

HOW TO KEEP THE PUPPY LOVE AFFAIR ALIVE? MANAGEMENT TOOLS AND TRAINING WILL KEEP IT BLOOMING

New owners usually chose a new puppy by falling in love at first sight and believe simply loving the new bundle of joy will keep things happy. The sad reality however, is a new puppy or newly adopted dog can be a handful without proper training and socialization.

Start Off Your Training on the Right Track

A few keys to begin a lasting relationship with your puppy include enrolling him in a kindergarten class taught by Certified Pet Dog Trainers. Choose a trainer that uses methods such as operant and classical conditioning. The trainer should instruct you how to train your puppy with positive training methods. In addition, you'll want to learn how to use invaluable management tools to aid you while teaching your puppy. The training center should have the ability to sanitize floors to insure your young puppy's health is considered. The kindergarten class should provide supervised, interactive play while the young puppy learns.

It is important to understand your puppy or dog already knows everything you are going to teach him in class. He can sit, lie down, walk by your side and come bounding from a short distance. Of course, this is usually when *he wants to do it*.

Early training will help teach him he wants to sit, lie down, come and walk when he is asked because there is *something good in it for him*. You will teach him every behavior you want and *change* every behavior you don't want. Let's train a puppy with our brains not through administering or utilizing pain. It is very simple: If you wish a behavior to *increase*, make sure something *desirable happens* - If you wish a behavior to *decrease*, be sure something *desirable goes away*.*

While dogs do not speak English, they do have the ability to learn 200 words through association.** However, while you develop this common language you'll

need to use some good management techniques. Puppies are impressionable at an early age. They are willing to bond with you if you remain calm, patient, and consistent. Remember, your puppy has the ability to make choices; let's guide and manage him to increase better choices and do as we ask.

What is Good Management?

Until training has begun and continuing, there are many occasions when *management is imperative*. If your puppy is not housetrained, you manage him by constantly supervising him, taking him outside frequently, or putting him in a crate, safe room or pen when you not at home, while you sleep or when you are too preoccupied to keep your eyes on him. If your dog does not come when you call him, you can manage this behavior by not letting him off-leash in an open area until you have *trained* him to respond to come when asked. You can manage your new dog with a leash. Yes, it is acceptable to use a leash inside...go figure. Try tethering your puppy in a room you are occupying. You then allow him to be with you while avoiding possibilities of getting into trouble. Puppies deprived of human interaction for long periods will often resort to attention-getting behaviors such as vocalizing, running and play biting. If a puppy is too boisterous try the Gentle Leader® head collar (Premier Pet Products, Richmond, Va.) and a leash to help keep better control.

Develop a routine for your puppy to become familiar with for eating, eliminating, and playing. Strive for positive interactions, not negative ones. He should see you as a source of affection, interaction and comfort. Be prepared to spend time with your puppy and reward him for desired behaviors. Simple, rewards will increase your dog's behavior. However, it is important to know that some rewards are not something we as humans consider rewarding, i.e., raiding the litter box, chewing your new shoes, digging or other 'fun things.' Consider rewards through your puppy's eyes.

MANAGEMENT IS NOT TRAINING

What management does is prevent your dog from repeating unwanted behaviors. This keeps you from getting angry at the puppy for undesirable behaviors. Remember, the more the dog is allowed, *willingly or unwillingly*, to repeat the inappropriate behavior, the more embedded that behavior becomes and the harder it is to change it.

Dog Training by PJ

5303 Louie Lane #19, Reno, Nevada 89511

www.dogtrainingbybj.com

775-828-0748

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WHAT IS TRAINING?

Dog training as defined by Wikipedia.com: "is the process of teaching a dog (*Canis lupus familiaris*) to perform certain behaviors under various circumstances and in certain roles on command. It is a general term not describing by itself either what or how the dog is taught."

Dogs like to get good things and wish to avoid bad things, but you do not have to physically punish your dog in order to make a behavior *not rewarding*; instead make the right behavior more rewarding so he chooses to do the good behavior instead of the inappropriate one.

Young puppies and some adolescent dogs are easily intimidated. Keep this in mind when disciplining them. Harsh *physical punishment is unnecessary and is not training*. It may also frighten him and make him hand-shy or may lead to possible aggression.*** A properly trained puppy minimizes the need for disciplining while establishing you as the leader. When discipline is required use a noise distraction or a change in vocal intonation. A good relationship foundation begins with positive training methods. It is about trust, respect and conditioning (training) for good results.

Promoting Socialization

Socialization in dogs takes place between 4 and 12 weeks of age, when puppies are most receptive to certain stimuli. During this period, puppies easily make social attachments and learn how to interact with other dogs and species. Although socialization is life-long, what happens during this early period can be crucial. At this age, you should expose your puppy to many new people (e.g. delivery persons, people wearing uniforms, children, infants, teenagers, elderly persons). These meetings should be pleasant; for example, the people could offer the puppy a biscuit or treat. The message conveyed to the puppy or dog is, "Aren't these people nice, they feed me." It's also advantageous to expose the puppy to new things such as: stairs, surfaces, elevators, vehicles, umbrellas, and bicycles. This list is endless. By introducing him to people and things in a calm, reassuring setting, he learns to handle new situations without fear. During the socialization period, an owner should continue allowing the puppy to interact with friendly adult dogs and puppies. Again, a good way to accomplish this is to enroll your puppy in a

positive reinforcement puppy class once *preliminary* vaccinations are given.****
Puppies are learning all the time, so there's no reason to delay training as was once recommended.

Proper training helps ensure a puppy's successful transition to adulthood. In the first few months, you can teach a puppy tasks that will aid in controlling him and in establishing the owner's leadership.*****

Remember any dog consistently denied attention and companionship the dog needs will increase the likelihood he will find other unacceptable ways to express bored anxiety or stress. Take the time to manage and teach your new puppy so your love affair grows and flourishes into a healthy, life-long companionship with your dog.

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