



Centre Street Animal Hospital

www.centrestreetanimalhospital.com

Martin Slome DVM & Associates

42-7700 Bathurst Street
Thornhill, ON

PHONE: 905-771-9855

FAX: 905-771-7260

reception@centrestreetanimalhospital.com

PUPPY RECOMMENDATION BOOKLET FOR NEW OWNERS

PART 1: Introduction

PART 2: Nutrition and Feeding

PART 3: Parasites

PART 4: Spaying and Neutering

PART 5: Vaccinations

PART 6: Housebreaking

PART 7: Training

We would like to congratulate you on the acquisition of your new puppy! Owning a dog is an extremely rewarding experience, but it also carries with it quite a bit of responsibility. We hope this document will give you the information needed to make informed decisions regarding your puppy. First, let us say that we are grateful that you have chosen us to help you with your puppy's health care. If you have questions concerning any subject related to your puppy's health, please feel free to call our hospital. Our entire professional team are always willing and happy to help you.

What type of playing should I expect from a puppy?

Stimulating play is important during the first week. Stalking and pouncing are important play behaviours in puppies and are necessary for proper muscular development. If given a sufficient outlet for these behaviours with toys, your puppy will be less likely to use family members for these activities. The best toys are lightweight and movable, look for toys that are branded for puppies and that take into account your puppy's size (as a 2-month-old Chihuahua is a very different size than a 2-month-old Great Dane). Any toy that is small enough to be swallowed should be avoided.

Can I discipline a puppy?

Disciplining a young puppy may be necessary if his/her behaviour threatens people or property, but harsh punishment should be avoided. Hand clapping and using shaker cans or horns can be intimidating enough to inhibit undesirable behaviour. However, remote punishment is preferred. Remote punishment consists of using something that appears unconnected to the punisher to stop the problem behaviour. Examples include using spray bottles, throwing objects in the direction of the puppy to startle (but not hit) it, and making loud noises. Remote punishment is preferred because the puppy associates punishment with the undesirable act and not with you.

When should my puppy be vaccinated?

There are many diseases that are fatal to dogs. Fortunately, we have the ability to prevent many of these by the use of very effective vaccines. In order to be effective, these vaccines must be given as a series of injections. Ideally, they are given at about 6-8, 12, and 16 weeks of age, but this schedule may vary somewhat depending on several factors.

Why does my puppy need more than one vaccination?

When the puppy nurses from its mother, it receives a temporary form of immunity through the mother's milk. This immunity is in the form of proteins called antibodies. For about 24-48 hours after birth, the puppy's intestine allows absorption of these antibodies directly into the blood stream. This immunity is of benefit during the first few weeks of the puppy's life, but, at some point, this immunity fails and the puppy must be able to make its own long-lasting immunity. Vaccinations are used for this purpose. As long as the mother's antibodies are present, vaccinations do not have a chance to stimulate the puppy's immune system. The mother's antibodies interfere by neutralizing the vaccine. Many factors determine when the puppy will be able to respond to the vaccinations. These include the level of immunity in the mother, how much antibody has been absorbed, and the number of vaccines given to the puppy. Since we do not know when an individual puppy will lose the short-term immunity, we give a series of vaccinations. The goal is that at least two of these will fall in the window of time when the puppy has lost immunity from its mother but has not yet been exposed to disease. A single vaccination, even if effective, is not likely to stimulate the long-term immunity which is so important. Rabies vaccine is an exception to this, since one injection given at the proper time is enough to produce long-term immunity. There are lots of choices of dog foods.

What should I feed my puppy?

Diet is extremely important in the growing months of a dog's life, and there are two important criteria that should be met in selecting food for your puppy. We recommend a NAME-BRAND FOOD made by a national dog food company (not a generic or local brand), and a form of food MADE FOR PUPPIES. This should be fed until your puppy is about 10-18 months of age, depending on its size. We recommend that you only buy food which has the AAFCO certification. Usually, you can find this information very easily on the label. AAFCO is an organization which oversees the entire pet food industry. It does not endorse any particular food, but it will certify that the food has met the minimum requirements for nutrition. Most of the commercial pet foods will have the AAFCO label. Generic brands often do not have it. In Canada, look for foods which are approved by the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association (CVMA). When looking at the AAFCO statement the gold standard is to find a food that indicates it has undergone "animal feeding tests" or "animal feeding trials", this indicates that the food has been officially tested before entering the consumer market. If the food uses the word "formulated" or "formulation" that means it meets the minimum guidelines set out by AAFCO but the food has not actually been tested before being sold. The AAFCO statement will also confirm whether the diet is appropriate for puppies, for adult dogs, or for all life stages. If you have an all life stages food it is appropriate for use during your puppy's growth period but may be best to switch to an adult maintenance diet once your puppy is full grown.

Feeding a dry, canned, or semi-moist form of dog food is acceptable. Each has advantages and disadvantages. Dry food is definitely the most inexpensive. It can be left in the dog's bowl without drying. The good brands of dry food are just as nutritious as the other forms.

As a rule, most veterinarians will recommend dry food for your puppy. Semi-moist and canned foods are also acceptable. However, both are considerably more expensive than dry food. They often are more appealing to the dog's taste; however, they are not more nutritious. If you feed a very tasty food, you are running the risk of creating a dog with a finicky appetite. In addition, the semi-moist foods can be high in sugar. Table foods are not recommended. Because they are generally very tasty, dogs will often begin to hold out for these and not eat their well-balanced dog food. If you choose to give your puppy table food, be sure that at least 90% of its diet is good quality commercial puppy food. We enjoy a variety of things to eat in our diet. However, most dogs actually prefer not to change from one food to another unless they are trained to do so by the way you feed them. Do not feel guilty if your dog is happy to just eat one food day after day, week after week. Commercials for dog food can be very misleading. If you watch carefully you will notice that commercials promote dog food on one basis, TASTE. Nutrition is rarely mentioned. Most of the "gourmet" foods are marketed to appeal to owners who want the best for their dogs; however, they do not offer the dog any nutritional advantage over a

good quality dry food, and they are far more expensive. If your dog eats a gourmet food very long, it will probably not be happy with other foods. If it needs a special diet due to a health problem later in life, it is very unlikely to accept it. Therefore, we do not encourage feeding gourmet dog foods.

How do I ensure that my puppy is well socialized?

The socialization period for dogs is between 4 and 12 weeks of age. During that time, the puppy is very impressionable to social influences. If it has good experiences with men, women, children, cats, other dogs, car rides, baths etc., it is likely to accept them throughout life. If the experiences are absent or unpleasant, it may become apprehensive or adverse to any of them. Therefore, during the period of socialization, we encourage you to expose your dog to as many types of social events and influences as possible.

Can I trim my puppy's toenails?

Puppies have very sharp toe nails. They can be trimmed with nail trimmers made for dogs and cats. If you take too much off the nail, you will get into the quick; bleeding and pain will occur. If this happens, neither you nor your dog will want to do this again. Therefore, a few points are helpful:

- If your dog has clear or white nails, you can see the pink of the quick through the nail. Avoid the pink area, and you should be out of the quick.
- If your dog has black nails, you will not be able to see the quick so only cut 1/32" (1 mm) of the nail at a time until the dog begins to get sensitive. The sensitivity will usually occur before you are into the blood vessel. With black nails, it is likely that you will get too close on at least one nail.
- If your dog has some clear and some black nails, use the average clear nail as a guide for cutting the black ones.
- When cutting nails, use sharp trimmers. Dull trimmers tend to crush the nail and cause pain even if you are not in the quick.
- You should always have styptic powder available. This is sold in pet stores under several trade names, but it will be labeled for use in trimming nails.

Why should I have my female dog spayed?

Spaying offers several advantages. The female's heat periods result in about 2-3 weeks of vaginal bleeding. This can be a struggle if your dog is kept indoors. Male dogs are attracted from blocks away and can almost seem to come out of the woodwork. They will try to go over, around, and through many doors or fences. Your dog will have a heat cycle about every 6 months. Spaying is the removal of the uterus and the ovaries. Therefore, heat periods no longer occur. In many cases, despite of your best effort, the female will become pregnant; spaying prevents unplanned litters of puppies.

Even more importantly: it has been proven that as the female dog gets older, there is a significant incidence of breast cancer and uterine infections if she has not been spayed. Spaying before she has any heat periods will virtually eliminate the chance of either. If you do not plan to breed your dog, we strongly recommend that she be spayed before her first heat period. This can be done anytime after she is 6 months old. If your dog goes into heat it is important to be aware that their cycle differs from what we are used to as humans. Dogs will start bleeding before they are able to get pregnant, this bleeding will occur for around 7-14 days and towards the latter half of the bleeding the dog will start to be receptive to mating and potentially able to get pregnant. If your dog goes into heat and you do not want to breed her, it is important to keep her away from any intact male dogs for at least a month once she starts bleeding, this will avoid any unwanted pregnancies. To protect your home while the bleeding is occurring, dog diapers are available in most pet stores.

If I choose to breed my female dog, when should that be done?

If you plan to breed your dog, she should have at least two heat cycles first. This will allow her to physically mature allowing her to be a better mother without such a physical drain on her. We do not recommend breeding after 5 years of age unless she has been bred prior to that. Having her first litter after 5 years of age increases the risk of problems during the pregnancy and/or delivery. Once your dog has had her last litter, she should be spayed to prevent the reproductive problems older dogs have.

Why should I have my male dog neutered?

Neutering offers several advantages. Male dogs are attracted to a female dog in heat and will climb over or go through fences to find her. Male dogs are more aggressive and more likely to fight, especially with other male dogs. As dogs age, the prostate gland frequently enlarges and causes difficulty urinating and defecating. Also, as they become sexually mature most male dogs will start marking their territory and will deposit little bits of urine very frequently on most surfaces they encounter. Neutering will solve, or greatly help, all of these problems that come with owning a male dog. The surgery can be performed any time after the dog is 6 months old.

NUTRITION AND FEEDING

Good feeding habits start as soon as you get your puppy! Your puppy's diet will influence his or her health status, development, appearance and attitude. How you feed your puppy will influence many behaviour aspects, from house-training to begging. It is also important to prevent your puppy from gaining too much weight, which can predispose them to obesity later in life, and its associated health problems. Here are some tips to get you off to a good start:

- Choose your puppy's diet carefully! There is excessive misinformation in the market regarding puppy foods. We know it's confusing, particularly with all the advertising and marketing efforts by competing companies. The old adage, "you get what you pay for" used to be an easy marker, but there are now multiple new companies which market themselves as 'high end' and charge accordingly which still may not provide the best and most balanced nutrition for your puppy. We encourage you not to compare diets using the "Guaranteed Analysis" on the label – it is a chemical analysis only that measures gross quantities of ingredient types it tells you nothing about the quality or digestibility of the ingredients. Please don't hesitate to call us or ask us about any issues regarding your puppy's diet – we are not interested in selling you food you don't need. We are interested in your puppy's health and well-being, and helping you understand the differences in food and how they impact your puppy. For more information on choosing an appropriate food for your puppy, see the earlier section that references the AAFCO statement.
- Do not "free choice feed" your puppy Free choice feeding is essentially feeding your puppy as much he/she wants to eat. Free choice feeding can contribute to digestive upset (vomiting and diarrhea), bloat, difficulties in house training, and obesity. The best approach is to feed your puppy's daily allotment of food in two or three measured meals a day (3 meals a day for puppies under 12 weeks of age). If your puppy hasn't eaten his measured amount of food within 15 minutes, remove it. Continue on with the same measured proportion at the next meal. If you find your puppy consistently isn't finishing his meal but is otherwise doing well, cut back on the total daily allotment. On the other hand, even if your puppy devours his meal in a few minutes, do not give more food. Watch his/her body condition and review this with us at each visit.

- Avoid feeding your puppy “human food” Establishing right from the start that “human food” is “off-limits” will reduce begging and an increased opportunity for obesity. It also helps minimize the chance of dogs becoming very picky eaters. If you must feed some “human food”, stick to small amounts of low-calorie options such as vegetables, rice etc., but always put them in your puppy’s bowl. We recommend not feeding your puppy from the table.
- Familiarize yourself with healthy treats We all like to treat our puppies. It helps us in socializing, training and just plain loving them. There are several healthy treat options now on the market. Ask us about home and packaged treats that would be suitable! Remember, many treats on the market have more calories than you would find in a ½ cup of puppy food. If your puppy enjoys his/her regular kibble, feel free to use those as treats as well!
- Use meals as a housebreaking opportunity! Puppies normally eliminate 5 to 15 minutes after eating a meal. Therefore, after you feed your puppy, take him or her outside to the appropriate place in your yard where you would like them to eliminate and wait for the magic moment. Praise your puppy for a job well done! Puppies also need to eliminate after naps and play sessions. Use this to your advantage in training and avoiding “accidents”!
- Food is an excellent training tool! Talk to us about training your puppy with regards to food rewards. It makes training easier and more positive for you and your puppy! Feed your puppy in a quiet place, and avoid feeding prior to or just after exercise. This helps establish consistency, reduces excitement around a meal, and reduces the incidences of gastrointestinal upset.
- Change diets slowly If you are changing your puppy’s diet, mix the new food with the previous diet in small amounts the first day or two. Then the proportion of new diet can be gradually increased over a week or so until your puppy is completely on the new diet. This will reduce the likelihood of vomiting and diarrhea. Your puppy should have formed stools which are easy to pick up. Please inform us if this is not the case. Also let us know how many times a day your puppy has a bowel movement. This information will help us assess the health status of your puppy, the quality of the food he/she is eating, and will help you in your housebreaking efforts.
- Bones and milk Please do not feed your puppy any bones. Bone fragments and the damage they can cause in the gastrointestinal tract can result in your puppy potentially needing medication and sometimes even surgery that could have been avoided. We would be happy to provide you with suggestions for appropriate chew toys. Many puppies cannot digest milk and it can give them diarrhea. This can also interfere with the absorption of nutrients from the intestinal tract.

PARASITES

Do all puppies have worms?

Intestinal parasites are common in puppies. Puppies can become infected with parasites before they are born or later through their mother's milk. The microscopic examination of a stool sample will usually help us to determine the presence of intestinal parasites. We recommend this exam for all puppies. Please bring a stool sample at your earliest convenience if one has not been tested already. Even if we do not get a stool sample, we generally recommend the use of a deworming product that is safe and effective against several of the common worms of the dog. Depending on which medication is used it may need to be repeated in about 2 weeks, because the deworming medication only kills the adult

worms. Within 2 weeks, the larval stages will have become adults and will need to be treated. Dogs remain susceptible to reinfection with hookworms and roundworms. Periodic deworming throughout the dog's life may be recommended for dogs that go outdoors.

Tapeworms are one of the most common intestinal parasite of dogs. Puppies become infected with them when they swallow fleas; the eggs of the tapeworm live inside the flea. When the puppy chews or licks its skin, the flea may be swallowed. The flea is digested within the dog's intestine; the tapeworm hatches and then anchors itself to the intestinal lining. Therefore, exposure to fleas may result in a new infection; this can occur in as little as two weeks. Dogs infected with tapeworms may pass small segments of the worms in their stool. The segments are white in colour and look like grains of rice. They are about 1/8 inch (3 mm) long and may be seen crawling on the surface of the stool. They may also stick to the hair under the tail. If that occurs, they will dry out, shrink to about half their size, and become golden in colour. Tapeworm segments do not pass every day or in every stool sample; therefore, inspection of several consecutive bowel movements may be needed to find them. We may examine a stool sample in our office and not find them, then you may find them the next day. If you find them at any time, please notify us so we may provide the appropriate drug for treatment. Other common parasites that can be seen include roundworms, whipworms, hookworms, and coccidia.

How important are heartworms?

Heartworms are important parasites, especially in certain climates. They live in your dog's heart and cause major damage to the heart and lungs. Heartworms are transmitted by mosquitoes so your dog does not have to be in contact with another dog or even need to go outside to be exposed. Fortunately, we have drugs that will protect your dog from heartworms. These drugs are very safe and very effective if given regularly. The most common product is a flavoured chewable tablet that is given once monthly, there are also products that are given topically instead for dog's who may not prefer oral tablets. Be aware that having a long coat or staying primarily indoors does not protect a dog against heartworm infection. Heartworm preventatives are dosed according to your dog's weight. As the weight increases, the dosage should also increase. Please note the dosing instructions on the package. These products are very safe. You could overdose your dog by two or three times the recommended dose without causing harm. Therefore, it is always better to overdose rather than underdose.

I've heard about ticks a lot in the news lately, what does this mean for my puppy? And what about fleas?

Ticks are definitely an emerging concern in our area, each year we unfortunately see more and more dogs coming in having picked up a tick. Ticks are a worry because they can carry a number of diseases including Lyme disease which they can pass on to your puppy, ticks can also migrate from dogs to people and can pass those same diseases to humans as well. Fleas are also a worry as they can cause significant itching/discomfort for your puppy if picked up, and some dogs are even allergic to fleas. Fleas do not stay on your puppy all of their time, occasionally they will jump off and seek another host, but as opposed to ticks they will not live and reproduce on humans. It is still important to kill fleas on your new puppy before they can become established in your house, as they are able to live in carpeting or rugs and then can jump back onto any animal host and start the life cycle all over again. Happily, both medications that are used for heartworm (see above) also protect your puppy from fleas. The chewable tablets also offer broad spectrum tick protection as well. If you use the topical product for your puppy instead, ask us about other options for tick protection.

What are ear mites?

Ear mites are tiny parasites that live in the ear canal of dogs (and cats). The most common sign of ear mite infection is scratching of the ears. Sometimes the ears will appear dirty because of a black material in the ear canal; this material is sometimes shaken out. The instrument we use for examining the ear canals, an otoscope, has the necessary magnification to allow us to see the mites. Sometimes,

we can find the mites by taking a small amount of the black material from the ear canal and examining it with a microscope. Although they may leave the ear canals for short periods of time, they spend the vast majority of their lives within the protection of the ear canal. Transmission generally requires direct ear-to-ear contact. Ear mites are common in litters of puppies if their mother has ear mites. Ear infections may also cause the production of a dark discharge in the ear canals. It is important that we examine your puppy to determine if any black material seen in his/her ears is due to ear mites or ear infection, as these require very different treatments.

SPAYING AND NEUTERING

Centre Street Animal Hospital is proud to offer laser surgery as a progressive treatment for your pets. The extreme precision of laser surgery offers multiple benefits over traditional surgery: less pain, less bleeding, less swelling, reduced risk of infection and quicker recovery.

Spaying female dogs

Preventing unwanted litters is just one important reason to spay your female dog. There are many other reasons with more direct and immediate benefits for you and your dog. A spayed female dog leads a longer and healthier life than her unsterilized counterpart. Once spayed, a dog will not be subject to many health problems, such as ovarian cysts, uterine infection, tumours of the womb and ovaries, abortion, birthing difficulties, caesarean section, ruptured uterus, false pregnancy, milk fever and injuries during mating. In addition, spaying also makes it very unlikely that she will develop mammary (breast) cancer. A spayed female never goes into heat. She is less likely to roam than unsplayed females who go into heat, and male dogs will not congregate at your door every six months. You will not have the problem of providing the extra care a pregnant or nursing dog needs. Spay surgery (ovariohysterectomy) is a safe operation. Your dog should ideally be spayed when she is around six months old (before her first heat). This is not the only time, just the earliest. Consult your veterinarian to determine the best time for your dog to be spayed.

Neutering male dogs

Strangely, people are much more reluctant to neuter their male dogs than to spay their females. A neutered dog is a more manageable and happier pet. Unlike female dogs, the males of the species are always ready to mate. They need only detect the scent of a female dog in heat to go in search of her, exposing themselves to many dangers, such as car accidents and dog fights. They often become difficult to control. Neutering substantially reduces the dog's desire to roam, and usually eliminates frustrated behaviour. Neutered dogs are much less likely to start a fight. Once neutered, a dog cannot contract an infection, cancer or traumatic injury of the testes, and prostate gland problems rarely occur in castrated dogs. Neutering (castration) is the surgical removal of the testes, a safe and simple operation. Your dog can be neutered at virtually any age, preferably before puberty (at approximately seven to nine months). By then, he will have developed such masculine habits as leg-lifting, but will not have any associated bad habits that you will have to help him break. Consult your veterinarian to determine the best time for your dog to be neutered.

After the examination, a treatment plan will be drawn up taking into account any other medical recommendations to ensure your pet has a safe and speedy recovery.

VACCINATIONS

Your puppy's **first visit** should be within the first week of receiving him/her (between 6-8 weeks old). At this time your puppy receives a complete physical exam, a microscopic stool examination to screen for

the presence of parasites, and deworming if needed. If he / she has not received vaccines within the previous three weeks then they will be vaccinated against Distemper, Hepatitis, Parvovirus and Parainfluenza at this visit.

Second visit is three weeks after the previous vaccination is given (9-12 weeks old). The puppy receives a physical exam and is given boosters for: Distemper, Hepatitis, Parvovirus and Parainfluenza. We also recommend the first Leptospirosis vaccine - a vaccine that is lifestyle specific - to be given at this time. We have been seeing a notable increase in the prevalence of this disease in the past few years. Often in small breed puppies or breeds that are known to be more susceptible to side effects of vaccines, we will advise that if they are receiving multiple vaccines that the injections be administered via split vaccine visits during the following 1-2 weeks for the safety of the puppy. This means that instead of having 2 injections done during their main visit, they will receive one injection that day and return for the second injection 1-2 weeks later; as long as they return within 2 weeks no exam will be needed for the split vaccine.

Third visit is three weeks later (12-16 weeks old). The puppy receives a physical exam and is given boosters for: Distemper, Hepatitis, Parvovirus, Parainfluenza and Rabies. At this stage a Leptospirosis booster would be administered, if applicable, and the first Lyme disease vaccine – an optional vaccine – can also be done but is area and lifestyle specific. As before, in small breed puppies or breeds that are known to be more susceptible to side effects of vaccines, we again advise that multiple vaccines be administered via split vaccine visits during the following 1-2 weeks for the safety of the puppy.

Fourth visit is three weeks later (15-19 weeks old). The puppy receives a physical examination, a microscopic stool examination (to see if they picked up worms in their new environment), and is vaccinated against: Parvovirus, and Bordetella (Kennel Cough) – an optional vaccine that is lifestyle specific. A Lyme disease booster can be given at this stage, if applicable.

Your puppy's **last puppy visit** is around 6 months of age. This visit is the spay/neuter examination and checks your pet's teeth (to make sure there are no retained baby teeth present). A base line/preanesthetic blood test will need to be performed in preparation for the surgery at least 2-3 days before the surgery. We are proud to offer laser surgery for your puppy – faster recovery, less pain swelling and less bleeding. In addition, while asleep a microchip can be implanted under your pet's skin for permanent identification.

HOUSEBREAKING

Using these guidelines, a puppy of six to eight weeks of age can be housebroken within a couple of weeks. Housebreaking can be achieved by utilizing the instinct of dogs to keep their bed clean. You can make use of this instinct by creating a sort of home “den” for them. Dogs are “den animals.” Their own private place gives them a sense of security. Confinement is not cruel unless abused.

Do this by constructing or obtaining a crate that will have a door on it. The crate should be big enough for the puppy to turn about in and even to lie at full length, but no larger. The door is required to keep the puppy from climbing out. Airline crates or even cat carriers for smaller puppies work well. Do not be alarmed if your puppy cries when first being introduced to the crate, it does take some time for them to get used to their new ‘bedroom’. Do not remove your puppy from the crate when he cries as he will learn that crying will bring your attention, instead try to find a brief break in his crying/barking to take him out, so he gets the ‘reward’ when he is quiet rather than when he is crying. A puppy does not want a mess in his bed and then have to sleep in it. He might get caught the first few nights, but he should learn fairly quickly. However, if the crate is too large that he can relieve himself in one end and sleep in

the other, he will do so. Remember that on the very first day it is important to start giving the puppy all his naps in the crate. Puppies sleep 75% of the time. When the puppy awakens from his nap, you immediately take him out of his crate and carry him straight outside to a spot that you previously have selected.

For best results take him to this spot before and after play; always when he awakens from a nap; and always the first thing in the morning and last thing at night. This is preferred to just taking him outside and letting him wander until he chooses a spot to eliminate (urinate/defecate). Instead, you must take him to this spot, urge him to go (if you would like you can choose a key phrase for this such as “go pee”), and PRAISE him when he does. With practice you may even be able to achieve the ability to have the puppy eliminate on command. Dogs develop a ‘substrate preference’ while training, this means that they learn the proper material to eliminate on. In most cases this material should be grass, so taking your puppy to his appropriate area as frequently as possible will help speed up his natural preference for the correct material. This can be done if using puppy pee pads as well, though can be a bit more confusing for puppies as there may be other similar materials he will encounter that can mimic this pee pad (such as newspapers etc).

Points to Remember:

- A dog can only understand scolding and praise if it occurs within a half second of the event you are trying to control. Catching a puppy “in the act” is the best time to scold or praise. After the event has occurred, it is too late to scold, or praise, because the puppy will associate your feedback with whatever he is doing at the time, not ten minutes before. Rubbing his nose in his mistakes does not help and should be avoided.
- Dogs need to relieve themselves after eating, drinking, sleeping and playing.
- The more often you take your puppy outside to his appropriate spot the better the chance he will actually need to relieve himself and you will be able to praise him. Praise does not have to be food rewards, just your excitement and attention is just as good a reward for your puppy as a treat.
- Feed your puppy at the same time every day. This will help keep the dog’s digestive system regular and it will be easier to predict when he needs to go out.
- Start housetraining on a weekend when everyone will be home and able to help. If mistakes happen, clean it up well and spray an odour neutralizer on the wet spot and rub it in well. White vinegar works well as a urine odour neutralizer. Dogs are attracted to their urine scent and will re-use previous accident sites if they detect their scent there.

TRAINING

Training is fun and very rewarding for both you and your puppy. Puppies have an amazing capacity to learn complex demands quickly.

- Start training as soon as you obtain your puppy. Puppies learn very rapidly but their attention span may be short, so spend 10-15 minutes twice daily.
- Training should be conducted when the puppy is not excited and when the home environment is quiet. Once the puppy has learned the appropriate response in one environment, move the training location to progressively more complex and more stimulating environments. That is, the puppy will have to be trained in each environment that you want him to respond in. Learning to sit in a quiet living room is easier than when out playing with other puppies.

- Learning occurs more rapidly if one person trains the puppy first and then the other family members get involved, as consistency is key. Train the puppy using one-word commands like “come”, “sit” and “heel”. Try not to use the puppy’s name in association with the command, as too much verbiage is confusing and slows the learning process.
- Reward appropriate behaviour as soon as possible after giving the command (best within ½ second). Give valued rewards such as food, touch and praise every time the puppy responds to a command. You will quickly learn which reward is more valued by your puppy. Once the response is learned, give the rewards intermittently. This will result in rapid learning and make the response more permanent.
- If the puppy fails at any level of training, stop, don’t reward and start the training again at a simpler level, and in a less stimulating environment. How consistently a puppy responds to a command is a function of the degree of training. If a puppy responds only when it feels like it or when the environment is quiet, start again and train more intensely.
- Be patient, never punish. The opposite to reward is no reward, not punishment. A punishment which causes pain, does not work and generally causes problems. Punishment may also interfere with the owner/animal bond. If the puppy is doing something that is inappropriate, distract it or use a reward for responding to a command which is incompatible with the unwanted behaviour.

Here are few options for local trainers, you are welcome to reach out and contact them to find a good fit for you and your puppy:

- www.wooff.ca
- www.navik9.com
- www.sitstaylearn.ca
- www.ak9.ca/index.html
- www.waggingwoofies.com
- www.barkbusters.ca

