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Start off right with your new puppy!

You got the puppy, food, bed and toys what else could you possibly need? It's the critical time in your puppy's life right now where you will shape the dog they are going to be. Life is always easier if you can have a dog that is well-behaved. Below are a few pointers to help you get through the first few months!

- **Potty training:**
 - Consistency is key!
 - When your puppy is loose in the house they should be supervised at all times, it only takes a minute for a puppy to turn around and have an accident in the house!
 - If your puppy starts to sniff at the ground a lot they may be indicating they are looking for a spot to go, at this point get them outside.
 - Once outside place your puppy in the same spot each time to urinate or defecate, so that they can associate that area with their "bathroom".
 - If you are going to use a command say it always once or twice will they are actually going, such as "Go potty". They eventually will associate the word with the action.
 - If your puppy goes outside during this time make sure to have a treat available or be very excited and give them extra attention.
 - If your puppy starts to go in the house, say a sharp "NO" then quickly grab them as most will stop urinating at this time and get them outside right away. If they finish outside they should be rewarded.
 - NEVER rub your puppy's nose in their urine or feces, if you haven't caught them in the action they don't know why you are yelling at them.
- **Barking!**
 - Once you bring your puppy home you may find that they will bark throughout the night. It is going to be critical to ignore this behavior!
 - Unfortunately, your puppy is going to bark louder and more frequently prior to realizing that it's not going to get them attention.
 - Tough love on this one will go a long way!
- **Socialization:**
 - It's important at an early age to get your new puppy acquainted with as many people, animals and objects as possible!
 - This may mean that they are going to interact with other dogs, these other dogs should be up to date on their vaccines to minimize any risk of disease to your puppy.
 - Make sure to introduce your puppy early on to the vacuum, bathing, nail trimming, and handling of the mouth/tooth brushing.

- **Basic obedience:**

- All training of any sort should be initiated with treats (or their meal and they get a piece of kibble per a trick).
- SIT
 - The easiest way to get your dog to perform this trick is to stand next to them and hold your hand just slightly over their head, most puppies will sit down. The minute your puppies butt touches the floor make sure to reward them. When giving the command make sure it coincides with the action.
 - You should not need to push on their rear to get them to do this.
- STAY
 - This can be a more difficult task for a puppy, as their attention span is short.
 - To initiate this first get them to sit, then say stay take one step back and if they stay in that position quickly step back to the puppy and give them a treat. Repeat this until the puppy seems to have learned, then you can increase the distance and time between command and treat!
- COME
 - Puppies often will chase you if you run, this is an easy way to start off getting a puppy to come to you. While running away from the puppy say come and once the puppy catches you reward them for this.
 - If your puppy already has sit and stay down, a quick and happy come here Fido will get them running, once they get to you they should be rewarded!
- **Crate training:**
 - Some people may not be interested in doing this, but it may be the safest option for your puppy when you are away from home. Most puppies that are crate trained from the start will find their crate to be a wonderful place into their adulthood.
 - The best way to start off with crate training is getting your puppy to go in willingly, never shove your puppy into its crate.
 - To do this put treats in the crate to get them to enter, once they are in they can come back out. After doing this a few times put treats in and close the door, let them out after about 5-10 minutes. Steadily increasing the time.
 - If leaving for long periods of time offer your puppy something to do while they are in the crate ~ a kong toy with peanut butter or stuffed with some sort of treat is the perfect way to do this.
 - Crate training will keep your puppy from chewing or eating things they shouldn't while you are away and will assist you in potty training.

Resources:

- <http://drsophiayin.com/>
- "Perfect Puppy in 7 days: How to start your puppy off right!" by Dr. Sophia Yin.
- <http://avsabonline.org/resources/position-statements>
- <http://www.asPCA.org/pet-care/dog-care/general-dog-care>