

Puppies for Thinkers



Socialization | Play Biting | Crate Selection | Crate Placement
House Training | Harmful People Food | Organic Foods
Potty on Command | Kids and Dogs | Fearful Pups
Barking in the Crate | Submissive & Excitement Urination
Meeting Basic Needs | Exercise | Dog Food Choices
Teach your Dog to Ring a Bell | Teach Whistle Come

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Introduction

The purpose of this booklet is to provide new puppy owners with accurate information about house training, kids and dogs, dog food choices, socialization, play biting, and meeting basic needs.

I know, you are thinking, “Information is everywhere, hundreds of books to choose from, and I am surrounded by experts.” Exactly! Everyone is an expert.

That’s the problem. Pet supply store clerks, your neighbor, your family, and nearly one third of the United States population know exactly how to raise a well mannered puppy. If that were true, why are there so many puppies and dogs relinquished to shelters and rescue organizations for behavior problems? It’s impossible to know, but some report that more dogs are euthanized because of behavior problems than all other ailments combined!

Have you looked at all the books on house training a puppy? Many have contradicting information. Some books are written by people who do not even practice in the field. The authors of these books repeat information that he or she gathers elsewhere. The authors are excellent writers but inexperienced in the practical aspect of teaching a puppy to potty outside.

I have worked with a few cats, a few horses, a few birds, and 1200-1500 (best guess) different puppies and dogs. I am a full time companion animal behavior counselor with a specialization in canine behavior. I understand what information a puppy owner needs to succeed.

I know the critical period to socialize your puppy ends at 12-16 weeks. I understand play-biting is a normal stage of development. I realize scolding a dog while urinating inside the house only teaches the puppy that it is unsafe to urinate near people.

Start off right! Follow my advice and you can raise a well mannered puppy!

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Section I: Meeting Basic Needs

You hold the key to raising a great house mate! Meeting your puppy's basic needs will eliminate many common problems.



A balanced pup is cooperative and ready to learn. There are three categories of needs to consider.

- Physical
- Social
- Emotional

Bentley, Australian Terrier @ 10 weeks

Physical

Physical needs are related to the physical well-being of the dog. Routine vaccinations are one example of physical health requirements.

Grooming and bathing, quality food and clean water are other obvious needs. Shelter from environmental extremes and refuge from everyday household commotion are important for the physical health of your puppy.

The ability to move about, sufficient bathroom access, and daily exercise are components of physical needs.

Health Care

Routine Home, Health Inspections

Some health problems can be easily recognized by routine home, health inspections.

Ear infections are common, especially in dogs with floppy ears. If your dog is constantly shaking his or her head or scratching his or her ears, there's likely to be an infection.

Ear infections are stinky. To determine if your pup's ears are infected, place your nose directly into your pup's ear and take a whiff. Do this a couple of times every week so you'll notice any changes in the odor, before the infection develops into a serious problem. Contact your veterinarian if your dog's ears are smelly!

Skin irritations are another common problem. Visually inspect your dog's

skin for signs of redness. In addition, you can sniff your dog's skin. Any changes in the odor of your dog's skin could be signs of a problem.

The consistency of your pup's stools is another indicator of overall health. Generally speaking, you should be able to pick up your dog's stools with a napkin. If your puppy has loose or runny stools, contact your vet.

Veterinarian Wellness Checkups

Wellness checkups are much more than disease protection and a quick once-over. Extensive blood work and a thorough examination are helpful for identifying potential health problems before they affect the life of your animal. Blood chemistry results are compared and contrasted from year to year.

Comprehensive wellness exams provide veterinary professionals with a baseline for measuring the pet's medical health.

Disease Prevention

Check with your veterinarian if you have any questions related to the prevention of global or regional health threats to your dog. I live in Memphis, TN. In the southeast, we have a saying.

There are two types of dogs, dogs that are always on heart worm and parasite prevention and dogs that are on the path to contracting parasites and heart worm disease.

Grooming

To all social mammals, grooming is a form of social interaction, a sort of bonding exercise.

Routine grooming has benefits beyond a neat coat. Brushing stimulates healthy skin. Grooming teaches your dog to accept handling, a most helpful coping skill.

Some puppies accept grooming and others view handling as an opportunity to bite. Please read subsequent chapters about socialization and play biting for tips on how to teach your pup to accept routine grooming.

Bathing

Bathing requirements vary greatly from breed to breed, as do ear and dental examinations. Check with your veterinarian and groomer about a schedule best suited to your dog.

Dental Care

Dental problems can develop into dangerous, life threatening conditions. Dogs with squashed faces (brachycephalic breeds) are at a higher risk for developing dental problems than breeds with a wolf-like muzzle. This is because the same number of teeth is condensed into a smaller area.

Dirty teeth can affect the health of the heart. Talk to your vet about starting a dental care program suitable for your breed.

There are many consumable products advertised to improve your dog's dental health and breath. Chewing bones and other, hard, abrasive chew items can help to reduce tartar.

I'm not sure if eating a mint flavored chew item actually improves long-term breath or not. I have fed Bentley some of these and never noticed a long term change in the odor of his dog breath. Try some and see for yourself.

Diet Choices

Pet food is a multi-billion dollar industry. Choosing a food can be very frustrating because you will hear different advice from everyone.

If your dog is healthy and happy on his or her current diet, then my advice is to stick with that diet.

If your dog has chronic medical or behavioral health issues, then perhaps a diet change is warranted.

One of the first questions I hear from clients is, "What do you feed Bentley?"

I feed Bentley a prescription diet purchased from my veterinarian because of his health condition, chronic pancreatitis. A portion of his meal is canned food placed in a bowl. The remaining portion of his meals is dry food, delivered as treats when training.

Even though the ingredients are not what I consider to be of the highest quality, the balance of nutrition, fat,

and protein is well suited for his medical condition.

Dry versus Wet Food

From a nutritional point of view, it stands to reason that wet or canned foods may contain more nutrients than their dry counterparts. Quality of ingredients, storage, and processing affect the nutritional value of all foods.

Many people claim that dry dog foods are better for dogs because dry foods help maintain clean teeth.

I'll accept that dogs who actually chew dry food may receive some teeth-cleaning benefits from dry foods. But, I've met many dogs who only ate dry food and their teeth were very dirty. Maybe this is because they didn't really chew the food or maybe it's an individual trait of that dog.

For whatever reasons, some dogs need annual teeth cleaning by a veterinarian and other do not. Ask your vet for a teeth cleaning schedule that's best for your dog.

Diet and Behavior

I am not a nutritional expert. I have absorbed information from those who I consider to be well educated in the field. I do know there is a link between diet and behavior.

**Diet affects physical health.
Physical health affects
behavioral health.**

Studies with children indicate that children who eat a balanced diet have

a learning advantage over those who consume a less balanced diet.

Any parent will tell you that their child's behavior is influenced by the amount of junk food the child consumes.

**I always address diet when
discussing problem
behaviors.**

There have been small studies about diet content and abnormal behaviors in animals. These studies claim that protein and carbohydrate levels can affect behavioral health.

My success with diet changes and behavioral improvements is unclear. Since I always present a multi-point behavior modification program which includes diet change, it's difficult to measure the effects of the diet change.

In 1% of my behavior cases, changing the diet did cause dramatic improvements. I know this because the clients admittedly did nothing but change the dogs' diets.

More apparent is the relationship between defecation and diet. Dogs who eat foods with more "junk" produce more, larger stools. Sometimes this can be a factor to consider while house training.

Commercial Foods

There are commercial foods marketed for toy dogs, working dogs, large breeds, puppies, adults, seniors, et cetera.

Some foods are advertised to be breed-specific, such as food especially for Yorkshire terriers.

I'm not sold on the necessity of selecting breed-specific foods, but I'm no expert. I avoid food marketed as suitable for all life stages.

Life-stage and weight control foods make sense to me.

Puppies require different levels of nutrients than seniors. Seniors need different levels of fiber, fat, protein, etc., than younger dogs. Overweight dogs should consume fewer calories.

Contact your veterinarian with any questions regarding the best food for your individual dog at his or her current life stage.

Rendered Foods

Dog foods contain ingredients that originate from the same sources as our people food. Lamb, rice, chicken and vegetables are common ingredients. The quality is usually of a lower grade than served to people.

Most commercial dry dog foods are rendered so that we can easily store and serve the product. Rendering is a type of heated reduction or extraction process in which fat soluble and water soluble products are separated from solid products.

Homemade Diets

There are some who profess that a B.A.R.F. diet is the best for our canine companions. **Bones And Raw Food**

make up the B.A.R.F. diet. I haven't been exposed to studies about the effectiveness of the diet, but I believe the B.A.R.F. diet has merits.

Many people prefer to make their dogs' food. There's no question that fresh foods are more nutritious than processed foods. I have no doubt that some people research and learn how to meet the nutritional requirements of their pets. Their dogs may indeed live longer, healthier lives than dogs on commercial diets of lesser quality.

Some of my concerns with homemade diets are related to balance and life stages.

Unless the people follow a well researched recipe, the animal may not receive necessary nutrients in the ideal quantities. In addition, life stage nutritional requirements may be overlooked in home made diets.

Another concern when discussing home made diets, especially the B.A.R.F. diet, is a group of bacteria known as salmonella.

Improper handling of raw foods places humans and pets at risk for illness.

Common symptoms of salmonella infection are diarrhea, fever, or abdominal cramps.

Frozen & Organic Diets

There are alternatives for those who do not want to prepare home made foods nor feed a traditional dog food. Frozen and freeze dried raw diets as

well as organic dog foods are other choices.

I question some claims posted by some niche-food manufacturers.

I wonder how a very small company can purchase organic ingredients, process, package, (sometimes freeze), and ship the finished product for a fraction of the cost I would incur by only purchasing the same ingredients.

Add in the cost of business and payroll taxes, insurance, various other business expenses plus a small profit and the math simply does not support their claims.

These and other non-traditional dog food selections might be good choices for those who want to purchase a higher quality diet, assuming the maker follows sanitary guidelines, has a nutritionist on staff, and uses the stated ingredients in quantity.

Table Scraps

Some people feed their dogs table scraps. Others pride themselves on never feeding people food. Some randomly toss food to their dogs when eating at the table.

Feeding dogs from the table can create a begging, obnoxious dog or can create a wonderfully polite dog! It depends on the timing of the delivery. If you toss a bite immediately after your dog whines or barks, then obnoxious behaviors will increase. If you toss a piece when your dog is waiting quietly, then polite behaviors will increase.

Feeding table scraps might temporarily upset your dog's digestive system.

In some instances, ingesting large quantities of high fat table scraps can permanently affect a dog's digestive system.

I never feed Bentley substantial quantities of table scraps, but he does get people food.

Feeding table scraps will aggravate Bentley's chronic pancreatitis.

I often let Bentley lick my empty plate. If he waits quietly and patiently, I rinse the plate and place it on the floor. Bentley doesn't really get any food or food juices from the rinsed plate.

People Food Treats

Some people food can be used as training treats.

I often use carefully selected people food for training treats.

Many of my clients use boiled chicken, turkey, other low-fat meats, organic cereals, and bits of fruits and vegetables. All these are great training treats. Unsalted, plain popcorn is another favorite.

I do not feed high fat, high salt treats like corn and potato chips as well as any candy, cakes, ice cream or sweets.

Harmful People Food

There are some people foods that can be very harmful to dogs. These include chocolate, grapes, raisins, macadamia nuts, coffee, tea, and sugar free candy.

The toxic ingredient in chocolate is theobromine, which is very similar to caffeine. Dogs that ingest as little as 50 milligrams of theobromine per pound of body weight may exhibit signs of toxicity.

Milk chocolate contains about 44 milligrams of theobromine per ounce (mg/oz). Semi-sweet chocolate contains about 150 mg/oz. The most toxic is baking chocolate which contains about 390 mg/oz.

- 34 ounces of pure milk chocolate is a toxic dose for a 30 lb. dog.

- 10 ounces of pure semi-sweet chocolate is a toxic dose for a 30 lb. dog.

- 4 ounces of pure baking chocolate is a toxic dose for a 30 lb. dog.

- Two tablespoons of hydrogen peroxide is an appropriate dose to induce vomiting for a 35 lb. dog.

Do not feed your dog grapes or raisins. These have been linked to kidney failures.

Do not feed your dog sugar-free snacks that contain xylitol. According to the AVMA, even small amounts of this sweetener can cause a life threatening or fatal drop in blood sugar.

Do not feed your dog macadamia nuts, tea, or coffee. These can be harmful to your dog.

Quality of Ingredients

Here are guidelines on how to recognize foods with higher quality ingredients.

Examine the first four ingredients in your dog's food. The better foods will list two different protein sources as the first two ingredients.

It is generally accepted by dog food specialists that the best foods do not contain unnatural preservatives, by-products, and processed grains or flour.

By-products are every part of the animal except the muscle meat.

By-products are usually not heat processed (rendered) so in some instances, by-products may be a better source of protein than meal, which is rendered.

By-products are not necessarily junky fillers, but it's impossible to know.

The composition of by-products is widely variable from batch to batch, thus the nutritional value is variable.

Whole meat sources of protein like chicken, lamb, and beef are indicators of high quality ingredients.

Meals, like chicken meal, lamb meal are also good, but again, the nutritional value is widely variable from batch to batch.

The word “meal” indicates the material used is not fresh, but has been rendered.

During some rendering processes, natural enzymes and proteins may be altered or destroyed. Other rendering processes may not destroy the nutrients.

The availability for dogs to extract carbohydrates and nutrients from grains and vegetables varies with the source.

The nutritional elements available to dogs in corn, beans, oats, potatoes, and wheat are lower than those available from meat and white rice.

Corn is a common ingredient in dog food. The nutrients in corn are less available than other ingredients, but today, corn is a much cheaper source of protein than meat.

Some scientists believe a diet that is high in corn products affects the body's ability to process tryptophan, an important nutrient for the production of serotonin. Serotonin is a calming neurotransmitter. Other scientists argue against these claims. I suppose it depends on the individual dog's metabolism.

When I work with anxious, fearful or aggressive dogs, I suggest that the clients eliminate corn from their dogs' diets. It's not costly and it requires little effort from the clients. It's certainly not harmful to eliminate corn from the dogs' diets and there is a chance that eliminating corn may be helpful.

General descriptions like animal fat, fish meal, poultry meal, et cetera are indications of a lesser quality diet.

Higher quality diets identify specific sources for the fat and meal. Examples are beef fat, codfish meal, chicken meal.

That unique odor you sense opening a bag of pet food is more than likely animal fat.

Restaurant grease is often rendered into feed grade animal fat.

The grease may be exposed to extreme temperatures in drums, months before it is processed and sprayed onto otherwise non-appetizing pet food.

Contact your veterinarian with any questions regarding pet food nutrition.

Switching Foods

Some nutritionists suggest that pet owners periodically switch between 2 or 3 different foods. This is recommended as a safeguard against unknown imbalances of nutrients that may occur when feeding the same product long term.

When changing diets, replace a small portion of the old food with the new food on day 1. Increase the percentage of new food by 10-20% each day to facilitate the change over a 5-10 day period. This will help to prevent digestive problems.

Pet Food Regulation

Many of us know that several pet foods were recalled by the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) in March 2007. As the investigation unfolded, additional brands and/or products were added to the recall. Most of the major brands were affected. How could so many different brands contain the same source of contamination?

Throughout many short and incomplete news reports, I noticed conflicting stories about the regulation of pet foods and the source of the contamination. Here are some facts about the regulation of pet foods and the pet food recall of March 2007.

The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is responsible for ensuring that human and pet foods are safe and properly labeled. This leads us to believe the FDA is regulating ingredients, but this is not necessarily so. Many ingredients such as the meats, poultry, grains and by-products are considered "safe" and do not require routine inspection or approval by the FDA.

The FDA does not inspect or regulate the source or quality of ingredients that make up the protein and fat in pet foods.

The FDA does regulate the production and distribution of food additives, chemicals and drugs that are included in pet foods. In addition, the FDA regulates the proper labeling of pet foods. The order by which ingredients are listed on the label and any health claims on the label fall under the jurisdiction of the FDA. Health claims on labels relate to claims that a particular food is helpful in the treatment or prevention of diseases.

The FDA labeling requirements are in concert with AAFCO (Association of American Feed Control Officials). AAFCO is a self-regulating organization whose members primarily consist of representatives of the pet food manufacturers.

AAFCO is not a government organization and does not have any enforcement capabilities; however AAFCO is considered an authority on which ingredients and nutrients should go into pet foods.

The Pet Food Institute (PFI) is another organization involved in pet food manufacturing. PFI is the "voice of pet food manufacturers". The primary function of the 50 year old organization is media relations. PFI represents 97% of all pet food manufacturers.

Pet Food Recalls

In March 2007, FDA learned that some pet foods manufactured by Menu Foods were causing illness and death among cats and dogs.

The USA company, Menu Foods, manufactures and packages pet foods for many of the major pet food companies. The companies give Menu Foods their recipes and Menu Foods manufactures and packages the finished products.

The source of the contaminant was an additive used in many pet foods, wheat gluten. The FDA does regulate the production and distribution of food additives. The contaminant in the wheat gluten was melamine.

"Wheat gluten is a natural protein derived from wheat or wheat flour, which is extracted to yield a powder with high protein content. Pet food manufacturers often use wheat gluten as a thickener or binding agent in the manufacture of certain types of pet food. Melamine can be used to create products such as plastics, cleaning products, glues, inks, and fertilizers. Melamine has no approved use as an ingredient in human or animal food in the United States."¹

The FDA recall included numerous Menu Foods products manufactured for many popular brands of pet foods. Other food manufacturers were affected by the recall too. Several companies voluntarily recalled some of their manufactured products.

The wheat gluten originated in China and was purchased by Chem Nutra,

Inc., located in Las Vegas Nevada. Chem Nutra imported the wheat gluten for resale to various pet food manufacturers. Menu Foods was one of the larger animal feed manufacturers that purchased contaminated wheat gluten from Chem Nutra.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) was also involved in the investigation because some farm animal feed and fish feed contained the tainted pet foods. The animals and fish consumed the feed and were processed for human consumption. Scientists determined the risk to humans who consumed meat from the farm animals was very low.

On February 6, 2008, a federal grand jury returned indictments against several key individuals and companies. Two Chinese nationals and their businesses along with Chem Nutra, Inc and key officers were included in the indictments. Menu Foods was not named in the indictments.

¹ US Food and Drug Administration. (2008, February 19). Charges Filed in Contaminated Pet Food Scheme. Retrieved March 6, 2008 from http://www.fda.gov/consumer/updates/pet_food021908.html

External Environment

When housed outside, dogs are exposed to climate extremes. Ask yourself these questions.

Is your dog's coat matched to the temperature extremes of your climate?

Does your dog have:

- suitable shelter?
- dry bedding?
- clean water?
- wading pool for relief from the heat?

Is your dog allowed periodic access to run and play?

Does your dog have a safe place where he can retreat and rest inside your house when the household commotion is too stimulating?

Some people never let their dogs inside because the dogs are a nuisance.

The best solution is to teach the dog how to behave inside.

Dogs that are never allowed into our living spaces are more likely to be overwhelmed with glee and excitement when they are invited inside.

To prevent this overload from too much freedom too soon, provide your pup with limited access to inside

areas. Use a tether. This will present your dog with opportunities to interact while you provide constant feedback.

To use a tether, get a 6-10 foot line and attach one end to your pup and the other end to your belt.

Exercise - Physical and Mental Stimulation

If your pup is left alone for 8-10 hours each day, don't expect to fulfill his exercise requirements with 10-20 minutes of playtime in the evening. One to 2 hours of fun and exercise would be a more realistic expectation.

If your puppy has lots of unused energy, it will emerge as annoyances.

Play-biting, destructive chewing, jumping up, excessive barking, pacing, refusing to settle, digging, fence running, escaping out doors and gates, refusal to come when called, et cetera – all these are signs that the dog is under-stimulated.

“Being let out” into the back yard for several hours a day is rarely enough stimulation for dogs. Many dogs just wait by the door for us to return.

Dogs need exercise beyond excursions in your back yard.

The amount and type of exercise needed varies with each individual. The perfect amount of exercise is just enough for your dog to be a relaxed member of your household.

Two 20–45 minute daily walks provide mental and physical stimulation.

Scatter feeding, food dispensing toys, scent games and other find-the-food puzzles are excellent methods to enrich your pup's environment.

If you find it difficult to provide your pup with ample stimulation, consider hiring a dog walker or share your dog with the family next door.

Obedience Training

Short obedience training sessions exercise your dog's mind.

In addition to exercise, obedience training teaches dogs the skills they'll need to adapt to our lifestyles.

A well-trained dog is usually welcome into any home!

You can start teaching pups as young as 8 weeks. First, focus on Attention, Here and Sit. Other important foundation behaviors are Stay, Down, Go-to-Place, Leave-it, and Walk on Lead. Since your puppy is very young, remember to increase your patience and adjust your expectations accordingly.

Fetch

I know some of you, like me, aren't runners or hikers and cannot take your dog for long outings every day.

There are ways to exercise your dog without exerting yourself. You don't necessarily need to drive to the dog park. Play Fetch! All you need is a few feet of open space. If you have a

smaller dog (or a larger home) you can play fetch inside.

Explaining how to teach fetch is outside the scope of this book, but I'll give you a huge hint. Convince your dog that you will always give him a great treat in exchange for the ball. Teach this concept before you ever toss the ball.

Frozen Kong®

Sometimes the weather or my schedule prohibit outside adventures. Sometimes I'm too lazy or tired to exercise. I've found ways to entertain Bentley without walking or playing fetch.

Here's how you can exercise your dog when you are busy.

Get a Kong®. Place a bit of wide, silver duct tape over the small opening to seal it off. Place some dog food and a few treats inside. Pour some water and a bit of chicken broth inside the Kong®. Stand it upright in the freezer and let it freeze.

Now you are prepared to exercise your dog without leaving your chair! Remove the frozen Kong® from the freezer, remove the duct tape and give it to your pup. He'll spend 15-25 minutes stimulating his mind and his body while he is foraging.

Scatter Feeding

An alternative to the Kong® is scatter feeding.

Scatter a small portion of your dog's food on the patio and around the plants.

Hide a few pieces on top of the mulch in potted plants, on larger leaves, behind the bushes, etc. Your pup will exercise his or her senses to find each piece.

Some pups eat mulch and plants. Some dogs have a behavior disorder known as pica. Pica is an abnormal appetite for non-food items.

Dogs are no better than humans at determining which plants are poisonous.

Watch your pup closely when scatter feeding outside. If he or she consumes non-food items, then limit scatter feeding to rooms with hard floors inside your house.

Add a Pup

I know many suggest adding another dog to give your pup a playmate.

Adding another dog has exercise and social benefits, however; I never mention add-a-pup as a solution for families that are having difficulties meeting the training needs of one dog.

Owning two untrained dogs is at least three times the work as one.

You'll need to separate them for teaching sessions. Dog A must be trained. Dog B must be trained. When you put them together, they are another dog, Dog AB. You'll need to practice with Dog AB too!

Some people prefer to send their dogs to day care. If your pup is not stressed by the noisy and rowdy environment,

send him off for a day to play with other puppies.

Sometimes it's tough to determine if puppies are playing or fighting. If the puppies often reverse roles and neither is hiding from the other, then the rough play is normal.

Reversing roles is when Pup A chases Pup B, then Pup B chases Pup A.

If one puppy is on top, and then the other pup is on top, the play is normal.

Social

Dogs are social animals. Domestic dogs evolved because of man. If humans (along with all of our waste products), were suddenly removed from the earth, domestic dogs would eventually become extinct. Dogs need us.

Isolating a dog in the back yard, and visiting the dog once or twice a day, rarely fulfills the dog's social needs. In order for our pet dogs to be well balanced, they should receive plenty of social contact with us.

The amount of daily interactions necessary to fulfill a dog's social needs varies with each individual dog.

Massage is a wonderful tool for social bonding.

We can use massage to teach our dogs the concept of "relax" or "easy".

Anytime I work with fearful or aggressive dogs, teaching the dogs to relax via the use

of massage is an important component for success.

Socialization of Puppies

You have a very brief window of opportunity to socialize your puppy.

During the last century, experiments and studies concerning genetics and the social development of dogs were prevalent.

It is well documented that dogs that were deprived of social interactions with people and events during the sensitive or critical period of socialization were adversely affected.

The critical period of socialization begins when the ear canals open at about 21 days of age. The period ends anytime from 12 to 16 weeks of age.

Genetics and the Social Behavior of the Dog by John Paul Scott and John L. Fuller is a well-regarded book which documents experiments about the critical period of socialization.

Pups that are exposed to various events, multiple settings, other pups, other species, friendly dogs and a diverse mix of adults and children during early developmental periods are less likely to develop fearful or aggressive behaviors.

In addition, the normal physiological development of organs associated

with the immune system can be enhanced or retarded because of increased or decreased early social interactions.

According to many studies, well-socialized puppies grow into dogs that navigate stressful situations well. Poorly socialized pups are more likely to become dogs that freeze, flee, or fight when presented with stressful changes in their environment.

Inside the circles of medical and behavioral health professionals, an ongoing controversy exists.

Medical health professionals are concerned about exposing non-vaccinated pups to life threatening diseases.

Veterinary personnel routinely instruct puppy owners to restrict their pup's excursions into non-sterile outside environments until the pups are fully immunized at 16 weeks. Their advice is warranted. Dangerous health risks are present in public areas.

The deadly parvo virus can survive for months in the environment. Roundworms and other intestinal parasites can live for years in the soil.

Many dangers are passed via animals' stools. If you are in a public area, don't allow your puppy to sniff stools or other dogs' rear ends!

Behavioral health experts contend that more dogs are relinquished or euthanized due to behavior problems than all medical conditions combined.

From a behavioral health point of view, pups should be exposed to diverse situations during the period from 8-16 weeks. With early exposures, fewer dogs would develop fearful and aggressive behaviors. This controversy has a simple solution.

Expose your 8-16 week-old pup to stimulating situations that don't threaten his or her developing immune system.

Take your young puppy on car rides, visits to friends and neighbors homes. Hold controlled play sessions with healthy, vaccinated pups and friendly dogs. Invite many people to your house so that your pup can meet all types of people.

Men and Dogs

I have worked with many dogs that were selectively aggressive or fearful around men. I don't believe all dogs that fear men were abused by men.

I've met many dogs who were fearful of men and I know they were never abused by anyone.

I attribute some of this selective fear and aggression to the fact that the dogs belonged to ladies or the dogs only interacted with a few men. Dogs don't generalize well.

Even though your pup may be relaxed with the males in your household, he or she should meet many different individuals during the Critical Period of Socialization.

Kids and Dogs

The same applies to young children and teenagers. Even though you may have children, invite other children of all ages to meet your pup.

Many dogs are afraid of children. From a dog's point of view, children are unpredictable.

Children have high-pitched voices and erratic, random movements. These attributes frighten some dogs.

Most dog bites to children are on their faces, because the kids are eye-to-eye with the dogs.

Some dogs perceive direct stares as threats.

Children's eyes are proportionately larger than ours (compared to size of their heads and bodies). They appear wide-eyed to dogs. Some pups may perceive their normal eyes as eyes that are staring and challenging them.

Children make poor choices while interacting with dogs. Dogs that are not accustomed to children make poor choices.

Dogs can bite several times within 1 second.

I am often told, "I was right there in the kitchen with them. I was washing dishes at the sink and the child and dog were right behind me." Yet, the client is unable to tell me what happened. All they know is the child started crying. Believe me; it happens more often than you imagine.

Dogs are animals and animals can be unpredictable.

Never turn your attention away from a dog and a child, not even for 1 second!

Another thing to consider is how the children interact with the puppy. If your children get on the floor and roll and tumble, just like a puppy playmate, expect your puppy to treat them like another puppy. Puppies bite other puppies.

Please don't expose children to these dangers. Visit the previous section about play biting to learn more about kids and dogs.

For more information about kids and dogs, visit the Play Biting Section IV of this booklet.

Puppies and Older Dogs

If you are living with a puppy and an older dog you have my blessings!

In many situations, the puppy will pester the older dog until the dog corrects the puppy with a growl or snap. That can be scary!

Most well socialized adult dogs do not attack and kill puppies. Some older dogs will do little to correct a puppy and some less socialized older dogs correct too much.

You should always supervise any interactions between dogs that are new to each other.

When you notice your older dog move away from the active puppy, it's time to separate them. Moving away from a stressor is a normal animal's first response to stress.

It's best to interrupt the puppy's play when he or she gets too excited. Just pick up your tether (you are using a tether, right?) and lead the puppy to another area. Give that older dog a break!

In addition to interrupting the rough play, you should redirect your puppy to another activity and praise that rascal for playing nicely!

If you feel the interactions between your puppy and your older dog are dangerous, you may need some professional help. Ask your vet for the name of a qualified trainer.

Naming Things

Almost everyone will agree that their dogs understand some words. "Walk", "treat", "outside", and "ball" are examples of words that most dogs understand. It's helpful to teach the dog the names of everyday items or events.

Bentley is ball crazy. He knows many of his balls by name. We play with blinkyball, bigbinky, tugger, jackball, earthball and several others. Even though the names are similar, Bentley knows the difference.

Kayce Cover, M.S., B.A. taught me about naming or labeling things of importance to the animal.

Naming or labeling things and events has benefits when working with fearful

or aggressive dogs, but I'm not exactly sure why.

I've worked with many clients whose dogs were fearful of or barked at thunder, trucks, bicyclists, joggers, et cetera.

In some instances, telling the dog, "That's thunder", followed by, "Let's play ball", reduces the unwanted behaviors.

Perhaps naming communicates to the animal that we are aware of our environment. If we are not fearful or aggressive, there is no need for the dog to react with fear or aggression.

I teach my clients to tell their puppies the names of items and events that seem to be important to the puppies, especially items or events that trigger undesirable responses such as fear or barking.

To name an item, bring attention to the item by holding it or pointing to it. Then say, "This is ball" or whatever name you like.

After naming two different items, place one in each hand and extend your hands out, as if you were handing the item to your puppy. Say "Show me ball". If your puppy moves towards the wrong item, move it out of reach. If your puppy moves towards the ball, praise him or her and toss the ball!

Shy Pups

Use your imagination when exposing your pup to various environments. If your puppy becomes excited or

frightened, just name the item or event, and act as if all is well.

If your puppy remains focused on the item or event, distract his or her attention from the scary thing.

Instead of saying "It's OK", divert your pup's attention with a treat or a toy.

It's normal for puppies to be leery of new things. Let your puppy adjust with minimal input from you. Both you and the pup should play the roles of observers.

Some people believe it's a sign of confidence if a puppy never becomes frightened. A truer test is to measure the length of time it takes for a puppy to return to a normal state.

Afraid of Collar or Leash

Occasionally clients report their puppies "freeze up" or lie down when they attach a leash, collar or harness.

This poses a problem in regards to house training, walking and managing unwanted behaviors, such as jumping up.

I tell all my clients to attach a leash or short line, even when their puppies are inside the house. This is so they can prevent their dogs and puppies from practicing rude behaviors.

The leash is an excellent inside and outside management tool. All dogs should be able to relax when a leash is attached,

regardless of the dog's location.

Initial protests to equipment fittings are not difficult to resolve unless people ignore the protests and drag their puppies via attached equipment.

If your puppy is afraid of a collar or harness, do this. Let your puppy investigate and smell the item. Name it. Attach the collar or harness, praise your puppy; hand him a food treat and then remove it. Repeat several times.

Next, attach the equipment immediately before feeding. Praise your pup. After your puppy has eaten, remove the item. Do this for several meals but methodically increase the amount of time the collar or harness is attached after the meal. In a few days, your puppy will like his equipment!

Some puppies quickly learn to dislike the leash because their owners pull and jerk on the leash.

Always supervise any dog when a leash is attached.

If, while following these instructions, your puppy is still afraid of the leash, break your introduction process into more, smaller steps. Use a very short piece of a leash instead of a 4 or 6 foot leash. Once your dog is accustomed to the short piece, use a longer piece.

Introduce the concept of restriction and the leash in several small steps and your puppy will learn to like the leash!

First, let your pup smell and investigate the leash. Name it.

Next, attach the leash and praise your dog. Hand him a food treat. Remove the leash.

After several instances of attaching the leash and immediately removing it, attach a short, lightweight, leash and let your puppy drag it around for a while. Do not pick up the end of the leash. Do this several times throughout the day, or every evening for a few days.

The subsequent step is to pick up the end of the leash, hand your puppy a food treat, and then drop the leash.

Do this several times in one session. Hold a few sessions throughout the day or evening.

Next you'll introduce the concept of leash and equipment pressure.

Tell your puppy, "This is pressure", and apply a slight, steady, and brief tug on the equipment. Praise your puppy and hand him a food treat. Repeat a few times.

Add just a bit more pressure each time. Vary the area of the pup's body that is affected by the pressure by tugging right, left, up, down.

Finally, you will pick up the leash and walk one step. Don't pull your puppy! The leash should be loose and not tight. Coax your puppy. Praise your

puppy for following you. Repeat several times, but add another step each time.

After few instances, your puppy will be accepting of the leash.

Socialization Tips

The most effective age to socialize puppies is from 3-16 weeks. Great breeders are aware of this and begin the process well before the pup is placed into your home.

The general idea is to expose young puppies to anything and everything they may come across during their lifetimes.

Here are some ideas for socializing your pup.

Place an X next to the suggestions that you complete.

- Arrange for your puppy to meet at least one new person each day. Invite a diverse mix of humans to meet your pup. The more diverse – the better!
- Arrange for a play date with other healthy puppies that are approximately the same age and size.
- Introduce your puppy to dog-friendly cats.

- Take your pup over to a friend's house to play with a friendly, adult dog.

- Before you attach any equipment, let your pup investigate the items. Name them. Tell your pup, "that's collar". Introduce your pup to the feeling of the equipment before you actually attach it. For instance, hold a collar in place for half a second and tell your puppy how good he looks. Give him a treat. Do this several times before you buckle it. Later, you can teach him to sit while you attach equipment.

- Introduce your puppy to coats or vests that he may be wearing during future outings in the cold.

- Attach a leash and let your pup drag it – before you ever pick it up. Pick it up and drop it – before your pup ever feels any tension. Practice standing-while- wearing-a-leash - before you go on walks.

- Let your pup investigate a closed umbrella. Tell your pup, "That's umbrella". Pop open the umbrella.

- Drop a pan on the floor, clap your hands loudly. Name it.

- Let your pup sniff a closed, paper, grocery bag. Tell your pup, “That’s bag.” Pop open the bag.

- Take your pup for rides that DON’T end up at the vet’s office!

- Get some crutches and introduce your pup to the odd gait of crutched walking.

- Do you know anyone with a wheelchair? Believe me; it’s easier to introduce a 10 week old pup to a wheelchair than to teach a 5 year old dog to relax when chairs start moving! Let your pup meet someone who has a moving chair.

- If you live in a rural setting, introduce your pup to horses, cows, goats, chickens, et cetera.

- Turn on the cartoon channel and crank up the volume a bit.

- Establish a friendly atmosphere for health care and grooming. Take your pup to your vet’s or groomer’s office when he doesn’t need care.

Ask the staff to give him treats for sitting!

- Introduce your pup to grooming tools. Let him investigate brushes, combs, etc. Start with brief, non-invasive touches and work up to actual grooming. Name the items and the event.

- Begin a daily program of massage, grooming, dental care and inspection. Praise your pup for allowing these intrusions.

- Handle your pup’s ears and paws. Begin by touching for a second or two and gradually increase the levels of your interactions. Praise him for relaxing. Name each part as you handle it. Tell him. That’s left ear”. “That’s right paw”.

- Introduce your pup to various types of floor surfaces, steps, and stairs.

- If you want to hunt with your dog, take him to the field and have a friend discharge a gun (many yards away) while he is happily

investigating the area with you. If he is distracted or frightened, name the sound or the gunshot. Tell him, "That's a gunshot" and immediately get him interested in a toy. Increase or decrease the distance between the pup and the shooter accordingly. If the pup is frightened, increase the distance. If your pup is relaxed, decrease the distance.

- Dress up in hats and coats.

- Stand next to a busy street (pup firmly attached via a safe collar and leash). Watch buses and cars speed past. Name the vehicles. For instance, tell him "That's a truck". If he is frightened or wants to chase the vehicle, interrupt these behaviors by distracting him with his favorite toy.

- During thunderstorms, name the lightning and thunder. Tell him, "That's lightning". If your pup is frightened, don't tell him "It's ok" and cuddle him. The only times he hears that phrase and that tone is when he is frightened. Being frightened is not ok, is it? You will

increase his fearful responses if you try to comfort him. Instead, distract him with a toy; act silly. Do the same for fireworks.

- Jump up and down while swinging your arms and singing.

- Run that vacuum cleaner, garbage disposer, leaf blower and lawn mower while your pup is safely watching. If he gets excited, have someone else operate the machinery while you distract your pup with a toy.

- If you are a boating enthusiast, take your puppy for boat rides.

- Park beside a train track. Let your pup hear the horn and feel the earth move. Name the train and the horn. Tell your puppy, "That's horn", "That's train".

Socialization of Older Pups and Dogs

If your pup or dog is over 16 weeks, you can still socialize him. It just won't have the life-altering effects as socializing during the critical period of socialization. Basically all the same examples can be implemented.

Expose your normal dog to various events, multiple environments, other

pups, other species, friendly dogs and a diverse mix of adults and children.

If your dog reacts with fear or aggression directed at people or other companion animals, you'll need the help of a professional. Ask your vet for the name of a qualified animal behavior counselor.

Emotional

I believe animals experience emotions such as fear, anxiety and aggression. Fear and anxiety are closely related to aggression.

The puppy that is constantly shy with visitors is more likely to grow into the dog that growls, barks and lunges at guests.

Puppies that are constantly fearful, anxious and stressed are likely to grow

into dogs with serious behavior problems.

Behavior problems become more apparent to owners when their dogs approach social maturity (18-36 months).

Helping pups with emotional disorders requires much more than teaching heel, sit, stay. If your pup constantly reacts with fearful behaviors when exposed to people, other pets or normal, everyday events, this is abnormal. Please contact your vet for the name of a behavior counselor.

Continued exposures will not cure truly fearful behaviors, but can actually make them increase in frequency and magnitude. In addition, using corrections to stop fearful or aggressive behaviors most often increases these behaviors.

Section II: Confinement Training



Confinement training is the term for using a crate, laundry room, baby gate or any other management tools to keep your pup in one particular area.

Confinement is the best management tool for house training. Young dogs with too much freedom get into trouble.

**Loose pups destroy our belongings, rooms, furniture, and landscaping.
Yikes!**

Why Confinement?

Dogs are den animals and contrary to misconceptions, (when introduced and used properly), dogs will readily enter their crates and relax, regardless of the level of activity near the crate.

Dogs should never be crated or left unsupervised while fitted with any types of harnesses or collars, except a break-away collar.

Please fit your dog with a break-away collar for any events or activities that do not include direct supervision by a responsible adult.

Here are some examples of why and when to use a crate. Use a crate:

- for house training
- to protect your property
- to keep your dog safe
- when traveling
- for overnight outings
- to rotate two dogs while training
- for stays at vet clinics, groomers
- to provide a den or safe spot for resting
- to restrict dogs' access to visitors
- to limit activity during medical recovery periods
- to give yourself a break

Confinement Overview

During my consultations with clients, I meet people who use laundry rooms,

garages or back porches instead of crates. Some in this group report that their dogs constantly bark or whine. What they don't realize is that dogs, like humans, are social mammals.

Most dogs want to be near us! A simple solution is to kindly introduce the dog to a crate and place the crate in a room with people. This often solves the barking problem.

Opposition to the proper use of crates is more often a reflection of how we feel about confinement (as humans).

Millions of dogs live full, happy lives with a crate as part of their daily routines.

If you are opposed to crating your unsupervised dog, use other, less effective, confinement tools such as laundry rooms, baby gates and exercise pens.

If you don't use any barriers, expect problems with house training. Expect soiled carpets and destruction of your property.

Many people only confine their dogs when they are away or at night. Pups and dogs normally relax when away from their people in these low activity situations.

These same dogs may bark and whine if confined when their people are home and moving about.

This is because the dogs were not introduced to the concept of being confined when people are home and active. More than likely the dogs were placed in the crate immediately before the people left the house or went to bed.

A crate trained dog:

- will not eliminate in the crate
- readily enters the crate when asked
- relaxes in the crate when alone in the home
- relaxes in the crate when people are home and active
- relaxes in the crate when other animals are not crated

Laundry Rooms

Even though some dogs do well in small rooms, I don't recommend laundry rooms, small bathrooms or garages.

These areas are rarely puppy-proof and don't protect your pup from making dangerous choices while exploring.

If you choose to use a small bathroom, garage or laundry room as a confinement area, expect your dog to remodel it. Don't be surprised when you come home to battered cabinet doors, wood pieces and sheet rock dust scattered in the area.

Rather than give an unsupervised pup access to the cabinets and walls, consider an exercise pen.

An exercise pen (x-pen) is a wire fence consisting of 8 sections that you can arrange into a variety of shapes. You can place the pen in any room and you can adjust the size and general shape to fit your needs. Using an exercise pen provides more space than a crate and protects your pup and your home.

Always place newspaper or training pads on the floor of your pup's confinement area.

Dog Beds

Dog beds come in many sizes, textures and shapes. Selecting one that's just right for your pup may take a few months. Here are some things to consider when choosing a bed for your dog.

Expect your dog to soil and destroy his or her first bed.

Avoid expensive, trendy, designer beds for your dog's first bed. Choose one that you can wash at home. I like the beds with removable covers and removable, washable, stuffing.

Under-exercised puppies are likely to become bored when confined. Their ultimate outlets for fun are to chew up their beds or shred the newspaper. Choose a first bed that has a tough outer layer.

Your pup will grow out of this stage, but for now, expect some damage. To

minimize the destruction, take your pup on exciting outings. Follow the guidelines for safe outings mentioned in Section 1 – Meeting Basic Needs; Socialization.

Provide plenty of stimulating chew toys and food dispensing toys. Well exercised pups sleep; energetic pups destroy beds.

Potty Training Pads

Potty pads are a good substitute for newspaper because they are more absorbent.

I'm not sure if marketing or assumptions are at fault, but I've met more than one client who believed puppies are somehow magically attracted to eliminate on potty pads. You can teach your puppy to use pads, but puppies are not naturally inclined to use pads.

Unless the dog or puppy has a medical problem that prohibits him or her from walking, I never recommend that clients place pads in several locations throughout their homes. It's much better to limit the potty area to one inside location.

Crating Period

A common question is "How long before I can put the crate away and let my dog roam the house?"

It depends. Puppies should never be given access to roam your house unsupervised.

Most dogs can be house trained by 6 months of age, but these curious youngsters are not ready for total freedom!

In addition to soiling our floors, puppies and dogs explore and chew. Some 10-12 month old, well exercised, adolescent dogs can be trusted in small areas for short periods. Other dogs get into trouble and can not be trusted to roam our home.

When introducing your dog to your home, first confine the dog to one small area and then gradually give your dog supervised access to more rooms. As your pup becomes comfortable and is more trustworthy, you can increase his territory.

I could trust Bentley for short periods in a small area when he was about 20 months old. By the time Bentley was 3 years old, I allowed him free reign of the den, hall and kitchen all day. Now, he has access to the entire house when I am home and he is restricted to the downstairs rooms when I am away.

I still use a crate when transporting Bentley and when workers come into my home.

A tired pup is a good pup!

I have several dog beds placed in strategic locations about the house. I use the beds as parking spots for Bentley. I tell Bentley to Go-To-Place when guests come over, when I am eating or any other time I want him to settle.

Go-to-Place is a basic behavior that should be on every dog's list of skills!

Crate Selection

Type of Crate

There are several styles of crates on the market. Some are large metal cages and others are tents or plastic carriers.

Tents and crates made of fabric can easily be destroyed by an active puppy.

Some dogs have a difficult time relaxing in the metal cages because they are constantly monitoring the environment outside the cage.

Since they can see in all directions, every movement or noise places them on alert. I've met several dogs that learn to constantly spin in these large wire crates.

I prefer the plastic, airline type carriers. These are more like a cave than a cage. They are portable, can be easily moved, and can be used in vehicles and on trips. In addition, the protection of closed sides offers a more secure environment for a resting dog. The dog only has one direction to monitor.

If you already have a cage, place a blanket over the top and sides or place it in a corner so your dog isn't shouldered with the task of monitoring all directions.

Crate Size and Setup

People often buy the largest crate that will fit into their space. This is not necessarily the best choice, unless you will be leaving your dog for extended periods or you install a divider.

Pups with large crates may use the crate for a bathroom, when in fact they would not eliminate if restricted to a smaller area.

Large crates with a divider are an economical choice for large breed pups.

The adjustable divider allows you to modify the size of the crate as your pup grows!

Home with Pup

If you are home during the day and can provide your pup with regular access to the outside, choose a crate that is just large enough for the dog to stand up without restriction, to turn around, and to lay with legs extended.

If you never leave your pup in the crate too long and you have already chosen a larger crate, place a barrier inside to reduce the area.

Natural tendencies for cleanliness developed as a very young pup should prevent your puppy from soiling the small area unless you wait too long between trips outside.

For extra protection, line the entire crate with newspaper.

Pup Home Alone

It would be nice if we could stay home and play with our puppies every day, but that's not realistic, is it?

If you are like me, you may not be able to arrange for a neighbor or pet sitter to come over and exercise your puppy.

Install a Bathroom and Newspaper Training

If your pup will be left in the crate for longer periods, select a larger crate. Set up a bathroom in the crate.

Place your dog's water and bedding in the front of the crate and cover the floor of the entire crate with newspaper or training pads.

An alternate setup for people that will be gone for extended periods is to use an exercise pen and a 'just large enough' crate with the door removed.

Place the crate with bedding inside the exercise pen. Place pads or newspapers inside the crate. Place pads or newspapers on the floor around the crate, making sure to cover the entire room or area.

Something should be covering the surface or your dog will associate the floor with an appropriate area to eliminate.

Expect your pup to shred the newspaper. It is not necessarily a problem unless he ingests it. If your

puppy shreds the newspaper as soon as he is confined, examine his exercise schedule. See if you can squeeze in a bit more exercise. Tired pups don't usually spend hours shredding newspaper.

After three weeks have passed and your pup has not eliminated inside his crate, remove the newspaper/pads from the inside of the crate.

Wait another week and then move the newspaper/pads one or two inches away from the crate each day.

Position the paper towards the door or closer to the permanent destination. If your pup eliminates off the paper, you moved it too far, too soon. If this happens more than once, start over and cover the entire floor.

Place some of the used newspaper outside where you take your dog to eliminate. The odors will prompt your dog to use it again.

Anytime you notice pre-elimination behaviors such as sniffing, circling or squatting, say "let's go potty" and take the pup outside to the desired location.

Crate Placement

Dogs are social mammals. They like to be close to their people. That being said, dogs are adaptable. Some pups and dogs can learn to relax in a crate that is placed in a laundry room or basement, away from the people. Some don't adapt so well.

My initial preference is to place the crate in a corner of a common area. This presents the pup with a safe resting spot near his people.

Placement depends on the individual pup's personality and when the dog will be crated.

If you use a crate primarily when you are away or asleep, a laundry room or basement may be a good choice.

Keep in mind that it is better to teach the dog to relax in the crate when you are gone and when you are home. This is not accomplished if you only crate at night or when you are away.

Don't be shy about experimenting with crate placement. Find the best spot for you and your dog.

Sometimes, moving the crate to another location resolves problems such as barking and eliminating in the crate.

Crate Introduction

I've met many people who did not take any special steps to introduce their pups to a crate and their pups learned to relax while crated.

Most people just place their puppy in the crate, give the pup a treat, and ignore any signs of protest. After a few days, the pup begin to relax while crated. Assuming the puppy's physical and emotional needs are being met, this method is fine by me.

Other pups require a more thoughtful approach.

The concepts for teaching a dog to remain calm in a crate can be adapted to teach a dog to relax when alone in other areas, such as the back porch, another room in the house or briefly tethered to a piece of furniture or door knob.

Before you lock your pup inside a crate and leave the house, introduce your pup to the crate in small doses.

This is best achieved over a long weekend. I like to remove the door at first, so the pup doesn't get spooked by the swinging door. In some instances, I might even remove the top portion (airline type crates) and present the crate without the top or door attached. It depends on the dog.

Toss some treats inside the crate and let your dog find them without any input from you.

The idea is to form an association between the crate and good things, such as surprise treats.

Feed your dog in the crate. Place water bowl in the front of the crate.

If your dog is hesitant to enter the crate, start by placing the food bowl or treats inside the front edge of the crate so that your dog can eat without entering the crate.

Once he is comfortable eating with his head inside the crate, move the bowl just a bit farther inside the crate.

Gradually move the food farther back inside the crate over the next few days. Always remove the bowl with any leftover food after 10-15 minutes.

Once the dog will readily enter the crate to eat, introduce him to the concept of the crate door. Here's how to do it. With your dog outside of the crate, attach the door and let your dog investigate it. Swing it open and latch it shut several times. Tell him "this is door".

Naming things that interest your dog is a great method to teach your dog about the environment.

Feed him inside the crate with the door attached. After a few meals, he'll be accustomed to the door.

Now it's time to introduce him to the closed door when he is inside. As soon as he is happily eating, tell him, "I'm closing the door" and swing the door shut and latch it. Wait a moment and immediately open the door.

Say nothing, just watch him eat and let him come out when he's finished.

Repeat this sequence during the next few meals, but increase the amount of time the door remains closed.

As you progress through these steps, begin to walk a few steps away. Gradually increase your distance from the crate over several sessions.

In addition to introducing your pup to the crate during meals, start crating your pup late in the evening or mid-

mornings. Assumedly he will be tired and ready to rest.

For this exercise I like to place the crate near my favorite chair, in the family room or in the kitchen. This will teach your dog to relax in the crate when people are nearby. You can move the crate farther away in small increments during this introductory period.

Remember the frozen Kong® I mentioned in the Exercise section? Get a Kong®. Place a bit of wide, silver duct tape over the small opening to seal it off. Place a few treats or pieces of dog food inside.

Pour some water and a bit of chicken broth inside the Kong®. Stand it upright in the freezer and let it freeze.

Remove the frozen Kong® from the freezer, remove the duct tape and give the Kong® to your crated pup. Once he is engrossed in the Kong®, tell him, "I'm closing the door" and then close the door. He'll spend 15-25 minutes stimulating his mind and his body while he is foraging inside his crate.

If he has been well-exercised before this "Crate-Kong" sequence, he'll probably fall asleep soon after he's finished.

If, after several crate-Kong sessions, your pup is still anxious in the crate, ask your vet for the name of a qualified behavior counselor.

If your puppy just barks and doesn't want the Kong®, try again later when he is hungry.

How Long is Too Long?

This is a common question. I wish I could quote a definite time period, but alas, this is not possible. It depends on the dog's age, the environment, amount of exercise, your schedule, crate placement, the individual dog's personality, et cetera.

Finding the appropriate length of time for crating your pup has at least two major considerations, physical and emotional. If one is discussing physical abilities, a rule of thumb is that most healthy 5 month old pups can "hold it" for 6 hours.

Younger pups need access more often and older pups require less.

If one is discussing emotional considerations, 6 hours may be much too long for some pups. Crate placement, the proximity of people, the environment outside the crate, the amount of exercise provided – all these affect the amount of time a pup is comfortable in a crate.

Your best strategy is to begin with short periods and gradually work up to longer periods.

Crating as Punishment

Many people caution owners not to crate their dog as a form of

punishment. In the majority of situations, this is good advice. Social isolation is a very powerful, negative punisher.

I don't necessarily object to briefly crating a dog to punish unwanted behaviors. If the dog has no doubt as to why he is on a crate time-out, crating can be a very effective, high level, correction.

I do have issues with handlers that use this high level of punishment as a primary teaching tool. When used incorrectly it can spawn many unwanted side effects.

The key differences between proper and improper use of crating as punishment is application, communication, and consistency.

I could write a book about punishers and time-outs! There are too many variables to give simple instructions here.

If you want to use crate time-outs, discuss your specific situation with a professional trainer. Otherwise, avoid crating as punishment.

Changing Bad Habits

Separation Anxiety

Dogs with separation anxiety have been compared to people that have anxiety attacks.

Separation anxiety is an emotional condition fraught with panic and fear.

Crating a dog with true separation anxiety is never a good idea.

Separation anxiety is one of the most misdiagnosed behavioral conditions. For separation anxiety to be considered, some or a combination of the following symptoms must occur ONLY in the absence of people. The behaviors most commonly occur within 45 minutes of departure.

The hallmarks of separation anxiety are:

- Excessive vocalization
- Salivation
- Inside Elimination (for a house trained dog)
- Destructive behaviors directed at entry and exit points

Even if your dog exhibits only two of these symptoms, he could be truly distressed. If this describes your dog or you are not sure if your dog has true separation anxiety, ask your vet for the name of a canine behavior counselor.

If your dog destroys your furniture when you leave, it is less likely due to separation anxiety and more likely due to too much freedom and not enough exercise.

Dogs with separation anxiety destroy items that are in the path of their escape, not couch cushions in the middle of the room!

If your dog barks and whines in the crate this may or may not be separation anxiety. Does your dog bark and whine in the crate if crated at the same times of day when you are home?

Elimination in the crate or in the house is not necessarily a sign of separation anxiety. Is the dog house trained? Will the dog eliminate in his or her crate when you are home?

Treating dogs with true separation anxiety is challenging. It will take several days or even weeks. It depends on how much time you have to dedicate to the treatment. The main obstacle is that every instance of separation perpetuates the condition and offsets progress. For example, suppose you make great progress over the weekend, but you go back to work on Monday and leave your dog alone. Your progress will be lost.

Treating separation anxiety is a process not an event. First you'll teach the dog to relax before you leave the house. Then you'll leave for very short increments while your dog relaxes. As the exercises progress, you'll leave for longer and longer periods.

If you decide to treat your dog for separation anxiety, you'll need to make arrangement to never leave the dog alone during the treatment period. Day care, friends' homes and other

babysitters can be helpful during this period.

Barking in the Crate

When accompanied by eliminating in the crate, drooling, or self-injury, barking in the crate can be a sign of separation anxiety.

Barking and whining can be normal signs of protest or a true alarm. I've met pups who bark to tell their people there's been (or about to be) an accident.

In some respects, a crated puppy can be compared to a baby, alone in a crib. If your pup is not wet, hungry, thirsty, or ill, let him cry.

Slowly introducing your pup by pairing the crate with meals and special treats usually removes most objections to being crated.

Even after you have properly introduced your dog to the concept of the crate, your pup may bark for short periods.

This is normal. Ignore the barking; don't make eye contact; say nothing.

For if you do, your dog will think he is on the path to freedom and will continue barking.

It's important to stick to your plan when teaching pups about crying in the crate.

If, after 30 minutes, you give in and release your crying puppy, he or she will learn that crying for 30 minutes is a good strategy for freedom.

Wait until your pup is quiet and relaxed before you praise and/or release him. This will teach him that being quiet and relaxed has good dividends!

If your pup barks for long periods of time, it is always possible that you are not meeting your pup's exercise requirements, crate-time is too long, or he is genuinely anxious. Review your exercise regime and review your introduction sequences.

Most normal, well-exercised dogs and pups that are gradually introduced will discontinue their barking strategy after a few episodes of being crated.

If this does not describe your pup or dog, start the introduction routine from the beginning or consult with a professional.

Eliminating in the Crate

When accompanied by drooling, self-injury, and barking, eliminating in the crate can be a sign of separation anxiety.

Other common causes are urinary tract infections, medical conditions, and medications.

If your pup or dog eliminates in the crate, first rule out medical and behavioral issues that might contribute to inside elimination. Visit your vet first!

Most people limit crate time to include only the periods when they are gone, asleep, or unable to supervise their dog. If these periods are too long for the individual dog, then it's best to arrange for someone to exercise the pup.

An alternate plan is to set up the crate or confinement area with a bathroom as discussed previously.

Sometimes a puppy or dog has already formed poor elimination habits. These guys eliminate inside their crates and are not offended by the presence of their own waste. Here's how I address these situations.

Purchase a different style of crate. Get an exercise pen. Move the crate to another location and place it inside the exercise pen. Cover the floor of the entire area with newspaper or house training pads.

Here's a suggestion I read in one of Ian Dunbar's books.

Place plastic on the entire floor of the confinement area and cover the plastic with grass sod.

Buy extra sod so that you can rotate the soiled sod outside for cleaning and replace it with clean piece of sod from the outside.

Place a crate inside the confinement area with the door removed. Follow the same instructions as newspaper training and slowly remove the grass sod from the area.

For even tougher cases, set up the confinement area with sod and discard the crate.

Section III: House Training



You can house train recently acquired adult dogs or puppies by following these instructions. The words outdoors, outside, out, indoors, in, inside are used throughout these instructions.

For the purpose of this guide, outside refers to a desired location and inside refers to an undesired location.

If your ultimate goal is to teach your dog to use newspaper, a litter box or pads, the same principles apply.

HB House Training QSG

House training a puppy, adolescent, adult or senior dog can be very frustrating. Follow How's Bentley House Training Quick Start Guide if the dog has never been house trained, if the dog has recently moved to a new home, or other instances when advised by veterinarians, trainers or canine behavior counselors to "treat as if the dog were never house trained". Follow this guide regardless of your dog's age.

If you could magically follow these two rules, your dog would "become" house trained.

Rule 1 - Do not give your dog a chance to eliminate on your flooring.

Rule 2 - Always give your dog a chance to eliminate in the desired area.

- Manage the environment. Close doors, use crates, baby gates, tethers, et cetera.

- Get a clean bill of health from a veterinarian.

- The dog should be leashed, confined or supervised at all times while inside.

- If you will be gone for periods longer than the dog can wait, place newspaper (or house training pads) on the flooring of the area where your dog will be confined.

- Methodically introduce your dog to the concepts of confinement and alone time.

- When you are inside and your dog is not confined, use a tether.

- To use a tether, make a 6-10 foot lead you can attach to furniture or your waist. I buy braided nylon rope at the hardware store and attach a leash clasp to one end. The round rope glides easily around furniture legs and does not have a loop on the end that might become caught on items.

- Always provide your dog with adequate exercise and periodic access to the "potty" area.

- Feed your dog at the same time(s) each day.

- Unless directed otherwise by a veterinarian, take up bowl and uneaten food after 10-15 minutes.

- Keep a log of feeding and elimination until you learn your dog's schedule.

- Always attach a leash, go out with the dog, and lead him or her to the elimination area.

- Teach your dog cues for defecating and urinating on command.

- Teach your dog that rewards are for eliminating outside.

- Reward your dog for eliminating outside.

- Teach your dog to ring a bell to signal desire to go outside.

- Never scold or punish your dog for any "accidents".

•Clean soiled, inside areas, with cleaners containing pet odor neutralizers.

•When your dog becomes more reliable, gradually grant supervised access to more and more areas of the house.

Discussion

I'm not quite sure why people think they automatically know how to house train a dog, but I was no different.

Years ago, I made all the same errors as my clients. I thought scolding and punishment were necessary.

I suppose this is in part because for years the process was commonly referred to as house breaking.

Even today, many people call me and ask for tips on how to housebreak their dog or how to “break” their dog from performing all sorts of unwanted behaviors. I avoid the use of the word “break”. The word paints a mental picture of something splitting into pieces.

I know only a few methods to intentionally break anything. The methods employ some version of excessive energy! YUCK! . . . bad idea for communicating concepts to any animal and a truly costly mistake when house training. I blame the most common house training mistakes on whoever first used the word “housebreak”.

Housetraining is a topic that I address very often.

In 75% of the cases, the resolutions involve “undoing” mistakes.

Years ago, I wrote and distributed a house training guide. I approached the subject with a very polite “do this” attitude. In the guide I did not address common mistakes and misconceptions.

The clients were excited to have accurate information, but yet, many ignored my suggestions.

They followed what they believed to be the right path to success. They failed to successfully house train their dogs because I failed to educate them.

I was perplexed. The people could read, yet it seemed as if they did not comprehend what they read. When I spoke with them later, we discussed their strategies. I found myself spending most of the interview dispelling misconceptions.

After many discussions with clients, I realized that house training is a very misunderstood process.

I learned that the same misconceptions that once filled my brain were prevalent in the masses. More importantly, I realized that providing specific instructions is not enough.

Most people cannot absorb new information unless they are purged of flawed concepts they believe to be accurate.

To remedy this situation I wrote this new guide. In addition to accurate instructions, this guide includes short discussions about misconceptions. As I did so often in the interviews, I've included explanations

of why and how dogs learn about house training.

I sincerely hope this will prove to be more effective than straightforward instructions.

Potty Area Conditioning

Contrary to popular beliefs, the process of housetraining is largely governed by a naturally occurring, classical conditioning process. I propose we assign a more accurate, 21st century, label for house training. Let's name it "potty area conditioning"!

All of your actions will alter the natural process of "potty area conditioning".

It's your choice. You can hasten the process, delay the process or unknowingly teach (condition) your dog to eliminate inside.

If one always provides their dog the opportunity to eliminate in desired locations and never ever gives the pup access to eliminate in undesirable locations, potty area conditioning will occur without any other input from people.

The dog will associate the desirable areas with the internal relief gained by elimination. The dog will naturally seek out the desired location².

The type of flooring or ground cover is an important dynamic for potty-area-conditioning.

Many people report their dogs often choose to eliminate on a specific types of ground coverings. This is because a "conditioned" dog automatically seeks out the same type of area that he used most often in the past.

For example, if your pup is always led to a gravel parking lot, he will seek out gravel-like surfaces whenever he feels the pressures associated with the need to eliminate. If he is always led to grassy areas, he will develop a natural preference for grassy areas.

An unsupervised dog that eliminates inside your house will naturally form associations with that type of flooring. In addition, the dog will be attracted to use the same area because of the odors of the soiled areas. The dog will return there to eliminate next time he or she has a need to potty. Yikes!

Myths and Misunderstandings

I'm sure you've noticed. There are many different, popular strategies for house training. There are just as many misunderstandings about why dogs eliminate inside. |

I've heard families claim that their dogs defecate inside to "get back" at them for leaving.

These families rarely consider any other explanations.

About half of all dogs I've met eat feces at some point in their lives. Wouldn't it be as logical to assume that dogs who

² There are always exceptions, but for the vast majority of dogs, the process as described is accurate.

defecate inside are presenting us with welcome home gifts?

Maybe the dog needed to go and couldn't wait. Maybe the dog was anxious and the bowel movement was stress induced.

Small Dogs Myth

Another myth is that small dogs are difficult to house train. I've met some breeders, veterinarians, and enthusiasts who claim small dogs are difficult to house train.

I can accept the fact that some dogs (large or small) are more difficult to house train than others, but these generalizations about particular breeds or sizes being more difficult to house train have no merit.

All dogs are the same species. To state that small dogs are somehow different in respects to how they learn is absurd!

One reason small dogs might be more difficult is because their owners are not offended by the tiny amounts of urine, thus the owners do not follow smart house training protocols.

I propose that if any dog, small or large, urinated so that the house was flooded, the owners would change their behaviors. The cost of accidents would be so great that the people would be more careful and never give the dogs the opportunities to eliminate inside.

Dogs become conditioned to seek areas they have used in the past. It stands to reason that if owners allow small dogs opportunities to eliminate inside, the dogs become conditioned to eliminate inside.

Another reason the myth persists can be attributed to breeders' and pet stores' methods of housing the puppies. Too often, puppies are forced to eliminate in their crates because they were not provided access to a suitable potty area. If the puppy is housed in this manner for a substantial period, they are conditioned to eliminate anywhere.

Scolding and Guilt

I avoid the use of any types of punishers when house training.

Scolding has been promoted for years. Some people suggest taking pups over to the soiled area and scolding or spanking them, well after the incident.

Others believe that punishing the dog is ok if you can catch the pup in the act of eliminating.

Punishment, during or after the incident is a bad idea.

It does little to teach the pup where to eliminate. More often, it teaches the pup that you are unpredictable, or that it is unsafe to eliminate in your presence.

Punishment can contribute to anxiety because, from the dog's point of view, attacks are unavoidable.

Dogs chew items, defecate, and urinate more frequently when they are anxious.

Assumed guilt is another important topic for discussions. I hear this phrase at least 2 times a week! "My dog knows he's

done wrong because he hangs his head or runs away when I find the mess.”

A huge misconception is that dogs know they have done wrong because they display submissive or escape behaviors.

Common submissive behaviors include a lowered head and body and a tucked tail. These behaviors are very often mistaken for an admission of guilt.

Dogs do not lower their heads to communicate shame or guilt; humans do.

Dogs are experts at reading subtle , human body language. Scolded puppies quickly learn a particular tone of voice, or face expression predicts when people are about to attack, so they respond with submissive behaviors.

Submissive behaviors are not an admission of guilt. The threatened dog is communicating, “Please cease your attack. I do not want to fight you”.

When people come home to a mess, or when people find an accident and scold their dogs, the pups do learn something from the experience.

Scolded pups learn that people are likely to attack them soon after the people arrive home.

If the people have a routine schedule, the puppy’s anxiety about the owner’s unpleasant homecoming increases as the normal arrival time approaches.

Scolding and punishment increase stress. Anxious or stressed puppies chew, defecate, and urinate.

Puppies learn that people “attack” them when feces or urine or shredded magazines are present in the environment.

From a dog’s point of view, at the moment of the “attack”, the only notable difference in the environment is the smell of elimination or the visible mess on the floor. The dogs may or may not remember that they caused the mess.

People scold their dogs for causing the mess. Dogs learn that people “attack” them because there is a mess.

After a few instances of punishment, the dogs display submissive behaviors when their people find a mess or when people enter the house.

At best, scolding an untrained dog after the fact teaches the dog that people are very predictable. People “attack” them when the smell of urine or feces is present, or when papers or other items are shredded and on the floor.

Some families recognize the pitfalls of using punishment after the fact. These people choose to punish their dogs only when they catch them in the act.

Many people state, “I take my dog out for several minutes and he doesn’t eliminate. As soon as we come back inside, he sneaks off and eliminates in another room.”

After learning the people have been punishing the dog, it's very clear to me why these pups refuse to eliminate outside. I also have a good idea why they hide to eliminate.

The pup has a history of safely eliminating inside when the people were not nearby.

From the pup's point of view, the only thing different (when he is scolded) is that people are nearby. He learns that his owners attack him when he eliminates. Now he's careful to hide from them when he eliminates.

Dogs that have been caught and punished in the past will "hold it" during outings with their people. These guys will sneak off into back rooms and eliminate immediately after their walks!

At best, scolding an un-housetrained pup during elimination teaches the puppy to refrain from eliminating when people are nearby.

Misconceptions and faulty strategies prevail because people attribute successful housetraining to their methods.

People rarely consider that success should be rightfully attributed to the natural process of classical conditioning because they are unaware of the process.

In addition, people have no way of knowing how quickly their dogs may have become house trained if they followed my advice.

Dogs become house trained because, over time, the dogs use an outside location much more often than an inside location. The natural process usually wins out.

In addition, scolding and spanking send signals to your children about teaching with force and striking animals.

Are those the messages you want your children to receive?

My advice is to discard all your ideas about house training and focus on your primary task.

There are only a few places for an un-housetrained dog. The dog can be confined, in your lap, outside, or loose in your house under direct supervision.

Your goal is to always provide access to desirable areas and never ever provide access to undesirable areas. This can be challenging especially if you are gone during the day.

Regardless of your situation, here are tips and suggestions that will make your task easier.

Food Rewards

Food rewards can be very effective, but many people don't quite understand how to effectively use rewards.

For example, some people open the door and release their pups outside, alone.

After several minutes the owner returns to the door and see their puppy waiting

by the door. (The pup is by the door so he must be finished eliminating, right?)

They open the door, praise their pup and deliver a food treat. This common sequence does not really teach pups about choices of potty area. It teaches puppies to hang out at the back door, for that is where the treats happen!

These pups come inside, finish their treat and then eliminate in the house. Yikes!

Food treats may hasten the process. Treats motivate some dogs to want to go outside and eliminate.

But first, the dog must recognize that eliminating outside is the reason for the treat.

Most owners don't know how to communicate the concept of "reward for eliminating outside", so they overlook this important step.

Before you Begin

Confinement training is the term for using a crate, laundry room, baby gate or any other management tools to keep you pup in one particular area. This is the best management tool for house conditioning.

Please read the previous discussion about confinement training.

Dogs that have always eliminated inside have formed strong associations and will be more difficult to re-condition.

Sometimes inside elimination is not a house training problem but can be

attributed to other factors. These include medical health, pre-learned areas, pre-soiled/scented areas, insufficient access, anxiety, marking behavior, submissive urination, excitement urination, fear elimination and attention seeking elimination.

Any of these contributors must be addressed before a dog can be house trained.

Medical

Health problems associated with bladder, intestines and kidneys may cause a dog to lose control over his or her elimination. Use "doggie diapers" (designed for females in heat) to protect your house from medically-induced uncontrollable elimination.

It's best to get a clean bill of health from your veterinarian to identify any conditions that may affect house conditioning.

It is common for pups and dogs to contract urinary tract or bladder infections. Pay attention to how much urine is released.

If you notice your dog urinating small amounts, often, it is possible that your dog has a medical condition.

If your dog has very loose stools, it is possible that you are over-feeding, the dog is adjusting to a different diet, the dog is stressed, or the dog has a medical issue.

Discuss probable medical causes with your veterinarian.

Ask your vet if any of your dog's medications might contribute to elimination problems.

Feeding and Watering

Place meals on a consistent schedule appropriate for your dog. Place the bowl down and allow your dog about 10 minutes to eat. After 10 minutes, remove the bowl and any uneaten food.

You are a scientist now! Keep a log of all feeding and elimination habits. Measure and record the amount of food and water consumed. Record the time of feeding and elimination.

Note the consistency of the stools and the amount of urination (full fledged or just a bit). Record the dog's activities in-between feeding and elimination, especially the events immediately before elimination. Note the area of elimination and finally, note where you were during the event.

You should see a pattern which will be quite helpful with scheduling. A Sample Feeding and Elimination Log is included at the end of this section.

Provide water throughout the day. Watch puppies carefully and remove water if they are gulping and playing in the water bowl. Give an ice cube or crushed ice instead.

Withhold food and water three hours before bedtime. Give your pup an ice cube or two if thirsty.

Check your dog's stool for consistency. If too soft, reduce food quantity by 10 percent, if too hard, increase food quantity by 10 percent. If consistency

cannot be regulated by quantity adjustments, discuss a diet change with your veterinarian.

Scheduling

Frequent trips outside lessen the possibility of inside soiling because the bladder is not full and the dog is not uncomfortable. You should take your dog out:

- Directly after awakening
- Within 15 to 30 minutes of eating.
- After playing (especially if the dog slows down the pace of play).

Eight week old puppies need to go out every hour if they are awake and once or twice during the night. This time frame decreases with age. Adult dogs usually defecate once or twice per day and urinate three or four times per day.

Female puppies that have not had a heat cycle may need to eliminate more often. If access is provided, a male dog will urinate more frequently, assumedly because of social and communicative reasons.

A rule of thumb is that most healthy 5-month old pups can "hold it" for 6 hours.

Younger pups need access more often and older pups require less.

Schedules of elimination vary according to the activities in-between eating and eliminating. Pups that are resting don't need to go as often as pups that are playing.

Outside Management Techniques

Area Selection

Select one or two areas for elimination at first. Smells and visual signs of previous outings will help to trigger elimination.

If you are paper training, place some of the used newspaper/ potty-pads in the elimination area.

Some pups are hesitant to explore without their people. These guys don't go out and eliminate – they just wait by the door. This behavior usually disappears with age.

Other dogs that wait by the door are not hesitant to explore, they just want to stay where the treats happen!

This is because the owner previously waited by the door and praised the dog (or delivered a food treat) while the dog was standing at the door, not while the dog was choosing the correct location.

Oops – these owners inadvertently trained their dogs to wait by the door.

Always go out with your dog. Attach a leash, say, “let’s go potty”, and lead him to the same area each time.

Do not encourage play on your trip to the potty area. At this point, you are very boring.

Turn on the charm immediately after your dog eliminates. Throw a party! Praise your puppy! Toss a ball! Become very exciting!

After several instances, your dog will recognize the contrast in your behaviors.

He or she will learn that you are boring and dull before elimination. And you bubble over with excitement after elimination!

Even if you live in the country or have a large fenced yard, attach a lead and walk your dog to the same area each time.

A short lead is best for these outside adventures. Your pup will have less area to explore, thus less distractions. Watch for signs of elimination like sniffing and circling.

Some people report their dogs will readily eliminate when they walk the dogs in a tight circle. Try it and see if this works for your dog.

Trips Outside with No Results

I used to stand outside with Bentley for 20-45 minutes, waiting for him to eliminate. I thought that was what you did. It never dawned on me to take more control. Instead of waiting away your evening, walk your pup to the area and patiently wait 5-7 minutes.

If he doesn't eliminate, try again in 20 minutes. Take him back inside and don't give him the opportunity to eliminate on your floor. Place him in the crate or confinement area. An alternative to confinement is to tether the pup to your waist and never take your eyes off him. Don't give that rascal a chance to soil your home.

In addition, review the following. Are you taking him to the same area that he used before? Are you ignoring him before he eliminates? Did you try walking him in a

tight circle? When did he last eat/drink/eliminate? How long has it been since his last trip outside? Is he getting enough exercise? Are you keeping a log so you will know how often he needs to eliminate?

Praise – Food Treats

Dogs that want to eliminate outside might go to the door and wait, bark at the door, or otherwise signal their desires to go outside. Delivering food treats and praise is one way to motivate a dog to eliminate outside.

Dogs eliminate without thinking about it.

To teach your dog that food treats are a reward for eliminating outside, first you'll need to bring attention to the acts.

Eliminate on Command

When it's cold outside, when traveling, or anytime you are about to leave the house, it's wonderful when your dog will eliminate on cue.

It's easy to teach your dog two different commands or cues, one for urinating and one for defecating.

It helps if you are already familiar with your pup's signature. Observe your pup closely so you'll recognize when he is about to eliminate and you will recognize if he is going to urinate or defecate.

Choose three words or phrases-- one for the act of moving to the bathroom area, another for urination, and a third command for defecation.

I use "let's go potty", "pee", and "poop". Choose phrases or words that suit you and your family.

Label Each Behavior

First, teach your dog the phrase for moving towards the bathroom area. Before you go out the door with your pup, say "Let's go potty". When you are leading your dog to your preferred area, again say, "Let's go potty". This works best if you refrain from adding other comments. Just speak the three words, "let's go potty".

Many people repeat phrases over and over as they are walking around with their pup. It's not helpful to repeat your commands over and over, two times is enough.

Watch your pup closely for signs of pre-elimination. When he is committed to the act, tell him what he's doing.

For example, suppose your pup is sniffing, circling and is about to squat and urinate. Softly say "Piddle". After he urinates, say "that's piddle", and immediately deliver the after-elimination rewards (treat and praise). Play a quick game of ball or act silly and let your pup chase you.

Repeat the sequence for defecation; just replace "piddle" with your word for defecation.

Label the behaviors for the next day or so.

I've found that 4-6 instances of labeling are enough to teach most dog the names of the acts.

Teach your pup that good things happen immediately after he eliminates outside. Praise him; give him a special treat and initiate a game of fetch or chase – immediately after he eliminates. For now, deliver all food treats outside, at the elimination area, right after you praise your pup for eliminating outside.

After potty area conditioning occurs, delivering treats (as well as the timing of the delivery) won't be important. You can give your dog a treat outside, after he comes inside – or not.

Cue the Behaviors

After a day or so of labeling each of the behaviors, you can transform the labels into commands or cues.

Perform these steps when you know your dog needs to eliminate. The first trip of the day is usually a good time.

Before you open the door, say "Let's go potty". Lead your dog out to the area. Say "Piddle" and wait. Do not repeat the command. After your dog urinates, throw a party! Play a game. Toss your dog a treat. The idea is to teach your dog that fun stuff happens after elimination!

If your dog doesn't urinate when you give the cue, don't repeat the command. His hearing is better than yours! He heard it; he just hasn't caught on yet. Repeating the cue is not helpful. Just back up in this program and repeat the labeling sequences.

Once your dog learns the labels, he will eliminate on cue.

Most dogs always have a bit of urine in their bladders, so urinating on cue usually happens right away. Teaching your dog

the cue for defecation requires a bit more planning. You'll want to deliver that cue only when it's time for your dog to have a bowel movement! Refer to your log and only deliver the cue for defecation when your dog is due a bowel movement.

Inside Management Techniques

The dog must be confined or constantly supervised at all times while inside. Use a crate, baby gates, and closed doors to reduce your pup's territory. Tether the dog to your waist when he is not crated or confined.

To use a tether, get an 8-10 foot section of nylon rope and attach the dog to your waist.

As your pup becomes more reliable, gradually increase the size of his inside territory. For example, if your pup hasn't had an accident in several weeks, open up another room or area and supervise him closely.

Treat your pup as if he is not house trained when introducing him to new areas.

Bells on Collars

Some sources suggest attaching a bell to your dog's collar so you will know when he sneaks off to another room. My suggestion is to secure the back rooms by closing doors or using baby gates. Never let an un-housetrained pup wander out of your sight!

A bell can be useful for keeping track of your pup's naps. When you hear the bell, you'll know your pup is awake and it's time for a trip outside.

Teach your Dog to Ring a Bell

First, decide which type of signal you prefer. Most people state they want their dogs to bark for the signal. I suggest teaching the dog to ring a bell instead of teaching the dog to bark. The dog will inevitably signal when she doesn't need to use the bathroom but she does want you to interact. If you teach her to bark at you, she will learn to bark at you for attention.

If you teach her to ring a bell, you can always take the bell off the doorknob. In addition, you can take the bell to a hotel room, a friend's house, the basement, or anywhere you want.

I suggest placing a bell on a string and hanging the string on the doorknob, but you can always hang the bell on your easy chair, kitchen island, bed post, or anywhere you like. Hobby and craft supply stores carry the ball-like bells in several sizes. String two or three on a leather string for a full sound!

Some people use a wireless doorbell and teach the dog to push the button with her paw or nose. This allows them to place the ringer near to them, when the door and the dog may be rooms away. This requires a bit more training to teach the dog to bump the button hard enough to ring the wireless bell.

Method two is best if you want to use a wireless doorbell.

It doesn't matter where you place the bell or if you use a wireless doorbell. The

concepts for teaching are the same. Just adapt these instructions for your situation. There are several ways to teach your dog to bump a bell to signal a desire to go out. I'll list two of them here.

Method One is simple to follow but may take some dogs longer to learn.

Method Two takes more time and thought and effort, but works with all dogs and is best if you want to use a wireless doorbell. You decide which Method is best for you!

Method One

Hang a bell on the door that Caroline exits to go potty. Leave the bell on the door from this point forward. Before you ever touch the doorknob, reach down and bump the bell with your hand.

Always bump the bell with your hand, and then open the door. Do this for several days.

If she sniffs or noses the bell, make a fuss as you praise her and then open the door. If you want, you can speed up the process by placing a teeny tiny bit of peanut butter on the bell. When she sniffs or licks it, praise her, open the door and walk her to the elimination area. Give the command to potty. After she eliminates, give her a treat, play with her, toss a ball, take a walk, et cetera.

Once she learns that interacting with the bell makes you open the door, you can teach her to bump it with her nose. Just ignore her when she sniffs or licks and she will "sniff harder". Wait until she bumps the bell just a bit harder.

There are many variations for Method One.

Some people gently take the dog's paw and strike the bell before they go out. If your dog knows how to shake, you can cup the bell in your hand to get your dog accustomed to pawing the bell. Experiment with variations and see which works best for your pup!

Method Two

This is the method you can use to teach your dog to bump a doorbell button or a bell hanging from the door. Just adapt the instructions to your situation.

Some dogs and some trainers might skip a step or perform additional steps. Use this outline as a guide to develop your own program.

After step 1, perform each step in very short sessions over the next few days.

Do not move on to the next step until you are sure that Caroline knows the current step.

If Caroline seems confused, go back to the last step that she understands and work from that point forward.

Teach Caroline:

1. a signal that will communicate success and motivate her
2. to bump the bell
3. to bump the bell when it is hanging on the door
4. to bump the bell and then step outside

5. to bump the bell, step outside and walk to the elimination area

6. to bump the bell, step outside, walk to the elimination area and eliminate

Before you can teach any animal, you must be able to communicate what you want and you must be able to motivate the animal to want the same thing.

At the very least, you should be able to tell the animal the instant he or she has succeeded. Some people use a clicker to communicate the instant of success, but you don't need a clicker to communicate.

You can pair any unique word or sound with treats and create your own unique signal. It is best if the word is not a common word; it should stand out as a unique signal. Initially, you'll pair the signal or marker with food treats so the dog will be motivated to perform behaviors that cause you to deliver the signal. I use the word "kick" for the signal.

Step 1

Teach Caroline a signal that will communicate success and motivate her.

Say "kick", and say it quick, like a sound instead of the actual word. Immediately toss Caroline a soft and tasty, bite-sized treat. Repeat 'kick and treat', 3-8 times. By now the sound should be conditioned and you should have her attention.

To test the signal, wait until Caroline is not looking at you but is close by. Say "kick" one time. She should turn her head towards you really fast. If not, just

stop the exercise and start from the beginning at another time.

Say nothing else during this exercise.

The “kick sound” must precede the treat, so be sure and wait a second before you toss the treat. Once you have conditioned “kick”, you have a great tool to tell Caroline the instant she creates wanted behaviors.

You’ll mark the instant of success with the word “kick” and follow the ‘kick’ with good stuff, like a treat, toss of a ball, verbal praise or a quick pat.

Once kick is conditioned, you don’t need to repeat this step and you don’t need to deliver the treat immediately after the kick (marker). You can deliver the treat or good stuff several seconds after the marker.

Step 2

Teach Caroline to touch a bell hanging on a string in your hand.

Hold the string so the bell is at Caroline’s nose height, an inch away from her nose. Say nothing. Wait until Caroline sniffs the bell with her nose.

The instant her nose touches the bell, say kick and then immediately deliver a food treat.

Perform this step several times, but hold the bell just a bit farther and farther away from her nose each time. Say kick the instant she touches it and then give her a food treat. Practice 5-8 times and then place the bell in a drawer or out of sight.

Hold a few sessions just like the first one until Caroline becomes excited when she

sees you get the bell out of the drawer. Go to step 3 after Caroline will readily bump the bell whenever she has the opportunity.

Step 3

Teach Caroline to touch the bell when it’s hanging on the doorknob.

Hang the string on the doorknob so that the bell is at Caroline’s nose height. Sit or stand next to the bell. When she touches the bell on a string attached to your doorknob, say kick and then immediately deliver a tasty treat. Repeat 5-8 times per session. After each session, place the bell in a drawer or out of sight.

Step 4

Teach Caroline that the treat after the “kick” is delivered right outside the door.

When she touches the bell on a string attached to your doorknob, say kick, open the door; walk outside and then deliver the treat right outside the door. Repeat 5-8 times per session.

After Caroline learns this step, you may leave the bell on the door.

Step 5

Teach Caroline that the treat after the “kick” is delivered after she walks to the elimination area.

Same as step 4 but walk to the elimination area (she will probably follow you) and deliver the treat there. Repeat 5-8 times per session. After each session, place the bell in a drawer or out of sight.

Step 6

Teach Caroline that the treat after the “kick” is delivered outside at the elimination area after she eliminates.

Introduce this step when you know she needs to eliminate, such as her first outing in the morning.

Same as Step 6 but once you arrive at the elimination area, give her your command for potty and then give her a treat after she eliminates. Practice this step the next few mornings - and any other times throughout the day that you know Caroline needs to eliminate.

After a few days of practicing step 6, you can drop the word “kick” and the food treat from the sequence. Instead of a food treat, praise her, play fetch, or take her on a walk. Now, you can leave the bell on the doorknob.

When she rings the bell, say something like, “Ok, you need to potty?” and walk her outside to the elimination area. Give her the cue to eliminate.

After she eliminates, deliver something good. Toss a ball or take her for a walk in the neighborhood.

At his point, it’s important to always open the door and go out to the elimination area every time she bumps the bell. If she eliminates, then give her a treat. If she doesn’t eliminate after you’ve given the command, just go back inside. You can leave her out of not, depending on how you feel about your dog being in the yard alone.

After a few days, you can stop walking all the way to the elimination area and stop giving her the command to eliminate.

Just open the door and walk halfway to the area. If she eliminates, perfect, give her a reward!

Over the next few days, reduce the amount of steps you take towards the elimination area.

In about a week, you should be able to wait at the door while Caroline goes out to eliminate.

It’s ok to give her a treat after she returns, for now she knows the treat is for eliminating, not for returning.

Some dogs learn to ring the bell to get you to interact, but they don’t need to eliminate. Keep a log of feeding and elimination. This will help you recognize the times she needs to go outside. If Caroline bumps the bell when she does not have to eliminate, she is telling you that she wants more mental and physical stimulation. Consider taking her for a walk or holding a short training session to stimulate her!

Happy Training!

When Accidents Happen Interrupting

I promote no suggestions to interrupt a dog during elimination. Instead, focus on preventing accidents. Keep a log. Watch your pup closely. Observe your dog’s behavior when he eliminates outside so you will recognize signs of “hunting for a location” like sniffing, and circling.

When you notice any pre-elimination behaviors while you are inside, tell your pup, “let’s go potty”, pick up your puppy and carry him outside to the desired location.

If you catch your pup eliminating inside, just label the behavior³ with your choice of word for the action – say something like, “that’s piddle”.

I know some very reliable sources instruct owners to kindly interrupt their untrained puppy (if they catch him in the act) and then take him outside.

The suggestions include actions such as softly clapping your hands, saying “ehh ehh”, shaking a can with pennies, or even tossing a magazine or keys on the floor beside the pup. I don’t like any of these suggestions.

Some pups are confident and others are shy and some are in-between. The same interrupter will be received differently by each pup.

If the interrupter you choose terrifies your pup, you might as well have kicked your dog.

If your pup is confident and playful, he might respond to interrupters as Bentley did --gleeful fleeing while peeing! Yikes!

Another point to consider is this. If people are instructed to use some sort of mild interrupter to reduce behaviors, what will their next choice be when the interrupter fails to reduce the behavior? I know what their choice will be because I am no different. My next choice would be stronger interrupters – which will certainly hamper the house training process.

I’m not sure why professionals who suggest interrupting don’t

clarify their suggestions with this statement:

“Interrupters will not hasten the house training process. At best, interrupters will stop the dog in the act and you’ll have a smaller area to clean. At worst, interrupters will teach your dog to fear you and to hide from you when he eliminates”.

Clean Up

Expect accidents. No matter how careful you are, there will be occasions when your pup piddles and poops on your floor. It’s nobody’s fault. It happens. The damage is done.

Try not to fuss at your spouse or your kids, yourself or your pup. Just remember, if it happens frequently, you should review this guide and make changes that will reduce your pup’s opportunities to eliminate inside.

Clean the affected area with an enzyme-based, odor neutralizer.

Any commercial product that specifically states “For Pet Odors” is sufficient.

It takes several days for the enzymes to break down the odors. Your dog will smell the urine and be attracted to the area long after you apply cleaners.

Whenever liquids are spilled on carpet, the carpet pad acts as a sponge and soaks up the liquid.

The urine is spread over a larger area in the pad than is

³ Kayce Cover taught me about labeling behaviors.

indicated by looking at the carpet.

Generously apply the cleanser to an area equal to twice the size of the observable stain.

If you have “pet proof” padding installed under your carpet, the affected area underneath the carpet will be even larger. Pet proof padding has a plastic coating on top to prevent liquids from seeping into the pad. This causes the urine to spread underneath the carpet until it is absorbed by the carpet backing, instead of the pad. Treat a much larger area than is indicated by the wetness of the carpet fibers.

If you don't have any cleanser, use a solution of 1 part distilled, white vinegar to 4 parts water. Do not use ammonia based cleaners. Ammonia breaks down into urea, which is a component of urine.

Do not use any cleaners that are not specifically marketed to neutralize odors. Non specific cleaners will set the stain and the smell.

Before you hire a carpet cleaning service, verify that they use an odor neutralizer with enzymes.

If the smell is set into the flooring, your dog will always be drawn to eliminate in that area. It's impossible to remove urine odors from concrete and other non-sealed, porous flooring materials. If you have any permanently-soiled areas, you may need to deny your dog unsupervised access to that area forever.

Troubleshooting

Bad Weather Outings

Some puppies, and most people, do not like to go outside in the rain or snow, unprotected! If your puppy hesitates to walk outside during cold or rainy weather, you'll need to make adjustments.

Here are some ideas.

Fit your puppy with a doggie coat. Aside from the obvious benefits of weather protection, you'll be introducing your puppy to handling and clothing.

All puppies should learn to accept handling. Dressing and undressing your puppy, during the critical period of socialization (before he or she is 12 weeks of age), is an opportunity to make a lasting impression and teach your puppy about handling and body manipulation.

If it's raining, use an umbrella. Position the umbrella so that your puppy is not getting hammered by the raindrops.

Some of my clients with small dogs will set up a bad weather bathroom area in their garages or laundry rooms. Follow the instructions in the *Confinement Training (Section II of this booklet)* to set up a bathroom for your puppy!

When it's raining I run with Bentley to an area of my patio garden that has several large bushes. He is protected from direct raindrop “hits”. Because I have taught Bentley to potty on command, we only spend a minute or so outside.

Marking

Keep a careful watch for marking when exposing your dog to new areas. Marking is when the dog urinates on, or at the base of, items or vertical surfaces as opposed to urinating on the bare ground or flooring.

Marking is more common in intact, sexually mature (about 6 months of age) males. It can be a normal or abnormal response. It depends on the circumstances.

Anxiety and a lack of clear communication / structure in the household are some contributors to abnormal marking.

The presence of other animals and bitches in heat are some normal motivators for marking.

Solutions involve determining why the dog is marking. If your dog urinates on odd items, discontinue access to the target area. Contact your veterinarian for the name of a qualified professional.

Eliminating for Attention

It's tough to diagnose attention-seeking elimination, especially before the dog is house trained.

Some dogs learn that we quickly give them attention when they eliminate inside. A dog who only eliminates in the presence of his owners might be eliminating for attention. It depends on what's occurring in the environment before and after the elimination. Keep a feeding and elimination log. Logs are helpful for determining the causes of inside elimination.

A professional will review your logs, ask some questions and determine if your dog is eliminating for attention.

Solutions for most attention-seeking behaviors involve meeting that individual dog's needs and teaching polite methods to get your attention.

Consumption of Feces

Coprophagia is the term used for describing the consumption of feces. It is a natural behavior for nursing bitches to clean up their dens by consuming waste. That being said, it's quite disgusting when our puppies model their moms' tidy behaviors. Most pups outgrow this stage.

There are products that can be added to the food or sprinkled on the waste. These are advertised to stop coprophagia. Sometimes they are effective, sometimes not.

My advice is to prevent the behavior from becoming a habit. Pick up and discard all stools immediately.

Submissive & Excitement Urination

Sometimes dogs seem to leak urine. I've noticed that it occurs more often during initial greetings. This can be caused by youth, a developmental problem, a medical condition, a behavioral issue or a combination of factors. It's always possible that sudden urination is the result of both behavioral and non-behavioral causes.

Contributors such as underdeveloped organs, medications that facilitate poor bladder control, diseases, or failures of organs are examples of non-behavioral causes.

Before you can address involuntary urination from a behavioral point of view, it's essential to ask your veterinarian to perform a thorough medical check-up to rule out non-behavioral reasons for the urination.

Once you've ruled out all non-behavioral causes, determine if the urination is submissive urination, or excitement urination, or both.

Observe your dog's body language. Carefully notice ear, head, tail position, and overall body language at the instant of urination.

Common submissive behaviors include lowered ears, lowered head and body, and a tucked tail.

If the dog is not walking or running, (the instant urination begins), the urination is most likely to be submissive in nature. If the dog is standing, sitting or lying, the urination is submissive. If the dog is in the process of sitting or lying, or rolling over, it's submissive urination.

Take note of your interactions with the dog. If the dog urinates when you bend over or reach towards him or her, it's submissive urination.

If the dog urinates when you interact via speech, touch or eye contact, it's more likely to be submissive urination.

If the dog is not sitting or lying, and is not in the process of sitting or lying, AND you are not interacting with the dog, it is more likely to be excitement urination. If he or she eliminates while running to greet you, it is more likely to be excitement urination. If the dog urinates while

zooming around the room, it's excitement urination.

I've only met a few dogs that exhibited excitement urination. Most often, submissive urination is the diagnosis. In rare cases, it is a combination of both submissive and excitement urination.

Excitement Urination Solutions

Be sure to have your vet rule out medical causes if you have an older dog that exhibits excitement urination.

To reduce excitement urination, tone down your enthusiasm. Avoid games that involve excessive amounts of glee which encourage your dog to race around the room. More often than not, a pup with excitement urination will grow out of the behavior after he's been with you a while. Some older dogs may always release urine when encouraged to dash around the house.

Submissive Urination Solutions

Shy dogs are prone to exhibit submissive urination. Confident dogs are less likely to react with submission when people interact with them. Submissive urination is not a voluntary behavior; it is triggered by "scary" stimuli and is more of a fear response. After the family learns a bit about the causes and changes their behaviors, and the dog matures and gains confidence, it usually subsides. Here are some short term and long term suggestions.

Short Term Solutions

Make your approaches less intimidating. During initial greetings, turn sideways.

Avoid bending over to greet the dog. Don't reach to pat the dog, especially on top of the head. Don't initially speak to the dog, and don't make eye contact.

After a few minutes, greet the dog in a calm, non-threatening manner. Touching a dog on the chest or belly so that your arm or hand does not loom over the dog's head or body is usually perceived as less threatening. Patting a dog's hips, back or sides, and scratching behind the ears, are less threatening when you are beside and slightly behind the dog as opposed to positioning yourself directly in front.

Never fuss at a dog or console the dog for submissive urination. Act as if it did not happen.

If you expect guests, take your pup outside on a leash for the initial greeting. This won't solve the problem, but it will make cleanup unnecessary!

If your dog jumps up on guests and then releases urine when the guests reach to pet him or her, your goal is to teach your dog how to greet politely.

If the dog eliminates when released from a crate, place the crate near an outside exit into a fenced area. Before you open the crate, open the outside door. Then open the crate door, and without saying anything, step outside and call the dog or toss a toy outside. If your dog is small and is confined in an airline carrier, pick up the carrier and take it outside before you open the carrier door and walk away.

Teach the dog to perform an alternate, confident behavior that will focus

attention on something other than the approach of people. Ask for this alternate behavior when you or others approach. Fetch, chase the ball, or "parade with toy in mouth" are good choices for alternate behaviors.

During this treatment period, always greet the dog with a couple of toys in hand. Place them outside the door in the garage or utility room. During the greeting (before the dog reaches you), toss a ball for him or her to chase/retrieve. This will physically orient the dog away from you and focus his or her attention on a task that is incompatible with submissive greetings.

Instead of using toys, you could toss a few tasty food treats on the floor. Toss them in an area behind or to the side of the dog. This focuses the dog's attention away from you. Walk back out the door while the dog is eating the treats. Repeat this sequence two times whenever you arrive home. After your second entrance, toss the treats and walk into another room and be seated. Wait for the dog to approach you. You may speak softly to the dog, but do not reach out to touch the dog. Wait a couple of minutes before you start interacting.

After a few of these sessions, your dog will begin to associate your arrival with food treats. The involuntary submissive responses to the stimulus of approaching humans will be replaced with the involuntary response of salivation. Your approach will trigger a "Oh goodie, here come the treats!" response.

Long Term Solutions

Your methods of interacting throughout the day shape the relationship with your

puppy. Following these guidelines will usually reduce submissive urination due to behavioral causes.

- Do not scold your pup or use body language which triggers submissive urination.
- Never scold any dog for any house training mistakes, much less for submissive urination.
- Do not coddle or tell your submissive dog, "it's ok". Just ignore the behavior and try to engage the dog in a confident task.
- Never reach down and touch any dog that is jumping up to greet you.
- Careful socialization in safe environments during the critical period of socialization (3-12 weeks) may lower the risk of submissive urination.
- Meet the dog's physical, social and emotional needs.
- Treating other fearful behaviors may reduce the instances of submissive urination.

•Soften your voice when giving commands.

•If your primary choice for teaching involves leash jerks, shouting 'no', corrections with a training collar, et cetera, discontinue these corrections-based teaching methods.

•Start a training program based on consistency, a clear communication system and a reward system. In addition to basic obedience commands, teach your dog some tricks / skills / commands that will engage him or her to perform confident actions. I already mentioned fetch, chase the ball and parade with toy; spin and find the "xyz" are other examples of confident behaviors.

•Touch or target training can increase a dogs' confidence. Teach your dog to touch your two-finger target for a treat. After confidence builds, introduce "shake" or "high five".

•Enrich your dog's environment. Scatter feed. Toss kibble on the patio

or on the kitchen floor. Encourage your dog to hunt for each piece.

- Each person in the household should teach and exercise the dog.

- Review the quality of your dog's diet.

- Begin a massage program.

If your dog continues to leak urine, ask your veterinarian for the name of a trainer or visit <http://apdt.com> and search for a trainer in your area.

Sample Feeding and Elimination Log

Day / Time	Event	Amount / Consistency	Events preceding elimination	My Location
Tuesday 6:15 AM	urinated in elimination area back	full fledged outurination	sleeping, walked her to elimination area, sniffed and then circled	standing next to her
Tuesday 6:25 AM	consumed ½ cup dry dog food			standing in kitchen
Tuesday 6:40 AM	bowel movement on kitchen area rug	soft, but not runny	playing in kitchen	standing in kitchen
Tuesday 8:15 AM	urinated in elimination area back	full fledged outurination	walked her to elimination area, sniffed and then circled	standing next to her
Tuesday 9:35 AM	drank water for 10 seconds			
Tuesday 10:14 AM	urinated on kitchen area rug	full fledged urination	chewing bullie stick in laundry room	

Note the pattern of urination and the time between feeding and bowel movement. The pup urinated every two hours and had a bowel movement 15 minutes after eating.

This pup urinated and defecated inside twice before 10:15.

Since every instance of inside elimination somewhat erases the benefits of taking the puppy outside, this owner will have problems house training. In addition, each instance was on the kitchen area rug. This owner should remove the rug and provide regular access to outside areas.

Section IV: Play-Biting



Have you ever watched dogs play together? They are a riot! They jump, mount, growl, bite, mouth, snap, nip, bark and chase. That's how they play. It's normal behavior.

Play-biting occurs when some of these normal, play behaviors are directed at human body parts and human clothing. Play biting is a stage of development. All puppies ply bite, some more than others. Puppies mature and “grow out of the play biting” stage, unless people unknowingly increase play biting by inappropriate play.

Play Biting Introduction

I categorize play-biters by placing them into one of two Groups. This is because some tips work well with 10 week old pups, but fail miserably with 6 month old pups.

If the pup is 8-16 weeks old, I automatically place them into Group A, the group of puppies that is learning about play-biting and making progress.

Play biting by these younger pups is normal and can usually be easily reduced, assuming the humans follow some guidelines. If their humans are consistent, young pups rarely graduate to Group B.

Group B pups are puppies 6 months and older that are still play-biting. Pups at 17-24 weeks could be in either Group A or Group B.

Play biting by older pups is most often the result of inappropriate play and miscommunications by humans.

Pups in Group B are likely to exhibit other annoying behaviors such as jumping up, mounting, attention-barking, counter-surfing, mouthing and more.

There's no shame if your dog falls into Group B.

None of this stuff comes to anyone in a dream!

There's no reason that you should automatically know how to raise your 21st century pup.

There is so much inaccurate, contradicting information about dog training. Everyone you meet is an "expert". It's all too easy to follow the wrong advice. I know I did!

Give yourself a huge pat on the back for finding this accurate resource.

The concepts for reducing play-biting, mounting, and mouthing are pretty much the same as the concepts for reducing most unwanted behaviors. There are several actions to consider.

- Meet your dog's basic needs
- Avoid play that involves tumbling, wrestling, hugging or interacting with your hands.
- Teach your puppy which behaviors you do like.
- Practice with your dog.
- Interrupt misbehaviors by redirecting your pup to perform wanted behaviors.
- Pay your puppy for complying.

Change Your Behavior

Few (including myself) can resist the soft cuddly fur of a puppy. I firmly believe that puppy tumble therapy is a marketable service. The buyer enters a room with several 7-10 week old

puppies, gets on the floor and just soaks up puppy-gee by touching, tumbling and interacting with the puppies. I can't imagine how such interactions would not be helpful for stress relief. I'd pay for the opportunity. Wouldn't you?

Most people's ideas of playing with puppies involve tumbling and rough handling.

Aren't handling, pushing, wrestling, poking, teasing, tumbling, hugging, holding, cuddling, rolling, and chasing all good clean fun methods to interact with puppies? Fun? . . . yes; helpful for teaching a puppy? . . . no.

Expect to be bitten if you get on the floor and play wrestle, hug, manipulate, or otherwise use your hands to roughly interact with your puppy.

All these behaviors give puppies the impressions that we are just like their canine playmates. Puppies play rough with other puppies. At some point, puppy handling morphs into miscommunications which morph into playful puppy attacks! Ouch, those needle teeth are sharp!

Kids and Dogs

It would be difficult for me to estimate how often I've heard this phrase.

"My child used to love the puppy but now she's afraid of him. He randomly jumps up on her, steals her toys, mouths her arms, and nips

at her heels and clothing. Sometimes he even knocks her down".

When you think about it, these behaviors are in the same class of behaviors dogs exhibit while playing with other dogs.

The first step to resolve these issues is prevention. Attach a leash or long line so that your pup cannot mug your child.

Children and untrained dogs do not make choices which promote safe play. Please supervise all interactions between children and animals.

Set aside time each day to introduce your child and your pup to safe games like fetch or hide-n-seek.

Sit-for-treat, roll over, and adult-accompanied, leashed walks are examples of other safe activities children can play with pups.

Nothing increases behaviors better than rewards. Establish reward systems for your child and you pup. Pay your child and your pup for playing nicely.

Other Preventative Measures

Ok, I'll ease up on the lecture. Regardless of your perfect behaviors, your pup will play bite. That's what they do. Here are some tips to help you survive this period.

Group A: 8-16 Week Old Puppies

- Tie a stuffed toy on a 10-12 foot line. (I use ¼ inch diameter nylon line I purchased at the hardware store.) Drag the toy when you walk. Praise the pup for attacking the toy instead of your ankles and feet!

- Sometimes you just want to handle your pup. Before you start grooming or handling, get a decoy. I use a Kong® toy stuffed with a bit of peanut butter. Hold the Kong® and let your pup get engrossed in the treat while you perform grooming or necessary inspections. Big Boy Bullies® (available from <http://sitstay.com>) are also great decoys.

- Pay your pup for chewing the correct items. Deliver a treat and praise when he is engaged in wanted behaviors. Remember, when you increase appropriate behaviors, the inappropriate behaviors decrease in frequency!

- Use decoys when your child wants to stroke your pup. Choose

periods when your pup is less active for stroking.

- Avoid sudden hand movements, especially movements near your pup's face and head.

- Avoid pats on top of the head. Stroke your pup under his neck and south of the collar instead.

- Use long gentle strokes instead of short, harsh pats.

- Harvest some of that puppy-fur therapy when your pup is asleep!

Interrupt -- Redirect -- Pay

The Play-biting period is an educational journey for our pups. This is when they learn about bite inhibition and jaw pressure.

Pups that learn about jaw pressure and bite inhibition are less likely to deliver deep puncture wounds as adults.

Puppies learn about bite inhibition as they play with other puppies.

Here's how a puppy learns from his littermates. When one pup bites another too hard, the recipient will yelp and withdraw.

This provides the play biter with valuable information about jaw pressure and contributes to the

development of excellent bite inhibition.

This education from siblings and parents takes place early in a pup's life.

Pups that are removed from their littermates before 8–9 weeks (or pups that are an only child) are at a greater risk for exhibiting more extreme versions of play biting.

Teaching puppies about jaw pressure reduces the probability of them delivering dangerous bites as adolescents and adults.

Ouch – Withdraw Method

Adults can continue the education process by following the following sequence. (This is not for children nor is it how to address play biting by Group B pups, which have already perfected their naughty behaviors!)

At this point we have two goals. Our short term goal is to teach the pup about jaw pressure. Our long term goal is to teach the pup that teeth-on-skin is unacceptable.

•When your young puppy play-bites, allow it. The instant you feel those needle teeth sting, speak a high-pitched “ouch” and immediately withdraw. Walk away and ignore your pup.

•If your pup becomes more excited after the “ouch”, follows you or bites your ankles, try this. Attach a leash and tether the pup to a piece of furniture. Now he can't follow.

•Ignore your pup for several seconds while you review your behavior. Are you sending the wrong signals? Are you somehow enticing the pup to bite?

•Reengage by redirecting your pup to interact with a decoy.

•Praise your pup for chewing the item.

•Repeat the sequence several times in succession. Pups learn by repetition. It may take a week or more of using this sequence before your pup catches on.

In some cases, the “ouch” and withdrawal method is a slow process. Here are factors to consider.

•If a confident puppy has practiced and has refined play-biting as a normal method to interact with people, it will take more repetitions

before the puppy will understand.
Keep at it and you will succeed.

- If the pup is not offended by your departure, then withdrawing will not be effective.

- If family members are inconsistent, then the puppy will continue to play bite.

- If the puppy is older than 12-14 weeks, the ouch method will probably be ineffective.

- Failure could be a sign that the pup's physical and mental exercise needs are not being met.

Sometimes it's difficult to interrupt and redirect. The puppy seems to be out of control and will not listen.

This pup either needs more exercise or a nap. If excessive activities such as play-biting occur late in the evening, the pup may be ready for bed. If it occurs after the pup is well rested, then perhaps it's time for some exercise!

In some cases, (especially in families with unwilling 'ouch-withdraw' participants), I find it necessary to focus solely on teaching the pup to interact with appropriate items.

To encourage a pup, hold a decoy for your pup to investigate. When your

pup touches it with his teeth or tongue, say "yes" to mark that instant of success.

Immediately deliver praise and/or a treat. After the pup catches onto the game, methodically extend the amount of time the pup must interact with the item before you mark success and deliver praise.

Group B: Puppies 6 Months and Older

Group B dogs are usually much larger (than Group A pups) and some of their newness has worn off.

Group B dogs have perfected play biting as a method to communicate with humans.

Because the dogs are older and families have yet to teach the dogs about play-biting, it is very likely that the family has unknowingly increased other obnoxious behaviors such as jumping up, nipping at clothes, attention-barking, object stealing, et cetera.

Group B dogs are at risk for being mistreated. Group B dogs are a bit closer to being sequestered into isolation or re-homed.

All of the preventative methods are effective with Group B dogs. In addition, you will need some management tools to control these larger dogs.

•Start a training program. Use kind methods to teach the dog basic obedience commands.

•If your Group B dog jumps up and play bites, attach a leash. Step on the leash to prevent the dog from succeeding. Use a buckle collar for this exercise.

•Correct and careful use of a head collar provides some families relief from the obnoxious behaviors of some Group B dogs. Check with your veterinarian or trainer for information about head collars.

What Not to Do

If you're reading this I'm guessing you've tried all the popular methods to stop play-biting.

Some suggest that you squirt a play biting pup with a water bottle, bop the dog on the nose, hold the muzzle shut, grab the puppy by the scruff, shout "No Bite" or even roll the pup over and hold him down. These are questionable solutions.

Some pups will learn by these corrections and others become anxious, confused, fearful, or more playful.

The water bottle is the only suggestion I might share – in rare situations.

Ask any person whose adult dog is grumpy during mouth and muzzle inspections. "Say, did you hold your dog's muzzle shut when he was a pup?"

These uncooperative patients learned long ago that hands approaching face equals discomfort.

If you are using corrections to teach your pup about play-biting, and it is still a problem, it's time to change course! What you are doing is not working.

Another problem with suggesting these methods is that people naturally become focused on stopping unwanted behaviors instead of starting wanted behaviors. This places them on a path of miscommunication with their pups. How will most people respond when the corrections are ineffective ... when the squirt bottle doesn't work? . . .

People naturally respond with more force and harsher punishers.

Some pups will stop play biting when harsher punishers are used. Of course these pups may stop coming when called, and start urinating in fear, but hey, they're not play biting!

In addition, forceful techniques send messages to our children about resolving problems with force, when kinder, more efficient methods are

available. Try the kind methods. You'll be surprised how well they work!

Some people, (far be it from me to single out a specific gender or age group) believe that rough play teaches pups to be good protectors.

I have some experience teaching protection dogs. I have full exposure to the techniques and exercises. None of the professional, protection dog trainers I have worked with use rough play as a method to teach a dog to protect.

If any of the members in your pup's circle of humans, insist on playing rough, expect your puppy's play biting to continue or increase.

**Play wrestling teaches
puppies that rough play is
ok.**

In addition, games which include jumping up not only increase inappropriate jumping up, but can compromise a growing pup's bone development.

People rarely eliminate play biting in a few days, because play biting is a normal stage for puppies. If you follow these suggestions, you can minimize play-biting during this period and prevent it from becoming a true problem in an older dog.

If your pup's play biting is increasing in frequency or magnitude, contact your veterinarian for the name of a trainer or visit <http://apdt.com> and search for a trainer near you.

Section V: Whistle Come

Teach Your Puppy to Come

There are many different methods to teach dogs to come when called. Here is an easy way to teach your dog to come when you blow a whistle. You may be creative with your whistle signal. For example, you could blow a short toot followed by a long toot.

Get a whistle. Any type of whistle will do. Sporting goods stores stock a selection of whistles. Walmart and Target have some in their sporting goods sections.

Use special treats for this exercise, not the normal treats you use for training. Small pieces of chicken, ham, cheese or turkey work well. The idea is to choose a treat that your dog will LOVE! Choose a unique and delicious treat that your dog never ever gets any other times!

From this point forward, you will only blow the whistle during whistle come exercises.

IMPORTANT: Do not use the whistle to call your dog when he or she is misbehaving! It will increase the misbehaviors! THEREFORE, if your dog is digging or barking or misbehaving, first get your dog's attention, then blow the whistle when he or she is looking at you.

Do not speak to your dog, or touch your dog during Steps 1 and 2.

Step 1) Go to your den or family room and have your dog next to you. Blow your whistle and hand your dog a treat. Wait a couple of seconds, blow your whistle and give your dog a treat. Repeat 4-6 times. You are finished now. Put the whistle away.

Wait 3-5 minutes and repeat the sequence in another room of your house. Do this in 3 or more different rooms during 3 or more different sessions.

Step 2) Go to an outside area and have your dog on a short leash next to you. Blow your whistle and hand your dog a treat. Wait a couple of seconds, blow your whistle and give your dog a treat. Repeat 4-6 times. You are finished now. Put the whistle away.

Wait 3-5 minutes and repeat the sequence in another area outside. Do this in 3 or more different outside areas during 3 or more different sessions.

Step 3) Practice in the front yard or other unfenced areas with your dog on a 10-25 foot line. Practice in 3 or more different outside areas during 3 or more different sessions. When your dog comes, hand him or her a treat. Praise your dog! Toss a ball! Play with your dog!

Step 4) Go to a fenced area outside with your dog off leash. Let your dog wander around for 5 minutes. Blow your whistle and wait. When your dog comes, hand him or her a treat. Praise your dog! Toss a ball! Play with your dog!

After several sessions, vary the rewards. Use treats sometimes, or use praise and play as rewards. Soon,

your dog will always come when you whistle!

IMPORTANT:Do not use the whistle to call your dog when he or she is misbehaving! It will increase the misbehaviors! THEREFORE , if your dog is digging or barking or misbehaving, first get your dog's attention, then blow the whistle when he or she is looking at you.

Happy Training!