

# It's A Dog's World™

## K - 9 A C A D E M Y

3890 Walnut Ave. Chino, Ca. 91710 • Local 909-548-3150 • Toll Free 866-324-DOGS • Fax 909-548-3154  
www.ItsADogsWorld.biz

### PUPPY KINDERGARTEN WEEK 1

#### INTRODUCTION

To have the dog of your dreams, there are three essential stages to developing a well-behaved pet. First, obedience training is the foundation. Without a solid foundation in obedience, your dog will not understand discipline, what you are trying to communicate to him or what is expected of him. Second, confinement conditioning teaches your dog how to behave properly by restricting him to areas that you deem appropriate and safe. Puppies are like human babies and they need constant supervision until they are to keep them and your belongings safe. Third, you must wait for nature to take its course and allow your dog to mature. If you have done the first two stages well, you will have a well-mannered pet in no time!

#### PHILOSOPHY

Our primary goal is to help you train your puppy to respond to what you are asking it to do. You will learn how to be a leader for your puppy and develop a life-long bond with your puppy while it is impressionable and eager to learn. Our training methods are based upon a learning theory called “operant conditioning”, which employs positive reinforcement. Positive reinforcement means that we use treats, toys, etc. to reward and motivate your puppy so that we may achieve the results that we want. Puppies are extremely impressionable, so it is very important that all of your puppy’s experiences are positive ones. Harsh corrections such as yelling or spanking your puppy may lead your puppy to fear not only you, but others as well, and in some instances it may lead your puppy to become aggressive toward people.



#### REWARDS

You need to develop a reward system for your puppy. A reward could be tactile praise (touch), verbal praise, toys, or treats. We will be teaching your dog to perform various behaviors using a technique called “luring”. Food is the easiest method of luring your dog into doing certain behaviors – most dogs are motivated to work for food! Try to work with your dog using treats to start off with. If your dog isn’t showing enough motivation to work for the treats, try holding off feeding your dog until after the training session. In other words, make your dog work for his or her food.

The size of the treat should be about the size of a fingernail, or smaller, depending on the size of your dog. It should be moist and easy to eat quickly. Good examples of treats to use are hot dogs, cheese, beef jerky treats or Natural Balance™ treat rolls. A bad

example would be something like a dog biscuit or its kibble. You don't want the dog to be distracted by what it is eating – it should just be a quick flavor burst on the tongue.

## **RELEASE WORD**

Before starting, pick a release word to use to release your dog from a command. It's similar to the "at ease" command for a soldier. Once you have given the release command, it signifies to your dog that he or she has completed the command to your satisfaction. Don't choose a release word that you use in your everyday language. Examples of good release words that you may choose are: "Break", "Release", "Free", "Relax" or "Easy". Steer clear of using the word "ok" as this is frequently used in everyday language. Later on in the training, the only things that can release your dog from a command, out of the house or car is the release word, the "Come" command, the "Heel" command or the "Let's go" command.

## **WATCH**

"Watch" is a fundamental and essential command for all dogs to know. Teaching your dog the "watch" command teaches your dog to have good eye contact with you. Good eye contact keeps your dog focused on you, instead of other dogs, skateboards, or in general various distractions that can excite or agitate your dog.

To teach the "watch" command start by having a treat between your thumb and your index finger. Take the treat up to your eyes and give the command "watch". Once your dog makes eye contact with you say, "Yes!" and give the treat. Gradually increase the time that the dog is giving you the eye contact by having your dog give you the eye contact and delay the moment that you give the treat.

When you begin to work on this command, train in a low distraction area. For example, work on this command while you are watching television in your living room. Eventually, increase the distraction level in the environment that you are working in. Your dog should be able to give you the "watch" command while you are sitting in the waiting room at the veterinarian's office or while at the park.

## **CRADLE & HOLD**

It is important for your puppy to learn to relax and submit calmly to your handling and restraint. This helps your puppy learn to settle down. It will also become important as your puppy grows and encounters situations where he may need to be examined by vets or handled by groomers.

There are several options for the "Cradle & Hold", depending on the size of your dog. In general, most dogs can be held in your arms, across your body with their chest resting snugly in the crook of your elbow and its rear end supported by your other arm. In this position, your puppy's front legs will be under your arm with his head over your arm.

A second position, especially for very young or small puppies, is the "football" hold. In this position, you can hold your puppy like a football at your side, with your arm bent and your palm under the puppy's chest, with several fingers between the puppy's front legs.

The third position, which works well for larger puppies, is done by placing the puppy between your legs, facing away from you with your hands on the puppy's shoulders. The puppy can be sitting or lying down.

In all methods, it is likely that your puppy may squirm, wiggle or whine. Do not give your puppy any attention when it is acting in this manner. Instead, keep a firm, snug grip on the puppy but ignore the dog and do not give eye contact or try to sooth the dog verbally. When the puppy has calmed down and relaxed, you may relax your hold and give the puppy gentle, quiet praise.

### **LEAVE IT COMMAND**

There may be times when you need to get your dog's attention BEFORE he or she gets something in his or her mouth, (e.g.- a dead bird, food, etc.) or if your dog becomes too fixated or focused on something (a cat, another animal, a person walking past your property, etc.) You are going to teach your dog to look at you every time you give the command, "*Leave it*".

**Step 1:** To begin teaching the "*Leave it*" command, start by holding a "high value" treat in one hand. In your other hand, have several smaller reward treats. Keep the reward hand behind your back so that your dog doesn't get distracted. Keeping the "*Leave it*" treat in your loosely closed hand, offer it to your dog and say, "*Leave it*". Of course, your dog is going to try to get the treat out of your hand. Keep repeating "*Leave it*" and try not to pull your hand away from your dog. Your dog should eventually get frustrated and will usually look up at you as if to say, "What do I have to do to get this food?" As soon as your dog looks up at you, give verbal praise ("Good Leave It!") and reward your dog with a treat from the hand behind your back. Keep repeating this until your dog immediately looks away from the hand that's off limits.

**Step 2:** Once your dog is consistently looking away from the "*Leave it*" hand, it's time to advance the concept. Put your dog on a leash, and toss the "*Leave it*" treat a couple of feet away from your dog. If your dog starts to move towards the treat, cover the treat with your hand or foot and give him a verbal correction (e.g. – "No!") accompanied with a mild leash correction. Once your dog stops attempting to get the treat on the floor and looks at you, promptly reinforce him or her by giving your dog a treat from your reward hand along with verbal praise. Soon, your dog will understand to ignore the treat on the floor. Once this begins to happen, you can begin saying to your dog, "*Leave it*" as you toss a treat on the floor. You want your dog to learn that when s/ he hears "*Leave it*", s/he comes to you for a reward rather than picking up what is on the ground.

Next, begin to watch your dog for signs of avoidance when you toss a treat on the ground. Signs of avoidance can vary from dog to dog. Watch carefully, or you may miss your dog's cue for avoidance. Typically, most dogs will look away, look at you, or simply move its head away from the treat. Once you have determined that your dog is displaying signs of avoidance, immediately praise him or her and reward with a treat. When the response is reliable, you can introduce other items and practice "*Leave it*"

### **HOUSEBREAKING**

From this point on, your dog will not soil in the house! Do not use wee wee pads or newspaper to teach your dog to go potty in the house. We are going to teach him or her to go outside from the very beginning. We don't want your puppy to get confused that it is ever ok to go potty in the house.

You are never going to correct your puppy after he has gone potty. If you left the room for ten minutes, and when you came back there is a fresh spot where your dog has soiled, you are not going to correct your dog. The primary reason for not correcting after the fact is that your dog will learn to hide going to the bathroom better. Typically, dogs will learn to go potty behind the couch or some other area that is out of sight to avoid being corrected. If you find an area where your dog has gone potty and you didn't



catch him or her in the act, you are going to put your puppy away, and clean up the mess. You don't want your dog to see you cleaning up the area, because your dog will learn that mom or dad will clean the messes. Use a product called *Nature's Miracle* to clean the area. This product will completely neutralize the odor to prevent your dog from wanting to come back and remark the area. Place any stool that is left behind outside in the area that your dog goes potty in. If you catch your dog in the act, distract him or her from finishing, grab your dog and put him or her outside.

Wait five minutes for your dog to finish, and let your dog back inside. If your dog doesn't finish going to the bathroom (because you scared it right out of him!), let him/her back inside, but keep a watchful eye on your dog.

In order to get your dog potty trained, you are going to have to have him or her on a fixed feeding and watering schedule. Typically for puppies under a year of age, you will want to feed them 2-3 times a day. Try to feed at the same times everyday. Usually, what goes in must come out within 15 minutes. So, once you have fed your dog, prepare to take him or her outside to eliminate. Do not feed or give any water after 7 p.m. at night. **Do not free feed.** There are several problems with free feeding. First, you cannot monitor intake and output. This will make it extremely difficult to potty train. Second, if your dog stops eating because of sickness, you may not notice right away. Therefore, you may not catch the illness until it is too late. Third, if you ever plan on traveling with your pet, it will make it extremely difficult to keep food out at all times. You will want your dog to eat as soon as you make a pit stop so that he or she can eat and go potty all at one stop. In addition, only give your dog 15 minutes to eat the food that you put down. If they don't eat in this period of time, pick up the food and feed again at the next scheduled feeding. Your dog will learn to eat when you set the food down. If you have a picky eater, you may want to add a large spoonful of wet dog food with a little hot water. Keep in mind that wet dog food can stain the teeth and cause your dog to need more dental visits than necessary.

There are five options that you can use while your dog is in the house.

1. **Keep your eyes on him.** Whenever your new puppy is in the house, it is important that you keep a watchful eye on him or her at all times. Look for signs of pre-elimination. Pre-elimination are signals that your dog may send out that he or she is looking for a spot to go potty. Typically, your dog will pace, turn around in circles while sniffing the ground. If you see any of these signs, immediately take your dog outside. Wait 5 minutes for him or her to go potty while you boringly say, "Go potty". Keep some treats with you so that when your dog does go potty, you can give him or her a treat and say, "Good go potty". If you follow this consistently, you can eventually get your dog to go potty on command. If your dog doesn't go potty, bring him or her back inside and watch carefully.

2. **Body tether.** If you are unable to watch your dog closely, you may choose to body tether him or her. For instance, while you are picking up around the house put your dog's leash on and ties the leash around your waist or belt loop. This will keep your dog with you at all times while you are working.
3. **Fixed tether.** If you are relaxing watching television, you may choose to do a fixed tether. Buy light line and bolt snaps from *Wal-Mart* or *Target* (you can find it in the camping or hunting section). Cut the light line into small 4' pieces. Burn the ends to keep it from fraying. Attach the bolt snaps. You may need to treat the light line in a no chew solution like vinegar and hot pepper to keep your dog from chewing through it. You may also use chain leashes for a fixed tether. Place these fixed tethers throughout the house. Tie them around unmovable, heavy objects like coffee table, posts, etc. While you are watching TV, or working at your desk attach your dog to the fixed tether. This way you can have your dog with you, but he or she is limited to the area that they can explore. Most dogs do not like to go potty in their immediate area (with the exception of pet store or pound puppies). Do not make the fixed tether so long that he or she can go potty and get far enough away from it to be comfortable.
4. **Crate.** A crate is one of the best options in getting your dog potty trained. They have many uses that can become invaluable latter on. Remember that dogs are den – oriented animals. Unlike humans, they like confined areas to sleep in. At first, to get your new puppy used to the crate and to keep him or her from going potty in the middle of the night, crate him or her. You may need to remove the crate from your bedroom at first if your dog is keeping you awake at night with his or her crying. Once you dog is used to the crate, bring the crate back into the bedroom. Dogs are pack oriented and see you as an extension of their pack. They like to sleep with their pack. To eliminate any future frustration consider finding a spot for you're dog to sleep in the bedroom at night. Puppies that are four months and older can start holding their bladder and bowels throughout the night. There should be no reason to have to wake up in the middle of the night to let your dog to go potty. Crates have many great uses. Before you say this just isn't for me consider these points. If it is a 110° or raining, you can leave the dog in the house while you run errands. If you intend to travel, your dog can ride safely in the car in the crate. Crates confine hair and dirt from your dog to one area. If your dog ever gets hurt or needs surgery, your vet may tell you that he or she needs to be confined to one area. If your dog is already used to the crate, there is no additional stress for dog staying in the crate. When you are busy and cannot directly supervise your puppy from going potty, you can keep him or her in the crate in the house with you. When using the crate, keep in mind that your dog can be in the crate 12 hours during a 24-hour period of time. This means that after sleeping in the crate all night, your dog can be in the crate 4 hours during the day.



5. **Puppy proofed room.** The least desirable option is to use a puppy-proofed room like a bathroom, kitchen or laundry room. Usually, these rooms are not carpeted. Make the area small enough that the dog would not be comfortable to go potty. Remove any objects that the dog may decide to chew on or get into. The problem with this option is that you usually cannot make the area small enough and the dog will get into trouble by finding things to chew on like wall plaster. However, a puppy-proofed room is a good option to use once your dog is a little older and understands housebreaking. You can use the puppy-proofed room to get your dog used to being in the house unattended. It works even better if you can install a doggy door that leads to the outside from this room. Professionals can install doggy doors into walls, windows, or just about anything. This way, your dog has the choice to be inside or out. As your dog is successful, you can open up this room to a slightly larger area like your bedroom and then keep opening up portions of your house until your dog has full access to the house while you are away.

There are three critical time periods where your dog is most likely to need to go potty. If you stay aware of these time periods, you can “beat your dog to the punch” by taking him or her outside to go potty **before** they make a mistake. These time periods are:

1. Right after awakening from a nap or sleep.
2. Right after any exercise or excitement.
3. Fifteen to thirty minutes after eating or drinking.

Follow these steps closely and you will have your dog potty trained in no time!

## **MANAGEMENT**

The key to getting a well-behaved dog is to manage your dog properly. If you allow your dog to have full reign of the backyard while you are at work, chances are your dog will not receive a correction when chewing on the hose or the air conditioning wires around the A/C unit. The only way to truly prevent your dog from doing these bad behaviors and to give you peace of mind is to confine your dog during the day while you are gone. Usually, a dog run is the best tool to use for this purpose. There are several benefits to using a dog run. They are as follows:

- Allows you to keep the dog away from objects that he may destroy or hurt himself on while you are away.
- Gives him or her a cement surface to go potty on, making it easy to clean and keeps the brown spots from ruining your beautifully manicured lawn.
- Gives him or her a cement surface to stay on preventing your dog from getting muddy or dirty during the day, thereby making it more enjoyable to allow him or her to live in the house.
- Gives you peace of mind knowing that he or she has not escaped or been stolen out of your backyard.
- Allows your gardeners, pool man, gasman, or construction workers access to your yard without you having to worry if they secured the gate properly before leaving the yard.
- Allows you to separate your dog from guest or children when have a party, etc.

So, during the day while you are gone you may want to use your dog run. While you are home or sleeping, you may want to use the dog crate. You are not forced to use these. They are just suggestions that have been successful for many dog owners.



## **HOMEWORK**

For your homework this week:

- Practice the “Watch” and “Leave It” commands.
- If your puppy is not already housebroken implement the procedures for Housebreaking and confinement conditioning/crate training.
- Periodically try restraining your puppy using the “Cradle & Hold” method. Be sure to wait until your puppy stops struggling before you release.

Don't forget that your puppy has a very short attention span, so keep practice sessions to no more than 5 to 10 minutes. Remember to stay positive and reward your puppy **every time** for his successful behaviors.

