



## **New Puppy Care Handout**

Your puppy now depends on you for everything – food, water, exercise, training, good health and hygiene. Please remember that all puppies are different, and you should consult your veterinarian and trainer for specific needs of your pup.

It is exciting to bring your new puppy home and into your life and heart. I know you will be excited to show him / her off and play with him / her right away but remember to give your puppy some time to adjust! We recommend three days at home. No visitors and no outings. Your puppy is undergoing a lot of change and they need lots of rest while they adjust. Adding more stress during this transition is detrimental to both their mental and physical health.

Puppies do not know English. The best way to train a dog is when they do a behavior you want, praise the pup with a pat, a treat or a verbal praise (keep it short and simple though). For example, don't say "Sit...sit...sit...sit...SIT" and expect a response. Get your puppy to do the behavior (sit) and then reward. You add the word and maybe even a hand signal later.

### **Puppy Chewing**

Puppies have needle sharp teeth and this can be tough! Some tricks to help you avoid becoming a pincushion are to have chew bones and toys always close by! Do not ever let them chew on you. All it takes is one family member that allows this behavior and it will be possible for the toddler to become a chew toy too. Keep your rules and boundaries consistent. If your puppy chews on you, offer an acceptable item for them to chew on. If they persist, then take yourself away from them (get up and leave or turn your back to them). They will not want to lose you! Another tip that works for most puppies is to make a quick, sharp "ow" noise. Shouldn't be too difficult, because their bites actually do hurt! Crying out in pain is how they let other littermates know it hurts!

### **Jumping**

Jumping is another problem that young puppies may struggle with. Their excitement and overwhelming love for people can make this extremely difficult; however, do not even start allowing this behavior. Do not reward, pet or praise a puppy that jumps on you. Ignore them, turn your back, or walk away! A calm puppy that is sitting is a puppy that is ready for praise and love! Teach calm, self-controlled behaviors now; it will pay off as they get larger and stronger!

### **Feeding**

I have cut the feeding schedule down to a twice a day schedule by the time your puppy comes home. As they age, you can put your dog onto a one a day feeding schedule if you prefer. So

how much should you feed your new puppy? Please follow the guidelines on the particular kibble you feed that correlates to your pup's weight and age!

Additionally, it is normal for your puppy not to have an appetite for the first day you bring them home. There are a ton of new sights and smells to explore that your puppy won't even be thinking about food! Offer it anyway, and make sure their food bowl is in plain sight. You will notice their appetite pick back up on the second day. If they are still not eating after 24 hours, call me or your vet.

### **Sleeping**

Don't wake a sleeping baby. Puppies sleep an incredible amount of time. Don't worry about this. As long as your puppy wakes up with puppy energy, silliness, eats well, drinks well, then all is good. Also, their breathing can be irregular and rapid which is most noticeable during their naps or while they are most relaxed. This is also normal and nothing to be concerned about.

### **Potty Training**

Depending on your bedtime schedule, remove food and water 2-3 hours before your bedtime to allow the puppy a greater chance of holding it all night. Remember that your dog's bladder will not be fully developed until he or she reaches five months old. Therefore, as your pup gets older, they will be able to hold it longer. If you do have to take your puppy out at night, please do not make this a play session. Be matter of fact (as little talking as possible) and get down to business. Praise the potty behavior and right back into the kennel. These puppies are very bright and if they know that you will get up in the middle of the night to play, talk sweetly, and love on them, they will start waking you for this attention alone. I strongly suggest kennel training, and potty training is one of the biggest reasons why. Puppies will rarely potty where they sleep. This is one of the main reasons I begin "potty training" puppies at three weeks old by dividing their whelping box into 2 sections - one for a nurse and sleep area and one for a potty area. When you bring your puppy home and put him or her into an appropriate sized kennel (not too large, just enough room to turn around and lay down) they will fuss when they have to go potty! If you cannot watch your puppy or it is naptime, tuck them into their kennel. When it is time to go out, place the kennel by the door and let the puppy walk him or herself out. In the beginning you may need to place the kennel right at the door, sometimes they squat just after a few steps! Over time, you can move the kennel farther and farther away from the door. While puppies understand the concept of a den vs. an elimination area, you are bringing them to a new "den" and you will have to show your new puppy the ropes!

When your puppy has an accident, please just clean it up thoroughly and move on. Only clap hands and scold vocally **IF** you catch the pup going potty. Rubbing their nose in it, etc. is not acceptable and is a complete waste of time. In your pup's brain they are wondering why you are making them smell their own urine or feces. They know what it smells like! In general, your pup will need to potty every 30 minutes as well as after a nap, vigorous play, exiting the kennel and following meals. When in doubt, take out! Again, if you can't watch your puppy, in the kennel they go!

## **Kennel Use**

Dogs are den animals and actually prefer sleeping in small places. The cost of a crate may initially seem expensive, but when you compare it to the cost of ruined rugs and / or chewed up furniture, it is well worth it! When you bring your puppy home, it is best to begin using the crate right away. There are many different crates, but I typically use the Midwest Life Stages Single or Double Door Folding crates. The kennel needs to be large enough for them to walk into, turn around and lay down. You should, however, refrain from giving your puppy enough space to have both a “sleep” and a “potty” area inside the kennel. The Life Stages crate is great for this because you can buy the size for your dog’s adult size, and the crate comes with a divider to section off the space that isn’t needed yet. Kennel training can make potty training easier, gives you and your puppy a few breaks throughout the day, and helps keep your puppy safe when you can’t watch him or her! I suggest putting a small plastic bin with a lid on the top of the kennel, filled with many different toys to keep your puppy occupied while he or she is inside the kennel. Toys like Kongs, Busy bones, Nylabones, etc. are all great options. Puppies will enjoy going into their kennel to see what special surprise you have for them!

Even though we expose puppies to kennels early on, they have free reign in and out of them. Once you close the door, protest will occur. This is where tough love comes into play – you will need to ignore the whimpering all the way up to the outright screaming (just make sure the pup does not need to potty or that something is wrong). If you let them out, you are teaching them that screaming will get them out! If you “console” them, you are teaching them that they are correct in their feelings of disdain. You cannot enable this behavior if you do not want it to persist into the future. Both behaviors from you will make this process very difficult. Try to get the pup to enter the kennel on his or her own, by luring them with one of those special treats or toys and then work up to closing the door for short periods of time working up to extended periods. Make sure you name the behavior as they walk in with the word, “Kennel” or something clever if you prefer. Generally, the crying and protesting only lasts 3 days - stick with it, it will pay off! We recommend playing classical lullabies and using the SmartPetLove Snuggle Puppy at night to make your puppy more comfortable during his or her transition to their new home.

## **Socializing and Developmental Stages**

It is imperative that your new dog socializes with other people and pets in a safe manner. Try to steer clear of other dogs and any areas populated by puppies and other dogs for a few weeks, until your veterinarian has administered all of your dog’s vaccinations. Having your puppy around other people, dogs, new locations, in the car, etc. will create a much happier, well-socialized dog in the long run. You will be so proud to take your pup with you on the go, and he or she will enjoy meeting new people and visiting new places. However, you **must** be cautious of Parvo, a highly contagious and very dangerous virus that can live in any environment for years and can be easily tracked into your own house on your shoes. We suggest you clean your house before your puppy comes home, keep your shoes at the door and employ the “all four off the floor” method to socialize your puppy until he or she receives all of its parvo vaccinations. Do not keep your puppy sheltered during these precious developmental weeks, just make sure that you avoid areas with other dogs and that your pup keeps all four

paws off the floor outside of the home. Brief and safe socializing is so important to the proper development of a puppy. I have 8 weeks. You have 8 weeks. And it takes both of us to ensure a stable happy puppy follows!

### **Obedience/Training**

Please start training your puppy immediately. They are smart, eager to learn and want to please! Dogs are pack animals and are looking to you for leadership and guidance when they join your pack. You will be amazed at how much they can learn starting at 8 weeks old. It is very exciting and rewarding when your pup learns something new! Start with sit, down, stay, kennel and go potty. I also highly recommend enrolling your puppy in a puppy kindergarten class. They get to socialize, start learning self-control and begin on basic obedience tasks. Follow through with any “puppy homework” you are given to continue building your relationship with your pup and helping him or her learn through repetition. Please do not stop at puppy kindergarten. We recommend Method K9’s Online Basic Obedience Course. You can get it for half off throughout the year (2020) with code “50off”. Another trainer we love can be found on Youtube called Simpawtico Dog Training.

### **Veterinarian Care**

Vaccination records are enclosed in the puppy packet. However, your vet will advise you on what is best for the proper care of your pet. Please spay or neuter your pup at approximately 7-12 months old. The health benefits are overwhelming, not to mention the implications of an unplanned pregnancy can be devastating.

### **Parasites**

Unfortunately, parasites in pups are extremely common and it is estimated that 95% of pups have parasites. We do our very best to keep our puppies parasite-free. They are dewormed at 4 and 7 weeks. However, not all parasites respond to particular deworming, and excess stress with “go-home” can “awaken” parasites that previously lay dormant. Throughout the eight weeks your puppy is with us, we perform random fecal tests to gauge any issues, and if any arise, we treat all of the puppies in the litter. We may send your puppy home with the remainder of his or her medication if there is an issue. Nonetheless, it is much easier to stop repeated transmission when the whole litter is not together, since they keep reinfecting each other! Upon bringing your puppy home, it is worthwhile for your pup to have another fecal test done at the veterinarian when you bring them in for their vaccinations.

### **Puppy “Massage”**

#### 10 Step Puppy Handling Exercise

This approach is performed to improve your pup’s ability to handle different types of touch, handling and sensation. It can be performed in ANY order. Do not put your puppy down if they are agitated or upset. If they are displaying resistance, stop until the puppy calms and then resume! Reward with positive praise and snuggles when done!

1. Rub and gently tug on their ears
2. Cover their eyes for 3-5 seconds
3. Open their mouth, inspect their teeth and place your finger inside of their mouth. You can rub their tongue and gums. I also always watch teeth to ensure they are coming in correctly. Every once in a while, issues with tooth eruption do occur.
4. Rub their belly and chest in a wide circular motion.
5. Run your hand up their back (from tail to head) a few times to ruffle their fur. Also practice "heavy petting" - patting your pup's back like you are burping a baby
6. Gently tug and twist their tail.
7. Rub your fingers in between all of their pads on their paws
8. Tap on the tip of their nails
9. Put your hands on their collar and apply a slight tug or pressure
10. Touch their nose!

This is an excellent time to check the puppy over from head to foot each day ensuring everything is forming correctly and the pup's conformation looks and feels good. I use my hands and fingers as a way to explore and touch every part of them. You can be standing (elevation work) or sitting - try both! Don't always perform the "puppy massage" in the same room at the same time. As pups age, it helps to do this exercise when they are sleepy - after a solid play session is a great time. It is also CRUCIAL to have others do the massage as well. You want your dog to be tolerant to touch by friends, strangers, kids, the elderly, veterinarians, groomers etc.

### **The Puppy Crazies**

FRAP (Frenetic Random Activity Periods) is the technical term for what I call the "puppy crazies" or others call the "zoomies." These FRAP sessions typically occur approximately two to three times a day. This is when your well-mannered puppy goes absolutely crazy! He or she will run around, jump on the furniture, attack everything, spin in circles, bark and quite honestly act like they have gone off the deep end. This is totally normal! The good news is that these periods of high energy only last a few minutes and your dog will grow out of them. With that being said, this is a time when young children need to be picked up and placed in a safe location! FRAP and young children are rarely a good mix.

### **Love and Patience**

You have made the important decision to let a puppy into your heart and home. We sincerely thank you for trusting us to give your puppy the best start possible. I know there will be frustrations and patience will be tested in having a puppy, but I also know the rewards are wonderful and exponential. Enjoy the complete innocence of a puppy, their ability to stop and smell the flowers, and maybe even taste them, their curiosity is contagious, and playfulness is humorous. I can promise you that you will gain a comedian, confidante, companion, and ultimately a new family member. Please don't hesitate to call, text, or email me if you have any questions and of course please send lots of updates and pictures!