



Foundation Clicker Course

Puppy Pack



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Welcome

Thank you for choosing to train your dog with SPPOT, A Community Interest Company. This pack is just a brief guide to help you with a few of the most commonly asked questions about puppy care. There are very many books on the subject of puppy care, many with conflicting advice, so please be assured that the advice you read here is the most up to date advice available and derived from correct scientific theory and tried and tested practice.

Socialisation is the single most important aspect of puppy rearing and is covered in detail at the end of this puppy pack (to make photocopying the charts easier).

Feeding Puppies

Puppies should be fed four times per day until they are three months old (12 weeks). Thereafter they should have three meals per day until they are six months of age, or eight to nine months for large and giant breeds. Detailed information about dog food is included at the end of this puppy pack.

When feeding, allow your puppy twenty minutes to eat the food, and then pick up the bowl, even if there is food left. Provide fresh food at the next mealtime. This will discourage 'grazing' throughout the day and allow puppy's digestive system to rest in between meals making for easier housetraining. Please check that the food you are feeding is as healthy as possible - see the guide in this pack.

Purchasing Equipment

A soft, flat puppy or cat collar to hang your puppy's ID tag on, a soft harness for lead walking and a fabric lead are all that is needed to begin with. When they are fully grown you can spend money on a really nice collar, still flat and kind though. Buy small cheap plastic

bowls for food and water and save money for the things they will need when fully grown. This also applies to beds which can be very expensive. Try old blankets in a cardboard box to start with and keep an eye on chewing!

Lead walking

A harness is a really good idea for lead walking any size puppy as they can help prevent pulling from the outset. Get your puppy used to the collar/harness and lead in short sessions at home. When you do attach the lead practise getting your puppy to stay with you using a cheerful voice but don't allow your puppy to pull. Never pull on a puppy's neck, just stop and call him back and change direction. Perfect lead walking is not important at this stage, just get him used to the feeling of lead and teach him that he goes nowhere when he reaches the end of the lead but goes everywhere with a loose one. It is vital that your puppy doesn't learn to pull to get to where he wants to go and you will learn much more about this on your course, but if you need help in the meantime, do please get in contact.

Recall Training

This can be the hardest element of basic training but it can be made so much easier by starting training from day 1 at home with your pup. Coming back to you must be extremely rewarding for the puppy - you need a happy emotional response as well as 'obedience', in other words he must want to come back, or he just won't! Very simply, reward your puppy every time he comes to you in the house, even if you didn't call him. Using treats like small pieces of chicken and cheese will mean a lot more than shop bought treats but also play with him and make a fuss of him every time. In class you will learn how to strengthen this training with a word like 'come' or by using a whistle, but in the early days just make coming back really fun for him.

Off Lead Exercise

Puppies must be socialised from their first day at home with you, with vaccinated dogs at their home and yours and with lots of people and situations; your puppy can even go for a short walk on a beach with a receding tide - please see separate chart and advice at the end of this leaflet.

Your puppy needs to let off steam and will need good off lead exercise every day, regardless of age and breed. It is only the length and type of exercise that differs with age and breed, all dogs need the time to 'be a dog' for mental health as well as physical. When your puppy is small though, letting him off the lead can be quite daunting for many people, even if we advise them that this is really the time when he is least likely to run off.

The compromise until you have a good recall is to use a harness and a long line. We stock 30', 50' and sometimes even 100' training lines, but these can sometimes be purchased from good pet shops - 30' (15m) is a good length for a puppy. Extendable leads are not a good

idea, they teach a dog to pull as they are always tight, they don't allow natural behaviour when greeting other dogs and they are not long enough.

Handling a long line takes practice and there are some safety issues to be aware of. Firstly, you must be able to physically hold your puppy when they have built up some speed.

Have the line looped in big loops over your arm when you don't need the full length. Tie knots all the way up the line to prevent friction burns in case your puppy takes off unexpectedly. Keep back a metre or two to let out as your dog runs to the end of the line to ease the impact. Avoid wooded areas and beware of the line getting wrapped around ankles or other obstructions. Always be ready to drop the line if needed.

As your confidence grows and your puppy's recall improves with training you can then leave the line to trail on the floor, so you can far more easily catch him again if needed, without grabbing at his collar causing him to avoid you in future. Just stand on the line (he won't know you've stopped him) then get his attention and call him back for a reward.

Leaving alone and night times

Try not to leave your puppy at all in the first few days until he is used to his new environment. Then just start leaving him in one room while you go to another for a couple of minutes. You can leave him with a food toy or chew. Build up the time he is left very gradually from there.

The best place for a new puppy to sleep is undoubtedly in a box or crate next to your bed, this has enormous benefits, not least the fact that he will settle better and need to go to the toilet less. You

can gradually move him out as he grows up (a crate is ideal as the crate becomes the place of security rather the position next to the bed).

If you don't like this idea, try sleeping downstairs with him until he settles into your home, before leaving him.

If you feel you must shut him away downstairs from the start, you must not go to him at all if he starts to cry (also applies to puppies upstairs with you). This will teach him to cry for attention. Do be prepared though, puppies can make an incredible amount of noise and if they get distressed, they are likely to wee and poo and get in a real state. Some puppies are fine from the start; some whine a bit, some sound like murder is being committed for hour after hour, night after night, but there is no way to tell in advance.

[Teaching Your Dog His or Her Name](#)

Dogs probably don't view their names in the same way that humans do - as part of their identity, which is why their names can be changed quite easily although people don't like to do it because they place human values on a name.

The way a dog views his or her name depends on how it is used. If a dog is re-homed and is known to have been treated badly in the past, many rescue organisations recommend a change of name. This is because the dog is likely to have negative associations with his name.

If we want a dog to look up expectantly whenever we call his name, he needs to learn that the word means something good. Even good owners use their dog's name to tell him off which can lead to the dog being less responsive to it, if this happens often enough. Another common 'human' thing to do is to use tone of voice to indicate what is required in a way that the dog cannot understand. For example, if the dog is nosing around in the bin and someone says "Roveeeeeer" in a warning tone, he'll get the message about the bin possibly, but he won't feel too positive about his name.

Another way, in which dogs become less responsive to their names, is when their owners talk about them a lot - "Rover did this, Rover did that". Each time Rover hears his name and looks up and no-one notices him, he learns that his name isn't worth looking up for.

It is common for people to use their dog's name to call him back (recall) and this can work well until perhaps your dog goes through adolescence, and decides to ignore his name! When a recall starts to fail, one way to rectify it, is to train a new cue for recall or use a whistle. If the dog's name has been used, a new cue will have to be trained and the dog will have to be retrained not to ignore his name.

It is a good idea therefore to teach your dog that his name means to pay attention to you, because something else is going to happen, maybe a cue to do something else, a walk, his dinner and so forth.

The Method

- An easy way to start this process with a new puppy or a renamed older dog is simply to put 20 - 30 tiny treats in your pocket each day and give them to your dog in 5 or 6 sessions of 5 treats. You should have no treats in your pocket by bedtime!
- Pop a treat in his mouth and say his name at the same time. Do this all around your house, and use different tones of voice and involve the whole family.
- After two or three days you should be able to say your dog's name when you are close to him and expect him to turn and look at you. Treat that moment.

Effective House Training

It is very well worth planning how you will house train your puppy **before** you collect him or her, if you have the opportunity, but don't worry if you've already started. The following explains a simple, kind method of house training that, when followed carefully should see your puppy becoming clean and dry as he or she physically matures. At your initial home visit session we can discuss how this method can

be tailored to suit your family and lifestyle.

New owners should not underestimate the time and commitment that this involves, but please remember that the time spent house training not only teaches your puppy to 'go' outside, but helps develop the bond between your family and their dog, as well.

Why are dogs 'house trainable'?

Dogs are born as 'nest' animals. That is to say, their mother gives birth to them and rears them in a nest until they are able to leave it under their own steam at about three weeks old. The mother dog keeps the puppies clean and dry throughout their immobile time in the nest, thus keeping the nest clean and developing the instinct in the puppies that they don't mess or wet the nest. It is a tremendously powerful instinct in creatures hardly able to walk or see. In order for that instinct to be allowed to develop, it is essential that the nest has a defined edge so that as soon as the puppies are able to wobble away to a bowl of solids, they are also able to wobble out of the nest to relieve themselves. If your puppy was raised in an enclosed bed and had to relieve himself in it, there will be additional work needed to redevelop the natural instinct properly. Similarly if a puppy had a bed and play area of the same material, he will not know which was which. Please ask for help if you know this applies to your puppy.

Tried and Tested?

Most people know of someone who has trained their dog by rubbing their dog's nose in his own mess, or who has said "the dog knew it had done wrong because he looked guilty". The dog is now house trained so that method works - right? No. The method of rubbing a dog's nose in the mess is cruel and totally unnecessary because the dog cannot comprehend what he is meant to be learning from that punishment. The puppy that looks guilty when you return from shopping may have made the mess hours ago and won't know why

he's being told off. He isn't looking guilty; he's using submissive body language because he has sensed that the owner is cross.

As previously mentioned the dog's instinct to relieve him/herself outside the nest is very strong and will quite often eventually prevail despite all manner of inappropriate house training methods. Those that continue to soil the house hopefully end up re-learning with enlightened owners, a dog trainer or end up in rescue centres labelled as hopeless cases. It is worth considering also the damage done to the owner/dog relationship in cases where the dogs eventually ends up house trained in spite of the methods used.

Good News!

The great news is, there is an easy way to house train your puppy. All you need is commitment, understanding, the right attitude and the right equipment.

Commitment

At this stage you should have this in bucket loads! Harness the whole family's enthusiasm and channel it into house training.

Understanding

The first thing to really grasp is that until your puppy is at least twelve if not sixteen or more weeks of age he or she will have little or no control - they can't help it. Imagine caring for a human baby with no nappy, you wouldn't expect a three month old baby to wait, and a baby dog is no different. So, anticipation is everything.

The Right Attitude

With commitment and understanding comes the right attitude. If you understand that he/she can't help it, what is there to be

annoyed about? If you know it's the quickest way to a happy, healthy, house trained young dog, you will be cool about the repeated trips into the garden on cold, wet evenings. Above all else, stay calm. Even if you are able to keep your voice calm, if you are seething on the inside because Buster has just done a wee on your new rug again, he will feel your annoyance from your body language and demeanour which can be counter productive and destructive to all your hard work so far.

It is also important to agree a plan if more than one person lives with the dog. Who is responsible for what? Who is going to clean up the mess? Who is going to take puppy outside each time? If you have children, spend sometime role playing what they should do when they spot puppy weeing or pooing in the house. Instead of shrieking from the other end of the house "Mum, Dad, Buster's weeing on the rug again", get them to practise walking calmly to you or calling you gently. Shrieking, running and arm waving are part of being a child, but if you can encourage calm at specific times it will benefit your puppy enormously.

The Right Equipment

The best way forward is to train your puppy to go outside right from the start. Training onto paper may be the only option if puppy has to be left alone sometimes, but essentially paper training means training twice - once onto paper then again to go outside. So, newspaper when he's alone and a soft puppy or cat collar and lead when you're are in!

You will also need some cheap biological washing liquid (easier to dissolve by hand than powder), a small bowl or bucket especially for the job, rubber gloves or disposable latex gloves, kitchen towel and old cloths. If you've got a spare mop for hard floors, that will be useful. You may wish to look at restricting your puppy's access to certain areas of your house using dog or baby gates, or investing in a

puppy playpen or crate.

You will need lots of small moist tasty treats (try small bits of cooked chicken) by the door that you will be taking your puppy out through to the toilet. Making sure that your coat is there ready will make life more comfortable for you.

For winter puppies with very short coats, you may wish to consider a coat as he or she will be spending several minutes, many times a day in the garden. This may also apply to puppies who have never been outside. Bear in mind though, that you will need to get outside very quickly!

Consider life from a puppy's point of view

Buster arrives at his new home, totally different to the place he was born and his mum and siblings are no-where to be seen. He may be excited, he may be scared, but he won't be relaxed so very soon he will need to relieve himself. His instinct will tell him to go outside the nest, but he doesn't know where the nest exit is, so ends up weeing on the carpet three times in a very short space of time. Each time noise, dragons and monsters descend from above, grab him and put him outside alone where it is cold and hostile. On the fourth occasion he checks for monsters and goes where they can't see or catch him - easy to do in a dark kitchen at night or behind the sofa!

Angel arrives at her new home and is left to explore her new world, which is only as large as the kitchen, with a nice bed. Soon after arriving, the nice teddy bear takes Angel out into the garden for a good sniff around on her new lead. There are so many things to smell and look at with the teddy bear happily chatting to her. When she needs to wee, she goes right there on the lawn without a moment's thought. But what a lovely surprise, the teddy bear says 'good girl' as she does it and gives Angel a nice piece of liver. Angel loves her teddy bears. Not only do they know when she needs to go, but they go with her and give her treats for fertilising the grass. Even when

she has to go in the house, she is almost unaware that she has done it, because there is no reaction when she does, so as soon as she's able, she makes every effort to get to the garden to get the treats.

Buster was taught not to wee in front of humans. Angel was taught to wee outside.

How to Actually Do It!

Up to at least twelve weeks of age, you puppy will need to go outside:

- Immediately after waking up
- After eating
- At least every waking hour
- After play or excitement
- Whenever you see the signs - circling, sniffing the floor etc

So the first step is to encourage your puppy to come outside with you at all of these times. Assess your pup's nature in order to gauge how best to do this. For example you might play 'chase me' to the door, or gently call your calmer pup with you as you go.

There may be times when you will need to scoop and poop - scooping him up just as his bottom goes down to start going, but generally try to get him to follow you to the door under his own steam. This is so that he knows where to go when the time comes to ask to go out.

Take him outside on his lead, with treats in your pocket, to the spot where you would like him to relieve himself. Allow him to sniff around the area and investigate as much as he wants. Initially, you may find that even if he was about to poo in the house, it will take a while for the urge to come back after being taken outside. The key is patience and observation. You should stay out here, really, for as long as it takes, but if he hasn't performed after ten minutes, go

back inside and try again in another ten minutes. When he performs, give him a really tasty treat and praise. If using a clicker, the click must come as soon as he finishes, maximising the learning (he may stop if you click as he goes). If you would like to train your puppy to 'go' on request, use a particular word as he goes. Try 'be quick' or 'hurry up' rather than 'tiddles' or 'widdles'! Later on, when he has learnt what the word means, you will be able to ask him to go before you go out, lessening the chance of accidents on the floor when you return.

If you would like him to use a specific spot to go to the loo, or if he doesn't learn how to ask to go out, please ask for details of how to do this.

Try to remember that even if it's 11pm, raining and freezing, he probably doesn't want to be out there any more than you do. He won't know yet what he has to do to get back indoors, so talk to him, happily and cheerfully, and if he doesn't perform in five minutes, go back in, but be prepared to go out again in another five minutes.

Important: if you let the puppy out to go to the toilet and reward him when he comes in, you will end up with a puppy that asks to go out and comes straight back in again over and over again. This is because he will associate the treat with coming back in - NOT going to the toilet. The treat must arrive the very second he finishes going to the toilet.

Dealing with accidents in the house

Your puppy has little or no muscle control until about sixteen weeks, so he is not messing on your best carpet on purpose, he just can't help it, so there is no mileage in telling him off. During the early weeks he won't be learning 'my bladder is full, WE must go into the garden', because he isn't getting enough warning to do that. He is learning 'when WE wee in the garden WE get a treat'. The more

times he successfully goes in the garden, the more you will build on his instincts and the conditioning his mother provided. This way, as soon as he starts to physically mature and get warnings, he will head for the garden automatically.

In the first few weeks, you may feel that you are spending half your time in the garden and the other half cleaning, but with commitment and perseverance you should soon start to see patterns emerging, making the job easier.

The key is always anticipation, look for his patterns. Does he need to go out five minutes or fifteen minutes after eating?

When you see him going in the house, encourage him outside as before, as he can associate with what he has just done. There is little point if you find it even a minute or later as he will already be into something else.

Ignore any accidents in the house at this age, and be very aware of your non verbal reaction to accidents in the house. If he senses your annoyance, he will start to get stressed and stress is proven to interfere with learning.

Cleaning

Dogs can smell where they have been, long after you have cleaned it with the most efficient disinfectant, and if they can smell it, they will go there again. A biological washing product will remove all traces of the accident. Blot as much of the urine as you can with kitchen paper (you'll need a lot and tread on the paper), then soak the area with a dilute solution of biological washing liquid, making sure it reaches down to the underlay, then blot again. For solid accidents, flush the solid away and treat the area as for urine. Diarrhoea on carpets is about as bad as it gets! Scrape as much you can up, use a carpet cleaner to get the stain out and finish with the

biological washing solution.

It's a good idea to make up a separate bowl or spray bottle of biological solution, and to buy a different colour of cloth and kitchen paper to your usual household ones. Find somewhere to keep the kit away from children and as far away from human crockery etc as possible.

Crate/Den Training

Crates and puppy dens can be tremendously useful with puppies, but they must be used in the right way - as a good place to be, never as a 'sin bin'. For house training, a crate or den must be large enough for the puppy to have a bed with an edge to it and an area to go to the toilet. Buying a crate which will be large enough for him as an adult is a good idea - even if you don't intend to continue to use it indoors, it may be very useful in the car.

At night time or any time you need to leave him alone or need him safely contained, use the crate or den or an enclosed room like the kitchen or utility room. For the first few times you will need to 'explain' how to use the area to him.

- Place his bed at one end of the crate, den or room and place several layers of newspaper at the other (not too far away if using a whole room).
- Collect some of his urine from one of his earlier accidents, on a ball of cotton wool and seal it in a plastic bag.
- Get him used to being in the crate by simply laying a trail of treats into the crate and provide a nice stuffed kong or chew in there - don't close the door until he's really happy being in there.
- Then when you need to put him in his area, dab the urine onto the centre of the newspaper sheets, to show him where he should go.

- Most puppies will pick this up very quickly, already being conditioned not to 'go' in their bed, reducing the need for you to do this yucky task very often.
- If your puppy didn't receive the right training from his mother or had his instincts curbed by the conditions he was kept in, you will need to do further work to help him.

The more times he goes in the garden, and the fewer times he goes in his crate, the quicker he will become house trained, but there will always be times he must be confined for his own safety.

Car Travel

Please be aware of your puppy's toilet needs when travelling in the car. The best thing to use is a crate in the car, with the separate toilet area. If you can't fit a crate in the car, make the floor of the area the puppy travels in, waterproof. Puppies get very distressed if they are forced to go to the toilet in an area they consider to be their bed. Please note puppies must not be left unattended with the plastic backed puppy pads as they would be dangerous if chewed - stick to newspaper when you leave puppy alone.

You may find that your puppy doesn't like going to the toilet in a moving car. In this case, take him out to the toilet before you leave and stop regularly to take him out.

Progressing forwards

As time goes by, you should notice that the length between visits to the garden starts to lengthen. Observe your puppy carefully. If he goes to the door or even looks at it, make sure you open it for him, so he learns what he has to do to get the door open. It is possible to teach your dog to ring a bell or push a buzzer when he wants to go out- please ask if you would like to learn how to teach this.

You will also start to notice fewer accidents in the house. Continue praising and treating every time he performs outside. This way, as his body matures, he will become conditioned to go outside. If you work hard and your dog matures quickly, he may be clean and dry by sixteen weeks. If not, don't worry, many dogs are six or seven months old, or even older when they become house trained. The good news is that by following this method, your dog will be house trained in a kind and effective way and in as short a time as possible for your particular dog, making for a much happier dog and home life.

Crate and Puppy Den Training

Crates and puppy dens can be invaluable when your puppy is very young, particularly if you have young children, but only when used correctly.

Crates are usually wire cages with a removable metal tray in the bottom. They usually fold flat when not in use. They have the advantage of being able to be used in the car as well if your boot is big enough, providing added security when travelling and you open the boot. Many dogs continue to use their crates through their lives so it is worth spending an extra ten pounds on one that will be roomy when she is full grown rather than ending up buying two. Check the size of the floor area and the height of the crate in relation to her potential full body size.

Puppy dens are usually like playpens, with or without a base. They give the puppy a larger area to move around in than a crate, but don't have the dual function of being able to be used in a car.

Their basic function is to give the puppy a secure place to be when she can't be properly supervised. You may find that you have a utility room or some small area that can be 'fenced' off that will do the same job. For the crate or den to feel secure it is important that children are not allowed to play in it or put their fingers through the wire when the puppy is in there. They need to be taught positively that the puppy must be left alone when in her crate or den.

It is important that whatever you use, your puppy can see out of it - shielding her from the world will make her nervous. So, crates and pens should be wire and areas or rooms must be fenced off with

baby gates or panels that puppy can see through, so that she still feels involved with her new family.

Crates and pens can be used to train all kinds of useful things. First of all you could learn how to cue her to go there when you ask. Then you could ask her to go there every time you sit down to eat or every time the doorbell rings. If you do this **every** time, she will eventually go there of her own accord when she sees you sit down to eat, or the doorbell rings.

Crates and pens are useful at night time, wherever you choose to have your puppy sleep; they are useful in cars and for all manner of reasons. You can use the crate/den/room whenever you need to leave your puppy alone. Make a bed area and a toilet area inside it - as described in the house training leaflet.

As crates are usually metal, plastic or wire based, it is important to make the bed area comfortable and warm, particularly for very young or very short haired dogs and puppies. Cardboard boxes, old duvets and pillows are ideal during the chewing phases. Do watch the chewing though; many puppies tear at soft bedding just to pull the stuffing out, or shred boxes just for enjoyment, but if your puppy is swallowing these things you will need to find comfortable bedding she doesn't find so attractive.

Encourage your puppy to use it voluntarily by putting treats inside and feeding her in there. Puppies can easily be clicker trained to use their crates, while older dogs can be shaped to use them positively even if they have had previous negative experiences. If you provide her with chews and toys stuffed with food (only under supervision) in her crate you can quietly close the door when she is engrossed and release it again shortly afterwards until she becomes accustomed to having the door shut.

Dogs often see these areas as safe dens, not as cages and most will

quickly come to love their den, even with the door shut. It is important to monitor the time your puppy spends in the crate or pen. If she is in there all night, it would be unkind to leave her there for longer than an hour or two in total during the day, so making a safe puppy proof area for daytime with the open crate inside as a bed would be a better solution.

To begin with only use the crate or den for very short periods, until you can see that she will settle nicely in there. You can put her in there any time that you are not able to supervise her properly, or when she needs a break from the children, or the children from her. PLEASE DO NOT USE THE DEN AS A SIN BIN. If you start putting her in there when she is naughty, or you are cross, she will quickly come to dislike the den and resist going in there. There are other better ways to deal with unwanted behaviour. Please also remember that a den is a training **aid**, not a substitute for good training, socialisation and family interaction.

You will find a den particularly useful throughout the chewing phases (bear in mind that after all the teeth are through, there is a secondary phase of chewing when the teeth 'settle in', which usually occurs between 9 and 12 months (although not usually for the whole three months!). They are also useful when puppy gets overtired or overexcited but they must be used **properly, ethically** and with the **interests of the dog foremost**.

Chewing



Some dogs chew more than others, but for most dogs chewing is a natural, enjoyable pastime, like getting into a good book. During the first year of life, puppies may chew more because their teeth are coming through. Try to remember that it is just a phase, he's not being deliberately destructive, he's just teething and this is your opportunity to teach him what he can and can't chew. Using a crate or pen will help when he is alone or cannot be properly supervised - but do keep an eye on how long he is separated from his human family. You must also provide him with plenty of things that he can chew, that are different to the things that he can't. Remember also, interrupt and distract, then refocus his attention on something he can chew. Try really hard not to get cross, as this may make matters worse. There is a second phase of chewing when the teeth settle into the jaw in the last part of the first year, so don't despair, you haven't done anything wrong, and it's just another phase.

Many dogs continue to enjoy a good chew throughout their adult lives, which is why pet shops are full of chews. The purpose of chew training is not to stop your dog chewing but to teach him what he can and can't chew.

Consider:

The dog, who chews furniture while his owners are out, then looks guilty on their return. He's chewing to annoy them, right?

It is more likely that he chews because it feels good, especially when he's left alone, after which he has a good sleep. On his owners' return, he's forgotten the chewing, but cowers because from their body language, because he anticipates a telling off.

Chew Toys

Look for uncoloured rawhide chews - soak the end in a cup of warm water for a few minutes to give your puppy the idea. Experiment with different chew toys to see what your puppy likes.

Make sure you get the right size and chew strength toys for your puppy or dog.

Treat dispensing toys are also a good way to occupy a teething puppy.

Anti-Chew Sprays

These work a bit like the anti-nail bite stuff and are unpleasant to taste. These can be used to protect certain things but only as part of chew training, not as a stand alone cure as puppies need to chew. Although they taste unpleasant for a puppy, they are a lot less unpleasant than chewing a live electrical wire! That said, do keep wires hidden and don't rely on sprays for safety. These are best used on expensive possessions like chairs and tables, the whole house shouldn't be doused in it. Some dogs will still chew but it is worth trying more than one brand as they are all different. Vets often sell the better brands (try one called Bitter Apple) and these do seem to have more effect than chilli paste or curry powder (which stain anyway).

Taking things they shouldn't and eating inedible items!

How you deal with this area of puppy care can affect how your dog behaves for the rest of his life (like so many other things). Puppies

will pick things up in their mouths just to see what they feel like/taste like and so on - just like six month old babies.

The first thing has to be to puppy proof your home - put away anything you don't want teeth marks on. Many puppies like cuddly toys, socks, gloves, underwear from the dirty laundry basket, children's plastic toys and so on. Put lids on the laundry, impress upon your children that it isn't the puppy's fault if their things (that were on the floor) got chewed and put anything else up out of the way. This is a much easier way than the old fashioned view that 'the puppy has to learn'. If they get a taste for stealing certain things because they are always lying around, it will become a habit.

The next thing is to change how you look at the behaviour. DON'T shout at your puppy (or worse) or squeal because they have something precious or dangerous, stay cool, don't make a fuss. Go to the fridge and get a couple of pieces of chicken (for example) and either encourage your puppy to come over, show the food and exchange the item for the food. As they give it up, feed the treat and say 'give' or whatever you want to call it. This is not rewarding the stealing, it is rewarding the giving back and your puppy will have no reason to fear you next time. Do be aware that if the same item is left lying around again, your puppy may well go and get it again just to get a treat - so put it away before he does.

If they have something dangerous, toss the food towards them, throw a ball, run up the garden making exciting noises, squeeze a squeaky toy - anything that's more interesting than what they have in their mouth. DON'T rugby tackle your puppy and force them to open their mouth. All they learn from this is to run away from you and clamp their jaws shut. This also leads to puppies swallowing the dangerous item or learning to growl and guard the item - deal with stealing calmly, when puppies are offered a more tasty option they usually give things up.

Eating faeces, dirt, and picking up stones is very common in puppies. Stay calm and don't react. Clear away stones, or make sure the puppy can't get to gravelled or bare earth areas. Ignore poo eating, but make sure you clear away faeces as soon as they are done and ask for more advice in class.

A salutatory tale

A man rushes his dog to the vet because he has seen him swallow a tennis ball. He knows this because he always has to grab the dog to take tennis balls from him because he will chew them up otherwise. On this occasion he went towards the dog and saw him swallow the ball.

When the vet opened the dog up she found **three** tennis balls inside the dog. TRUE STORY!

Learning to Be Alone



To begin with, try not to leave your puppy alone at all if you can help it. Let him explore your house, bit by bit until he starts to settle and know your and therefore, his routine. Dogs are sociable animals and as such do not like being left alone, but living with humans often

means they have to be sometimes, so it is important to teach your puppy how to be relaxed on his own fairly soon.

If you are able to take time off work to be with your puppy, please consider doing so or if you are at home anyway, you can get him used to being alone in a gentle and gradual way.

The key is always 'cool goodbyes' and 'warm hellos'. That is to say, don't make a fuss when you leave him, only when you return (although there is a lot to be said for teaching him not to mug you when you get home - see below!).

Start by putting him in his crate and leaving him for a minute or two while you go to another room. Return and wait a minute before you let him out, ignoring any protests in the meantime - not even eye contact. Build this up slowly through the first few days, going into the garden and so on, until you can pop to the shop, return; leave him in his crate for two minutes before letting him out to greet you. Teaching him not to run at you when you arrive home, means you won't get mugged when your arms are full of groceries, thus allowing you to give him your full attention when you've unpacked the shopping (for example). This is in the long term though, as for a good while, you can only leave him in there for a minute or two after you return because you will need to take him to the garden!

If you have any continued problems with separation anxiety, like howling and barking please ask for help. There can be many different reasons for this, and lots of ways to help your puppy learn to be alone.

If you have to leave him for more than a few minutes right from the start, it would be a good idea to have a support plan in place. If you are going to work, hopefully you will have considered this before getting your puppy.

If he absolutely must be left, consider asking a neighbour or family member to pop in to him. Some kennels offer day care and you can also pay a dog walker to come in and spend time with your puppy as well as walk him. It is vital that you provide your dog with 'home alone' activities to maintain his mental health and preserve your belongings. A crate would be too small for a dog for any length of time, but an area of the house that can be cordoned off or a large puppy pen are ideal. Inside your puppy will need his bed, a toilet area as far away from his bed as possible, a spill proof water bowl and interactive toys.

If you are with your puppy a lot of the time, you should still teach him to be alone sometimes and this will include relaxed separation from any other pets also.



Play biting, harassing people or other pets & over-excitement

Puppies play bite in order to learn to control how hard they bite. This is a lesson essential for communication in their future lives, since between dogs, biting is a communication tool as well as the obvious eating one. The more a puppy bites and receives education as a result, the safer his adult jaws could be. There is no direct evidence to support this, but common sense tells us it's a good idea not to allow biting.

Clearly biting from dogs is not something most people will tolerate in the home, although it is worth considering how humans have changed in their attitudes to biting dogs even in my lifetime. Not so many years ago, people accepted that a growling, snapping dog was trying to communicate his unhappiness about something. These days, our expectation that a dog should not even growl is nothing short of expecting that a human being never raise their voice or write a letter of complaint. It should also be remembered that playbiting is very different to aggressive biting and even perfect play biting training will not stop a dog biting if they are stressed enough.

The reasons why some puppies play bite more than others may lie in their early history. Puppies weaned early do not get the chance to learn from their mothers during nursing, that biting is unacceptable. Puppies taken from their siblings too early or those born without siblings may not have the chance to learn which bites result in a yelp from a sibling and the cessation of the game.

Some dogs are bred for 'soft' mouths, others for 'hard' mouths, some are bred to have a low bite threshold and some a high bite threshold. For example, some terriers were bred to bite other dogs with a low threshold (sooner rather than later) but to have a high bite threshold with humans.

There will however, always be animals that don't conform to their breeding or the experiences of their early lives, but whatever the case it is vital that puppies learn good bite inhibition before their adult teeth come through and their adult bite strength reaches its peak.

Managing Play Biting

It is unpleasant when an adult dog still play bites like a puppy, but more importantly a dog must learn not to put his teeth on people even when frightened.

- When your puppy bites too hard, make a noise to show it hurt and remove your hand/leg/whatever. Depending on the degree of bite you could stand up or remove yourself entirely from the puppy. (If you try to remove the puppy you risk further play biting because it will be like a game to the pup, or you will start a game of chase). Distancing yourself without further interaction can be a challenge though.
- The aim is to provide your puppy with an education regarding the consequences of differing degrees of bite.
- If your puppy is under twelve weeks, it may have more effect if you 'yelp' like a sibling puppy before ceasing the activity.
- Issue the sound or yelp firmly but not harshly or shouting.
- There is no need for chastisement or angry body language. The removal of attention/favourite human chewtoy, including eye contact is enough together with aloof body language.
- The puppy should only be excluded for 20-40 seconds - not long enough for him to get into something else or any learning will be lost.
- Return the puppy to the original environment and simply repeat the procedure every time the play biting or chasing occurs.

- When your puppy learns to stop biting at the painful level, work on the next level in the same way - even if it doesn't actually hurt. Work all the way through the biting in this way.
- By introducing many other activities, training, play, canine friends, the frequency should also decrease. By teaching a 'no' or 'stop' or 'off' cue you can also decrease the frequency.

Harassing People and over-excitement

If you permit your puppy to chase people, jump on people, and bark for attention or to behave in an otherwise inappropriate way, she will not 'grow out of it'. Instead the behaviour will be re-inforced because of the attention she receives for doing it. Attention in any form is preferable to no attention for a dog, so if you shout and yell, the chances are your dog will either get used to the noise or actually prefer it to when you pay her no attention. Of course if your puppy gets used to being shouted at, you are left with the choice of cranking up the punishment or trying an alternative method. If punishment doesn't work, incidentally, it becomes abuse - by definition. Please refer to handouts for more information.

It is important to recognise that much behaviour that people find unacceptable is quite normal for a dog. If you intend to teach your dog not to do something like tugging at people's clothes, it would be worth considering teaching him an appropriate game of tuggy as an outlet for this need. Games like tuggy need to be taught properly to be safe and to help rather than hinder training (see page 40)

Other Pets

Generally cats can be very good at dealing with puppies. Try not to shout at your puppy if he chases the cat as you could add to the thrill of the chase or scare your cat more. Cats must be able to reach their bed and food without fear of being harassed by the

puppy. If you are worried about your cat, or any other animals you have, please ask for advice.

Dealing with play harassing people or other animals and general over-excitement

- Very simply, if your puppy is behaving unacceptably, say 'no' and stop the activity immediately.
- Issue the cue or yelp firmly but not harshly or shouting.
- Remove the reinforcement from the situation, either the humans or the puppy - as long as the rewarding activity, whatever it was (biting, chasing), stops without further re-enforcement.
- There is no need for chastisement or angry body language. The removal of attention, including eye contact is enough.
- The puppy should only be excluded for 20-60 seconds - not long enough for him to get into something else or any learning will be lost. This way your puppy could have 5 lessons in 5 minutes.
- Return the puppy to the original environment and simply repeat the procedure every time the behaviour occurs.

Dealing with unwanted puppy behaviour may be very time consuming and will undoubtedly try your patience. If this happens, wait for a moment when your puppy is being **good**, click and treat, and then call your puppy to his crate or special place with treats and something to chew. This technique makes sure that dens and crates don't form negative associations in the puppy's mind and neither is the puppy rewarded for poor behaviour. You can then

have a cup of tea and let your puppy out again when you're ready (not too long though!).

- Don't expect instant results. This may take hours, weeks or longer depending on your puppy and the accuracy of your training technique.
- Whatever way you use this technique, your timing will be crucial to your puppy's understanding. Also, each time your puppy is allowed to get away with biting it will reinforce that behaviour.

Other Ideas to Consider

- Try putting your puppy in his crate before opening the door to visitors. Allow them to come in and close the door before letting your puppy out.
- Get your visitors to follow your wishes regarding your puppy e.g. don't pet him until all his feet are on the floor.

Dog Food Advice

In the last ten years or so, people have begun to be so much more food conscious and are increasingly concerned about how their food is farmed, the welfare of the animals bred for food, the carbon footprint of the companies that bring the food to our shops and also about how food and additives to food affect our health and behaviour.

When people start to consider what food to feed their dogs they often have similar questions and concerns as with their own food but are unsure about how to go about finding the right food for their dog's health and wellbeing and also their own budget.

Commercially available dog food varies enormously and it is very hard to know where to start, but the following should enable you to analyse the food label on any dog food packet.

- If you buy small bags, check the ingredients on the corresponding large bag in the shop - small bag labels don't have to be as detailed by law. Don't buy bags of dry food to last a long time as the vitamin content will deplete.
- Ingredients are labelled with the greatest ingredient first and the least last. Look for foods where the first two ingredients are specifically named. These will probably be a meat and a cereal. Make sure these are named *We.e.* 'chicken', 'rice' or 'lamb', 'potato'. Avoid products that simply say 'cereal' or 'meat and meat derivatives'.
- Cereal is a term used to describe any grains used in dog food and the digestibility of these varies considerably. The more easily digestible they are the more expensive they are to the manufacturer. If a manufacturer is using a good quality grain, they usually want you to know that and label it clearly e.g. Brown Rice.
- If a manufacturer uses low digestibility grain, your dog's body will not be able to use it very well and this will pass in the form of large, soft, very smelly poo. This also means that your dog will be hungrier and need more food. Cereals such as sorghum and corn/maize are not very digestible at all and yet they are on the ingredients lists of several top brand foods.

- Manufacturers who use low digestibility cereals often refer to these as just 'cereals' which gives you no information about what cereal. It also means the manufacturer can put whatever the cheapest cereals are that week and put those in, so ingredients can vary from batch to batch. Many people tell their vets when the dog has been sick in some way that they haven't changed the food recently, but although they haven't changed the brand the manufacturer may well have changed the ingredients.
- Try to find foods where the meat is the largest quantity, but be aware of how grains and so on can be 'split'. The example below is an illustration only and not from an actual dog food:
 - Turkey (min 32%), Brown Rice (28%), Wheat, Turkey fat, Maize, Peas, Soya, Alfalfa
 - From this you can see that although there is more turkey than rice, there are far more grains and cereals in the whole list than there is meat.
- Avoid products which contain 'derivatives' of meat, just 'meat' or 'animal fat' or any general terms like this. These terms tell you nothing about what is actually in the food. The front of the packet may say 'Beef' but if you look closely many actually say 'with Beef' and on the ingredients label you often find that 'beef' is only a small part of the total meat content, but the rest may not be obvious.
- Meat derivatives can be any part of the animal including heads, feet, internal organs and so forth. The animals used have to be 'fit for human consumption' in the UK but that includes the whole animal and the term 'meat derivative' nicely covers what manufacturers don't want you to know.

- Avoid any food with EC Permitted Additives as these could be the kind of colourings and flavourings and preservatives that cause behavioural and health problems. A packet that says 'no artificial preservatives' usually has artificial colours and flavours. A label that says 'no artificial colours or preservatives' will usually have artificial flavours and so on.
- Check that even the fat is named - 'animal fat' could be any animal.
- You should be able to tell exactly what the meat is in your dog's food, this is essential for understanding your dog's health, his or her preferences and particularly working out intolerances and allergies. Many dogs are bathed with medicated shampoos, given supplements and vitamins and even prescribed steroids for itchy skin, when a good quality diet with a single meat source and single grain source may be all that is needed. Even if that doesn't work immediately, at least ingredients can be ruled out and ruled in and other foods tried.
- Look for products where the meat is clearly named throughout the ingredients list. Some foods may have 'x' percentage of lamb for example at the top of the list, but if there are 'meat and meat derivatives further down the list, the same issues apply.
- 'Meal' is fine as long as it is named We.e. 'Duck meat meal' this just means dried, ground duck. In fact when a meat is dried, you will get a higher percentage of meat than a food that uses 'fresh meat' because the fresh meat can be measured before processing We.e. before all the water is removed. Meal has to be free from hooves, horn, bristle, hair and feathers as well as digestive tract content.

- Beef and chicken are in fact common allergens in dogs, which in the case of chicken is a surprise to many people, but many of the premium brands foods do not have chicken or beef varieties for this very reason. That said, chicken is an easily digestible protein for dogs that are tolerant of it, but beef is less digestible than chicken, lamb and turkey.
- Digestibility means the degree to which the dog's body can use the food, so less digestibility means more wastage and less use to the dog, regardless of the laboratory measured protein content written on the packet. Protein percentages are very misleading and it is not true that too much protein always causes behavioural problems; in fact low protein can cause behaviour problems too. The answer is to try different good quality foods and find which one suits your dog physically and behaviourally.
- The following preservatives: E320 - BHA - Butylatedhydroxyanisole; E321 - BHT - Butylatedhydroxytoluen; E324 - Ethoxyquin, which could be written as the E number or the name or the abbreviation, have been proven to cause cancer in people and dogs and while there may be claims that they are safe, do you really want to take the risk? Good foods contain natural preservatives, usually 'tocopherals' which are a blend of vitamins "E" & "C".
- The following list is a brief guide to other ingredients:
 1. Ash isn't an ingredient, it is just the total mineral content.
 2. Digest is a flavour enhancer that can be natural or not.
 3. Products of vegetable origin and soy products are bulking agents with little nutritional value and dogs are often intolerant of soy.
 4. Egg is an excellent source of protein.

5. Potato is a good alternative to rice for rice allergic dogs.
6. Sugar beet pulp is a good source of fibres.

- Be aware that many popular brands contain very high levels of sugar which cause higher activity levels, tooth decay and also make it more difficult for the dog to accept a healthier food. Avoid any food that has sugar on the label.
- There is no definitive answer to whether dry food or moist food is better, see what your dog likes and just make sure it's healthy. Dry food doesn't protect teeth very much better - providing things to chew on and brushing your dog's teeth does that.
- If you want your dog to enjoy dry food more, try using pet mince or a good quality wet food mixed in. Don't teach your dog that by refusing food he will get tastier and tastier things added, just make it tasty from the outset.
- Try feeding food in food dispensing toys - much more fun for your dog and make help him enjoy it more too.
- It doesn't follow that the more you pay the better the food is as there are some awful foods that cost the earth, but equally, you rarely get a good cheap food.

By popular request WE have compiled a brief list of some dog foods WE can suggest, with varying costs that are currently reasonably free of artificial additives, sugars and so on. This is NOT a list of recommendations as my own research causes me to be rather sceptical about commercial dog food generally. There are also many more good foods than are on this list - please view this a starting point for your own research into the best diet for your dog.

Please always double check any food against the separate advice sheet on how to read food labels as foods do change over time. Please do also consider feeding a raw food diet (known as BARF - Biologically Appropriate Raw Food), resources and suppliers listed below also.

The websites shown below are the company's own websites, but do check out on-line stores such as www.zooplus.com who list all ingredients and have free delivery, and www.petplanet.co.uk Remember also that most independent pet shops in the county will order most foods for you and many vets will too.

Pet Shop Food

- **James Welbeloved** (dry & moist)
- **Wainwrights** (dry & moist)
- **Burns** (dry food)
- **Pets at Home** own brand (dry)
- **Butchers Tins** - not the best quality meat but the loaf variety is all meat & meat derivatives unlike many tins which are full of soya and other fillers.
- **Natures Menu**: pouches, tins and raw packaged meats available at Pets at Home and on-line at www.naturesmenu.co.uk
- **Nature Diet** moist holistic food with vegetables and rice
- **Royal Canin** dry food

Local Franchises

- **Oscars** - Helen Coney 01437 541414, will deliver, provide nutritional advice and bring free samples.
- **Trophy** - Judith Thomas 01367 240333 will deliver and bring free samples.

On-Line Dog Food

- **Arden Grange** www.ardengrange.com
- **Challenge** www.challengedogfood.com
- **Orijen** www.rijenpetfoods.co.uk
- **Harringtons** www.harringtonsdogfood.co.uk

- [Gelert www.gelert-petnutrition.co.uk](http://www.gelert-petnutrition.co.uk)

At www.zooplus.com you will find a huge array of dog foods (with lists of ingredients) that you may never have heard of but that are 'natural' or 'organic' and so forth, for example: Josera; Defu Organic; Happy Dog Natur-Croq and many more. It is worth looking through all the food, prices and ingredients and trying a few small bags to see what your dog likes.

Biologically Appropriate Raw Food

Many people ask about raw feeding and the best advice we can give is to point you in the direction of a couple of really good books, available from Amazon and possibly to borrow from me:
'The Barf Diet' by Dr Ian Billinghurst

'Real Food for Dogs and Cats' by Kymythy Shultz

More and more people are switching their dogs to raw foods and seeing remarkable benefits but it is important to read up on it and find a feeding plan that suits you and your dog.

General Rules

Dogs should be fed a diet that is high in bone content and contains about 50% liquidised fruits and vegetables (half meat half fruit & veg). Fruit and veg should ideally be over-ripe and definitely liquidised and mixed with mince.

Bone content can be provided by buying meat from suppliers who mince the bone too, or by feeding lots of raw meaty bones. The meat should be varied and of the best quality you can afford.

Provide fresh organ meat once a week, e.g. liver, heart etc. Liver can be too high in vitamin A for dogs so feed sparingly, heart is a good option.

Dogs do not need cereals or rice or pasta and these are common allergens and even when dogs are not actually allergic they do not

suit their systems well. Things like buckwheat, millet and Quinoa can be added as fillers if you want to.

Use a good mineral and vitamin supplement whether your dog is on raw meat or other diet. SUPERDOG ULTIMATE NUTRITION FOR DOGS is recommended by Nick Thompson BSc (Hons) Path Sci., BVM&S, VetMFFHom., MRCVS of www.holisticvet.co.uk . SUPERDOG is available through Nick's website and also has lots of dog feeding advice.

You can choose how 'convenient' you want your dog's raw diet to be. Companies like Natural Instinct mince the meat with vegetables and brewers yeast and kelp, so you can just defrost and serve. Other companies provide meat chunks and minces that you have to add your own fruit and vegetables to.

[Raw food suppliers](#)

It is easy to DIY through a local butcher but you will probably pay more. The following companies make BARF feeding really easy.

www.naturalinstinct.co.uk

They provide complete convenient frozen raw foods with vegetables and fish oils already added. They deliver to your door (minimum order may apply).

www.prizechoice.co.uk and <http://naturesmenu.co.uk/>

Prize Choice is a sister company of Natures Menu and they both sell plain minced meats and chunks and also minced meats mixed with minced vegetables and fruit. They deliver to your door (minimum order may apply).

www.landywoods.co.uk

Landywoods are significantly cheaper than most of the others and sell simple, straightforward minced meats, meat chunks and meaty bones. Landywoods deliver as far as Llanboidy where Pembrokeshire people can collect their food. When enough people do this from our area we may be able to organise delivery closer to us.

<http://www.berriewoodwholesale.co.uk/>

Berriewoods sells raw food and many others.

<http://www.honeysrealdogfood.com/vets.php>

Honeys Real Dog Food is a similar company to Natural Instinct.

Why Punishment doesn't work

If you do something to cause a startle response strong enough to cause a dog to stop doing something, it may work if the punishment was severe enough. This could be a sharp tone of voice, a smack, or a water squirter, spray or electronic collar or other aversive. The effect on the relationship between the person punishing and the dog needs to be considered carefully. Neither dogs nor people appreciate harsh words or treatment and while people can anticipate what may cause punishment, dogs who do not generalise well, may have to be punished in every situation that the behaviour occurs. The psychological impact of punishment cannot be underestimated and this is why punishment based training is now so outdated, together with the combined, confusing method of rewarding desired behaviour and punishing the undesired.

It is far quicker and infinitely more humane to teach a dog what he *can do* to gain reward than for him to endure a regime of punishment until he hits on the correct behaviour which simply means no punishment.

The other reason that punishment is ill advised is because it is now scientifically established that if punishment isn't immediately effective, it is abusive.

A further contra-indication for punishment is that dogs and people can grow used to the punishment. If a puppy startles when spoken to sharply, he will usually get used to it, causing the handler to increase the reprimand each time the growing dog becomes used to the sound or learns to ignore it in the face of greater reward (the fox mess or the leftover roast dinner on the side). If we then resort to physical punishment the same will happen and to what end and what cost to the dog's mental health and the owner/dog relationship?

If the punishment is administered when the dog is frightened, it serves only to increase the fear. If a cowering dog is led over to a dog it is frightened of 'so he can get used to it', he will be terrified. If that dog attacks him the impact is damaging in the extreme. Similarly, if a dog barks at the neighbour's dog because he is frightened and is led over to it and receives an electronically administered, unpleasant smell or electric shock, it will likely increase his fear – understandable as he most probably associated the scary thing with the punishment, not necessarily his own behaviour. If someone was scared of spiders and was forced to hold one *and* it bit them, imagine how they would feel about spiders.

There are some measures to control behaviour that are ambiguous and should be used with care. Time out is a recognised way to remove attention and provide space to calm down. It must be carried out appropriately though. Dogs or more particularly over-excited puppies may be left alone or excluded in a familiar place for a few seconds before being allowed back in to try again. This may take many sessions, but leaving them shut out reduces the learning potential, while using their own space like their crate will affect their perception of that place. Another example might be to put the dog out of the room if he bothers visitors, but this may be better trained by teaching the dog a good 'stay in your bed' or more appropriate behaviour around visitors.

All of this does not mean that we should let our dogs behave as they please, only that there are better, more effective ways to educate them.

New Puppy Socialisation Programme

Good socialisation is absolutely vital for the health and wellbeing of your new puppy and good breeders will begin this from birth. A well socialised dog is far less likely to develop behaviour problems and it is much more unusual for a well socialised dog to become aggressive. Socialisation is not just about social skills with other dogs, it's helping a dog to be confident in all areas of his life.

Photocopy the following charts for use each week, tick each experience as you go along and each week evaluate all the charts together and address any gaps.

The most critical period is in fact before twelve weeks so carry your puppy where he cannot be put down and get as many experiences as possible introduced gently without overwhelming the puppy by 12 weeks. Even if your puppy is not fully vaccinated he can, and must go to many places and meet lots of new people and play with vaccinated dogs. Your vet will agree that puppies can go to the beach and be put down at the (calm) water's edge of a receding tide because the beach is washed twice per day.

Calmly reassure an apprehensive puppy but don't make a fuss, and never force him to do anything if he is clearly afraid, you must protect him and help him to deal with all that life will bring. Small tasty treats (e.g. cooked chicken) can turn neutral experiences into positive ones, for example new people may be ok but new people with food could be fantastic. **ALWAYS** make sure your puppy is enjoying the experience, there is nothing to be gained from making him face something he's afraid of, you'll just make him more frightened.

Even if you haven't actively socialised your puppy before 12 weeks, don't worry- just make up for lost time now by taking him everywhere with you.

Active, conscious socialisation should continue until the puppy is at least twelve months old, preferably eighteen months and for some breeds and individuals with specific needs, socialisation may need to continue longer.

Many aspects of the plan will happen daily, naturally and some will need to be sought out on a regular basis. Whether an experience should be daily or weekly or fortnightly is a matter of common sense plus assessment of what that puppy needs to know for his adult life. If gaps appear in your programme, look at the area and assess. For example if your puppy has had no experience of boats and it is winter and you intend to go sailing next summer, NOW is the time to get your puppy accustomed to boats, starting in dry dock. On the other hand if your puppy has had no experience of grooming parlours and is a whippet, you won't need to worry about that.

Always take your dog to the vet to buy worming tablets; flea treatment etc and even just pop in to make an appointment, let him have a fuss from the reception staff and leave. This will help him to view the vets as a nice place.


All dogs need to be socialised with dog educated children whether or not they live with them. If you feel your puppy is particularly nervous please ask for additional assistance.

Daily Handling

All dogs, with the addition of many tasty treats, gently look in ears, mouth, between toes, under tail, between legs, stroke eyes, trim toenails.

Groom with soft brush, clean teeth with soft finger brush, clip claws with small clipper (ask vet if not confident)

Carry up and down stairs, in and out of car - Labrador size upwards carry until 6 months to protect growing skeleton.

Meet & Play With People 		Different surfaces 	
Adults (men PRIORITY and women)		Wood (table perhaps)	
Young adults		Carpet	
Middle-aged		Pebbles/gravel	
Elderly		Woodchips	
Disabled/infirm		Grass (wet and long)	
Loud, confident		Tile/lino	
Different skin colours		Earth/mud	
Shy, timid		Tarmac	
Delivery people		Grates	
Joggers		Concrete	
Uniform; police etc		Puddles	
Hats/hoods/scarves		Pavement	
Environments		Different noises (CDs available to introduce at low level first)	
Babies PRIORITY		Cars/vans PRIORITY	
Toddlers PRIORITY		Trains/buses	
Juniors PRIORITY		Boats	

 Other animals		 Play with Objects	
Dogs - PRIORITY adult, all shapes & sizes	Kong toys (stuffed)	Dry food toys	
Puppies, all shapes and sizes	Paper	Wooden toys	
Cats	Fabric	Pop tins	
Small pets	Big & small balls	Car keys	
Chickens; ducks etc	Soft tuggy toys	Squeaky toys	
Sheep, cows, horses etc	Fluffy toys	Cardboard	

Environments	Different noises (CDs available to introduce at low level first)		
Other people's houses	Doors slamming		
Shopping centre	Farm animals		
Parks/beaches etc	Big Lorries		
Outside school/play area	Doorbell		
Country walks	Children playing loudly		
Fete/car boot sale	Power boat/jet ski		
Pub/party/village hall	Lawnmowers & strimmer		
Slippery floors	Babies crying		
Environments	Different noises (CDs available to introduce at low level first)		

Vets PRIORITY		Applause/loud music	
Grooming parlour if appl.		Loud singing/shouting	
Boarding kennels		Pan dropping	
Streets from quiet to busy		Vacuum cleaners	
See (not chase) & hear from a distance initially moving objects			
Skateboards		Motorcycles	Squirrels etc
Cars/vans/lorries		Lorries/tractors	Brooms
Hoovers		Running cats	Bicycles
Roller skates		Joggers	Joggers

Challenges			
Climb on, in & around box		See an umbrella in use	
Step up and down (only 1 for big breeds)		Walk in the rain	
Play hide and seek		Go through a small tunnel	
Climb over obstacles		Practise different doorways	
Experience balloons		Walk on a beach near calm sea	
Climb over a log		See an umbrella in use	
Be held on a low wobbly table		Sit in bath (no water)	

Eat From Different Shaped Containers



Metal bowl	Cup	Wobbly bowl	China plate	Foil tray	Plastic bowl
By hand often to build trust			Home alone toys (Kongs; Buster Cubes etc)		

Play games with familiar people and family dogs, then expand

Retrieve	Tug	Gentle play wrestling	Chase (if pup enjoys)
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Leave alone

Safely from family and other animals, 2 - 45 minutes, 12 times per week. Vary the time of day, sometimes in the dark, build length gradually. Begin in crate/pen/safe area with company, and settle with home alone toys before company leaves.