

Puppy Start Right PRESCHOOL

**INFORMATION FOR
NEW PUPPY OWNERS**





Congratulations

ON GETTING YOUR NEW PUPPY

Puppies are cute, adorable and they steal our hearts. However, puppies can be a handful and don't come pre-programmed to know where to potty or know that everyday sights and sounds are nothing to be afraid of.

We have created this information pack to help you and give you a head start in building a bond with your dog.

1. **Potty Training** – Teach your dog to eliminate at a “human-approved” area
2. **Puppy Socialization** – The most important time for puppy socialization is the first three months of life. Incomplete or improper socialization during this important time can increase the risk of behavioral problems later in life. Behavioral problems are the greatest threat to the dog-owner bond. Refer to American Veterinary Society of Animal Behavior (AVSAB) Position Statement on Puppy Socialization.
3. **Myths About Dominance and Wolf Behavior as it Relates to Dogs** – Refer to AVSAB Position Statement on the Use of Dominance Theory in Behavior Modification of Animals.
4. **Canine Ladder of Aggression** – Dogs communicate their discomfort with a situation and a desire to end an interaction by using visual cues. These are depicted on this ladder of aggression. Recognizing the lower-rung gestures is important so a perceived stress or threat to a dog can be removed sooner.
5. **Canine Body Language** – Learn to read what your dog is communicating especially during the socialization window. Look out for signs of fear and discomfort and advocate for your dog as their guardian and remove them from the situation.

6. **How to Greet Dogs and How Kids Should Interact With Dogs** – Learn appropriate ways to greet dogs.
7. **Be A Smart Training Consumer** – Know how to ask the right questions and choose a trainer that is right for you. See AVSAB handout on How To Choose A Trainer.
8. **What is Positive Reinforcement Training** – It might sound like some buzzwords. Have a look to see what it's all about.
9. **Filling Your Dog's Emotional Cup** – Every dog has a cup that needs to be filled. Keeping their cup full enriches their lives and minimizes behavioral problems.
10. **Last but not least, enjoy your puppy.** Have fun, enjoy each other's company and build good positive happy memories together.



**SOME LEASH WALKING TIPS
HAVE BEEN INCLUDED AT THE BACK**

Important Puppy Skills

01

Intro to Potty Training

Successful potty training depends on your ability to effectively communicate to your puppy where you consider it appropriate for them to eliminate. This process will not occur overnight. Punishment, including verbal reprimands, will only teach your puppy not to potty in front of you. This will make potty training very difficult.

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02

Potty Training Protocol

This is the protocol for potty training. It covers what to do and when to do it. **The key to successful potty training is in being able to predict when your puppy needs to eliminate.** Potty training and confinement training go hand-in-hand. If you haven't already set up a confinement area for your puppy, do that now.

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03

Puppy Socialization

During your puppy's first 3 months, it should be exposed to as many new people, animals, stimuli and environments as possible without causing overstimulation. For this reason, **the American Veterinary Society of Animal Behavior believes that it should be the standard of care for puppies to receive such socialization before they are fully vaccinated.**

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04

Socializing Your Dog

Socializing your dog is about **providing positive experiences with new things.** The best way to make sure your dog has a great time is to include things he loves (like food or toys) when first being exposed to new things. Socialization is about **teaching your dog that this world is not such a scary place.** It is often misunderstood that socialization refers only to dog-dog interactions

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Canine Communication

5

Myths About Dominance



Applying dominance theory to human-animal interactions can pose problems. The American Veterinary Society of Animal Behavior emphasizes that **dominance theory should not be used for behavior modification**. The use of scientifically sound learning principles that apply to all species is the accepted means of training and modifying behavior in pets and is the key to our understanding of how pets learn and how to communicate with pets.

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6

Canine Ladder of Aggression



Dogs communicate their discomfort with a situation and their desire to end an interaction by using visual cues. Recognizing the lower-rung gestures is important so that a perceived threat to the dog can be removed sooner. If those subtle gestures are not responded to, the dog will escalate its communication. At the top of the ladder is when the dog bites. **Observe your dog and recognize when any situation may be making them feel uncomfortable.**

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7

Doggie Language



Your dog is communicating with you all the time. Dogs don't speak English. They use their entire body to tell you if they want you to continue what you're doing or if the situation is making them uncomfortable. Every dog is an individual. **Build a better relationship with your dog by learning to read their body language.**

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8

Body Language of Fear

Recognize the subtle signs when your dog is trying to communicate his discomfort. **Help your dog overcome their fear by pairing it with good things like treats, toys or belly rubs** (depending on what your dog likes most). Always go at your dog's pace if you want your dog to overcome their fear.

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Interaction with Dogs

How to greet dogs



The way we attempt to interact with dogs can sometimes cause a misunderstanding. For example, bending over them can be perceived as confrontational by our dogs. **Learn how to approach dogs to avoid misunderstandings.**

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How Kids Should Interact with Dogs

Be polite and kind to pets and play appropriate games. Adults should always supervise all interactions. Be proactive and train your dog to have positive experiences with kids in case your kid accidentally interacts inappropriately.

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How Kids Should NOT Interact with Dogs

Here are some examples of how kids should NOT interact with dogs. For everyone's safety, please ensure everyone in the household refrain from interacting with dogs in such ways.

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How to Choose a Trainer

AVSAB Guidelines



Choosing a dog trainer can be one of the most important decisions that you make in your dog's life. The techniques that a trainer uses can strongly affect how you interact with your dog for years to come. Therefore, it is very important to choose your trainer wisely

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Be a Smart Consumer



Asking the right questions will help you make a better decision in hiring the right trainer. If you don't get clear concrete answers, or are at all comfortable, keep shopping!

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Getting a well behaved dog



WHAT IS R+ TRAINING?

Teaches dogs desirable behaviors using science-based methods. R+ training teaches your dog to enjoy doing the things that you want them to do. This type of training allows you to build trust in the relationship between you and your dog for a long-lasting bond.

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WHAT AND WHY?

Every dog has a cup that needs to be filled – with social connection, security, access to reinforcers, and enrichment. Behavioral problems surface when your dog's emotional cup is nearly empty. Learn what fills a dog's cup and what empties it.

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Leash Walking Tips

01

Keep Leash Hand on Belly

Keeping your leash hand on belly reminds you to stop when your dog hits the end of the leash. Stop and wait. Once your dog turns to you or loosens the leash, resume the walk.

02

Long Flat Leashes are Awesome

Use a longer leash if you want to minimize instances of pulling. Dogs naturally walk faster than us. Sometimes all they need is that extra 2ft of leash length. I recommend using at least a 6ft leash. A retractable lead is highly discouraged as it requires your dog to pull in order to move forward.

03

Just Keep Going

A well socialized dog is one that is able to notice another dog in the environment and continue going about their business. When you see another dog on walks, keep a distance (at least 2-3m) and just keep going. It can be dangerous walking your dog up to an unknown dog. Some dogs need space.

04

RED FLAGS

If you see a dog on lead that is unable to take their eyes off your dog, increase distance immediately! That is a dog that is unable to disengage. If your dog ends up too near, this dog may lunge. Change direction or try to get as much distance as the space allows (>5m is ideal).