy is exhibiting behavior that is a bit over the top, consider contacting a dog trainer in your area that has experience building tolerance to touch.

Dealing with Play Biting



Play biting can be one of the most annoying things that you and your family will be dealing with when welcoming your new puppy into your home. Those tiny sharp little teeth really hurt when they make contact with our skin and they also have a handy little tendency to easily rip our pants, socks, and other clothing items. Play biting is just a part of



puppyhood, it doesn't mean that your puppy is aggressive; dogs and puppies simply lead and explore with their teeth.

In order to get your puppy to stop biting you, it's important to understand why he is biting. Puppies have very sharp teeth at this age for a reason, that reason is to teach them bite inhibition. Bite inhibition is a dog's understanding of how much force is appropriate when biting. I know what some of you may be thinking, "Puppies and dogs shouldn't bite at all, so no force is acceptable when biting, right?" Well you are somewhat correct, but in reality dogs and puppies bite when playing with each other and they use their mouth and teeth to pick things up, carry things, and other daily uses, similar to how we use our hands; so using their teeth is definitely a part of their lives.



The earlier that a puppy can learn bite inhibition the better. Before bringing your puppy home to live with you, your puppy's mother already



started teaching him bite inhibition. Puppies generally learn the most on these lessons at very early ages, around five to eight weeks old. His first introductions to bite inhibition happened when he was corrected by his litter mates and mother for inappropriate force during play, and also during his corrections to other litter mates for the same reasons. It's extremely important to deal with play biting and teaching bite inhibition because it's common for puppies to later develop behavior issues when they have had little or no bite inhibition training.

So how do we deal with all that biting? Although humans are not as good at correcting puppies as other dogs are, we can still learn from some of the ways they correct a rambunctious puppy. There are a few options available, let's take a look:

Game over approach - If your puppy gently bites you during play, simply say "ouch" in a somewhat normal tone of voice and immediately walk away from the play session. After ignoring your puppy for about 20 seconds, you can then return to the play session if he is quiet. If your puppy actually bites you during a play session, repeat your "ouch" but in a much louder tone of voice and completely leave the room for about 30 seconds. If he is quiet, return to the room and rejoin the play session.

This approach teaches your puppy that all play stops when he uses his mouth. Repetition and consistency from everyone in the house is required for the puppy to make the connection. This approach also requires a tether for you puppy so that he can't follow you during the breaks in the play sessions.



Hand over the muzzle approach - Another option that you have is to physically restrain the puppy when he is biting. Although we are not looking to hurt your puppy or punish him, we are going to make him physically unable to continue biting us. When your puppy bites you, you are going to immediately hold him in your arms off of the ground. You are then going to want to take the top of his snout and apply some downward pressure with your index and middle fingers. We want the pressure to simply redirect his head and snout downward so that he is physically unable to reposition his head upward for another bite. Do not use enough force where you can hurt him, use gentle but effective pressure.

When your hand is restraining him, he may take his paws and try to remove your hand from his face, and he also may squirm and cry to make it stop. Although it's sometimes emotionally difficult and physically demanding, you have to follow through and win each and every one of these little battles. You are going to want to keep your hand on his snout and his head facing down until he stops squirming and accepts the restraint; you often may also hear a slight exhale from your puppy indicating that he has given up.

This is a very similar concept to the handling drills we discussed in an earlier chapter. As soon as you put your puppy back on the ground, get up and walk around letting him shake out the stress and realize what the heck just happened. After a few seconds pass you can go back to playing or interacting with your puppy.



This method may not be for everyone because it involves going “hands on” with your puppy; timing, confidence, and accuracy are crucial when implementing this approach. Improper use of force and timing can actually cause the biting and frustrations to increase, so please make sure you completely understand this method and are comfortable with it before implementation.

Prevention method - Play biting and mouthiness also rears it’s ugly head at times outside of direct play. Puppies also target moving objects like feet, flowing dresses, or other clothing items that are easily within reach. Tethering your puppy can help avoid giving him options to even participate in using his teeth in these situations all together.

You can also prevent him from getting accustomed to excessive mouthiness by not playing tug with your puppy. Tug prevents rough play and teaches him to target your hands and use his mouth. Tug can be implemented back into your routine at a later time, a time where the play biting and mouthiness have been extinguished.

Another important step when using the prevention method may go without saying, but nevertheless, here it is... Don’t encourage, praise, reward, or allow your puppy to bite you or other family members; even if you think it’s cute. The more a puppy is allowed to practice something, the better they become at it.

Play biting is something that is not going to go away overnight, dealing with it takes a lot of patience, consistency, and band aids.



Although dealing with your puppy's play biting may feel like an eternal struggle, there are a lot of things that you and your family can do to improve it and get your puppy past that stage of his life.

If you and your family are having a tough time with curbing play biting, consider consulting a local dog trainer. It may be better for someone to directly work one-on-one with your puppy to get a better understanding of what is and is not working with your puppy.

After Puppyhood



Following all of the theories, tips, tricks, advice, and outlining we covered in this e-book are absolutely going to benefit you and your puppy. Your puppy is going to be happy knowing that you and your family are his leaders, he will be confident about going out in public, meeting people and other animals, and will have the knowledge of where to go potty and will thrive in his new home with you and your family.



Although this material is targeted to puppies, older dogs can absolutely benefit from the same information as well. Because the information we covered goes beyond puppyhood, it's important to keep up with the drills and stick to the outlined information as your puppy gets older and reaches adulthood.

Although most of the skills we discussed are lifelong training theories, as your puppy starts to get older and matures you can possibly change some of the exercises up a bit if your puppy has earned your trust. For example:

- Over time you will be able to monitor the water a lot less because your puppy has proven that he knows where to go potty, is able to hold it during the appropriate times, and hasn't had an accident in the house in a few months.
- If you want to, and your dog is stable and well-balanced, you can start to invite your dog onto some of the furniture; again the key word here is invite. Don't let your dog automatically just jump onto the couch, that is still a resource that you want to control, and inviting him up at your approval is still controlling it!
- You can start allowing your dog more and more time out of his crate during times that you determine. I would still keep the crate as part of his daily routine, but if he can be trusted to sleep on his dog bed without getting into trouble then good for you!



I do want to be perfectly clear that the things I mentioned above should not be rushed into. Don't be in a big hurry to start throwing more and more responsibility at your dog or puppy before they are ready. If you relax your rules, regulations and boundaries too much before your dog is ready, you will see a backslide, and you will need to return to the same old rules that were previously working.

Also, as your puppy gets older and matures, his brain will be maturing as well and he will be ready for more intensive training. It really depends on the maturity level of the puppy, but the four month mark may be a good point to start him on some serious obedience classes that will set him up for later success in life with skills such as come, sit, down, heel, etc.

I also want to restate the reason why the first time you are even seeing the words [come, sit, down, and heel](#) is in the last paragraph of this entire book. **Obedience can be taught at anytime. It is more important to address the skills we covered in this book as soon as possible. It is very difficult to undo things later in life that are not addressed at the right time - that right time is NOW!**

Enjoy your puppy!



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