

Dog Training by PJ

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Tips to Raise a Well-Adjusted Toy Dog

Why do we often enjoy the toy dog? There are so many reasons to consider, but often because the toy dog is portable. Often times they are very cuddly and of course, the cuteness factor is always top on the list. However, just because they are small, does not mean they are not dogs. These small dogs do have special needs and concerns.

Just a few tips to help you with that little dog of yours:

- Remember your dog views the world a little different - Try it - get on your belly and see their world through your eyes - pretty large if you look around.
- He is a *real dog* - who just has a few special needs, but still can be trained just as the "large dogs." At Dog Training by PJ we offer the Toy Dog (Small dog) class so you can introduce your toy dog to training while in the comfort of other small dogs.
- Housetraining is a big issue for small dogs. Why? Often, the small piddles or small gifts are not seen as bothersome so the small dog is never truly housetrained. You must be patient, gentle and consistent. Reward the dog when they potty where you want. Don't punish for mistakes. Remember management is the key to success. Refer to other Reference Materials entitled, "*How to Manage your Dog*"
- When potty training be sure the small dog has a safe place to relieve himself. Remember there are many animals, other dogs, coyotes, owls, hawks and some snakes that see your dog as a tasty morsel.
- Equally important, to remember, is your small dog has legs and feet - allow them to be used. Exercise is important for the small dog.
- Be aware of your surroundings. Big dogs on the loose or children running and playing can injure these little dogs. Additionally, fast-moving crowds of people or crowds in general can overwhelm your toy dog or trip over them, injuring both the dog and person. Again, think about what the world looks like to these small toy dogs.
- Some small dogs and children are often not a good combination. Toy dogs have

been accidentally injured or killed by someone accidentally sitting on them, dropping them or handling/playing too rough. It is not wise to leave a small dog and children unsupervised. Be aware of a small child picking up the toy breed since the fall/drop can severely injure or kill this small dog.

- Use a harness when walking a small dog; oftentimes toy dogs have a collapsing trachea and additional pressure on their throats can cause discomfort.
- Play gentle and fun games - you can play tug of war - as long as there are rules - even for small dogs!
- Teach your toy dog to come when called - the game should not be you chase them around - but they learn to chase you instead.
- Handle your toy dog regularly; allow others to handle them while the toy is still young; socializing your toy dog to other dogs and people is critical - they do have to be able to be handled at your veterinarian's office or at your groomer - let's make sure we don't raise the often referred to "arm piranhas" - allow your toy dog to be handled gently by others; better yet, join the toy dog class for socialization and handling. You and your veterinarian and groomer will be pleased with the results from training classes.
- Check with your veterinarian on dental hygiene for your small dog. Often toy breeds have crowded mouths and terrible dental problems. Be sure to keep your dog's teeth clean because dirty teeth can lead to other health problems. If you wish to brush their teeth, select the smallest child-size toothbrush or purchase a special dog toothbrush, such as the product Oxi-Fresh products. Use only doggie toothpaste that can be swallowed, unless you can teach your dog to spit! *That's a joke!* Seriously, human toothpaste can lead to digestive upsets if swallowed by our dogs. There are several products on the market, including Denta-Treat by Wysong, Oxyfresh Pet Gel and Solution, Petrodex toothpaste and a few others that are very effective. Of course, if you are a BARF feeder, then the natural bones will do the trick.