



Lagotto of House Woller

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TRAINING TIPS

****NOTE: If you are not experienced with house breaking or crate training or preventing puppies from biting/chewing, please let us know so we can help you find Youtube videos and other resources.**

Collars and Leads

Use flat buckle or snap together collars only; do not use choke or pinch collars without advice or instruction. NEVER use flexileads while training your puppy. The puppy can get tangled and you can get hurt. If your puppy is chewing the leash, buy a chain leash until they are past the chewing phase of puppyhood.

Training books

Preferred books for reading and training (most are available at amazon.com, anything by the Monks of New Skete is GREAT!!):

- a. Raising your Dog with the Monks of New Skete and The Art of Raising a Puppy the New Skete Way (<http://www.dogsbestfriend.com/>)
- b. "Dog Training For Dummies" by Volhard
- c. "Good Dogs, Great Owners" by Brian Kilcommons
- d. "Smarter than You Think" by Paul Loeb
- e. Allie loves anything by Ceaser Milan

Lagotto Romagnolo Club of America

The LRA is the national AKC breed club. You can receive a lot of interesting information by joining. There is also a LRA Facebook page. It's a great place to network with other lagotto families. www.LagottoRomagnoloClubofAmerica.com

Raw Hide

Do not give your puppy raw hide. We prefer to NEVER give raw hide. Raw hide is difficult for dogs to digest and has been linked to choking. Pig ears are great. The rib bones are also good. Do not use the knuckle bones, the knuckle pieces break off. See the puppy shopping list for other suggestions.

Feeding

Feed your puppy 3 times a day. Give them enough food to use in a 15-20 minutes period. They have been eating *Taste of the Wild Puppy (Bison)*. Make sure there is plenty of water available as well. Do not ever use a “puppy” food for your adult dog as the nutrient composition is not correct for bone/joint development.

Later on, you can switch to adult dog food. We currently use Taste of the Wild Wetlands Canine and High Prairie formula. Because dog foods are frequently recalled it is important that you sign up for emails from the dog food advisor.

<http://www.dogfoodadvisor.com/dog-food-recalls/>

You can also get information on the rating and rankings of dog foods. It is important that you feed your Lagotto a very high quality dog food. These are working dogs and burn a lot of energy.

Potty Training

Potty training and crate training are covered in the book recommendations very well. However, know that your puppy has been raised indoors and in a puppy exercise pen for hip and joint health so be patient. They have been potty box trained up to this point.

At a young age they cannot hold their urine very well yet (you can figure one hour for every month old they are - so a 4 month old pup can hold it for 4 hours). Puppies require LOTS of potty trips...and remember to be consistent - use the same door, the same place, and the same commands!

I highly suggest the use of a bell on your door for training. You may purchase one at chewy.com or get a large bell and tie it to a string or chain and gently touch the bell to the puppies nose each time you go out to potty.

They will get the picture and soon you will have a dog that rings the bell instead of scratches, barks, or pees elsewhere! Also, for clean up of accidents, you will want to have Nature's Miracle on hand...it is the only thing I have found to effectively keep them from going back to the same spot.

Not giving them water past a certain time in the evening (2 hours before your bed time) will also aid in training. The use of a schedule will also GREATLY assist in training your puppy for both the crate as well as house breaking.

Details on this are covered in the Monks of New Skete book series. It is imperative that a young pup is NOT be left outdoors for long periods of time, even in a fenced in yard as they will develop bad habits (digging, barking, chewing, not to mention running away or getting hit by a car, etc.) out of boredom.

Puppies are better in a crate during potty training transition. They can develop the habit of peeing where they get the inclination. Basically just standing right next to you and peeing. In order to avoid this they should be crate trained and spoken to when they are taken outside to potty.

House Rules

Remember you are getting a working breed of dog. One of the ways they work is by using their feet to push off of you. This will be annoying when they are 20-30 lbs so make sure you are consistent in teaching them "OFF." Encourage your children and visitors to follow this rule as well.

It is also recommended that whatever you want as the house rules, they need to start the moment you get your puppy home. For example if you have furniture that is off limits or do not want your Lagotto putting paws on people you need to train that behavior out of them now. These are behaviors that will not be cute at 20-30 lbs. You need to firmly establish pack leadership and rules NOW.

Puppies and Children

Children should ALWAYS be supervised with your puppy. Young children can be perceived as littermates and it is HIGHLY advisable to strictly adhere to supervised play times in which you can make sure the pup does not jump on, chew on, or bite/nip play with your child.

Children should be discouraged from running from or screaming or other high pitched voices as this will encourage the pup to react in a positive way with a negative behavior. They think the jumping and running and screaming is fun and thus will engage in the exact behavior. When the child wants it to stop playing the dog will want more of it! This is how injuries occur to both puppies and to children.

Chewing and Biting

Puppies chew and bite as they grow and develop and teeth. To teach your puppy not to put its teeth on human skin even in play, DO NOT play tug of war with your new puppy. Do not allow them to get excited and chew on your or your clothes.

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Should your puppy chew on you or someone in your family, gently grasp the puppy's muzzle and looking him in the eye say "No bite." Give him something he can bite immediately so he has an option of what is correct. If he continues, a short 'time out' in his crate for about 5 minutes is a good idea. You are not using the crate for discipline, only a time out so he can think things through. Dogs learn in three's so it may take up to three times to get this pattern established ONCE he has his memory hooked up. By this, I mean for the first 6-8 weeks you are in training, not the puppy. He is taking so much in with his new environment that he may have a hard time committing such things to long term memory.

Socialization

Get your puppy involved soon with a puppy class and socialize, socialize, socialize! Make sure that your puppy has all of the necessary shots prior to socializing with unfamiliar dogs or at a dog park. Puppy classes can start as early as 12 wks. Remember to try to get your puppy to meet 50 dogs in 100 days and 100 people in 100 days!

Some general tips

- a. Don't let your puppy have free reign in your home. When you can't watch your dog, put him up in a crate or in an exercise pen. If you want to teach your pup to stay with you, use a lead to tether him to you - where you go, he goes.

- b. Start place training right away. This is a simple task that you can do while working at the computer or watching TV. Simply get a mat, small rug, or dog bed that will be your dog's place. Put him on it in any form or fashion (sit/stay or down/stay) and then say Place. Do this every day for 5 minutes, 3-4 times a day. He will get up repeatedly, and you will put him right back on saying Place. He will get it in about 3 days and this will be invaluable!

- c. If you have other dogs, introduce them in a neutral environment, ride home in the same car in CRATES, and then your first dog will go in the house AFTER your new dog, at the same time.

- d. Teach everyone manners - dogs must not bolt through doors, jump on furniture, or bark when you don't want them to. Make them earn their 'living.'

- e. Establish a schedule - especially for infant and toddler puppies...and when I say that you understand my meaning! Dogs need naps, time outs, and breaks from us. They need to think after training times in their crate, they need to get their act together in a time out in their crate, and they need to regroup when they start to get silly...you guessed it, in their crate.

Temperament

Your dog has been temperament tested. This temperament, however, is meant to establish grounds for puppy placement only. There is not a guarantee made as to that

test done at 8 weeks as temperaments can slightly change after leaving the pack. And while every attempt is made to counter this, it is up to you to uphold our contract by properly training and socializing your dog.

There will not be huge variations in temperaments after leaving the pack especially since our pups generally stay in the pack until 9-10 weeks of age, but be prepared for minor adjustments.

A pup that was VERY laid back, for instance, during the temperament testing, could show its true colors after settling in at home with some more active behavior. Vice versa, the hyper puppy will very likely settle down in a home where he has adequate exercise and attention.

It is important not to forget as well that they are puppies who are VERY active and this active stage can last through 2 years. Exercise and proper training are the only answer to well behaved dogs, regardless of temperament. A tired dog is a good dog!!! Enjoy your new Lagotto friend!! We have!!!



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Place Training

Training your dog to go to his place can be helpful when you need him to settle down or get out from under your feet. You can pick one place in your home or a different place in each room to send your dog when you tell him to go to his place. This command is fairly easy to teach your dog. Here's how to do it:

What You Will Need

Your dog should not need to know how to lie down on command before you teach him to go to his place, but some people find it helpful. With young puppies it might seem like an exercise in futility, but be consistent with 2-3 five minute sessions per day working your way to an hour and so on.

Next, decide where you want your dog to go when you give him the command that sends him to his place. A dog bed or area rug works well. If you want to be able to use the command in any room, use a portable bed or mat that you can easily move from room to room.

You will also need a handful of treats and a clicker if you plan on using clicker training.

Choose a Command

Decide on a command to use. Using one word usually works best. "Place" is frequently used, but "bed" or "mat" work fine, too.

Lure Your Dog to His Place

Start off by standing close to the bed or mat that will serve as your

dog's place. Give him the command "place," and then use a treat to lure him onto his spot. As soon as all four feet hit are on the mat, praise your dog or click the clicker and give him a treat. Repeat this several times. Most dogs will go to the bed or mat on command after a few short training sessions.

Add the Down

Once your dog is putting all four feet on the mat or bed when you give the command, begin asking him to lie down. Give him the command "place," and as soon as he gets to his mat, give the command "down." It may take him a few minutes to comply the first few times, but after a few practice sessions, he should lie down automatically when he gets to the mat after you give him the "place" command. Once he's done this several times, he should only be getting treats and praise when he lies down after you give the "place" command. If you are working on this with a young puppy, down should be a separate session using the sit-down-stand routine training.

Increase the Length of Time

Now that your dog is consistently lying down on his mat after you give him the "place" command, you can increase the amount of time he spends on his mat or bed. To do this, slowly add a few seconds before he gets the treat after he responds to the command. Slowly add small increments of time between the time your dog responds correctly to the command and the time he gets a treat.

If your dog makes a mistake and gets up from his place before you give him the treat, simply give him the "place" command again, and go back to the last point where your dog was successful. By slowly adding to the amount of time your dog stays in his place, you will soon be able to give him the command and have him stay in his place while you have dinner or watch a show.

Move to Other Rooms

If you want to be able to use the "place" command in other rooms, wait until your dog has mastered the command in one place. Once he's done this, move his bed or mat into another room, and start the process again. Or if you prefer not to move his bed from room to room, pick a spot in each room that will serve as your dog's spot when you give him the "place" command.

Many dogs catch on quickly, and will immediately go to their bed or mat and lie down when you give the command in a new room. Other dogs will need to learn that the same behavior is expected in a new room, almost as if you haven't worked on this at all. If this is the case with your dog, start from the beginning by giving the command and luring him over to his mat. Then, simply follow the steps to teach him to lie down on his place. Again, wait until he's mastered the "place" command in the new room before you move onto the next room.

Most dogs learn this command fairly quickly. With just a few short training sessions, you should have a dog that finds his bed or mat on command.