

Puppy Class – Homework Week Two

Week Two Practice Instructions

Ignore behavior you do not want; reward behavior you do!

1. **Loading the “marker”** – by now, your pup should know that “yes!” means a treat is coming, but begin each practice session this week with 4 or 5 repeats of “yes!” followed immediately by a treat.
2. Now, immediately practice eye contact (arms out to sides, “YES” for eye contact). *Also, practice “positive name.” Refer to your “POSITIVE NAME ASSOCIATION” handout.*
3. **Practice sit/stay** – refer to “THE STAY” handout. Reread each day before you practice.
4. **Practice down** much as you did “sit” last week. Do not command “down.” He doesn’t know what that means yet. Use a treat to lure him into a down and the second his chest is fully on the floor say “YES” and treat **by laying the treat on the floor directly between his legs.** Remember to name it *while he is doing it....* “Good down.” If you always reward on the floor, you are really reinforcing the down. If you’re quick enough to always feed low (below his chin) you can do that instead. It all depends on your timing. Again, the down should be an automatic stay. When you get a good down (pup seems to know what you are asking), then start doing it in heel position with a stay as described in THE STAY handout.
5. **Loose leash walking. Every time your puppy is on the leash you are practicing, like it or not!** Reread the article from your week one homework on loose leash walking and practice, practice, practice. If you find yourself thinking, “I’ll just let him pull today; I’m too tired to deal with it,” you are allowing a behavior to become established which will take much more time and effort to extinguish in the future. Put in the time now.
6. **Choose to heel (step two)** – Follow the directions from week one. Show him the treat and as he comes toward it, allow your left hand to drop to your side and give him the treat the second he comes to it. Say “yes” as you treat **at your left side**. Then stand up straight (with another treat already available in your left hand) and immediately begin to move forward. As he turns to stay with that hand, treat him again. Do not lure. Make sure he sees the food and move. The treat is there in your left hand. When he shows up by that hand, he gets a treat. If he stays on your left as you take another step forward, he gets another treat and praise. Try to continue to stand up straight as you take several more steps with the puppy, hopefully, staying right there with you. Remember, it is all about timing. Use your “yes” marker to let him know he is doing what you want even if it takes a second for you to deliver the treat. If you do this every day, you should be able to walk forward for 5-10 steps standing straight and the pup glued to your left side receiving praise and treats for being there. Remember, don’t lure or call. Let him CHOOSE to show up.
7. **Wait** – using the instructions from week one, continue to practice wait at the door. Just like for loose leash walking, put in the time NOW and your pup will quickly accept that you own the door. The benefits are tremendous. You can also use the wait when you feed. When you are ready to give him his food, tell him to wait (flat hand is a good reminder). The pup’s position is up to you. Mine are standing; I don’t care as long as they make NO move toward their food

until I say “release.” Often, for a young puppy, it is helpful to have them sit. When the food is prepared, stand up straight, take a deep breath, and then, as long as he is waiting, gently release him to his food (NO excitement). I often stand, breathe, wait quietly until they look up, then smile and gently say “release.” Expect some drooling on the floor ☺

8. **Come** – continue to play the come game any time you see an opportunity. Make sure there are not other dogs around. Have treats. Let the pup see that you have them, and then sort of run away from him. As he pursues you, say “YES!” and “GOOD COME!” as you dole out those treats! Every come is a party! Try increasing the distance. Once you’ve got his interest, try running into another room and “hiding.” Make it fun for him to find you. Always set him up for success. Make it easy at first; then harder as he gets better at it.
9. **Two person come:** This week, let’s also add a two handler “come” game. Get a partner to help. You both sit on the floor with plenty of treats in your hand. Start by calling him back and forth making it really fun every time he comes. Slowly you can increase the distance and even be in two different rooms.
10. **Practice the toy release.** This is how you reinforce your leadership status and make life easier on everyone. YOU decide when to play. YOU decide when to stop playing. YOU decide how rambunctious or gentle the play is. Also, getting good at this enables you to use the toy as a reward/relaxation/break at the end or in the middle of a training session. Start by holding the toy in front of the pup. Wiggle it and happily invite the pup to “get it get it get it!” As he grabs it, make it fun! If he loses hold, wiggle it and begin again. After a few seconds, stop pulling. The pup will probably continue to pull, but you let your arm go slack and command “out.” Do NOT pull it from the pup’s mouth (this would cause him to clamp down tighter). If he doesn’t immediately give you the toy, say “uh” and reach with your other hand to gently release his grip. PRAISE the second he begins to yield – “good boy!” and let the toy fall to your side. It is so tempting to raise it out of reach, but that both tempts the pup and also looks like an admission that you are not in control. If the pup looks at it or makes a try for it, say NO! Or “leave it!” If he refrains from trying to get it, say “good” and then immediately offer it again with “get it get it get it.” This activity is FUN for you dog, and reinforces your relationship.
11. **READ** the two attached articles: *House breaking* and *Crate Training*.

House Breaking – A Few Guidelines

- The best way to house break a puppy is to prevent accidents by taking him out MANY times each day: after he eats, when he wakes up from a nap, when he has been playing for 10 or 15 minutes. In other words (and this is not an exaggeration) maybe 35 times a day.
- When you take him out (and it is wise to carry a pup out initially if he is really small, especially if he has been in the crate for awhile), always take him to the same place, wherever you prefer that he go.
- Walk around with him a little to get him sniffing and thinking about it, and then *stand still*. When he realizes this isn't a hike, he'll get down to business.
- As he is going (in a gentle voice so you don't startle him), say "YES, good BUSY" or whatever word you choose to associate with relieving himself. If you do this religiously, you will reach a point where you can say "go busy" and he will.
- Do not take him directly back into the house or he will get the idea that he needs to hold it if he wants to stay outside. Play with him a bit and then go back inside.
- NEVER reprimand the puppy for accidents. The old "rub his face in it" advice just leaves your puppy thinking you've lost your marbles. The second he is done going, it's over as far as he is concerned. He has no memory or interest in it.
- You may say "no" pretty emphatically if you catch him *in the act*. Then pick him up and head for the great outdoors. If you are lucky enough that he decides to finish up outside, PRAISE enthusiastically.
- Any accidents in the house must be cleaned up thoroughly including the scent. All pet stores carry products for this. A good one is NATURE'S MIRACLE. Thoroughly soak up as much urine as you possibly can, and then SOAK the area with Nature's Miracle.
- One last reminder, if you take the pup out and he doesn't go even though you are certain that it must be "time," take him back in and **cheerfully put him in the crate** (remember the cookies) and leave him alone for a bit. Come back later and try again.
- About 4 or 5 months old, just about the time you think it's done, the puppy is housebroken, it is not unusual to have a series of accidents. This just means you need to back up and watch more carefully. Any young dog (under 8-12 months) should not be loose in the house unless you are actively supervising him.

Turn page for info on Crate Training.....

Crate Training – the why and the how

Although the majority of dog owners now crate train their dogs, some still resist it as cruel – they view it as putting the dog in a cage like a zoo animal. The truth is, if we look honestly at our pups, we will note that they love to find a “den” – often that turns out to be under a couch (until they outgrow it) or under a coffee table, etc., etc.

They naturally feel safer when they are tucked back into a small space. If they are carefully introduced to a crate, they readily recognize it as a “den.” If you attend a major dog event, you will see dogs snoozing stretched out on their backs in their crates in the middle of an enormous convention center or arena. Inside their crate, they feel *safe*. A crate trained dog is a secure and happy dog.

Modern crates are collapsible and easy to fold-up and transport. After a pup is grown and trained, you can even use a light weight fabric crate which you can put over your shoulder like a collapsible beach chair.

Crates help with.....

- **Housebreaking** – a pup will not soil his crate if he can help it (bear in mind, young pups cannot hold it very long). Also, if you take a pup out to potty and he doesn't go, cheerfully put him in the crate when you come inside. Give him a cookie and let him chill. Pretty soon he'll remember he needs to go and let you know and you can take him out again.
- **Saving your “stuff”** – your pup should never be wandering the house unsupervised. You wouldn't let your two-year-old “hang out” alone. A crated pup cannot eat the couch or tear down the door or ingest socks or underwear (leading to a very expensive foreign body surgery).
- **Travel** – a crated pup cannot eat your mother-in-law's furniture or soil her rug. A crated pup cannot run out of a motel room. A crated pup cannot jump on the dashboard or in your face as you drive.
- **Staying at the vet** – if your pup needs to spend some time at the vet, the trauma is dramatically reduced if he is accustomed to staying in a crate.
- **Disasters** – shelters that allow dogs usually require that they stay in a crate.
- **Recovery** – after surgery of any kind, the vet often recommends “crate rest.” This is no problem for a crate trained dog. It's a trauma for a dog who has never been introduced to a crate.
- **TRAINING** – you can practice “wait” every time the pup exits the crate (just gently close the door to push him back if he breaks the wait). If your pup becomes “possessed” (my son-in-law's description of their Golden Retriever puppy when he started “butt-dragging” around the room -- some call this the “zoomies”), just cheerfully run to the crate calling “cookie, cookie” and gently shut him in. Toss a few more cookies in and leave him alone till all those arousal hormones settle down. This also works when the pumped up pup begins biting everything and everyone. There is no solution except time to settle down (while you go apply Neosporin and a band aid to your dripping hand).

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My husband purchased a piece of furniture quality wood and made a lovely top for a crate we keep in the living room. Most people who spend time in the room don't even notice the crate; it is just a handy and attractive table. If I say “kennel”, all the family dogs try to run into it at once! Of course, there is always a cookie jar handy on the top of the crate.