

12 QUICK TIPS FOR NEW PUPPIES!

Life with a new puppy is similar to life with a toddler. (A vampire toddler with needle-sharp teeth, who jumps and barks, and poops on the carpet :) These are all normal puppy behaviors, and easily curbed with patience and a few good tips.

- 1. The first several days can be scary and overwhelming for a new puppy,** especially if it's the first time away from littermates, or if puppy has been moved to and from several different homes or born in a shelter, **so be patient!** New environment, new people, new schedule, new rules, can all be very confusing to a young puppy brain. Puppies are not trying to be dominant, stubborn, or purposefully destructive, so teach your new puppy as you would a child. Aim for small goals and set set your puppy up to succeed. **Teach with kindness and repetition.**
- 2. Get a crate!** It makes house training easier, and puppies do need timeouts and naps throughout the day. If the crate is used properly and positively, it becomes a safe place for your puppy to retreat to when overwhelmed or tired. As a general rule of thumb, puppies can hold it as many hours as they are months old. For example, a two month old puppy should be able to hold it for two hours. A four month old puppy should be able to hold it for four hours. (Puppies can usually hold it longer when sleeping).
- 3. Pick a potty spot.** It's a good idea to take puppy out often, and put going potty on cue. The first place you take your puppy to potty will be where puppy returns to potty in the future, so go out WITH puppy and reward as soon as puppy does her business. **Do not punish, startle, scold or spank if puppy has an accident.** Potty training is an ongoing process and there will be mistakes. Have cleaning products prepared and pay more attention for clues that puppy needs to go out. Sniffing, walking in circles, or going back and forth to the door are all signs to watch for.
- 4. Feed a high-quality combination of wet and dry food twice a day,** preferably three times per day until your puppy is at least six months old. Even the best dog food is still a processed product. Just like people, dogs should have some fresh food in their diet, and meat, fruits and vegetables can be added to your dogs food. Eating people food does not make a pup more likely to beg or misbehave at meal times, and food is actually a great training tool, you can use part of your puppies meals as rewards throughout the day.
- 5. Don't make puppy sleep alone.** Let your puppy sleep in your bedroom, at least for the first few nights. Put the crate next to your bed so she can hear you breathing, snoring, etc... and you can comfort her if necessary. This will also help with potty training, as younger puppies will still need a midnight potty break.
- 6. Set a daily routine, and include playtime, training time, and cuddle time.** Puppies feel more secure with a consistent schedule and when they know what's going to happen. All things - such as potty training, basic obedience, and house rules will proceed more smoothly if your puppy knows what to expect from her day. People are also busy, so this will also help you set aside scheduled time to meet puppies needs.
- 7. Make training fun!** Training isn't a 30 minute session with rules and regulations, but two to three minute training games throughout the day. Attend a positive based puppy class. Your pup will learn some basic obedience, but the real benefit of puppy classes is socialization with other puppies and people. Introduce new experiences slowly and never let your puppy get

overwhelmed. Also, avoid dog parks. Not only does that put your not-fully vaccinated puppy at risk of catching a disease, but many dogs can be bullies. A couple bad experiences could make your puppy fearful of other dogs in the future.

8. Provide toys, chewies, puzzle feeders, and food dispensing toys. Teething puppies need a variety of textures and shapes to chew on, and chewing helps with teething pain, and helps relieve boredom and anxiety. Teach your puppy to self-soothe by chewing on a bully stick, bone, or sucking goop out of a Kong. Puzzle toys help puppies learn to think and problem solve. Mental exercise is just as, if not more important than physical exercise.

9. Make a puppy safe room. Have a small area, such as a laundry room or bathroom set up as a puppy safe room for longer absences or when you can't supervise. Have a bed and water dish on one side, potty pads on top of a towel or bathmat on the other side, and include plenty of toys and chewies. Leaving a radio on with calm music is also helpful.

10. Baby gates are your friend! Use them to keep puppy separated the first few days from resident dogs or cats so you can **take introductions safely and slowly**. Remember, puppies are impulsive and tend to chase things that run. Introducing your puppy to smaller animals or potentially cranky larger animals should be done with care. Baby gates are also good to confine puppy in a smaller area, or to keep puppy out of parts of the house where you don't want to risk an accident or chewing incident.

11. Supervise, supervise, supervise! Then **SUPERVISE!** If you cannot keep your eye on your puppy, she needs to be in her crate or in the puppy room. Pick up anything you don't want destroyed, if it's on the floor, it WILL be chewed, and it will be your fault. Puppies do not know the difference between a toy and your shoe, so this is your mistake, not hers.

12. PUPPIES GROWL, BARK, AND BITE. It is NOT aggression. Do not react by yelling, smacking her, rolling her on her back or holding her muzzle shut. Sometimes yelping like another puppy works, as does walking away, becoming boring, and putting a toy in the puppies mouth. Puppy needs to be taught what is and what is not appropriate to bite. **Don't encourage behavior that you'll regret when puppy gets big.** Nibbling on your hand or jumping up is cute when she weighs ten pounds. It won't be fun when she's bigger. Don't get angry or offended when your puppy chews on you.

Please do some basic research. Proper socialization and training during your puppies first few months is critical. Every interaction your puppy has with you or another dog or animal is a teaching opportunity, and your puppy is learning something, good or bad. Your puppy is a blank slate, and her experiences with you affect her behavior and personality for the rest of her life.

If you have problems or questions about your new dog or puppy, please contact **Susan Wiater** at **Out Of The Dog House** 303-506-3286 www.outofthedoghousedenver.com. Discounts available for all adopters and escue/shelter volunteers.

