



Puppy Tips

Puppies are learning constantly

- Exploring
- Observing
- Trying new things
- Outcomes (positive or negative) impact future behavior and learning
- Puppies are learning how to do, and also how to “feel”

The most important things to focus on during the first few weeks are not traditional skills, but rather on the foundations for socialization, care and life with people.

- Housetraining
- Being touched/ handled gently is a good thing
- Meeting people or other dogs in a controlled environment where puppy feels safe
- Playing with people is different than playing with puppies
- How to be alone
- How to navigate new experiences with your support
- New things, people and other animals are usually safe
- People near their food, toys, and space are okay.
- Your puppy does not need to meet and play with most of the people and other dogs they see

Puppies learn best when there is some predictability in their world

- Set mealtimes (puppies need multiple during the day). It's best not to leave food out during the day.
- Frequent, really frequent, chances to go potty
- Predictable routine for bedtime
- Predictable interactions/ consequences

Puppies cannot effectively learn if they are too scared, tired or excited.

- Look at body language during new experiences
- Make sure your puppy has enough down time/nap time. Don't keep disrupting sleep or quiet alone time.
- If your puppy is getting wild, you need to stop and do something calming. Puppies have a hard time regulating themselves.

Puppies bite! They chew!

- Chewing feels good
- It's one way to explore their world
- Biting is how they interacted with other puppies/dogs
- Offer alternatives like toys, Kong
- Want to teach them play stops when they bite

- After adult teeth come in, puppy should naturally have stopped nipping

Puppies pee and poop

- Housetraining requires supervision
- Almost every activity causes a puppy to have to pee!
- If your puppy doesn't pee when you take them to potty, bring back and crate, contain or tether the puppy to a person.
- Don't play with your puppy if they didn't pee when you took them to potty.
- Play with/ otherwise reward your puppy for going potty when you take them to potty.
- Restrict water 2 hours before bedtime to reduce the puppies need to get up and pee in the middle of the night.
- Be prepared to get up and take your puppy out if they awaken at night.
- Young puppies often poop shortly after a meal
- Limit access to anyplace you can't actively supervise your puppy for the first few weeks.
- The nerves and muscles involved in "knowing" they have to pee often aren't fully functional until close to a year old.

Puppies are not just little adult dogs

- Experiences from weeks 6-16 set the stage for how your puppy will view the world for the rest of their life
- Puppies are more open to new experiences than adult dogs
- Puppies have short attention spans but can learn some things faster than adult dogs
- Puppies need more food than a similar sized adult dog
- Puppies play more, eat more, bite more, chew more, pee more and poop more than adult dogs

The first behaviors puppies learn tend to be the ones they will default to or resort to for most of their lives

- Think long-term. A behavior that might be cute at 10 weeks might be dangerous or super annoying when the puppy is an adult
- Try to interrupt and redirect or predict and derail behaviors that are annoying or problematic

You get to make your own house rules!

- Where will your puppy sleep?
- Will your dog be allowed on the furniture?
- Will your dog be allowed to have people food?
- Where do you want your dog to be while you eat meals?
- For little dogs - Are you okay with your dog jumping on you?