

Kathy's Pet Dog Training Top Ten Puppy Training Tips

1. Praise immediately for correct behaviour. If you wait more than 2 seconds, pups do not understand why they are being praised. Corrections should be firm, kind and instructive. Example: In house accidents should be corrected with a firm "outside" followed up with a visit to their potty space and praise for performance. Scolding, hitting and yelling are ineffective. Sometimes the best correction is ignoring the bad behaviour while praising the good.
2. Expose your pup to new experiences. A well socialized puppy becomes a well adjusted dog. Introduce the pup to different people, other dogs and new experiences. Do not force the pup into unfamiliar situations. Allow the pup to enter the situation at its own pace. Treat shyness with distraction (ie ask the pup to sit) or simply ignore it. A calm attitude on your part will create a confident pup. Attend a good obedience or training class and have some fun!
3. Get your pup to focus on your face. Use a treat or your voice to encourage the pup to look at you. Praise for eye contact and attention.
4. Replace inappropriate behaviour. Example: rather than allowing the pup to jump up to greet you, ask the pup to "Sit". Only greet the pup when it is sitting calmly in front of you.
5. Never allow a pup to pull on leash. If the pup reaches the end of the leash and there is tension on the leash, stop, stand and wait for the pup's attention. Once the leash is no longer tense, allow the pup to walk forward. Use this technique for exciting times like meeting other dogs.
6. Stand tall when giving commands. Dogs read body language very well and will respond better to a handler who is standing upright and very still. Allow the pup time to process the request and praise immediately.
7. Never punish a dog for coming to you—or call a dog to you in order to do something unpleasant. Try not to chase a dog. If the pup is ignoring your calls try: running away from the pup, looking interested in something on the ground, throwing a ball, or squatting and calling enthusiastically. Remember to call in a pleasant tone of voice—no matter how frustrated you are—and praise enthusiastically as soon as the dog turns toward you.
8. Always crate a pup when you are unable to supervise it. The pup will be safer and so will your belongings. You can also attach a leash to your belt if you cannot supervise.
9. Teach a firm "Leave It" to prevent your dog from swallowing dangerous items. I also ask "What do you have" in a pleasant tone of voice and exchange the contraband for a tasty treat. This way I don't have a pup that gulps before I can get to it.
10. Remember that if you teach the behaviour to a pup, it will continue into adulthood. Puppies that jump up may be cute; the behaviour becomes more annoying with adults. Ask yourself "Will I want a dog that does this?".

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