



# Dark Timber Kennels

## Puppy “TO-DO” list

First of all, thank you and congratulations on your new Dark Timber puppy. The following are the most common questions we receive from new puppy owners. Included are some do's, and more importantly Don'ts, in our opinion. Please keep in mind that every puppy is different and each family will have different expectations for their new family member. That being said, here is how we start and train our personal Dark Timber puppies. Please remember that this list is for an 8 week old puppy, if you have an older puppy or young dog, you will need to adjust this list to fit your needs.

### 1) Crate Training.

Potty training is essential in a new family member, for obvious reasons. This goes hand in hand with crate training. I know, and often here, that crate training is cruel or like jail to a puppy. This could not be farther from the truth. Here's the truth about crate training. Like children, puppies need rules and boundaries to become good members of society. A crate is NOT to be used for disciplinary actions. Don't correct your pup and force them into the crate. The crate is a place for them to feel comfortable, to relax and sleep. It's their own personal room. Remember that dogs naturally like smaller areas, more confined and secluded little get aways. Under desks, in the corner of the room, up against chairs, etc. They need to feel that type of a “snuggle” feeling on a fairly regular basis. It's a natural feeling to a dog and the crate gives them a place to decompress.

### 2) Rules for Crate Training

- a) Choose a crate just large enough for your puppy. A basic rule of thumb is that a puppy should not be able to go the bathroom in the kennel and not lay in it. Most people, the vast majority, buy one crate (usually and XL) and let a 5 lb puppy live in it. They go to the bathroom in the rear, lounge in the front and play everywhere in between. A crate, especially to a young puppy, has many purposes, and potty training, will be made much easier if you choose the correct size crate. Just as a reference most of the time when we are housebreaking a puppy, we use 4 different crates for a puppy during the first 5 months of age.
- b) Teaching your new pup to go into the kennel can become difficult for many. If you are having trouble getting your pup into the kennel, try these few techniques.
  - a) Feed your puppy in the crate (as long as they have not used it as a restroom)
  - b) Toss a treat (a single piece of dry dog food) into the crate and teach them that's a fun game. Usually this fixes the problem in a few days, sometimes weeks.
  - c) If you have a stubborn little pup, pick up the rear of the puppy, off of the ground and point their head into the kennel. Don't shove them in, just pick up

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the rear saying “kennel” or whatever word you wish. By picking up the rear of the puppy, it points them in the direction of the head. After a few attempts, they usually will start to go in on their own. This is the same technique used for adult dogs, no pressure, just help them go in one direction by removing the back legs from the equation. Sometimes couple this technique with a piece of food. This is a normal problem to have with any non crate trained dog or puppy.

### 3) Rules for Potty Training

Potty training is what laughingly call “30 days of headache”. That being said, it can be made simpler and more successful by following a few steps.

- a) Don't over feed your puppy.
- b) Keep to a schedule, feed and water your pup at the same times each day.
- c) Don't feed or water your pup past 6pm if you can.
- d) Measure out the food each day, each meal. Increase it as they look thinner or grow, cut it back if they have loose stool.
- e) Feed your pup, let them eat, if they don't eat all of the food (ie walk away from the food for any reason) take it away immediately.

### 4) Handling the Potty Training and Bathroom Timing

Below is how we potty train our indoor pups.

- a) You get up in the morning, let them out immediately, take them outside and let them go to the bathroom, if they want to play (normal) just stand there, don't move, don't give them any attention, good or bad attention, just ignore them. After a few days, they'll stop the playing game and start getting into a routine. The longer that you play their game, the harder it will be for you to break.
- b) Make sure they go to the bathroom, at least pee, before you bring them back in.
- c) Feed your pup, in the crate, as soon as they're done, immediately go back outside.
- d) Don't bring them back in until you know that they have went to the bathroom.
  - a) Many people use a small pen outside for a few months where they can leave their pup outside unattended and still verify that they have went to the bathroom and it illuminates a lot of the playing.
- e) After they have been out to the bathroom, put them back in the crate. If they cry, let them cry. You will know that they have went to the bathroom and the rest is a tantrum. This is NORMAL, heartbreaking sometimes, but necessary. If you don't do this step and you keep going back to the kennel every time he cries, he is training you! You'll regret it I promise!
- f) After a few hours, if they cry, repeat steps a & b then e. If they won't go the bathroom (normal), put them back in the crate and ignore them. It will take a few days and most of the crying will end and your pup will be a much better overall dog.

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- g) When you get home from work, repeat the entire process. Outside first, then feed and so on.
- h) If they go to the bathroom in the crate. Don't make a big deal of it. Just clean it up and go about your day. As your pup get older, most of the accidents go away as their bowel movements are more controllable.

Remember, don't oversize the crate at this stage in these stages. Keep the crate cozy at best, too large of a crate is the worst thing you can do.

### 5) Bumpers and Retrieving

**Don't over do it.** Just **3** per day. keep the energy high. Keep the success as high as possible. Teach now, test later. Ever bumper should be found. Don't get crazy with the distances yet, we want every puppy and young dog should have 100% success.

- a) The most common issue people have is a puppy not coming back with a bumper. Training a puppy should be done in an isolated area if possible. One that is not as familiar as the back yard if possible. When the pup runs around, **DON'T CHASE THEM!!!** Just stay in one place, talking with a high pitched encouragement and eventually they will come back to you.
- b) When they come back to you, **DON'T** take the bumper away. Hold it in one hand while they are allowed to hold it in their mouth and rub their belly (while they're standing), most of the time, after a few seconds of the belly rub, they'll just give it to you. A few weeks of this and the bad habit is broke!
- c) Get them in water slowly, but often if possible, even if it's just a fun play on the shoreline, Fun, Fun, Fun all the time in the water with a puppy! Warm Water.

### 6) Leash Training

This is simple, just get them on a leash at a young age. Don't expect too much, just up what you expect of them every month. In the beginning it's kind of like roping a cat, in the end they'll be pulling you around. Pulling is fixable, lagging behind is difficult. That's why we start them young. Let them have a good time on a leash.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to ask.

Thank you.

Jason Craig

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