



DIGGING AND CHEWING

DIGGING:

Don't allow your puppy to watch you dig in the yard or garden. You should supervise him when he is in the yard, so that you can reprimand him if he begins to dig-"NO DIGGING!" Make a loud noise, if necessary, to distract him. Do not let him watch you repair the hole. Praise him for stopping.

Do not leave young dogs unsupervised in the yard. Crate or confine him in the house when you are gone.

You may also try sprinkling cayenne pepper in susceptible areas. Since the nose goes first into the dirt, this will cause an undesirable effect upon the dog and may condition him to avoid those places when you are not there. An mousetrap set upside down in these areas may also be effective as remote negative reinforcement.

CHEWING:

It is best to supervise and confine your dog when you can not supervise him. A crate will become your best friend if you have a naughty puppy.

Provide appropriate toys to chew on: latex squeaky toys "give" when chewed upon- avoid the harder plastic toys. A Kong toy stuffed with peanut butter will keep him occupied for hours! Nylabones and Gummabones, as well as commercially made rope toys are also very good. As for real bones, use only the very large knuckle bones (cooked) or other very large bones that cannot be chewed into small pieces or splinter- no chicken, pork or steak bones!!! Always supervise your puppy during chew-bone time.

When your very young puppy chews on something inappropriate, distract and provide an appropriate item. When he is older (about 3 months) he will be able to understand a firm "DROP IT!". Once he drops the item, praise him. Then show him the item and say "Is this yours?" If he takes it again, say ""DROP IT" again until he will not take the item. Always praise lavishly when he does not take the item.

Do not play tug-of-war with your puppy. This encourages a dominant attitude and can lead to aggressive behavior.



DOMINANCE IN DOGS

Dogs are "pack" animals- they are socially adapted to living in a group environment. When living with humans, the humans become their "pack". There must be a leader of this "pack"- and if you do not assume this position, the dog will attempt to do so, which spells disaster for you!

All members of the family must be dominant to the dog. The dog will view young children as littermates, easily dominated, so the children must be instructed also.

The puppy's personality is fully formed by sixteen weeks of age. Therefore it is vital that you have your puppy fully in hand by then- afterwards, it will be much more difficult to correct bad habits.

Begin with a puppy at least 8 weeks of age. Roll him over onto his back and grasp his muzzle, making him be still. He may struggle some, or quite a bit. If he does, hold firm, say "NO!" Release only when he stops struggling. Do not tolerate any biting.





MOUTHING AND PLAYFUL BITING OF HANDS

It is very important to stop a mouthy puppy now, or it may become a serious problem as the puppy grows older. It is a two-step procedure:

Step 1: Whenever the puppy puts his teeth on your hands, gruffly reprimand with a guttural "OUCH!", fold your arms and turn away. Do this every time he begins to mouth you. He'll soon get the idea that you do not appreciate the behavior.

Step 2: Condition out the negative behavior. Whenever you are petting the puppy and he begins to mouth your hands, reprimand sternly at once with "NO BITE!" and take your hands off the puppy. Start to pet the puppy again; praise if he does not mouth. Repeat the procedure each time, until there are no more attempts to mouth you. It may take several days to fully eliminate the behavior.

Soft mouthing may also be an attempt at dominance. It is important to establish yourself as the "leader" in the pack, or household. The dog needs a structured environment, with set "ranks". He desires and needs a leader, otherwise he will attempt to take on the position of leader himself.

Do not play tug-of-war with your puppy. This encourages "bossy" behavior and can lead to aggressive behavior. If he will not give you his toy, refuse to play with him anymore. Say "GIVE!" and take the toy. When he gives you the toy, praise him lavishly.



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BARKING

It is unrealistic to expect dogs never to bark. It is realistic to expect to have verbal control over the barking.

When the dog barks inappropriately, make a loud noise to interrupt the barking, whether with a "shaker can"- a pop can filled with pennies and taped over-or a verbal correction- "That's enough!". The dog must be distracted to stop the barking. Some people have found a squirt bottle containing water to be effective at distraction. When the dog is quiet, praise him lavishly.



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CRATE TRAINING YOUR DOG

A dog crate, or kennel, is NOT a cage or jail- the dog sees it as a "room of his own", a place where he can feel secure, a "den". Used properly, a crate can provide you with peace of mind, and your dog with a sense of security.

You can leave your dog home alone, knowing that nothing will be soiled or destroyed, and that he is comfortable, protected, and not developing any bad habits.

You can housebreak your dog more quickly by using the close confinement to encourage control, establish a regular routine, and to prevent "accidents" at night or when left alone.

You can effectively confine your dog at times when he may be underfoot (meals, family activities), when he is unwelcome (guests, workmen, etc.), when he is over-excited or bothered by too much confusion or too many children, or when he is ill.

You can travel with your dog without risk of the driver being dangerously distracted or the dog getting loose and hopelessly lost, and with the assurance that he can easily adapt to any strange environment as long as he has his "security blanket" along.

Your dog can enjoy the privacy and security of a "den" of his own to which he can retreat when tired, stressed, or ill.

Your dog can more easily learn to control his bowels and bladder and to associate elimination only with the designated location.

Your dog can be kept with the family and not isolated in the backyard, garage, or basement.

In the case of puppies, the crate is used also as a "playpen"- you would not let an infant roam unsupervised in your house, so neither should you let an untrained puppy, free to chew inappropriate objects and to soil your floors.

The plastic "airline " crate is the most convenient type of crate. It should be large enough to permit him to stretch out flat on his side and tall enough to allow him to sit up without hitting his head. It is better to

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get a crate that is a little too large than one that is too small. With a puppy, do not use a full-grown size crate unless you block off part of it, because he will use any "extra" space to eliminate in.

The crate should be placed in a bedroom at night- he will be able to hear you breathing and will feel secure in your presence at night. During the day, place the crate in the corner in an area where there are people close by. You may place a towel over the door to give him privacy, or as a signal to be quiet. Place an old washable blanket inside the crate, and a piece of freshly worn unlaundered clothing of yours (it will have your scent on it) to make him feel secure. Do not use newspaper- it may encourage soiling.

Make it clear to children that the crate is not a playhouse for them, but a special "room" for the puppy, whose rights should be recognized and respected. You should accustom the puppy to letting you reach into the crate at any time, lest he become overprotective of it.

Establish a "crate routine" immediately, closing the puppy in it at regular 1 to 2 hour intervals during the day (his own chosen nap times will guide you.) and whenever he must be left alone for up to 3-4 hours. Give him a chew toy for distraction (a "Kong" toy stuffed with peanut butter will keep him occupied for hours!) and be sure to remove all collars and tags which could become caught in an opening. Even if things do not go too smoothly at first, **DO NOT WEAKEN AND DO NOT WORRY**. Be consistent, be firm and be aware that you are doing your pet a real favor by preventing him from getting into trouble while left alone.

If you decide to start feeding your dog in his crate, use only the cups that can be attached to the door- either plastic or metal. If your puppy cries to get out of the crate, give a firm "NO" with a sharp rap on the crate. Only release the dog when he is quiet.

Once he has accepted the crate as his bed and as his own "special place", your pet can stop being a problem and start being a pleasure! In due time it may even be possible to wean him gradually off using the crate without him resuming any problem behavior. Most dogs, once they accept the crate continue to use it freely throughout their lives and will eagerly hop in by themselves.

A SECURE DOG IS A HAPPIER DOG - USE A CRATE. YOU'LL BE GLAD YOU DID... AND SO WILL YOUR DOG.

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HOUSEBREAKING

An important part of your housebreaking success is establishing a good feeding protocol for your pet. Feeding regular meals three times a day until six months of age and then two times per day up to one year of age is the best routine. After a year of age your pet can be fed once or twice per day depending on your preference and schedule.

During each feeding session leave the food down for 20 minutes and then pick up any food left uneaten. Do not feed your pet between these feeding sessions. Your pet will soon learn that when the food is present it is time to eat and will establish good eating habits.

Developing these good eating habits is strategic in developing a good housebreaking routine. Most puppies will eliminate within an hour after a meal. This makes it easier to get the puppy outside to the designated area at the appropriate times. Always praise the puppy when he eliminates outside.

When you take your puppy out at these strategic times to the designated area you will be on your way to a successful housebreaking routine. When visiting this designated area take your puppy out the same door and frequent the same spot so your puppy can associate this with his/her elimination behavior.

When the mission is accomplished make sure you allow for praise and reward. Giving a treat such as a few pieces of dry cat food or a lavish verbal reward is often very successful.

Other strategic times to enter the "designated area" are after periods of confinement and after waking from naps.

If your puppy starts to eliminate in an inappropriate spot, startle him with a loud "NO" to interrupt his behavior, and immediately take him outside. Take him to a previous place of elimination, let him sniff the area and praise him. Do not rub his nose in his mistake, or scold him unless you catch him in the act of eliminating. Dogs will not understand why they are being scolded if done after the fact.

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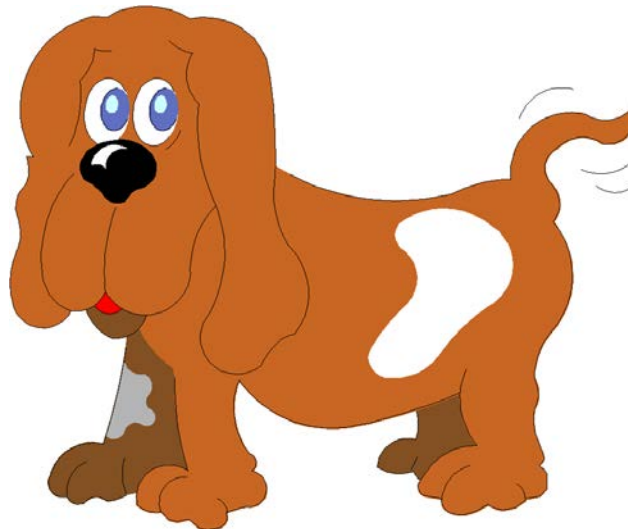
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Do not allow the puppy to watch you clean up accidents, and be sure to odor neutralize the spot. Vinegar and club soda or commercially made preparations work well.

IN SUMMARY:

TAKE YOUR PUPPY OUTSIDE FIRST THING IN THE MORNING, AFTER EVERY MEAL, WHENEVER YOU OBSERVE THE PUPPY SNIFFING THE FLOOR, AFTER PLAYTIMES, AND BEFORE BEDTIME (AFTER SLEEPING, EATING AND PLAYING).

A crate will simplify housebreaking greatly. The puppy will not soil his own "den" if given ample opportunity to eliminate at the right times. Confine the puppy in the appropriately sized crate whenever you cannot watch him, and during the night. He may have to be taken outside once or twice for the first few weeks- and ALWAYS GO WITH HIM. He cannot learn to eliminate appropriately without positive reinforcement.



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