



1133 S. Fort Thomas Ave, Fort Thomas, KY 859-781-7387

## **CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR NEW PUPPY!**

We are so happy you have a new “furry” addition to your family. Your first year with your new puppy will consist of three different vet visits, and a neuter or spay, if needed.

### **Puppy’s First Visit**

- New Puppy Exam (extended exam)
- 3 doses of Nemex dewormer
- First series of Distemper/Parvo Vaccine (DHLPP)
- Free heartworm prevention for 1 month
- Fecal exam for intestinal parasites
- Free toe nail trim
- Complimentary Doggie Bag with samples and coupons

### **Puppy’s Second Visit (3-4 weeks later)**

- Second office call
- Second series of DHLPP
- Bordatella (kennel cough vaccine)
- Free toe nail trim

### **Puppy’s Third Visit (3-4 weeks later at 12 weeks of age or older)**

- Third office call
- Third series of DHLPP—lasts 1 year
- Rabies Vaccine—lasts 1 year, includes tag with name & phone number engraved on back
- Microchip (can be given during spay/neuter while pet is under anesthesia)
- Free toe nail trim
- Schedule spay/neuter (due at 8-12 months of age)

1 year after your puppy’s first Rabies vaccine, you will receive a reminder in the mail to come back for booster shots—they will last 3 years with the exception of Bordatella, which is necessary every year.

### **Introduction: Training Your Puppy**

Training your puppy should begin the same day you bring your puppy home. It is important to remember that dogs are pack animals and are happier following a pack leader (you!). Dogs communicate through body language. In the dog world, whoever walks in front is dominant, as well as whoever enters or exits a door first, so it is important to show your puppy who the leader is. Know that your puppy’s behavior and personality are molded from day one. Good or bad, some behavioral traits will last a lifetime. Behaviors that are cute for a six-week old puppy may be intolerable as an adult. Jumping, biting, and excessive barking are a few examples of bad habits that are easier to prevent than to break.



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Allowing your puppy on the furniture is a choice you must make from day one. Do not allow your puppy on the couch or in your bed if you do not want it there when they are grown. If the puppy is not allowed and you want to hold the puppy in your lap, then you should sit on the floor with it.

Life must be black and white until your puppy develops higher cognitive abilities, which occurs by about 5-6 months of age. At that time gray zones can be allowed under specific circumstances, such as jumping or barking on command. Create rules, boundaries, and limitations before you bring your new puppy home and have all family members stick to it. As pack leaders to our dogs, we have the right and the responsibility to choose the rules that they live by. This includes blocking instinctual behaviors such as fighting or hunting when not appropriate (i.e. hunting the family cat). These behaviors must be channeled in appropriate ways, such as fetch retrieval games and other forms of exercise.

Puppies learn by repetition and consistency. They have a very limited attention span however, so training sessions should be short and frequent. Begin with 10-second training sessions for the first several weeks. Standardize the commands among all family members. Learning will be impeded if there are multiple commands for the same desired behavior. For example, use either 'off', 'no jump', or 'floor' to train your puppy not to jump on people. Once you choose a command word, stick with it so the puppy will learn efficiently.

### **Bringing your new puppy Home: Exercise, discipline first, then affection**

The very first thing you should do when you bring your new puppy home is to go for a long walk. For older, leash-trained puppies this walk could be as long as an hour if they are old enough to walk that far. For younger puppies, the walk is much shorter, but you are still teaching the puppy that it is migrating to a new home. During this walk, you are both building a bond of trust with your new companion and establishing your position as the pack leader. The rules of your entire relationship are being established in those first moments.

Entering the house for the first time (and every time) is as important as the first walk together. Make sure you enter the house first then invite your puppy in. Don't let your family members rush to the puppy and shower it with affection (we know it's hard!). Have them stand and bring the puppy to them. Let the puppy approach him/her and learn their scents. Let the puppy only have access to one room. They must learn to get permission to do everything, which includes entering new rooms.

### **Housebreaking/Crate Training**

It is best to use a crate or kennel to confine your puppy when you cannot be with it. The main purposes of a crate are to keep the puppy safe when no one is able to monitor it and to promote housebreaking. It should not be used for punishment, although it can be used when the puppy gets too rambunctious to allow it time to calm down. Teach the puppy that calm, submissive behavior gets rewarded—not whining, barking, or jumping. The crate should be a positive and comfortable environment. The crate should be thought of as a bedroom not a prison cell. Provide the puppy with a



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few toys and a rawhide or pig's ear to amuse and occupy it. Use of a crate also teaches the puppy to chew only on appropriate toys.

Through crate training, the puppy will soon learn that they do not want to urinate and defecate where they sleep. At six weeks of age the puppy should be able to hold their bladder for approximately 3-4 hours, so you can work up from there. When your puppy is out of the crate, keep it in your sight so that you can catch it prior to soiling or in the act of soiling in the house and reprimand it immediately. It is not beneficial to reprimand your puppy several minutes after they have made a mess. Give plenty of praise when the puppy urinates or defecates outside.

### **Biting and Chewing**

One of the biggest obstacles to tackle is breaking your puppy of biting and chewing on items they shouldn't. We unknowingly promote biting and aggression by playing games such as tug-of-war and chase. These two games teach the puppy to be mouthier and should be avoided until the puppy is 5-6 months of age. Never promote or encourage chewing on fingers or biting. If the puppy is prone to these habits, try to substitute a toy or a stuffed animal so the puppy transfers its aggression and energy. If this diversion does not work, take the puppy out for a walk, run, or work on a retrieving game. Puppies are especially prone to biting when playing with children, so supervise their interactions. Children should never encourage the puppy to play chase as this promotes biting and chasing of other objects, such as cars, bicycles, and joggers.

### **Bad Habits to Avoid**

Make sure the puppy is calm before giving attention. Jumping up on people should not be allowed or encouraged. When the puppy jumps, correct the puppy with a jab on the back of the neck (this imitates the correction established by the mother when she bites the back of the neck to correct the puppy). This bite creates an immediate submissive attitude thereby making you dominant and the inappropriate behavior is corrected. Then push it back to the floor, place in a sitting pose and give it the command "off." Teach the puppy when he greets you to sit calmly to earn your attention. Getting the puppy worked up into an excited frenzy, might make us feel loved, but isn't a healthy state of mind for dogs. Jumping for attention is the number one "bad habit" owners promote/encourage when they pet or pick up the puppy after it jumps on it.

Chewing on the leash or other objects is another difficult behavior to break once it begins. When the puppy takes an object in its mouth, give it the command "drop" and take the object out. You may need to substitute an appropriate chew toy to divert attention from the object. If the puppy continues to grab the object, wet it with Bitter Apple Spray so that when the tainted object enters its mouth, the puppy is conditioned to avoid the object.



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## **Establishing Dominance**

When the puppy tries to establish itself as the top dog by being aggressive, correct it with either a quick jab at the base of its neck or pick it up, cradle it over on its back in your arms, and hold it down by its neck. Do not choke the puppy! Just restrain it upside down with your hand surrounding its neck. Your goal is to create calm submissive behavior. You may let it up when they no longer struggle. If you let it up while they struggle, the message he/she receives is that he/she has just won and is still dominant.

It is unproductive to attempt training your dog without first establishing yourself as the pack leader. Every dog needs a leader from which to learn. A few guidelines to help you establish your dominance:

- When correcting your puppy, reprimand it quickly and fairly, and then forgive it by moving on. Give it a collar shake, a leash correction, or a gentle but firm nudge on its neck with your fingers. Absolutely no hitting!
- Give permission for what your puppy is about to do as long as it is okay with you. For example, tell it when it is okay to get out of the car or eat from its bowl. This will teach them to look to you for approval and permission instead of making decisions on their own.
- Use sit-stays. Give it the command to sit and stay (for very short periods). When they break it, put it back. If they break it 10 times, put it back 10 times. Release it and say "Okay."

## **Mastering the walk/ Leash walking**

The technique on the walk establishes the human's dominance. Remember position indicates dominance. Walk with the puppy beside you or just behind you. Use a slip leash or choke chain and keep it way up at the base of the head and neck. Do corrections with a quick jerk to the side and then give it slack. Walks should be done for 30-45 min twice daily. Eighty percent of the walk should be structured at your pace and where you want to walk. Remember to walk with a purpose and pride. Twenty percent of the walk can be for the puppy to sniff and explore.

## **Off Leash Training**

All dogs, with few exceptions (beagles), should be as well behaved and controllable off leash as they are on a leash. This may sound impossible, but it is a realistic goal. When a puppy is 6-12 weeks old he is very dependent upon you for safety and security. This is the ideal time to work on "off leash" training. Hike in a fenced area, preferably with no other dogs. Start the walk on a leash and then give your puppy permission to explore off the leash. This is also the best time to teach your puppy to come when called. Wait until they are coming toward you. Call it to encourage it to continue to come and then give a positive reward (petting, verbal praise, or food). Unfortunately most people try to train their puppy to come when it is running away, which almost always fails. Your puppy will also learn the command "come" much faster if you use an adult dog as a companion that is already trained to come when called.



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## **Basic Commands**

Your puppy should start learning basic commands the day they come home. Puppies learn by rewards and corrections. Always use a commanding tone in your voice. Say the puppy's name, give the command, enforce the command (i.e. make it sit), and then give a positive reward (verbal praise, petting, or food). There are five basic commands that your puppy needs to learn to be kept under control. The most important aspect of training is repetition; so try to work in reps of 6-10 (such as 6 sits in a row). Try not to repeat a command, or you are essentially training the puppy to ignore the first command.

### **Come**

This sounds easy but it is the hardest to teach. He needs to come to you under all circumstances. The only way to teach it to come is to train it off leash under safe conditions. Your house and yard is home base. Although the training starts here, you need to expand beyond that and do the training away from the house. Highland Park in Ft. Thomas has a fenced dog park and is great for socialization, but not a good place to try to train since there are usually too many other dogs and distractions.

Never call the puppy to punish it; always go and get the puppy. If you call the puppy to you for punishment, he will not be able to tell later if he is being called for a punishment or reward and will usually not respond. Remember to give lots of positive rewards each time the puppy comes to you.

### **Sit**

When teaching a puppy to sit it is important to realize that its instinct is to resist pressure. If you push down on its back to make it sit, he will naturally resist the downward pressure and try to remain standing. Instead, give the sit command, tuck your hand under its rear end, and then push back on its chest. This will easily get it to the sit position. Once the puppy gets the idea, you can use light pressure on the back or even teach hand commands.

### **Down**

Begin with the sit command. Give the down command while pulling one front leg out, using the other hand to push downward on the shoulders. Once again, after the puppy learns the down command you may add a hand signal.

### **Drop**

This is so that the puppy will let go of an object in its mouth. Give the drop (or give) command, and then grasp the upper jaw with your hand to open the mouth. Take the object from the puppy and praise it. If it is an object that they should not be playing with, substitute one of its toys and tell it to take it and praise it. If he will not drop the item, pry its mouth open to remove the object. Any additional commands and tricks are up to your imagination. Your puppy's limit of learning is governed by your commitment to training.



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### **Appropriate Treats**

Good eating habits should be established by feeding only dog food, preferably dry food. This is especially important in the miniature breeds who frequently outsmart their owners when it comes to choice of foods.

### **Dental Care**

Condition your puppy to dental care at a young age. Use pet dental care products rather than human toothpaste. Try to brush your puppy's teeth at least every other day. Initially, many pets will not tolerate a toothbrush so begin with a Q-tip or finger toothbrush. There are several treats available that are designed to remove tooth plaque and calculus, but none are as effective as brushing.