



# **PUPPIES 101: A PRACTICAL GUIDE FOR THEIR FIRST WEEKS IN THEIR NEW HOME**

Your step-by-step weekly plan to build a great foundation for your new puppy. This short program will help set them up for success with ongoing training. Everyone in the family can participate, and should!

# GETTING PREPARED

Stock up on these items for your pup. They'll be used throughout the next several weeks.

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## LONG LEASH

Preferably with the loop removed so that it can be used around the house without getting caught. Keep your puppy on this while out and about in the house for the first few weeks so that you can guide them away from trouble.



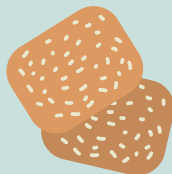
## DOG FOOD

We'll use their food as a training tool throughout their first few weeks, so make sure you are set to feed multiple times per day with high quality food.



## TASTY TREATS

Have lots of treats handy so that you can use them as rewards throughout training. Choose high quality products with limited ingredients to avoid tummy upset.

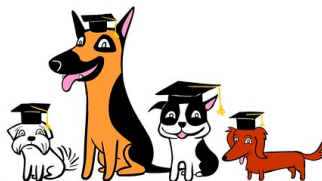


*Please make sure that the items and ingredients that you use for your dog are high quality. Puppies can have sensitive tummies so keep an eye on what may or may not sit well with them, and remove items that cause tummy upset.*

# BACKGROUND

## What is Positive Reinforcement Dog Training?

- Teaching dogs desirable behaviors using SCIENCE-based & REWARD-based methods.
- Helping dogs learn and succeed step by step.
- Motivating dogs with fun exercises and games. No force! No pain!
- Encouraging dogs to think more for themselves.
- Valuing dogs' voluntary behaviors.
- Understanding dogs' feelings from their body language.
- Understanding how dogs learn, their needs and wants.
- Using methods that work humanely with ANY dog. Big dogs, small dogs, puppies, senior dogs, disabled dogs, fearful dogs, reactive dogs... can all learn and have fun!



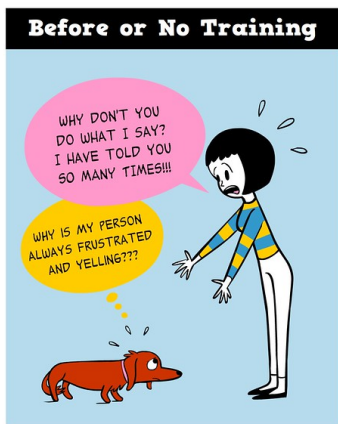
**1. develop  
dog's self-control**



**2. develop  
a trust relationship**



**3. develop  
dog's self-confidence**



**Positive Reinforcement Training  
= HAPPY RELATIONSHIP**



# CRATE TRAINING

Having your puppy crate-trained is a huge advantage to training. For those moments you can't keep your eye on them, you'll need a safe, comfortable place for them to go. The crate provides just that. **Start crate training immediately, and train to your worst day.** For example, if there are days you'll be gone for 8 hours, start training your puppy to be crated to that duration. Be sure to include bathroom breaks every 2-3 hours. If your schedule ends up being light, you can always give them more time out of the crate. It's much harder to do the opposite.

## CRATE SIZE

A crate for your dog should be large enough for her to comfortably stand up, turn around and lay down in. Using the crate, you can confine puppies under six months in 2-3 hour shifts. If you can't let your pup out that often, make arrangements for a friend or family member to help out. Very young puppies (under three months of age) require more frequent potty breaks, so plan accordingly. Each week they get older, they'll be able to hold it a little longer.

## HOW TO CRATE TRAIN

Begin to get your new dog used to the crate right away. Put it in an area of your home where the family spends a lot of time, such as the living room. Put a soft towel or blanket inside. Bring her over to the open crate on leash, and attempt to lure her inside with some high value treats or a toy. Don't force her to enter!

If she doesn't want to go all the way in at first, keep tossing treats or toys inside until she is willing to enter on her own. Your dog's experiences with the crate should be all positive, so remember to reward her for staying inside the crate quietly. You can close the door to confine her, and continue to pass her treats through the bars of the crate while she remains calm and quiet.

You can also give her appropriate chew materials (sturdy rubber toys or bones that can't break down for her to choke on) while she's in her crate. Covering the crate with a blanket or towel (especially at night time) might also help your help your dog view her crate as a safe, cozy, den-like retreat.

If your pup is extra noisy in the crate, the first thing to do is to ensure all of their physical needs have been met. Do they have water? Have they been out to potty recently? If not, do those things and return them to their crate. If they continue to cry, this is a good time to wait them out.

Shhhhhhhhhhhh? Many people put their dog in the crate and spend the whole day trying not to make any noise. We recommend crating your dog and carrying on with your usual noise/routine. Your pup will get used to the noise in no time.

# THE RULE OF THREE

When rescuing a dog or puppy, keep the **rule of three** in mind:

## 3 DAYS

Your new dog is trying to figure out their new home and family.

## 3 WEEKS

They have figured out they will live with you and start a routine.

## 3 MONTHS

Your dog has become part of the family.

**Welcome home!**



Give your dog time to learn. For puppies, especially, their brain is like an open file cabinet - fill it with files full of positive experiences for as long as you can. This will give you a confident, secure dog for a lifetime.

**Enjoy your new best friend, and the journey of becoming a pack.**

# 1<sup>ST</sup> WEEK

8 WEEKS OLD

Puppies typically leave their litter and start their new life around eight weeks old. Your pup may be older or younger depending upon their situation, so we'll simply refer to this as week one - the first week they are home with you. This is a **big transition** for your puppy, so be patient. Your primary goal over the next few weeks is to build trust and positive experiences. But first, some ground rules...

## GROUND RULES

These are a must if you're going to be successful and have a well-trained puppy at the end of this course.

### 100% SUPERVISION

You have to **be present** so that you can **proactively** give your puppy good information. Puppies are constantly learning and need management to avoid trouble. If you can't have your eagle eye on them, they should be created/confined to a space where they can't get into trouble.

### BE CONSISTENT

Decide on your rules, boundaries, and verbal queues early on and stick to those throughout this training program. If you change things on a weekly basis, your puppy will end up confused and getting in to trouble.

### BE PATIENT

Your puppy is going through a big change, and they have to learn everything they need to know through a set of strange hand motions and a language they don't know.



# SKILLS

YOU'LL PRACTICE THIS WEEK



## THE NAME GAME

**Arguably, the most important thing you'll ever do with your dog.** Your puppy needs to know their name in order to get their attention and give commands. Your goal is to associate their name with the most positive experiences such as treats and affection. To play **the name game**, you'll say their name, give them a "yes" as soon as they look at you, lure them towards you with a treat, and treat them once they are close. Repeat this over and over. When they have it down, wait until they are distracted with something like a toy or smell, and say their name.



## ESTABLISHING A VERBAL **MARKER**

Throughout the week you'll use a verbal marker - yes - to let your puppy know they are on the right track. Creating a positive association with this marker (treat, praise, etc) will help you guide your puppy away from trouble and towards you.

To teach this you'll simply say "yes" and follow it up with food or treats. In their mind yes = something great!

yes



# PLAN

CHECK THESE OFF AS YOU GO!

## DAY ONE

- Handfeed each meal to teach name
- 10 min of name game w/treats

## DAY TWO

- Handfeed each meal to teach name
- 10 min of name game w/treats

## DAY THREE

- Handfeed each meal to teach name
- 10 min of name game w/treats

## DAY FOUR

- Handfeed each meal to teach name
- 10 min of name game w/treats

## DAY FIVE

- Handfeed each meal to teach name
- 10 min of name game w/treats

## DAY SIX

- Handfeed each meal to teach name
- 10 min of name game w/treats

## DAY SEVEN

- Handfeed each meal to teach name
- 10 min of name game w/treats

## BONUS!

- Lure your puppy around the house with hand motions and food. This will teach them the importance of paying attention



**WORDS**  
I KNOW

**MY NAME**

Use to get my attention and follow up with a treat. Use mostly when training so I don't start tuning it out.

**YES**

Use to let me know I'm doing something correctly and follow with a treat



# 2ND WEEK

9 WEEKS OLD

This week we are going to continue the focus on building confidence for our pups. Supervision is critical this week - as our pups grow they become more confident, active, and energetic. This means they can get into more trouble. **It's easier to prevent problems than it is to fix them.** Stay vigilant.

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### BE PATIENT

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# SKILLS

YOU'LL PRACTICE THIS WEEK

## THE **NAME** GAME

Continue to reinforce that their name = a reward. Be really conscious of **how often you are using your puppy's name**. If it's not followed with a reward, it's going to start losing value. This week, **start including family members** in this exercise so that your pup gets used to other saying their name. Also **increase the lure** -- bring your pup a little farther each time to encourage following.

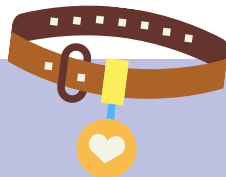


## REINFORCE THE **VERBAL** MARKER

Continue using the verbal marker as your puppy succeeds.

## **COLLAR** HANDLING

It's important to be able to touch your pup's collar to help guide them or get them out of trouble. This week you'll start by simply putting their collar on, and touching it while on them. Each time you touch it, reward with a "yes" and a treat. Eventually approach from different angles and even hold it for a second or two. This will help avoid a hand-shy pup later on in life. Keep this interaction light and gentle.



# PLAN

CHECK THESE OFF AS YOU GO!

## DAY ONE

- Handfeed each meal to teach name
- 10 min of name game w/treats

## DAY TWO

- Handfeed each meal to teach name
- 5-10 minutes of collar handling

## DAY THREE

- Handfeed each meal to teach name
- 10 min of name game w/treats

## DAY FOUR

- Handfeed each meal to teach name
- 5-10 minutes of collar handling

## DAY FIVE

- Handfeed each meal to teach name
- 10 min of name game w/treats

## DAY SIX

- Handfeed each meal to teach name
- 5-10 minutes of collar handling

## DAY SEVEN

- Handfeed each meal to teach name
- 10 min of name game w/treats

## BONUS!

- Lure your puppy in, out, and around your legs with tasty treats.



**WORDS**  
I KNOW

**MY NAME**

Use to get my attention and follow up with a treat. Use mostly when training so I don't start tuning it out.

**YES**

Use to let me know I'm doing something correctly and follow with a treat

# 3<sup>RD</sup> WEEK

10 WEEKS OLD

Your pup now knows their name, and knows that good things happen when they hear that "yes" marker. Over the next few weeks are are going to focus on building new skills like sit, down, shake, stay. The ground rules from the previous weeks still apply, but we're introducing some new ways of thinking about commands.

## COMMAND PROGRESSION

Commands are taught and progressed in three steps. You want to use all three teaching methods to start, while limiting distractions.

### TEACHING

A NEW COMMAND

**1 Command**  
Say the word you'll use for the command (i.e. sit).

**2 Stimulus**  
The verbal marker and lure into the position.

**3 Reward**  
The treat/praise used for acheiving the command.

### PROGRESSING

A NEW COMMAND

**1 Distance**  
Start close and work your way out.

**2 Duration**  
Start with short bursts of the behavior and work up.

**3 Distraction**  
Once your pup has mastered the skill, start doing it with distractions around (i.e. toys, another dog).

# SKILLS

YOU'LL PRACTICE THIS WEEK



## SITTING

A classic! Begin by asking your puppy for a sit. Take the treat and place it near their nose, slowly drawing it up and back so that their head tilts back. This motion is the "lure". This will cause their but to go down. When their but hits the floor, mark with a "yes" and give a treat! Rinse and repeat.

You might be tempted to drop the lure but don't quite yet -- we'll get there over time.



## PAW HANDLING

All pups will need to have nail trims and be checked out by the vet. It's important to start handling those areas now so that appointments go smoothly. It's important that this part be practiced very calmly and is best when your pup is tired. Lure your pup into a down position. Calmly pet them and help them lay "on their side". Use those words so they start to associate this motion with that position.

Calmly pet your pup on their side for a few minutes. Eventually gently pet their paw and immediately give them verbal praise (yes, good boy, good girl) followed by a treat. Continue this for a few minutes. If your pup gets too excited, return to calmly petting them until they are relaxed.

# PLAN

CHECK THESE OFF AS YOU GO!

## DAY ONE

- Use meals to practice sitting
- 10 min of name game w/treats

## DAY TWO

- Handfeed each meal to teach name
- 5-10 minutes of collar handling

## DAY THREE

- Use meals to practice sitting
- 5-10 minutes of paw handling

## DAY FOUR

- Handfeed each meal to teach name
- 5-10 minutes of collar handling

## DAY FIVE

- Use meals to practice sitting
- 5-10 minutes of paw handling

## DAY SIX

- Use meals to practice sitting
- 5-10 minutes of practicing "sit" w/treats

## DAY SEVEN

- Handfeed each meal to teach name
- 5-10 minutes of paw handling

## BONUS!

- Crates! Practice the "kennel" command by tossing treats into the crate for your pup to follow.



**WORDS  
I KNOW**

**MY NAME**

Use to get my attention and follow up with a treat. Use mostly when training so I don't start tuning it out.

**YES**

Use to let me know I'm doing something correctly and follow with a treat.

**SIT**

Use with a treat to lure my head up and butt to the ground.

# PRO TIP

You're probably figuring out by now that the key to puppy training is association: word > action > reward. Knowing this, it's easy to teach your dogs words for everyday things they already do.

For example, when they are out doing their business, you can say "good potty" or "good poop". In the future, you can use these as commands to encourage them to go if they are unsure of what to do. (Or if it's 40 below and you are cold and want to go inside.)

Another good one is "water". Each time they drink you can say "good water!" very enthusiastically, over and over while they drink. Some day down the road when they are hot, panting, and staring at you, you can say "go get some water" and they'll know what to do.

Think about everyday things you want them to associate with words and start associating them as you go.

Just remember to take it slow. These things take months to develop and too much at once causes confusion.



# TH WEEK & BEYOND

11+ WEEKS OLD

As you continue your journey, the same ground rules apply. This is a really important time to be consistent, and continue to practice the skills you want your pup to have. **Keep in mind that training is not a linear progression.** You'll have setbacks here and there - that is ok! When you do, just reset and try again.

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# SKILLS

YOU'LL PRACTICE THIS WEEK

## STAY

This command will pay dividends in the long-run. Check back to last week's information on how to progress this command appropriately. You'll want to start with very short duration, calmly rewarding your puppy for staying in one place. As they get better and better, you can start adding in distance. Once they've aced that, incorporate duration and then distraction.

Start with your puppy in a sit or down, whichever is most comfortable for them. Give them the "stay" command. Take a step back, immediately return forward, and reward your pup. If they pop up, body block them from moving forward, return them to their start position, and try again.



## DOWN

Having your pup reliably lay down & stay will ultimately lead to a great place command. To teach your pup down, put them in a sit position. Using a treat, lure their head down by lowering the treat down and in between their front legs. They'll bring their head down and back, and plop down. As soon as they are in a down position, give them the treat.

# PLAN

CHECK THESE OFF AS YOU GO!

## DAY ONE

- Use meals to practice "down"
- 10 min of name game w/treats

## DAY TWO

- Handfeed each meal to teach name
- 5-10 minutes of collar handling w/treats

## DAY THREE

- Use meals to practice sitting
- 5-10 of working on "stay" w/treats

## DAY FOUR

- Handfeed each meal to teach name
- 5-10 min of practicing "down" w/treats

## DAY FIVE

- Use meals to practice "stay"
- 5-10 minutes of paw handling w/treats

## DAY SIX

- Use meals to practice sitting
- 5-10 min of practicing "down" w/treats

## DAY SEVEN

- Handfeed each meal to teach name
- 5-10 minutes of "stay" w/treats

## BONUS!

- Pup your pup and a leash and practice luring them with a treat so that they follow you around.



**WORDS I KNOW**

## MY NAME

Use to get my attention and follow up with a treat. Use mostly when training so I don't start tuning it out.

## YES

Use to let me know I'm doing something correctly and follow with a treat.

## SIT

Use with a treat to lure my head up and butt to the ground.

## STAY

Place the puppy in a sit or down and ask them to stay.

## DOWN

Lure the pup with a treat until they lay down

# WHAT'S NEXT?

Over the next several weeks, continue to work on your puppy's skills. There are great videos to teach leash manners, recall, and more. Pick a new skill every couple of weeks, watch a few videos, and dedicate a few minutes each day to working on it. Keep working things from week one and two so that they don't forget the basics.

In the end, you'll have a well-behaved puppy who loves to train.

# THANK YOU

Fetch Wisconsin Rescue, Inc. operates solely based on donations. If you enjoyed this companion, and would like to donate to our rescue efforts, please visit [www.fetchwi.org/donate](http://www.fetchwi.org/donate).

Happy Tails!