



PUPPY PLAY

Puppies between the ages of 6-16 weeks are in their greatest learning period. They are most sensitive at this time and it is therefore extremely important their first experience with an unfamiliar puppy is positive.

Forcing your puppy to play or allowing your puppy to be bullied could lead to an anxious adult dog with a higher risk of developing fear aggression towards other dogs.

If allowed to play on his/her own terms, confident and over excited puppies run the risk of practicing and learning inappropriate play.

One of the main aims during early learning is to help puppies learn to socialize appropriately with their own species. The first step in this process is for your puppy to learn to be confident and relaxed in the company of other dogs. This can be achieved by calm and controlled exposure to puppies over a period of time.

It is also important for your puppy to have an excellent 'come', 'sit' and 'look' in order for you to be able to control the interaction and help your puppy have a positive experiences with another puppy.

REWARDS BASED TRAINING

The aim of positive training is to help you build a successful, happy and trusting relationship with your puppy. Dogs don't know or understand the concept of 'right' and 'wrong'. They perform behaviors in order to benefit themselves. Any behaviour that is rewarded with a benefit will be repeated. A reward can anything from a pat, a toy, verbal praise, a food treat, anything your puppy wants, likes or needs.

Positive reinforcement training focuses on and rewards the behaviour you would like your puppy to perform, while denying your puppy the reward or benefit for behaviour you dislike.

Puppies will repeat any behaviour they find rewarding or beneficial. In order for you to teach your puppy the pack rules, you must begin by rewarding your puppy EVERYTIME they display a behaviour you desire. Examples of desired behaviours may be chewing their own toys, lying quietly on a mat, not jumping or barking. As your puppy gets older, reduce the rewarding amount from every time to intermitted so they never know when they are going to get the reward.

TRAINING THE CUE OF 'SIT'

- To begin, hold a treat in close to your puppy's nose to gain their attention. When you have their attention, keep the treat close to the nose and slowly raise it upwards and then over the puppy's head.
- This should make your puppy follow the treat with their sense of smell, consequently tilting their head backwards. As the head follows the treat backwards your puppy's bottom should eventually hit the ground, in the sit position.
- When your puppy's bottom hit the ground it is extremely important you say 'yes' and release the treat IMMEDIATELY. This ensures your puppy learns it is this exact behaviour that is earning the treat. The word 'yes' will become a reward marker.



- When your puppy can repeat this action, we can begin to teach the word to match the action. Add the word 'sit' at the exact moment your puppy's bottom touches the ground.
- Be sure to only say 'sit' only once and the 'yes' and release the treat. Repeat the training often and indifferent environments/ surroundings.

TEACHING 'TAKE'/ 'GIVE' CUE

It is important to teach this cue to ensure items are safely taken from your puppy. This can be achieved with high value food treats and a game of tug of war.

- Show the puppy a tug toy and get him/her interested in it by dragging it along the ground or shaking it. Then offer the toy to the puppy but don't let go. Allow the puppy to chew and tug on the toy and encourage them with praise for doing so.
- To teach the puppy to let go of the toy, you must stop interacting in the tug game and hold the toy still.
- With a treat in your other hand, show your puppy what you have. When the puppy instinctively lets go of the toy to reach for the treat, immediately say 'yes' and reward your puppy by handing over the treat.
- When your puppy has finished the treat hold the toy back out to him/her and let the game begin again.
- When the puppy is fluent and comfortable taking and releasing the toy begin to add words to match the actions. For example say 'take' as your puppy goes to grab the offered toy, and say 'give' when your puppy releases the treat for the toy.

HANDLING YOUR PUPPY AND HELPING IT BE CALM

Puppies need to be taught at a young age to accept being handled and restrained. A puppy that accepts touch makes applying and administering medications, grooming, vet treatment a lot less stressful. It is also important your puppy accepts being held onto by the collar without mouthing or being scared.

Massage is used in order to help calm and relax your puppy. You can either do this with your hand or with a grooming brush. It is important you teach your puppy how to relax in a quiet environment before you attempt to calm them in the presence of exciting stimulus.

- Place puppy in a sit position between your legs and rub the puppy's chest slowly and calmly. If your puppy is still and relaxed continue to massage the puppy.
- If your puppy struggles at any stage stop the massage and apply a small amount of pressure by squeezing your legs and holding your puppy still using your hand on the chest. It is important not to handle your puppy too roughly, remember the pressure is not to squash the puppy but to prevent it from running away.
- When you're struggling puppy relaxes, reward him/her by releasing the pressure and resuming the chest massage. Always use your voice to praise or a treat your puppy.
- In this position teach your puppy to accept handling by slowly touching each part of the body. When your puppy remains still and calm say 'yes' and reward the behaviour.

If you come across a sensitive spot your puppy does not like you touching, you should move away from that spot immediately and resume massaging the chest. When your puppy is relaxed again, hold a treat in front of their nose and slowly move back for a split second before saying 'yes' and releasing the treat to reward your puppy for accepting the touch.



TEACHING THE CUE 'LEAVE'

It is important to teach your puppy the action of backing away from things. For example, if your puppy was about to pounce on the cat it would be helpful if they knew the word associated with the action of backing away. To do this:

- Hold a treat firmly in closed hand. Show your puppy your hand that holds the treat, and allow him/her to nudge at your hand in attempt to retrieve the treat. Do not release the treat to your puppy until s/he has stopped nudging your hand. At the EXACT moment the nudging stops, say 'yes' and give the puppy the treat.
- After a few repetitions your puppy will begin to understand that backing away from your hand earns them a reward. When this happens you may begin to add the word you wish, such as 'leave', at the precise moment they back away from the hand.

TEACHING THE CUE 'COME'

This cue is extremely important to teach your puppy as it will help prevent your puppy being involved in a dangerous situation. A good recall will help stop your puppy from annoying other dogs, people and stop them from disappearing.

To train a puppy how to 'come' you can use their instinctive behaviour to follow;

- Start by showing your puppy a treat and then walking away. When your puppy begins to follow say 'yes' and give your puppy the treat. Repeat this frequently, so your puppy begins to learn moving towards you is great.
- Next, with your puppy off the leash in a secure area such as the back garden, continue the same process with your puppy. When your puppy instinctively turns to see where you are going and begins to follow, encourage him/her to keep coming by moving backwards and using short sounds such as 'pup, pup, pup' or kissing noises. **DO NOT SAY 'COME' AT THIS POINT.**
- When you can guarantee your puppy will reach your feet, say 'come' once only, following 'yes' and immediately rewarding your puppy with a treat.
- Remember for your puppy to understand the word 'come' it needs to be paired with the action numerous times in a variety of environments and with different friends and family members.

When asking your puppy to 'come', always make sure the consequence of coming is positive. Never call them to do something they don't like such as leaving the park.

NEVER yell at your puppy or threaten them when they finally come to you. A fearful puppy is unlikely to obey a 'come' if s/he believes it will be punished or actually coming to you.

GETTING YOUR PUPPY TO FOCUS WITH EYE CONTACT

- Hold a treat in your hand and get your puppy's attention. Slowly move the food up towards your face and hold it between your eyes.
- When your puppy achieves eye contact with you say 'yes' and reward your puppy with the treat.
- Repeat until your puppy become fluent at the action and understands it is holding your eye contact that earns them the treat.



- At this stage you can begin to pair the action with the simple word 'look'.
- Be sure to say 'look' at the exact moment your puppy's eyes meet yours

PREVENTING FROM CHEWING AND MOUTHING

A puppy between the ages of 3 weeks to 6 months is teething. Teething can be quite painful for your puppy and chewing is a way of relieving this pain. For this reason, you should provide your puppy with toys s/he is allowed to chew. A good idea is to feed some of your puppy's daily intake in a Kong dog that they play with to release the food.

Puppies should never be allowed to chew on items such as old shoes. This is because they do not have the ability to distinguish between old shoes they are allowed to chew and shoes that they are not allowed to. When your puppy is caught chewing something s/he is not allowed, take that item away and exchange it for something it is allowed to chew. Remember to reward your puppy with 'yes' and a food treat when s/he begins to chew the acceptable items. Never attempt to take or exchange when your puppy has something of value like a bone until s/he learns to open the mouth to the cue of 'give'.

If your puppy is mouthing you, you need to immediately remove yourself from the puppy's reach. At the same time, remove all attention from the puppy. This includes talking to the puppy and even eye contact. This may mean standing up and leaving the room. When the puppy is calm and begins to interact appropriately, reward your puppy with lots of attention and a piece of the dry food if s/he accepts touch without mouthing.

For these techniques to work and be successful the entire family and guests must be consistent in their response.

PREVENTING YOUR PUPPY FROM BITING

Biting may be cute now but when your puppy grows it will be far from a laughing matter. It usually occurs when the puppy is over excited. It will be helpful to the training process if you use this energy at key excitable moments such as getting up in the morning or arriving home from work. Playing tuggy or throwing the ball are excellent ways of expending energy.

To begin teaching your puppy that biting humans is unacceptable you need to establish a learning pattern around biting. Every time the puppy bites you regardless of if it hurts or not, you need to walk away from the puppy. This may even mean locking yourself in a room until your puppy is calm enough for you to return. Ignoring biting will not work alone. It is vital you reward your puppy every time s/he interacts with you calmly. The consistent positive and negative feedback will ensure your puppy understands which behaviour is acceptable

It is important to try not to yell, scruff or muzzle your puppy for biting as this may encourage your puppy to bite back or even begin to fear you. Do not allow the children to play roughly with the puppy or tap him/her around the face. This behaviour will only encourage rough play and for the puppy to mouth. Try not to allow the children to run as the puppy is likely to snap at their ankles. Try to teach them to remain calm, still and quietly call to you for help. You will find that you will have a higher success rate of teaching your puppy not to chase and bite if you prevent the puppy from practicing the actual behaviour. In order to do this, separating your puppy and children playing is highly recommended unless supervised.



**MALVERN
VET
HOSPITAL**



Malvern Veterinary Hospital
547 Dandenong Rd
Armadale, Vic. 3143
www.malvernvet.com.au
askthetvet@malvernvet.com.au

☎ 03 9509 7611

LOOSE LEAD WALKING

Puppies that pull on the lead are being naturally inquisitive. It is important to teach your puppy at a young age they will only receive what they desire to explore when s/he is behaving appropriately.

NEVER yank your puppy backwards if s/he pulls ahead, simply stop. Recall your puppy, reward for coming and resume walking. Reward your puppy with verbal praise and treats when s/he is walking nicely.

After rewarding the correct behaviour and repeatedly stopping when your puppy pulls, your puppy will begin to recognize that pulling equates to no walk. Further training or a head halter may be necessary to help establish a permanent loose lead walk.

PREVENTING YOUR PUPPY FROM JUMPING

When your puppy jumps it is his/her way of demanding attention. The simple solution to a jumping puppy is to teach your puppy that s/he never receives attention when jumping.

Every time your puppy jumps to greet you, you must try to avoid all contact. You may have to jump backwards, turn your back on your puppy, stand up and move away or quickly open your legs so your puppy falls between your legs without contact.

Never speak, make eye contact or push your puppy down when s/he jumps. They will continue to jump if you react in this manner as they are receiving what they want which is your attention.

When you have avoided contact and your puppy has backed away or even sits, then you may start to give the attention. When giving the attention it is a good idea to get to their level to avoid them jumping, if they do jump then immediately start to avoid the puppy again. Remember to be consistent; it is a good idea to put your puppy on lead when guests arrive in order to prevent him/her from receiving attention when jumping up. Once the puppy sits then they may greet the guests.

NUTRITIONAL INFORMATION

All veterinarians recommend feeding a premium brand dry food such as Hills, which is available from vet clinics and leading pet stores.

These premium brands are nutritionally balanced, containing the correct amounts of proteins, vitamins, minerals, carbohydrates and fat to help build a healthy puppy. Eukanuba has recommended serving sizes on the bag, although the size servings are a suggestion only and require you to watch your dog's weight for suitability.

Puppies should be fed a minimum of 3-4 times a day until they are six months old, then twice daily. Providing your puppy is on a balanced diet, no milk or added supplements are necessary.

It is a very good idea to make your puppies earn their food via toys such as Kong, buster food cubes and home alone. Not only is this fun for puppies but it also keeps your puppy mentally stimulated and easily occupied while you're not at home.



Bones are very important to give your puppy throughout their life as they assist with dental care. It is vital that these bones are only given raw as cooked bones can splinter causing health problems. They should only have the bone for 20-30 minutes to chew on then dispose of them. If the whole bone is eaten it can cause constipation, pancreatitis, diarrhoea and overweight dogs. **ONIONS, CHOCOLATE AND GRAPES are toxic to dogs and should be avoided. If your puppy is to eat these things please advise a vet immediately.**

TOILET TRAINING YOUR PUPPY

Dogs instinctively do not want to soil where they sleep. However, any area other than where they sleep is considered suitable to use as a toilet. This is why crate training or confining your puppy in a very small sleeping area is recommended. This will help your puppy develop bladder control to hold over night.

Begin toilet training by establishing the toilet area. It is recommended you always use the same toileting place. Take your puppy on lead here first thing in the morning and as they may have held on overnight they should relieve themselves almost immediately. You need to choose a word, such as 'quick quick' or 'toilet' and say this word once as your puppy starts to go. Remember to only use that word as changing it will confuse the puppy. When they have finished, say 'yes' and pay them with a treat and lots of attention.

Take your puppy to the toilet after every meal, after play, after sleeping and every half to two hours in between. Creating a routine can be helpful, and at these times take your puppy outside on the lead to your chosen toileting area. If your puppy does not go to the toilet in 5 minutes, go back inside the house for another 10 minutes. During this 10 minutes inside it is vital you do not let your puppy off the lead. You must not let your puppy fail by allowing them off the lead or to walk freely around the house.

During toilet training make sure to keep an eye on the puppy whilst s/he is in the house. Circling, sniffing, whining, scratching and walking off are indicators your puppy may need a toilet break.

NEVER yell at your puppy or rub his/her nose in any mistakes. Always clean up mistakes with non-ammonia based cleaners (BioZen washing powder) so they cannot smell past mistakes and make the again in the same spot.

EXPOSURE AND NEW EXPERIENCES

When your puppy arrives into a new home you should be aware that they are in a sensitive learning period. For this reason, you should help your puppy develop safely and happily by introducing them to a variety of new experiences and sounds in a positive manner. They are not programmed to understand the busy world and noises. Each new experience the puppy has will have the potential to be positive or negative. If your puppy has a fearful response to something, this is an indicator that they haven't learnt that it won't hurt them. This can become something that they learn to fear more as they get older which can turn to aggression in some cases.

Most displays of aggression in dogs are due to anxiety or fear based emotion. To help these problems you can help your puppy develop into a relaxed and confident adult dog by making sure every new experience is a good one.

Things that may frighten your puppy could include;

- Noises- such as car alarms, fireworks, vacuum cleaner, lawnmower, doorbell, sirens and slamming doors.



**MALVERN
VET
HOSPITAL**



Malvern Veterinary Hospital
547 Dandenong Rd
Armadale, Vic. 3143
www.malvernveter.com.au
askthevet@malvernveter.com.au

☎ 03 9509 7611

- People- such as elderly, children, middle aged, facial hair, people in hats/sunglasses, people holding umbrellas, cyclists and people with prams.
- Objects- such as garbage bins, street signs, tents, curtains and trolleys.

Dogs can hear up to 4 and a half times higher frequency than humans. For this reason, it is understandable how thunderstorms, fireworks, doorbells and construction sites can be frightening.

HOW TO BE A GOOD PACK LEADER

Make your dog earn all of the things he wants in life by sitting. SIT = PLEASE.

Make your dog earn his daily meal intake via training or motivational food toys.

ALWAYS reward or acknowledge the correct behaviour. E.g., if he is chewing his toy (and not your boots!) tell him he is good, or better yet give him a piece of kibble.

Do NOT allow your dog to make mistakes. E.g., if you want your dog to stay out of a room or not toilet in a particular place, it is up to you the pack leader to prevent this from happening.

Do NOT ask your dog to do something you have not trained him to do.

Make sure you generalize and proof all trained behaviours, in order to guarantee a correct response from your dog.

Do NOT respond to your dogs demands. E.g., do not pat attention to your dog if he is barking, jumping or pushy, but rather acknowledge when your dog is not demanding.

Play lots of games with your dog such as tuggy or fetch. Make sure you ask for a 'sit' before you throw the ball, or a 'give' when playing tuggy.

If your dog has stolen an item, it is YOUR fault as you left it around, do NOT chase your dog but rather exchange the item for something your dog finds more valuable.

Do NOT physically or verbally threaten your dog. They do not understand what they have done wrong but rather that you are scary. If a pack leader is scary this will diminish your dogs respect and responsiveness to you.