



# Puppy Training Guide

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## Crate Training Your Puppy

Despite their appearance, crates can be a boon for a puppy - a home away from home or a comfortable retreat when the rest of the family gets to be too much. Crates are a great tool for house training because dogs don't like to soil their immediate environment. They also make an excellent place for a "time-out," though confinement in them should not be employed as a punishment. In addition, a crate in the car is probably the safest way for a puppy to ride and for dogs that must fly cargo, crates provide a touch of the familiar on a plane.

Not all dogs respond the same way to crates. Some gravitate to them willingly; others detest them and will injure themselves in them while trying to escape. Why the difference? Nurture and developmental experience have a lot to do with the answer. Dogs forced to stay in crates, or other small, confined places, under extreme adverse circumstances develop a post-traumatic association and will panic when confronted with similar confinement. On the other hand, a dog that has been well managed in a crate as a youngster may positively reveal his crate as a place of security and comfort.

- **Bad experiences** in a crate include lengthy confinement for many hours at a time, infrequent attention during confinement, and absence of attachment figures. For dogs that have had unpleasant experiences in a crate, confinement may be viewed in the same light as a prison to an ex-inmate - an experience to be avoided.
- **Good experiences** in a crate include circumstances that permit the crate to be viewed as a retreat or place of comfort, freedom to come and go (the door is left open periodically so that the dog is not always confined), company inside or outside the crate, and regular feeding and bathroom trips.

No matter the age you begin crate training a dog, all experiences within the crate should be good ones. Ideally, begin with a very young puppy and establish good associations with each exposure to the crate. This can be arranged by:

- Allowing the puppy free access to the crate so that he can come and go at will prior to confining him.
- Make the crate a comfortable place by putting a blanket and perhaps some toys inside. **Be cautious** if puppy shreds and/or eats blankets and/or toys!
- Praise the puppy every time he goes inside the crate.
- Confine the puppy for short durations at first, ensuring that company is at hand.
- Never use the crate as a place of punishment.
- Make sure that no one disturbs the puppy when he is inside the crate, so the crate comes to be appreciated as a place of refuge.

Once your puppy has figured out how to go in and out of his crate and has satisfied his curiosity about it, use a cue word - such as "kennel" as he moves toward the crate and hand him a treat as soon as he enters. Repeat this several times at random intervals until he goes in when he's told to. At this point, you can shut the door for short periods, without making a big deal about it. In fact, it's best to ignore your puppy altogether while opening or shutting the door.

Once your puppy is willing to rest in the crate, start confining him for varying periods of time, and at different times of the day, while you're at home. The more random and persistent you are, the less the puppy will worry when you do have to leave the house. With this kind of routine, the puppy will learn to rest while crated, and that's exactly the way you want him to feel - at home, relaxed and comfortable in his own little den.

### **House Training – The Beginning**

The rule of thumb for dog training is "set the dog up for success." Always supervise the puppy until it has learned what it is allowed to chew, and where it is supposed to eliminate. Keeping the puppy on a 10-foot leash is an excellent way to keep it in sight, and to train it not to wander off. This is particularly helpful with a highly investigative puppy or for a very busy household.

At any time that the puppy cannot be supervised, such as throughout the night or when you need to go out, house it in a secure area. An escape proof crate is highly effective and most importantly - safe. The crate should be warm and dry with comfortable bedding. It should be placed in a social area, such as the kitchen. This way the puppy associates this area with being with its family. Each time the puppy needs to be confined, it should first be well exercised and given an opportunity to eliminate. Anytime the puppy will be left alone for longer than it can control elimination, arrangements should be made with someone to come and let the puppy outside to do so.

### **How do I potty train my puppy?**

All it requires are a few basic rules to house train puppies within a few days. This does not mean that the puppy will be able to be trusted to wander throughout the home without eliminating. What the puppy should quickly learn is where it should eliminate, and the consequences of eliminating indoors when the owner is supervising.

1. Puppies have a strong urge to eliminate after sleeping, playing, feeding, and drinking. Prepare to take your puppy to its selected elimination area within 30 minutes of each of these activities. In addition, although some puppies can control themselves through the entire night, most puppies need to eliminate every 3 to 4 hours during the daytime. With each passing month, you can expect your puppy to control itself a little longer between elimination times. The puppy should be taken to its elimination area, given a word or two of verbal encouragement (e.g., "Hurry up") and as soon as elimination is completed, lavishly praise, and pat him. A few tasty food treats can also be given the first few times the puppy eliminates in the right spot, and then intermittently

thereafter. This teaches the puppy the proper place to eliminate, and that elimination in that location is associated with rewards. Some puppies may learn to eliminate when they hear the cue words. Always go outdoors with your puppy to ensure that it has eliminated and so that rewards can be given immediately upon completion, and not when the puppy comes back indoors (too late!)

**2.** When indoors, the puppy must be supervised so that you can see when it needs to eliminate and immediately take it outdoors to its elimination area. Should pre-elimination signs (circling, squatting, sneaking off, heading to the door) occur, immediately take the puppy to its elimination site, give the cue words, and reward the puppy for elimination. If the puppy begins to eliminate indoors, use a verbal reprimand or shake can, and immediately take the puppy outdoors to its proper site, so that it can complete the act. Rather than using punishment, it is best to always supervise your puppy. One of the best techniques is to have a lead attached.

**3.** When you are not available to supervise, the puppy should be confined to its crate. Be certain that your puppy has had a chance to eliminate and has had sufficient play and exercise before any lengthy confinement. If the crate is small enough, many puppies will have sufficient control to keep the crate clean. This means that when you come to release the puppy from its crate, it must be taken directly to its elimination area. Puppies that are not supervised and rewarded for outdoor elimination, but are constantly disciplined and punished for indoor elimination, may soon begin to fear elimination in all locations in your presence. These puppies do not associate the punishment with indoor elimination, they associate the punishment with presence of the owners.

If urine or stool is found indoors, there is no point in punishing or even pointing out the problem to the puppy. Only if the puppy is in the act of elimination will it understand the consequences (rewards or punishment). In fact, it is not the puppy who has erred, it is the owner who has erred by not properly supervising. By regularly taking the puppy outdoors, through the same door, to the same site, and providing rewards for proper elimination, the puppy should soon learn to head for the door each time it has to eliminate. If you recognize the signs of impending elimination and praise the puppy whenever it heads for the doorway, the behavior can be further encouraged. Puppies that have been interrupted or reprimanded on one or more occasions as they begin to eliminate indoors, may try to sneak away, whine or show some form of anxiety, when they feel the urge to eliminate, but cannot escape from the owner's sight. If you can pick up on these cues and take the puppy directly to the outdoors for elimination and reward, the puppy may consistently begin to show these signals when he or she needs to eliminate and may even begin to take you to the exit door.

Generally, you will want your puppy to have been error free around the house for about 1 month before you can begin to decrease your supervision. The first time you leave the puppy unsupervised should be just after taking the puppy outdoors for elimination. Gradually increase the length of time that your puppy is allowed to roam through the house without supervision. If the puppy has been able to go unsupervised for a couple of hours without an accident, it might then be possible to begin going out for short periods of time. Of course, if the puppy still investigates and chews, then crating and supervision may still be necessary.

### **Chewing and Biting**

Puppies are extremely playful and investigative. While play with people and other dogs is an

important part of socialization and social development, exploration and object play are important ways for dogs to learn about their environment. Therefore, it is a normal behavior for puppies to investigate their environment by sniffing, tasting and perhaps chewing on objects throughout the home. Dogs that chew may also be scavenging for food (as in garbage raiding), playing (as in the dog that chews apart a book or couch), teething (puppies 3 to 6 months of age that chew on household objects), or satisfying a natural urge to chew and gnaw (which may serve to help keep teeth and gums healthy.) Some puppies may chew because they receive attention (even if it is negative) or treats from the owners each time they chew, and the owners are inadvertently rewarding the behavior. Chewing and destructive behaviors may also be a response to anxiety. Puppies that are confined in areas where they are insecure may dig and chew to escape. Puppies that are in a state of conflict, arousal, or anxiety, such as separation anxiety, may turn to chewing and other forms of destructiveness as an outlet.

### **How can chewing be treated?**

First, determine why the dog is chewing. It is likely if the puppy is chewing on household objects, it is play and investigation or teething. Directing the chewing into appealing alternatives, sufficient play and exercise, and prevention of inappropriate chewing are needed for the exploring puppy. You must ensure that you are not inadvertently rewarding the behavior. Inattention or disruption devices may be useful. Also, this behavior may decrease with time, provided you direct the chewing to proper outlets. Puppies that are chewing in any way should be always watched and crated when it is not possible to do so.

Before considering how inappropriate chewing might be discouraged, the real key is to provide some appropriate outlets for your puppy's chewing needs. Begin with a few toys with a variety of tastes, odors, and textures to determine what appeals most to the pet. Although plastic, nylon or rubber toys may be the most durable, products that can be torn apart such as rawhide may be more like the natural prey and wood products that attract most puppies. The KONG is a durable chew toy, but its appeal can be greatly enhanced by filling it tight with biscuits.

Numerous other play toys are also available that provide a means for stuffing food or treats inside, so that the puppy has to "work" to get its reward. To ensure that your puppy is encouraged and rewarded for chewing on its toys, and discouraged from chewing on all other objects, it must be always supervised. Whenever supervision is not possible, you must prevent access to any object or area that might be chewed. Although play periods and chew toys may be sufficient for most pets, additional activities such as self-feeders, other pets, interactive toys, and even videos help to keep pets occupied.

Of course, there is always the puppy that is not sufficiently distracted by the above suggestions. If this is the case, access to all areas that the puppy might chew must be prevented unless the owner is present to supervise. Your puppy can only be punished for chewing if it is caught in the act. Even then, punishment must be humane, immediate, and effective. A shake can, verbal reprimand, or alarm can deter the pet in your presence, but the behavior will continue in your absence. The only way to prevent chewing when you are not home is to keep your puppy in its crate. If the puppy is chewing the blankets and toys you leave with him, it may be necessary to take them out and give him the KONG toy filled with treats exclusively. This behavior should be outgrown with time. Large breeds may chew for 1 to 2 years.

## **Bite Inhibition**

All dogs bite. Learning to inhibit the force of his bite is an extremely important lesson for a puppy. It is learned during litter interaction, during play with other puppies later, and during interaction with us. When puppies are playing and one bites down too hard, the other puppy will screech, letting the biting puppy know, "Ouch, that's too hard!" This is very important feedback. Dogs have very strong jaws and without knowing or meaning to, they can inflict a lot of damage. They must be taught about the pressure of their bite and learn to inhibit it during puppy play and human interaction.

Allow your puppy to mouth you, so that you can teach him bite inhibition. When the puppy bites down on you yelp, "OUCH!" in a sincere, hurt tone. This informs the puppy he has hurt you and lets him know that he is not to bite you in any way. Only with the opportunity for the puppy to mouth you will you get the chance to give him this type of feedback.

## **Body Handling**

You will do yourself and your new puppy a favor by teaching him to allow you to handle his body. Throughout the life of your dog there will be times you need to handle various parts of the dog's body. You may need to wipe their feet, clean their ears, give medication, or trim their nails. Yet if you have never handled your puppy these simple tasks could become impossible. Handling also serves to simulate the physical communication that is exhibited by a mother controlling her puppies or a leader dog over a subordinate group member. You should gently handle your puppy daily. Pick a time when your puppy is calm, like just after a nap. Do not try to start a body handling exercise when your puppy is excited, rambunctious or in the mood for play.

Place the puppy in your lap and touch the feet, open the mouth, look in the ears and under the tail. All the while, praise your puppy for being good, even offer a few tasty food treats. Be sure to keep the initial sessions very short, since you want your puppy to succeed and not struggle. If the session is too long you run the risk of the puppy struggling and getting free. This should send a message to your puppy that it can "win." Always set up the puppy to succeed, but on your terms. Gradually increase the amount of time you control your puppy so that no struggle ensues. Soon the puppy will allow and perhaps anticipate these handling sessions. Then when you need to, you can treat your puppy. ALL family members should participate in this exercise. An adult should supervise young children.

If you see any hesitation or reluctance on the part of the puppy, you will want to repeat the exercise, until you can accomplish the handling without resistance. Do the same exercise a little more gently or in a slightly different location, and give some tasty treats for compliance, and progress gradually to more difficult situations. Never force the puppy to the point that it exhibits fear or attempts escape. On the other hand, if you do not gradually overcome the resistance the puppy may never allow the handling as an adult. Over time your puppy should allow you to place pressure on the back of his neck while it is in a down position, to roll it onto its side, to grasp its muzzle and to be lifted (if small enough). These forms of handling should not be used for punishment.

## **Food and Toy Guarding**

Another exercise that is so important is acclimating your puppy to having his food and possessions touched by humans. Dogs in the wild will guard their food to prevent its loss but that is not necessary in the home. We are not going to take away our pet's food and not give it back. Handle the food bowl while your puppy eats, pet the puppy, and perhaps lift the food bowl, place in a special treat, and return it. When walking past the puppy while it is eating you can place a treat in its food bowl, or reach down, pat the puppy, and give it a treat. This way the puppy learns to tolerate intrusions and disturbance while it eats and will not be startled and react aggressively should something unexpected happen when eating. If the treat you add is tasty enough, the puppy may even look forward to your approaches during feeding. If any growling should emerge you should seek professional guidance immediately.

You should also practice gently taking toys from the puppy. Quietly and calmly place your hand on the toy and tell your puppy "give" as you remove it from its mouth. Then say, "thank you" and return the object as you tell your puppy to "take it." Repeat this training task multiple times daily in multiple locations. At times take the object and offer a treat instead, this will let your puppy know that sometimes something better comes from relinquishing the object. You should be able to handle any toy that your puppy has. This sends the message to the puppy that it is okay for you to handle its possessions, and that you will give them back. The puppy will trust you and then when you need to remove something from their mouth, your dog should accept you.

## **Socializing Your New Puppy**

Socialization is the process during which the puppy develops relationships with other living beings in its environment. To reduce the possibility of fearful responses as a puppy grows and matures, it is essential to expose young puppies to many stimuli (people, places, and things) during the first 2 to 4 months of life. Early handling and exposure during this time are critical factors in the social development of the puppy. Life experiences should be positive during this period, so it is important for the owner to supervise the puppy's introduction to new people, animals, or situations. Dogs that receive insufficient exposure to people, other animals and new environments during this time may develop irreversible fears, leading to timidity or aggression.

Even the most social and playful of puppies may become fearful and aggressive as they develop out of puppyhood. Avoid selecting puppies that are shy, withdrawn, or fearful. But selecting a friendly and non-fearful puppy does not ensure that this behavior will persist into adulthood. Puppies under three months are still developing their social skills, but as puppies age these criteria do begin to become more reliable. Assessing the behavior of the parents and understanding the behavior of a breed are just as important as assessing an individual puppy.

Puppies that are stimulated and handled from birth to five weeks of age are more confident, social, exploratory, faster maturing and better able to handle stress as they develop. Puppies obtained from a breeder or home where they have had frequent contact and interaction with people are likely to be more social and less fearful as they develop.

## **PRIMARY PUPPY SOCIALIZATION?**

There is a sensitive period in the development of most species when they develop social attachments with their own and other species, independent of punishment and rewards. In fact, both positive and negative events seem to accelerate the situation. The events that occur during

this socialization period determines the puppy's future social partners, as well as to what species it feels it belongs. By recognizing the critical time frame in which canine socialization develops, you can help to ensure a healthy social attachment to people and other animals, including other dogs.

The primary socialization period for dogs begins at 3 weeks of age and is diminishing by 12 weeks. Peak sensitivity is at 6 to 8 weeks. Beyond 12 weeks there is a tendency to act fearfully towards new people, animals, and situations. Many young dogs will regress or become fearful again if they do not receive continued social interaction as they grow and develop. The 6 - 8-month period is another important time for socialization.

To help a healthy social relationship with other dogs throughout life, dogs should maintain their social contacts with their mother and litter mates until 6 to 8 weeks of age. They should continue to have regular social interaction and play sessions with other dogs after it is taken into a new home. The puppy would likely do best if there was another dog in the new home, or if it had playmates in the neighborhood that it could interact with daily.

There should be little problem with a puppy that is less than 12 weeks of age developing healthy and lasting attachments to the people, sights and sounds in its new home. Your puppy is most likely to become fearful of stimuli that are not found in its day-to-day routine. Make a conscious effort to identify those people and situations that the puppy is not regularly exposed to. Introduce your puppy to as many new people as possible, beginning in its first three months of development. People in uniforms, babies' toddlers, the elderly, the physically challenged are just a few examples that may lead to fear and anxiety, unless there is sufficient early exposure. Similarly, car rides, elevators, stairs, or the noises of cars, trains, or airplanes are some examples of events and experiences to which the puppy might be usefully exposed.

One way to facilitate the introduction of the puppy to new situations and people is to provide a reward such as a favorite toy or biscuit each time it is exposed to a new stimulus. Having a stranger offer a biscuit to the puppy will teach it to look forward to meeting people and discourage hand-shyness since the puppy will learn to associate new friends and an outstretched hand with something positive. Once the puppy has learned to sit on command, have each new friend ask it to sit before giving the biscuit. This teaches a proper greeting, and it will make the puppy less likely to jump up on people.

Be certain that the puppy can meet and receive treats from a wide variety of people of all ages, races, appearance and both sexes during the formative months. There will, of course, be times when your puppy is in a new situation, and you do not have treats. Be sure then to use a happy tone of voice and encourage your puppy. If your puppy seems to panic, back off a little and try again later, rather than aggravating the fear. Never reassure the fearful dog as this might serve to reward the fearful behavior.



## Puppy Discipline

Punishment should not be considered unless the pet has the means to satisfy its nature and its needs. For example, the chewing puppy should be provided with appropriate exercise and appealing toys to chew on, before any attempts to punish undesirable chewing are initiated. If, however, we can train our pets to do what they are supposed to and provide outlets for their needs, then it will seldom be necessary to punish inappropriate behavior. Remember that you are punishing the behavior, not the puppy.

There are appropriate ways of letting the puppy know that he is doing something you don't want him to do. There are also inappropriate ways. Never hit your puppy. Avoid screaming at the puppy; never rub your puppy's nose in a bathroom accident. Don't roll the puppy on his back or try to muscle him into some submissive state. These are uneducated myths concerning control and leadership. They do not work and more importantly they most certainly will create more trouble.

The consequences that you dole out to your dog should match the seriousness of the canine misbehavior, keeping in mind the nature of puppy and whether you are doing your job to keep the puppy safe and effectively teaching the puppy what you want him to do.

If you are doing your job properly and your puppy views you as his fearless leader, one of the most powerful negative consequences to your puppy is for you to ignore him. How often do we see people chasing their dogs and screeching at them? This is a game to the dog and, in most cases, great fun for him. In his doggy head there is a fun game of "chase me" going on and he is the leader. Here are some very effective and strong ways of letting the puppy know that they have just missed an opportunity to do something right.

→ **Turn the other cheek:** Simply ignoring the puppy when it is safe and possible is very effective in many situations. Once the puppy is doing what you want, reward him.

→ **Withholding rewards:** *We aren't going out the door until you sit.*

*You will not get this toy until you sit.*

*You may not chew on this bone until you sit.*

*You will not get this bowl of food until you sit.*

**\*\*\* Straightforward and very effective \*\*\***

→ **Time outs:** Similar to a time out that parents and teachers give to kids, a time out is exactly what it sounds like. The puppy is taken out of the area that he is in and put in a less desirable place (in the puppy's opinion). You can give a verbal indication to the puppy - "too bad" or "you lose" - as instead of banishing puppy. Your tone of voice should NOT be angry, it should be hushed and **slightly formal**, indicating to the puppy that he has missed the mark. A time-out can last 15 to 30 seconds. You will need to adjust the time depending on the infraction and the effect the time out has on your puppy. For a puppy who is playing too rough with other puppies, simply picking the puppy up out of the area for 30 seconds is a good time out. We are telling the puppy that we do not like the ferocity at which he is playing, to be gentler, chill out. You may need to do more than one time out. Your timing is very important. The puppy must be picked up or taken out of the picture at the very moment of their breaking the rules for this to be an effective snub of the behavior that you do not want.

→ **Back-Turning:** Turning your back on your puppy is especially great for puppies who will not seem to quit jumping up on you and everyone they meet. What you are saying is "I am not going to greet you or acknowledge you while you are flying around the air." Good timing is essential. Ideally, you turn your back on the puppy as it is attempting to jump on you. Be sure and reward the puppy when you get the behavior that you want, not jumping, sitting,

whatever the case may be.

### **Puppy Training Basics**

You will begin training your puppy from the moment you bring it home and start to house train. Puppies start learning from birth. Some training can begin as soon as the puppy can open its eyes and walk. Young puppies have short attention spans but expect them to begin to learn simple obedience commands such as "sit," "down," and "stay" from as young as 7 to 8 weeks of age. Formal dog training has traditionally been delayed until 6 months of age. This adolescence stage is a very poor time to start. The dog is beginning to solidify adult behavioral patterns, dominance behavior is beginning to emerge, and behaviors learned in puppyhood may need to be changed.

When training is started at 7 to 8 weeks use methods that rely on positive reinforcement and gentle teaching. Puppies have short attention spans, so training sessions should be brief but daily. Puppies can be taught to sit, down, and stand using a method called food-lure training. We use food treats to entice the dog to follow its nose into the proper positions for sit, down, stand and stay.

#### **How to teach my puppy to "Sit" on command:**

Using a food treat, hold the food over the puppy's nose and slowly move it up and back over the puppy's head. As the puppy follows the food with its head it will sit down. Now couple the word "sit" with the action. The upward motion of the hand as you hold the food treat also serves as a visual command for the puppy. If the puppy lifts its front legs, you are holding the treat too high. **As soon as** the puppy sits, say "good sit" and give the treat. Many repetitions will be necessary for the puppy to learn the association. Gradually, as the puppy understands what you want her to do, only give the treats intermittently. You should practice sit in many places throughout your home. It is especially important to teach your puppy to sit by the front door. A dog who readily sits by the front door will do better when greeting guests.

#### **How to teach my puppy to "Down" on command:**

Start your puppy in a sit position. To get the puppy to lie down, take a treat and lower it between the puppy's front paws and say "down." Usually, the puppy will follow the treat and go down. If the puppy does not lie all the way down, slowly push the treat between the paws and if the puppy lies down give it the treat and of course add "good dog." If the puppy stands up, start over. For some puppies, teaching the "down" command can be very difficult. An alternative method is instead of pushing the food treat backwards, slowly pull the treat forward. If that does not work, sit on the floor with your legs straight out in front of you and slightly bent at the knees. Take a hand with the treat in it and push it out under your knee from between your legs. As the puppy tries to get the food treat, slowly bring it back under your knee. As puppy tries to follow, it will usually lie down. Once the puppy understands the "down" command, make sure that you will vary the starting position. You should try to get your puppy to "down" from both a stand and a sit.

#### **How to teach my puppy to "Stay" on command:**

Puppies can be taught to stay for short periods of time at a young age. Once they sit on command each time they are asked, without the need for food inducements, training can proceed to more difficult concepts such as "stay." First the puppy is taught to stay without moving as you stand in front for 1-2 seconds. Initially give the puppy the "sit" command, say "stay" (using a hand as a stop sign can be a good visual cue), take one step away, and return to puppy and

reward him or her for not moving. Establish a release word such as “ok,” to use at the completion of an exercise so the puppy learns when the exercise is over. Be very careful that the puppy does not stand up or move as the present the reward because you will have rewarded “getting up.”

Gradually increase the distance by a step at a time, and the length of the stay by a few seconds at a time, until the puppy can stay for a minute or more with you standing at least 10 feet away. It is important to set up the puppy to succeed. Proceeding very slowly, and keeping a long lead attached to the puppy so that it cannot run away can help ensure success. Be patient. It can take a week or more of daily training to get a puppy to sit and stay for 1-2 minutes. Over a few months it should be possible to increase the stay to 15 minutes or more, and to be able to leave the room and return without the puppy rising from its stay. For these longer stays it may be better to use a “down-stay” (lying down and staying in place) combination, and to train the puppy in a favored resting or sleeping area. Once extended “sit-stays” are accomplished, the command can be used to prevent many potential behavior problems. For example, if you practice “sit and stay” by the front door, this command can then be used to prevent running out the door and jumping on company. Have your puppy sit and stay while you place the food on the floor and then give him an OK or release command. This will help establish your leadership and control.

### **How to teach my puppy to “Stand” on command:**

Place your puppy in a sit position. Take the food treat palm facing up and move it forward and away from the puppy as you say “stand.” Your puppy should again follow his nose and stand up. Don't pull your hand so far away that the puppy follows you, but just until it stands up.

### **How often should I give these commands?**

Ideally you should give the command phrase once and then use your food to move the puppy into positions. Once the puppy has performed the task, add in verbal praise and an affectionate pat which are known as secondary reinforcers. Some trainers also use clickers as secondary reinforcers. If the puppy does not immediately obey on the first command, then you are likely proceeding a little too quickly. If you are repeating the command, the puppy will learn that several repetitions are acceptable before it needs to obey. Keeping a leash attached can help to gain an immediate response if the puppy does not obey.

Remember, early in training your puppy does not know the meaning of the word. Therefore, you could just as easily teach your puppy to sit with the word bananas, (or sit in another language) as you could with the word sit. The key is to associate the word, in this case “sit,” with the action of placing the hind end on the floor.

### **How do I phase out the food rewards?**

At first you are going to let the puppy see the food in your hand so that you will have its attention and can use it to guide her into position. As your puppy begins to comply more readily, you can start to hide the food in your hand but give the command and repeat the motion or signal that she has learned to follow. Soon the puppy will come to expect the treat each time she performs the task. Then, signal and give the command, but when she performs the task, reward only with praise, and give the puppy an affectionate pat. Next, you can begin to vary the frequency, giving the “good dog” and perhaps patting each time, but giving the food randomly, perhaps every 3 or 4 times. In time, the puppy should respond to either the hand signal or the command.

Over time, the words “good dog” or the affectionate pat become secondary reinforcers.

Because they have been paired with food in the past, they take on more meaning and become a reinforcement in themselves. It is important to use secondary reinforcement because you will not always have food with you when you need your pet to obey. In addition, if you rely on food to always get your puppy to comply, you will have a puppy that will only do the task when you have a treat. At first training may begin in designated sessions throughout the day, with a variety of family members. All rewards should be saved for these training sessions. Over time however, you should begin to ask your puppy to perform the tasks at other times.

### **How much time should I spend training my puppy daily?**

You do not need to train in a set session daily. Rather, integrate these tasks throughout the day. A goal to strive for is at least 15 minutes of training every day. These can be short 5-minute sessions spread throughout the day. Try to have all family members ask your puppy to do these tasks. Remember to try and train in every room of your house. You want your puppy to sit, lie down, and stay everywhere, not just in the training location.

Use these training tasks as you integrate the puppy into your life. For example, ask your puppy to sit prior to receiving her food, sit before you let her out of the door and sit before you pet her. These are times when your puppy wants something and is more likely to comply. In this way you are training your puppy all the time, throughout the day and establishing yourself as the leader, the one who controls the resources. Training your puppy prior to getting each reward also helps to prevent problems. Having your puppy sit before getting a food or treat prevents begging, while teaching your puppy to sit before opening the door can prevent jumping up or running the door. Be creative.

***\*\*\* The time you spend training your new puppy now will ultimately pay off when you have an adult dog. Think long-term. To have a well-trained dog you need to be committed to reinforcing the training tasks on nearly a daily basis for the first year of your puppy's life. The more you teach and supervise your puppy, the less opportunity she will have to engage in improper behaviors. Dogs do not train themselves, when left to choose their behavior they will act like dogs \*\*\****

### **What can be done if my puppy is too distracted or excitable to control?**

Training should begin in a quiet environment with few distractions. The reward chosen should be highly motivating so that the puppy is focused entirely on the trainer and the reward. Although a small food treat generally works best, a favorite toy or a special dog treat might be more appealing. It might also be helpful to train the puppy just before a scheduled mealtime when it is at its hungriest. For difficult puppies or headstrong puppies, the best way to ensure that the puppy will perform the desired behavior and respond appropriately to the command is to leave a leash attached and slightly tug it to correct its inattentiveness.

### **Should I also consider puppy training classes and/or trainers?**

Pet owners who are novices at training can begin a training program with these few simple steps. It takes repetition, time, and perseverance for the puppy to be able to respond to commands predictably and reliably in a variety of situations. The training class serves many functions. Of course, trainers can demonstrate techniques and help guide you through steps in training. They can help advise you on puppy training problems and can help you advance your training to more difficult exercises. The puppy owner who takes his or her puppy to training classes will be forced to practice throughout the week if they do not want to fall behind by the next class. A

training class is a good place to meet and talk to other new puppy owners and see how all puppies behave.

Training classes for young puppies are also an excellent way to socialize your new puppy to a variety of people, other dogs, and stimuli, in a controlled environment. In addition, you will learn how to prevent problems before they can begin, or deal with them as they emerge, rather than trying to find a way to correct problems that have already developed. Your puppy may also make some new friends of the same age. You could then visit these friends for social play and exercise sessions. Since the primary socialization period for dogs ends by 3 months of age, puppy socialization classes are most valuable for puppies 8 weeks of age and older. If all puppies in the class have had initial vaccinations, are healthy and parasite free, the health risks are low, and the potential benefits are enormous. (Please see our list of local trainers at the end of this booklet).

### **Come / Heel / Wait Commands**

#### **How to teach my puppy to “Come” on command:**

Teaching a puppy to come on command is a very difficult but important task. Start early because a puppy that will come when called is safer. In addition, most young puppies do not like to stray too far from their owners. So, all it takes is a kneeling owner and a happy “come” command and your puppy may willingly approach (without the need for any food or toy prompt). Similarly, most young puppies will automatically come and follow you as you walk away. However, by 3 to 4 months of age, as puppies become a little more independent and exploratory, more appealing rewards may be needed. The two most important rules about teaching your puppy to come to you is to set up the puppy for success and that each training session is simple, fun, and pleasurable.

#### ***NEVER CALL YOUR PUPPY TO YOU FOR DISCIPLINE!***

Start by backing away from your puppy 1-3 feet and wiggle a food treat or a favored toy in front of its nose. At the same time say the puppy's name and “come.” Use a happy inviting tone of voice. When your puppy comes to you, praise it lavishly and give the treat. Then repeat. Start by only moving short distances, then gradually have the puppy come further to reach you. Reinforce this task by calling your puppy over multiple times daily, giving a pat or a food treat and sending it on its way. Try to avoid only calling the puppy to you to bring it inside, to put it in its crate or otherwise end something fun. Be sure to spend time calling the puppy over and then releasing it, this will help the puppy learn that by coming to you, good things happen. Remember it is critical to succeed with every training session. Stay close, make certain that there are no distractions and proceed slowly.

Over time, the puppy should be very slowly taught to come from progressively farther distances and in environments with a greater number of distractions. If there is any chance that the puppy might escape or disobey, have the puppy wear a long remote leash. Then if the puppy does not immediately obey the come command, a gentle tug of the leash can be used to get the puppy's attention, and a repeated command in an upbeat, happy voice (along with a food or toy prompt) should be able to ensure that the come command is successful and rewarding.

#### **How to teach my new puppy to “Heel” on command:**

Teaching a puppy to wait or follow are extensions of the other tasks you should have already taught. To teach your puppy to follow at your side (heel), use a food treat, place it by your thigh

and entice the puppy both vocally and with the food to “heel.” As the puppy follows its nose to stay near the treat, it will also be learning to heel. For puppies that constantly walk ahead or pull, teaching your puppy to follow should begin where there are few distractions, such as in your backyard. To ensure success you should keep a leash on your dog. Begin with a sit-stay command and give a reward. Start to walk forward and encourage your puppy to follow or heel as above, using a food reward held by your thigh. Be sure to only allow a few inches of slack on the leash so that if your dog tries to run past you, you can pull up and forward on the leash so that the puppy returns to your side. Once back in the proper position, provide a little slack in the leash and begin to walk forward again. Continue walking with verbal reinforcement and occasional food rewards given as the puppy follows. Each time the puppy begins to pass you or pull ahead, pull up and forward on the leash, and release as the puppy backs up. Although the puppy should be made to sit each time it pulls forward, the goal is to have the puppy return to your side. If the puppy “puts on the breaks,” and will not follow, all you need to do is release the tension and verbally encourage the puppy to follow. Once you have the puppy successfully heeling in the yard with no distractions, you can proceed to the front yard and the street, at first with no distractions, until good control is achieved.

### **How to teach my puppy to “Wait” on command:**

Although much the same as stay, this command is important for the puppy that might otherwise bound out the front door, lunge forward to meet people and other dogs, or run across a busy street. Begin with “sit - stay” training, until the dog responds well in situations where there are few distractions such as indoors or in your backyard. Next, find a situation where the puppy might try to pull ahead, such as at the front door, so that you can begin to teach the “wait” command. Training sessions should begin when there are no external stimuli outdoors (other dogs, people) that might increase your puppy’s motivation to run out the door. Use a leash to ensure control.

Begin with a “sit - stay” by the front door. While standing between your puppy and the door, and with only a few inches of slack on the leash, give the wait command and open the door. If the puppy remains in place for a few seconds, begin to walk out the door, release him with your chosen release word and allow your dog to follow. Then repeat, with longer waits at each training session. If, however, when you open the door or begin to walk out, your dog runs ahead of you, you should pull up on the leash, have your puppy sit, give the wait command, and repeat until successful. Once your puppy will successfully wait for a few seconds and follow you out the door, gradually increase the waiting time, and then try with distractions (dogs or people on the front walk). This training should also be tried as you walk across the street, or before your puppy is allowed to greet new people or dogs it meets.

### **For the Stubborn / Disobedient / Headstrong K9**

Puppies that are particularly headstrong and stubborn might need some stringent rules. Tug-of-war games should only be allowed if the owner initiates the game, and can successfully call and end to the game, with an “out,” or “give” command when it is time to call it quits. Rough play must not escalate to uncontrollable play biting that cannot be controlled by the owner. One of the best management tools for always gaining safe and effective control, is a gentle leader or Halti collar. The puppy can be supervised and controlled from a distance by leaving a long line or leash attached to the head halter.

The principle of halter training is to gain control over the puppy with as much natural communication as possible and without the use of punishment. Positive reinforcement is used to encourage proper behavior. A pull on the leash is used to disrupt misbehavior. Since the halter is

attached to the puppy's muzzle, common behavior problems (nipping, barking, jumping up, pulling, stealing food, etc.) can immediately be interrupted without fear or pain by pulling on the leash. The halter places pressure around the muzzle and behind the neck. This stimulates the muzzle and neck restraint that a leader or mother dog might apply to a subordinate, and therefore is a highly effective and natural form of control.

### **Puppy Play and Exercise**

Play with owners and with other dogs, not only provides the puppy with some of its exercise requirements, but also helps to meet social needs. Insufficient exercise can contribute to problem behaviors including destructiveness (chewing and digging), investigative behavior (garbage raiding), hyperactivity, unruliness, excitability, attention getting behaviors, and even some forms of barking. It is especially important to ensure that a puppy's need for exercise has been met prior to leaving the puppy alone at home and prior to lengthy crating or confinement sessions.

Taking your puppy for a walk is a good way to accomplish exercise and can be enjoyable and healthy for you as well. From an early age you should acclimate your puppy to a collar and a leash. A flat nylon or leather collar is fine. Keep your puppy away from stray dogs and neighborhood parks until all vaccinations are finished. Practice your walking skills in your own yard first. Put your puppy on a leash, and with your voice and a small tug, or perhaps as a food or toy reward as a prompt, encourage it to follow you. Reward the good behavior with praise. Keep initial walks short to encourage compliance.

Playing with your pet is an enjoyable activity for both of you. Not only does the puppy get exercise, but positive interactions take place. Training sessions are also an excellent way to gain owner leadership and control, while providing interaction between you and your pet. Selecting an appropriate amount and type of play and exercise, will depend firstly on the type of puppy. Puppies and even adult dogs from breeds that have been bred for their stamina or to do "work" often have higher exercise requirements.

For purebred dogs, consider their traditional work when deciding the type and amount of play to provide. For example, the retrieving breed do best with lengthy games of fetch or frisbee, while the sledding breeds might prefer pulling carts, or running or jogging with an active owner. The length and type of play and exercise for your puppy will depend on its behavioral requirements and health limitations. While some puppies may still be ready for more after a 5-mile jog and a game of fetch, others may be tired and satisfied after a short walk around the block.

### **Jumping and Chasing**

Chasing and running after prey, nipping at heels, and herding are normal dog behaviors. These behaviors are more strongly motivated in some breeds of dogs than others. In addition, some dogs may be motivated to chase intruders (people, other dogs) from their property and when the intruders leave, the behavior may appear to the dog to have been successful. This usually results in the dog continuing in the "chase" behaviors. To control chase behaviors, it is necessary to train the dog to do something different than it was doing before. It is not enough to yell "NO" and punish the dog. This alone will not stop a behavior that has had a strong motivation but may cause the dog to be more anxious or fearful about the stimulus which would increase the problem.

First, let's talk about prevention of chasing behaviors. Once you have witnessed your puppy engaging in an inappropriate chase, now is the time to start training. Get a leash on the dog and

teach it to sit and stay. Then present the dog with the distraction that it would normally chase and reward the dog for good behavior. Remember, when off the leash the dog may reversion to its old habits. Therefore, try to avoid those situations until you feel confident that the dog will behave. If this does not work and your dog continues chasing behaviors, you should consult a behavior specialist or trainer for further assistance.

Another behavior that causes problems for owners is door charging. Door charging is the behavior of the puppy speeding to the door whenever anyone knocks or rings the bell. To deal with this problem start by teaching the dog to sit and stay for a food reward in the entry area. Gradually phase out food treats when the behavior is learned and can be readily repeated. Next you may need to practice with family members entering the home. Finally, when a dog has mastered the task with people he knows, practice with visitors, keeping the dog on a leash and making it sit and stay. Again, a leash and head halter are an excellent way to control the dog and train it not to chase or jump up when people come to the door. Always require your dog to sit before it gets petted, and you can go a long way to eliminating jumping up behavior. If the dog has never even practiced the task without distractions, how can you expect the dog to perform the task when visitors come over? If door charging behavior is coupled with aggression, you should seek the help of a behavior specialist or trainer.

For many dogs, jumping up on people is part of their greeting routine. Often owners have tried to discourage this behavior using methods such as squeezing the front feet, stepping on the dog's toes, or kneeling the dog in the chest. Yet the behavior continues. If that is the case with your dog, then it is important to think what might be motivating your dog to jump up and what is the reinforcement for the behavior continuing. Usually, the motivation for the jumping up behavior is to greet people. Many dogs like to greet "face to face," like they do with their canine counterparts. People, however, find this objectionable. Correction therefore must not be directed at punishing the problem, but rather finding a means of teaching the dog and appropriate greeting posture. This usually is a sit/stay, which can then be rewarded with food and attention. Once the dog has perfected this without people there and practiced it with family members, the dog is ready to try it with visitors. Make the dog sit and stay while people come and hand the dog a treat. If the dog gets up, then put him back in the sit and stay and try again. Often placing a "treat jar" by the front door with a bell on it will help. Once the dog associates the bell on the jar with a treat, and a treat with a sit/stay, the dog will more likely perform the task.

Once you understand the motivation, and have trained a new task, you need to be sure you have identified all the reinforcement for the behavior. If the dog succeeds in getting any attention for the jumping behavior, then the dog will continue to jump. Attention may be petting, pushing away and even mild reprimands can be reinforcing for a dog who really wants attention. To change this behavior, you need to remove all reinforcement. This may mean that you do not look, speak, touch, or interact with the dog in any way when it jumps on you. Walk by the dog, give a command such as sit, but do not interact with the dog. Alternately, you could try punishment to see if you can disrupt the behavior just as it begins.

To use punishment for jumping up, you need to be able to interrupt the behavior quickly and humanely. This is often best done with some type of device that makes a loud noise. Shake cans and air horns make loud noises that will startle a dog. As soon as the dog hesitates, you need to give the dog an alternative command so that the dog can do the proper thing and then reward the dog with praise. So, as you administer the noise, you say "SIT" and when the dog sits you reward it with praise and food rewards if available. Many dogs soon learn that to avoid the noise, they need to sit and will do so to greet you. Then have the person leave, and reenter the home, using the device and command if the dog does not immediately sit, and a good sit and reward



as soon as the dog does sit. Continue to have the person leave and reenter until the dog sits for its reward without hesitating.

Another method that is consistently successful at deterring and preventing the jumping up, is to leave a leash and head halter on the dog during greeting. All it takes is stepping on the leash or a quick sharp pull to prevent or disrupt the jumping up. Again, be certain to reward non-jumping behavior.

### **Collars and Leads**

#### ***The Gentle Leader***

The Gentle Leader® headcollar is **NOT** a muzzle. When fitted properly, your dog is free to open his mouth to eat, drink, pant, fetch, bark and even bite - except when you close his mouth by pulling on the leash. The Gentle Leader® headcollar features two soft nylon straps - the collar portion fits high at the top of the neck, and the nose loop fits loosely and comfortably across the base of the muzzle. Each strap has a distinct and important effect.

- **The Nose Loop:** Dogs are naturally "pack" animals with a highly structured social order. One of the ways the "pack leader" will demonstrate his position is to grasp a subordinate's muzzle gently but firmly in his mouth. This is a non-aggressive but very clear signal regarding who's the boss! The Gentle Leader's nose loop encircles your dog's muzzle in this same manner, *letting him know in his own language that you are his leader*. Dogs feel more secure when they know who the leader is.
  
- **The Neck Strap:** Have you noticed how puppies seem to melt in relaxation when their mother picks them up at the back of the neck? Gentle Leader® applies pressure to the *back of the neck* rather than the front of the throat, working with your dog's natural relaxation instinct with an amazing calming effect. Also, dogs tend to pull *against* pressure so the gentle pressure at the *back* of the neck causes the dog to pull backward, not forward.

### ***The Animal Medical Center of Mt. Pleasant*** *Recommended Canine Preventative Healthcare*

#### **Vaccinations**

Vaccination regimens are based on your dog's individual needs and risk factors. Puppies receive a series of vaccination boosters to ensure the puppy becomes fully protected against diseases as maternal antibodies wane. All puppies receive vaccinations for **Distemper, Infectious Canine Hepatitis, Parvovirus, Parainfluenza and Rabies**. After the first-year dogs will receive these vaccinations for infectious diseases once annually and a rabies vaccination every three years.

**Leptospirosis:** Leptospirosis is an infectious disease caused by a type of bacteria called *Leptospira*. The disease causes serious damage to the kidney and liver and may be fatal in severe cases. Bacteria are passed in the urine of infected animals and can survive in the environment for long periods of time in warm, stagnant water or moist soil. Wild animals, including skunks, raccoons, opossums, rats, wolves, and deer, can spread infection to dogs.

Most dogs are infected by direct contact with urine from an infected animal. Others are infected by contact with water or soil contaminated with infected urine. *Leptospira* can penetrate the soft

lining of the nose, mouth, and eyelid, and can enter the body through open sores and scratches in the skin.

Vaccination for infectious tracheobronchitis, also referred to as **Kennel Cough**, is recommended and often required for any dog that may board, visit grooming parlors, attend obedience school, or generally meets numerous dogs. This is a highly contagious disease transmitted by aerosol droplets. The disease produces a harsh, dry cough and can sometimes progress to Bronchopneumonia.

**Lymes Disease** is caused by a Rickettsial organism transmitted by ticks. Although Lymes disease is more prevalent in the North, numerous cases have been diagnosed in the Southeast. A vaccination for Lymes disease is recommended for any dog that may meet ticks.

**Canine Influenza Virus (CIV)** vaccines are available for dogs at risk to this emerging disease. Dogs at risk for this disease include those that have extensive daycare visits, go to dog parks, kennels, or other high dog density activities. CIV has been reported in South Carolina and its prevalence is being closely monitored.

### **Deworming**

A minimum of two dewormings is recommended for all puppies. Intestinal parasites are passed to puppies from their mother and/or picked up from their environment. Fecal exams are conducted to find parasite eggs. We recommend yearly fecal exams for all adult dogs that spend time outdoors. Some **intestinal parasites can pose a potential threat to young children** so annual fecal exams are important for families with children.

### **Heartworm Preventative**

Heartworm disease is endemic to the Southeast. Heartworm infection is transmitted to dogs by mosquitoes. Infection causes damage to the heart and to the blood vessels in the lungs, resulting in respiratory problems such as coughing, harsh or strained breathing, and in severe cases, death. **Year-round heartworm prevention is strongly recommended for all dogs.**

### **Flea and Tick Control**

There are numerous flea and tick products that are very effective when used as directed. Our staff will be happy to help you decide which product would be best for you and your pet. Be careful of look-alike products. They are not as effective and can result in severe and occasionally fatal reactions from the permethrin compounds.

### **Dental Care**

Due to the increase in periodontal disease among our patients, we recommend preventative dental care. Dental care options include routine brushing and/or dental treats (Hills T/D, CET Chews, etc.). Periodontal disease can lead to gingivitis; tooth loss, bad breath, and can ultimately contribute to kidney failure, heart disease and liver disease.

### **Spaying and Neutering**

Unless you are planning on breeding your pet, we recommend spaying/neutering all animals. Spaying and neutering provides a convenience to the pet owner, better health for your pet, and helps decrease the overpopulation problem. Spaying reduces the risk of breast cancer by 95% and eliminates the problem of future uterine infections, while neutering reduces a male dog's

desire to roam and decreases the risk of future prostate problems and testicular tumors. Current research indicates that if your pet is going to be greater than 34 pounds as an adult, there are significant health benefits associated with waiting until 1 year of age before spaying or neutering. We encourage you to speak with your veterinarian to determine what is best for your pet.

### **The Animal Medical Center Surgical Difference**

Spaying and neutering may be the only surgery your pet ever needs. These, along with dental cleanings, are the most common anesthetic procedures for pets. Please do not take it lightly - although common, it is still surgery, and you need to understand that there are important differences in how they are done. Saving a few dollars can be a painful mistake for your pet that can lead to organ damage or even death.

At the Animal Medical Center, we are leaders in the field of veterinary surgery. Our surgeons strive to provide your family members with a level of care that far exceeds the "generally acceptable level of care". We strive to reduce the possible negative outcomes through advanced monitoring equipment, highly trained surgical nurses, pre-anesthetic bloodwork, human grade sutures and surgical supplies, IV fluids and pain management. Our doctors have advanced training in surgical pain management, and we are recognized as leaders in this area of medicine. *Our doctors further the pledge of your pets' comfort and optimum recovery with the use of **Laser surgery** with every spay and neuter. The Laser ensures less bleeding, less swelling and therefore less pain and better healing after the surgery.*

When it comes time for your pets' surgery their medical history can be invaluable to the surgeon. We do not practice "one size fits all" anesthesia. Anesthesia is catered to and around your pets' specific needs, problems or breed characteristics. We look at the whole animal and try to consider what other problems we can address to reduce the likelihood of having to undergo further procedures.

Anesthetic records become an invaluable part of your pets' medical history. The base line bloodwork will be used to compare against future diagnostics as they age or develop sicknesses. Their response to anesthetic medications will assist in the planning of further treatment protocols.

Here is the bottom line:

***The extra steps that we employ to provide the safest, cleanest and most pain-free surgical experience your pet can receive are important to their short-term comfort and long term well-being. We will not compromise their trust.***

### **HEARTWORM DISEASE**

Heartworm disease is a life-threatening condition that is unfortunately all too prevalent in our area of the country. Greater than 95% of dogs which are not on a consistent form of heartworm prevention will be infected with heartworms. Left untreated, dogs with heartworms usually develop heart and lung disease, and many will die. Treatments are available for heartworm disease but are expensive and not without risks.

Prevention is the key to managing heartworms. We recommend heartworm prevention be given twelve months a year. To be sure the prevention is effective we always recommended yearly

heartworm checks. While the heartworm preventatives available are very effective, no medication is 100% perfect.

We also must factor in occasional late or missed pills, or even pills that are thrown up without our knowledge. The fact is: We continue to see heartworm positive dogs every week and many from owners who don't believe they missed prevention.

**We require a yearly heartworm test prior to dispensing preventative.** This will comply with manufacturer recommendations and satisfy their guarantee. This will also satisfy the Veterinary State Law concerning prescription drugs. Most importantly, we believe this will help us provide the BEST CARE for your pet.

## **WHY NEUTER?**

There are many medical and behavioral benefits to having your male cat or dog neutered:

1. CONVENIENCE TO OWNER
  - a. Usually stops tomcats from spraying foul-smelling urine in the house.
  - b. Reduces the annoying and embarrassing urge of male dogs to "mount" children and adult's legs.
  - c. Reduces aggression against other animals.
2. BETTER HEALTH FOR YOUR PET
  - a. Eliminates your pet's desire to seek out a female and reduces risks involved with a free-roaming animal (car accidents, etc.)
  - b. Reduces the risk of prostate problems and testicular tumors later in life.
3. HELPS DECREASE THE OVERPOPULATION PROBLEM
  - a. One male running loose for just a few hours can impregnate many females adding to the serious problem of unwanted puppies and kittens.
4. ELIMINATES SEXUAL FRUSTATION
  - a. A male sensing a female in heat is nearby can break down doors and jump fences in his desire to mate.
  - b. Lets your pet relax and enjoy being part of the family.

## **MYTHS**

### ***-Neutering will make my pet fat.***

Neutering does not make your pet fat or lazy. Too much food and not enough exercise are the main causes of obesity.

### ***-Neutering will take away the "guard dog" instincts.***

Neutering a dog does not reduce his ability as either a guard or watch dog. He will still be as protective of his territory as he was before the surgery.

### ***-Neutering will hurt him.***

Neutering is a safe and relatively painless operation done by a licensed veterinarian. Your pet will appreciate the freedom from sexual frustration.

## **WHY SPAY?**

There are many medical and behavioral benefits to having your female cat or dog spayed:

1. CONVENIENCE TO OWNER
  - a. Eliminates estrous or "heat" periods: no bloody discharge.
  - b. Eliminates the scent that attracts annoying males.
  - c. No need to confine your female while in heat.
  - d. Eliminates the frantic pacing and crying by the female while in heat (cats are especially vocal at that time).
2. BETTER HEALTH FOR YOUR PET
  - a. Eliminates all the problems and potential risks involved in pregnancy and birth.
  - b. Eliminates the common problem of cancer of the uterus as the pet gets older.
3. HELPS DECREASE THE OVERPOPULATION PROBLEM
  - a. By not bringing more unwanted puppies and kittens into the world.
  - b. Rids you of the worry of what to do with unplanned litters of puppies and kittens.
4. ELIMINATES SEXUAL FRUSTRATION
  - a. Decreases your pet's desire to roam in search of a mate: decreasing the problems involved with a free-roaming animal (car accidents, etc.)
  - b. Lets your pet relax and enjoy being a part of the family.

## **MYTHS**

### **-Spaying will make my pet fat.**

Spaying your pet will not make her fat and lazy. Too much food and not enough exercise are the main causes of obesity.

### **- Spaying will hurt her.**

Spaying is a safe and relatively painless operation done by a licensed veterinarian. Your pet will appreciate the freedom from sexual frustration and repeated parenthood.

### **- I will find homes for my puppies and kittens.**

You may be able to place your puppies or kittens but are they all good homes? And remember each time you place one of your puppies or kittens; somewhere else an animal is being killed because there was no home for him. Right now, in the United States 15 million animals are being euthanized each year.

# Dangerous Foods

Common food items that can be dangerous to your pet if ingested:

- **alcoholic beverages**
- **apple seeds**
- **apricot pits**
- **avocados**
- **cherry pits**
- **candy and gum containing Xylitol, a toxic sweetener**
- **chocolate**
- **coffee**
- **garlic**
- **grapes**
- **hops, used in home beer brewing**
- **macadamia nuts**
- **moldy foods**
- **mushroom plants**
- **mustard seeds**
- **onions**
- **onion powder**
- **peach pits**
- **potato leaves and stems**
- **raisins**
- **rhubarb leaves**
- **salt**
- **tea**
- **tomato leaves and stems**
- **walnuts**
- **Yeast dough**

# Household Dangers

## PET PROOFING YOUR HOME

Just as parents childproof their home, so should pet owners' pet-proof theirs. Four-legged members of the family, like infants and small children, are naturally curious and love to explore their environment with their paws, claws, and mouth. But they can't know what is dangerous and what is not... so it's up to you to make your home a haven.

The following tips can help ensure that your pet enjoys a long, happy, and accident-free life in your

### All Around the House

- Install screen windows to guard against falls.
- Don't let young pets out on balconies, upper porches, or high decks.
- Many house plants, including dieffenbachia, elephant ear, spider plants, and more are poisonous if eaten. Remove them or put them out of reach of hanging baskets.
- Puppies & kittens love to chew when they're teething, so unplug, remove, or cover electrical cords.
- Don't leave a room where a fire is lit, or space heater is being used unattended.
- Plastic bags pose a suffocation risk.
- If your pet can put something in his mouth, he probably will.
- Don't leave small, sharp, easily swallowed objects lying around.

### In the Garage

- Cats enjoy naps near a warm engine, so before you start the ignition, honk your horn and make sure your pet is not under or near the car.
- Pets like the smell and taste of antifreeze and windshield washer. They are both highly poisonous.
- Tightly cover all containers and wipe up any spills.
- Paint, gasoline and other dangerous chemicals should be stored out of reach.

### In the Kitchen, Laundry Room & Bathroom

- Never leave burners or irons on unattended.
- Dangerous household chemicals such as bleach and ammonia should be stored out of your pet's reach.
- Check before closing washer and dryer lids - your pet might climb in and become trapped.
- Keep toilet lids down-small pets can drown if they fall in.
- Medicines, shampoo, suntan lotions and other personal care items can poison your pet. Make sure he can't get hold of them.

### Out In the Yard

- Some outdoor plants, like ivy and oleander, can be poisonous to pets.
- Keep pets away from lawns and gardens treated with chemicals.
- Store garden tools and chemicals securely.
- Keep garden shed locked.
- Cover swimming pools and hot tubs- your pet might fall in and not be able to get out.

### Avoiding Cat-astrophes

- Many objects used as cat toys- yarn, string, rubber bands, aluminum foil- can be extremely harmful if swallowed.
- Cats love to sleep in warm, dark places, so close drawers, chest, and closets- your pet might suffocate if trapped.
- A cat looks adorable with a ribbon tied around its neck... but it poses a suffocation risk. Instead, opt for a breakaway collar.

### Dog-gone Disasters

- Eliminate hooks or similar objects placed at your dog's shoulder height- his collar or harness could become tangled, and he could choke.
- A tall perimeter fence or invisible electrical fence around your property will minimize the risk of your dog running out into traffic or roaming far from home.

### Home For the Holidays

- Tinsel, icicles, Christmas tree lights and glass ornaments will be sure to tempt your pet's curiosity-but all could be lethal if chewed or swallowed.
- Poinsettia, holly and mistletoe are poisonous to your pets.

# Signs Your Pet Needs to See the Vet

- vomiting
- diarrhea
- unintended weight loss
- change in appetite-decreased or increased
- change in normal activity level: lethargy, hyperactivity, or restlessness
- limping
- sudden inability to move back legs
- crying in pain when touched
- clumsy or disoriented behavior
- seizures
- any loss of consciousness
- coughing, especially at night
- panting in a cat
- any difficulty breathing or labored breathing
- any blue, purple, or pale hue to the tongue and gums
- sudden collapse
- excessive drooling
- straining in the litter box without producing any urine
- crying out while urinating
- change in urination: location, frequency, amount, color, smell
- bloated abdomen
- sneezing excessively
- uncontrolled bleeding
- nosebleed or bruising anywhere on the body
- any unusual odor
- hair loss
- runny eyes or nose
- squinting



# Poisonous Plants

***This list of potentially dangerous house plants and outdoor plants is extremely long. Identification of all the different types of poisonous plants is not possible here, but a selected list of the most common plants that can be toxic to your pet follows:***

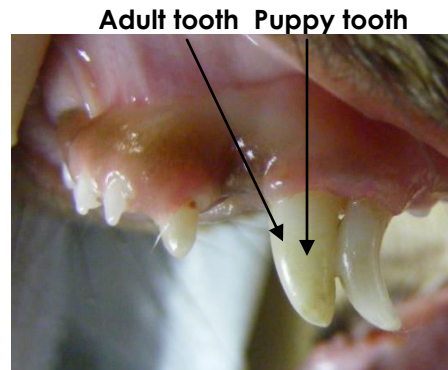
Alfalfa	Cordatum	Nephtysis	Marijuana	Ribbon Plant
Aloe	Coriara	Heartleaf	Peace Lily	Rubrum Lily
Amaryllis	Corn Plant	Philodendron	Mexican	Saddle Leaf
Andromeda	Creeping	Heavenly	Breadfruit	Philodendron
Japonica	Charlie	Bamboo	Milkweed	Sago Palm
Angel's Trumpet	Crown of Thorns	Holly	Mint, Purple	Satin Pothos
Arrowgrass	Cutleaf	Horsehead	Moonweed	Schefflera
Asian Lily	Philodendron	Philodendron	Morning Glory	Skunk Cabbage
Asparagus Fern	Cycads	Hurricane Plant	Mother-in-Law	Spinach
Australian Nut	Cyclamen	Hyacinth	Mushrooms and	Spotted Dumb
Autumn Crocus	Daffodil	Hydrangea	Toadstools	Cane
Avocado	Day Lily	Iris	Narcissus	Stargazer Lily
Azalea	Delphinium	Ivy	Needlepoint Ivy	St. Johnswort
Bird of Paradise	Devil's Ivy	Jack in the	Nephtysis	Striped
US and Euro	Dieffenbachia	Pulpit	Nettles	Dracaena
Bittersweet	Dumb Cane	Japanese Snow	Nightshade	Sweetheart Ivy
Black Locust	Easter Lily	Lily	Oleander	Swiss Cheese
Bleeding Heart	Elderberry	Japanese Yew	Onion	Plant
Branching Ivy	Elephant Ears	(aka Yew)	Orange Day Lily	Taro Vine
Buckeye	Emerald Fern	Jasmine	Panda	Tomato Plant
Buddhist Pine	English Ivy	Jerusalem	Peachtree	Thorn Apple
Buttercup	Fern	Cherry	Philodendron	Tree
Caladium	Fiddle-Leaf	Jimsonweed	Pertusum	Philodendron
Calla Lily	Philodendron	Kalanchoe	Plumosa Fern	Tropic Snow
Castor Bean	Flamingo Plant	Lace Fern	Poinsettia	Dumb Cane
Cherry	Florida Beauty	Lacy Tree	Pokewood	Tulip
Cherry Tree	Foxglove	Larkspur	Precatory Bean	Umbrella Plant
Chokeberry	Fruit Salad Plant	Lily of the Valley	Queensland Nut	Variable
Chinaberry Tree	Glacier Ivy	Locoweed	Red Emerald	Dieffenbachia
Chinese	Gladiolas	Lupine	Red Lily	Variiegated
Evergreen	Glory Lily	Macadamia	Red-Margined	Philodendron
Christmas Rose	Gold Dust	Nut	Dracaena	Varneckei
Chrysanthemum	Dracaena	Madagascar	Red Princess	Dracaena
Clematis	Golden Pothos	Dragon Tree	Rhododendron	Wood Lily
Clover	Green Gold	Marble Queen	Rhubarb	Yucca

Symptoms will vary from animal to animal. Some may eat these plants and exhibit no symptoms; others will exhibit local irritants such as drooling, vomiting, diarrhea, irritation to the mouth and skin or swelling of area around the mouth. Extreme cases of poisoning may cause convulsions, tremors to the heart, respiratory and kidney problems, and in the most extreme cases, may cause coma or even death. It is good to note that most dogs and cats will vomit after chewing on plants. This probably does not mean poisoning. Only severe and persistent vomiting is a danger sign, especially when accompanied with one or more of the other symptoms.

***Be sure to know the names of all the plants in and around your home and keep potentially toxic plants out of the areas accessible to your pet. If your pet should happen to be poisoned by a hazardous plant or any other substance, contact your veterinarian immediately.***

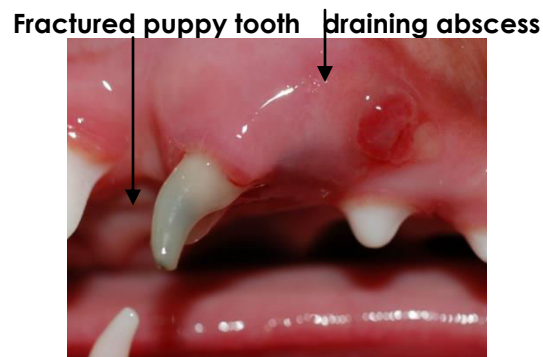
# RETAINED DECIDUOUS (PUPPY) TEETH

Most dogs lose their puppy teeth by 6 months of age. This process sometimes fails to occur in certain pets, especially toy and small breed dogs. Retained puppy teeth create numerous problems that can be eliminated through EARLY INTERVENTION AND EXTRACTION of affected teeth.



Over-crowding is a problem because when there is an adult tooth and a puppy tooth present, both are occupying the same space. Oftentimes, there is no gum tissue between the adult and puppy tooth to prevent food and debris from entering the sockets and rapidly progressing to periodontal disease. Orthodontic issues are also more likely to occur when deciduous teeth are retained because they push the adult teeth out of proper alignment and can lead to a great deal of pain for your pet. Major orthodontic procedures can oftentimes be avoided simply by extracting the deciduous teeth as soon as the problem is recognized (interceptive orthodontics).

**THERE SHOULD NEVER BE A DECIDUOUS AND ADULT OF THE SAME TOOTH VISIBLE IN THE MOUTH AT THE SAME TIME!** Waiting until the puppy is neutered is NOT recommended. Immediate extraction of the deciduous tooth will increase the likelihood of the adult tooth erupting into the socket in a normal position.



**FRACTURED DECIDUOUS TEETH** exposes the pulp (blood and nerve supply inside of the tooth). Once exposed to oral bacteria, pain and infection occur and may eventually affect the permanent tooth that is developing nearby. A fractured puppy tooth should **NEVER** remain in the mouth until the pet is spayed or neutered.