

A black and white puppy with a blue floral bow tie is sitting on a brick floor. A red Kong toy is visible in the bottom left corner. The text "GOOD HUMAN" is written in white, bold, sans-serif font across the top of the image.

GOOD HUMAN

# *Survival Guide*

for people raising puppies

A companion guide to Good Human Dog Training programs.



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# WELCOME TO PUPPYHOOD!

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So, you have decided to embark on the fantastic, frustrating, scary, overwhelming, rewarding, joyful, and fulfilling journey that is puppyhood.

## **Congratulations!**

We are excited for you. In this short guide, you will find an overview of our thoughts on surviving puppyhood happily and positively. We can't promise that it will be easy, but we can promise that a little effort in the puppy stage goes a long way toward having a fantastic adult dog!

We can also tell you from experience that puppyhood is hard. Puppies don't come with instruction manuals, they don't speak English, and they have a LOT of natural instincts that people aren't so fond of (like chewing, barking, peeing, jumping, nipping, and general mischief-making). The most important thing to remember during this phase is that with some proper guidance, your puppy will learn all they need to know to be your perfect companion and that you can set them up for success! If you don't want your puppy to chew your shoes, put away your shoes. If you don't want your puppy to pee on your carpet, don't leave them unsupervised on your carpet. Simple, right?

If you take away anything from this guide, we hope that it is the idea that you can plan and guide what your puppy does and doesn't do and what they do and do not learn. If they make a "mistake," think about how to change the situation next time and guide your puppy to the "right" behavior. We are here to help! And we promise, it gets easier, and you will survive.



# NEW PUPPY CHECKLISTS

Adding any new family member requires adjustments to your home for everyone's safety and comfort. Here are some recommendations

## BEFORE THEY COME HOME

- Determine who you will use as your regular veterinarian. Let them know you will be getting a new dog!
- Write down the names and phone numbers of your regular veterinarian and the closest emergency veterinarian, and keep them handy.
- Give your vet a copy of your dog's vaccination info as soon as you have it, so they can let you know when to schedule your first appointment.
- Find a training class that is appropriate for your dog's age. Ask for recommendations!
- Plan your dog's schedule. How will you keep them occupied while you are busy? How frequently will you need a dog walker?
- Consider purchasing pet insurance. Unexpected illness or injury can quickly become very expensive.

## PUPPY-PROOFING

- Put away shoes, decorations, clothing, pillows, and other chewable items within your dog's reach.
- Tie up/conceal cords and wires.
- Move houseplants to shelves above waist level.
- Put away all valuables and breakables!
- Secure or remove hanging tablecloths, blankets, and curtains (these make fun tug toys).
- Secure cabinets containing chemicals and hazardous materials
- Put away small children's toys. Your dog may think they are meant to be dog toys!
- Check your backyard for dangerous plants, chemicals, holes, splintering wood, or broken items.



# PUPPY PLANNING

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## Management Ideas

One thing you definitely DON'T want to do with your puppy is give them free rein in the house. Sectioning off your home will help you keep your puppy from chewing all kinds of dangerous and valuable stuff, and planning ahead will make sure you reinforce the kinds of behaviors you want!

- Choose a section of the house with tile or wood floors and install a baby gate. This will allow your puppy to run free in this room safely and will make it very easy to clean up messes.
- Set up a play-pen for your puppy where you spend the most time. This will allow you to be with your puppy without monitoring every move.
- Shut the doors or baby gate any rooms that are not puppy-proofed.
- Start crate training early so your puppy quickly learns to love their crate. Use it as a place for naptime where you don't have to monitor them.
- Keep a leash and harness handy whenever you need to be with your pup in an area of your house that is not puppy-proofed.

## Plan Ahead!

Map out a plan for how you will handle each of the following situations. The more consistent you are, the faster your puppy will learn the routine.

- Where will your puppy be allowed when you are home?
- Where will your puppy stay while everyone is gone?
- Who will take your puppy out during the day?
- When will you go to puppy class?
- What will you do when visitors come over?
- When will you exercise your puppy (with a walk or play date)?
- Who will be working on training your puppy?
- How will you ensure your puppy has a consistent routine?
- What will you do when you encounter people on walks or out and about?

Fail to plan, and you will plan to fail. Think ahead about how you can keep your pup out of trouble. You can do this!

# PUPPY MILESTONES

Here are a few milestones to help you track your puppy's growth. Keep in mind that these may vary based on breed or other factors.

## DENTAL DETAILS

### 3 to 4 weeks

canine teeth start to erupt

### 4 to 6 weeks

full temporary teeth erupt

### 3 to 5 months

permanent teeth begin to replace temporary teeth

### 7 months

full permanent teeth have erupted

## 5 PUPPY MILESTONES

### Neonate = 0 - 13 days

puppy can't see, hear, regulate body temp. or eliminate without stimulation. Puppy is totally dependent on mom.

### Transition Period = 13-21 days

The pup's eyes and ears gradually open and it begins to respond to taste and smell.

### Awareness Period = 21-23 days

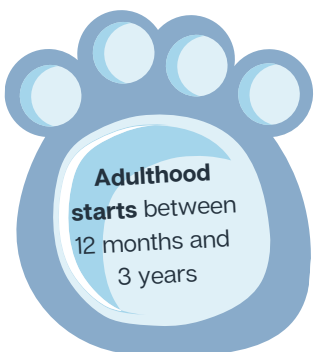
The pup begins to use its' senses of sight and hearing. Learning begins. The pup begins eliminating on its own at 3-4 weeks.

### Socialization Period = 3-16 weeks

Pup learns specific dog behaviors such as barking, chasing, biting and body posturing. It's important to introduce puppy to many new people, places and things.

### Juvenile Period = 4-6 months

Fear period may occur. Continue socialization but keep puppy safe on-leash.



# PUPPY MOUTHING CHECKLIST

Puppies explore the world with their mouths. It's normal and most grow out of it naturally. Until then, here are some things to consider and ways to manage the environment and meet puppy's needs... without blood or tears.



## Is Puppy Hungry?

Puppies need 3 meals a day while they are growing. When they get hungry, other items start to look like food options!



## Do Puppy's Teeth Hurt?

Make sure there are lots of YUMMY items around for the pup to chew. Cold or frozen treats help to sooth aching gums.



## Is Puppy Overtired?

Tired puppies are grumpy and lack the ability to play nicely. Be sure to give young dogs chances to nap often away from the family.



## Just Being a Puppy?

Your puppy WILL sometimes try to chew on you, even if they are not feeling sleepy, overstimulated, or frustrated. Be sure to keep a variety of safe toys, chews and bones in different textures.



## Overstimulated?

Sometimes play goes too long and puppy can become overly excited or aroused, and start to lose inhibition and self-control, which leads to them getting extra bitey. Keep play sessions short and use enrichment when over stimulated.



## Need Exercise?

Dogs need a mix of high stimulation exercise (play, chase, fetch) and low stimulation exercise (sniff walks, hikes, swimming). Check with your vet about what's safe for your dog's age.



## What's Puppy Saying?

Many puppies will become mouthy when you pet them for too long. Sometimes, this can be chalked up to the pup getting overstimulated from all the scritch-scratching, but many other times, your pup is asking you- the only way they know how- to please give them a break.



# DANGERS TO DOGS

## Human foods that are toxic or dangerous to dogs

include but not limited to

- yeast dough
- cooked chicken or turkey bones
- avocado
- peach and plum pits
- chocolate
- hops
- onion and garlic,
- grapes and raisins
- mushrooms



- bread
- macadamia nuts, & walnuts
- coffee/tea
- spinach
- mushrooms
- alcohol
- xylitol (often in products labeled sugar-free, check peanut butter).



## Non-food items that are toxic or dangerous to dogs

include but not limited to

- Tylenol
- anti-freeze
- mouse and rat bait
- insecticides
- cleaning products



- Pharmaceuticals
- plant and lawn fertilizers
- paint and paint
- thinner
- fuels



## Plants that are toxic or dangerous to dogs

include but not limited to

- Autumn Crocus
- Azalea
- Cyclamen
- Poinsettia
- Daffodil,
- Dieffenbachia
- Hyacinth
- Tulips



- Kalanchoe
- Lily, Oleander
- Sago Palm
- Foxglove
- Rhododendron
- Compost
- Dyed Mulch
- Mushrooms





# PUPPY SOCIALIZATION

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Socialization is the process of getting your puppy accustomed to new things, people, and places while helping them learn that the world is not a scary place!

## **Critical Socialization Period**

Puppies go through this important phase during the first 4 months of their lives. This is the time when they are MOST impressionable and your opportunity to start them off on the right foot! Every day during this period is a crucial time to teach your puppy that the world is fun and to help them develop the foundation for their future play skills with other dogs, greetings with people, and the ability to see, learn, and do new things without fear.

## **But puppies love everything already!**

Sure they do. Until the early stage of their development draws to a close. At that point, they become wary of other dogs if they have met too few. And down the road, puppies can become shy or growly around children or strangers, too, unless they have met and enjoyed meeting a bunch of them.

Under-socialized dogs are at much greater risk of developing all sorts of behavioral problems such as fear, aggression, and reactivity.

## **How to socialize your puppy.**

Think about the things your puppy will see every week as an adult. Visit those places, see those people, or experience those things now.

Help your puppy form positive associations. Cheer and praise them when they encounter something new. Offer a treat whenever possible.

If your puppy seems even a bit nervous, move away, give them treats, and then walk away. Anything your puppy is unsure about should be encountered in short bursts.

As soon as your puppy seems more relaxed, try again. As they see or hear the scary thing, start your cheerful praise and break out the treats.

If your puppy didn't seem nervous about the new thing or acts curious about it, go back and let them investigate a little more. Again, praise and treat. 9



# START TRAINING!

You will need the right tools to train your puppy comfortably and effectively.

## We suggest the following

- Your puppy- nothing fancy, preferably awake and a little peckish.
- Treats. Provide 3-4 kinds of small, easily eaten treats (soft ones, about the size of a pea, work great).
- A treat pouch with one kind of treat in it and some containers your puppy can't reach with the other kinds (on a shelf, for example.). Have an empty container to dump out the treats and replace them with another type, if needed.
- Clicker, if you use one. More soon about markers!
- Water bowl with water nearby but not knock-over-able

## When working outside

- A soft, wide collar (cloth or leather) with their ID attached
- A leash long enough for your puppy to explore (6' - 10')
- A long leash up to 20'. Retractable leashes aren't recommended. They provide less control, have been known to break, and can cause injury.
- Portable water bowl. Your puppy should ALWAYS have access to fresh water. When your puppy gets lots of treats throughout the day, they will need more water than they normally would.

## Tips for setting up a training session

- Start in a quiet area with little distraction.
- Plan to work on just one new behavior at a time. Revisit behaviors your puppy already knows, but stick to just one new behavior for each session.
- Training sessions are more productive if they are short. These quick, focused lessons will help your puppy learn. Fifteen minutes is excellent! Young puppies or dogs who are easily distracted may need even shorter sessions.



If your training session is too long, your puppy will get distracted, bored, or tired, and may start making mistakes.



# TRAINING FAQs

## What training method is best?

There is so much conflicting information in the media that knowing what training method you should use can be challenging. However, science repeatedly shows us that positive reinforcement is the most effective long-term training method. Sometimes, it can be tempting to punish your puppy. This is what most people are taught to do growing up, and it seems like it works most of the time. But we never recommend physical or verbal punishment for your puppy. Punishment almost always backfires in the long term and can lead to fear-aggression in adult dogs.

Instead, we recommend keeping things positive, practicing what you want your puppy to learn, and rewarding them for their excellent behavior. This will teach them to choose to do what you want your puppy to do rather than teaching them to fear you. In the long run, you will not have to maintain the training because your dog will start to do the "right" thing independently.

Plus, it is WAY more fun to be your puppy's cheerleader and friend than to yell at or punish them.

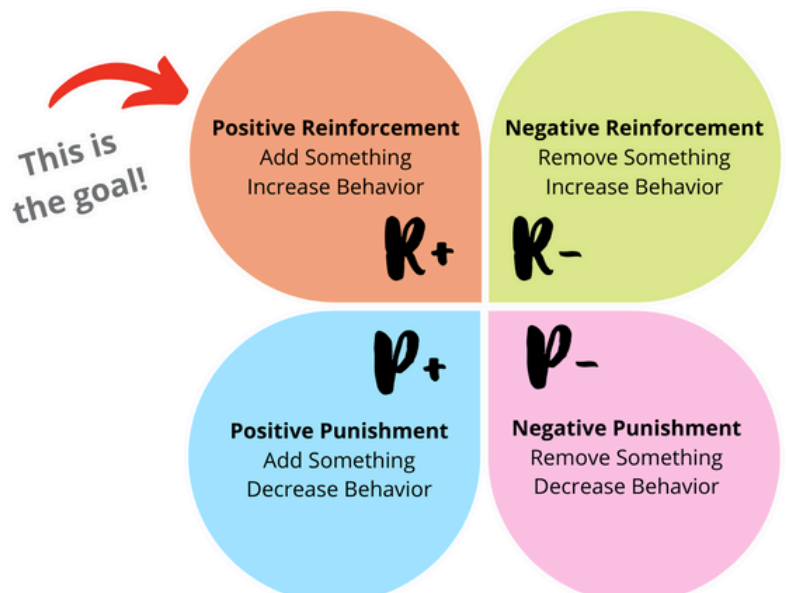
## What is positive reinforcement training?

Positive reinforcement involves rewarding behaviors you like so your dog does more. A reward can be anything your puppy loves, from treats to toys to a really good booty scratch. Often in training, we use treats as rewards because most dogs love them, and they are easy to keep on hand and give to your pup.

We can go into a lot more detail, but on the surface, positive reinforcement is very simple.

When your dog does something you like (e.g. sitting, calmly laying next to you, or not pulling on the leash), reward them.

It's easy, and it really works.



## What should I do when my puppy misbehaves?

Great question! Puppies don't understand what "good" and "bad" are until we show them, and they will try out all kinds of stuff to see what works. When your puppy does something you don't like:

### 1. Ask yourself why.

Is your puppy trying to get your attention? Are they scared or confused? Can you change that for the next time this situation arises and set them up for success?

### 2. Ignore it.

If your puppy has done something before you could stop them, like chew on a shoe or pee on the rug, the opportunity has already passed for training, so move on and make a plan for next time. If your puppy is engaging in attention-seeking behavior, like jumping on you, ignoring them denies them the very reward they seek. Over time, your puppy will learn that behavior gets them nothing, so why even bother with trying it?

### 3. Management to the rescue.

Prepare your environment so your puppy can't practice behaviors you consider "naughty" but instead learns what you want them to know. Use baby gates, a crate, and excellent supervision to keep them out of trouble.

Good management works hand-in-hand with training. You will use management and training routines over the first couple of years. As your dog's training skills develop, your management lessens.

## How do I train better behavior?

It's time to train better behavior. Here is an overview of the training process. Stick around for the secrets to better behavior!

1. **Get the behavior.** You may need to lure your puppy into position with a treat or notice them doing something you like and reward that.
2. **Mark the behavior.** Use a clicker or a bright, happy "yes" to mark the moment the puppy has performed the behavior about to be rewarded.
3. **Reward the behavior.** The reward comes immediately after the marker. Behaviors that are rewarded get repeated.
4. **Name the behavior.** Once you can bet a stack of cash that your puppy is doing what you like, you can fade the lure and give it a name.
5. **Generalize the skills.** Work in new environments to create stronger behaviors.



# TRAINING REWARDS

We'll first use a lot of food in training — more than you expect. Once behaviors are well-established, you can gradually reduce the frequency of food rewards and incorporate other forms of reinforcement.

1. Food is a powerful primary reinforcer, creating a strong positive association with the desired behavior. Food is inherently rewarding, unlike praise or toys, which are learned reinforcers,
2. It helps establish a clear marker for correct behavior. When a puppy performs the desired action and immediately receives a treat, they can quickly understand exactly what earned them the reward.
3. Frequent rewards maintain motivation and engagement during the learning phase. Puppies are more likely to stay focused and keep trying when rewards come often, especially if learning new behaviors.
4. It's easier for YOU! It's easier to pop a treat in your dog's mouth. Using food rewards keeps your training moving efficiently.

## Examples of appropriate treats

- Treats that can be broken into pea-sized pieces
- Charlee Bears - These can be snapped into many pieces.
- Happy Howie's Roll- it is VERY rich but great as a very high-value treat
- Small bits of cheese (high value)
- Hot dogs (high value)- Look for higher-quality or low-sodium
- Small bits of meat (high value)- Boiled chicken, lunch meat, leftover steak (avoid sauced and spiced meat).
- Freeze-dried liver (high value)

## Balancing rewards and meals

- Measure the recommended daily amount of your dog's food and put it in a container.
- The vet recommends one (1) cup of food per twenty (20) pounds of your dog's ideal weight.
- Set aside a portion (around a third of the amount) for dinner, depending on your dog's requirements.
- Use the rest for training throughout the day. Add high-value food as needed.

## **Do I have to use food/treats?**

You do not have to use food or treats. Toys, play, praise, petting, and functional rewards like sniffing something or going outside can all be used as rewards. However, training new behaviors with food is usually easier because it creates a clear training loop for both the dog and the human.

## **Won't my puppy become dependent on treats?**

Not if you plan ahead. There are 3 important things to do when you are training with treats to keep your puppy from only doing what you want when food is involved.

### **1. Don't always keep the treats visible.**

This is a common mistake people make without realizing it. Your puppy will learn that they will be rewarded when you have treats in your hand. Instead, try hiding some treats around the house to surprise your puppy with a reward when they do something great, or putting treats in your pocket when they are not looking, then randomly asking your puppy to do something they know, like "sit." A little surprise and mystery go a long way toward motivation!

### **2. Gradually phase out treats when you can.**

When your puppy is first learning something new, it's a good idea to reward every time. Then, as soon as your pup has the hang of it, change up the reward pattern by rewarding every other time, every few times, then randomly. Make this transition from every time to variable as soon as they understand what you are asking, and you will actually make the behavior stronger. For your puppy, variable reinforcement is like playing the lottery, and they want that jackpot!

### **3. Mix in other rewards.**

If your puppy likes toys, these can make great rewards. For example, you can ask your pup to sit or lie down each time you throw the tennis ball. The reward is getting to play fetch! Get creative with your rewards. Does your dog like going outside? Stand by the door and ask your pup to practice their newest trick once, then reward by immediately allowing them to go out. There are tons of other rewards, like jumping on the bed, getting in the car, or playing with another dog. What's important is that your puppy enjoys whatever you are using as a reward, and the reward comes immediately after they do something you asked for.

The possibilities are endless!



# GETTING BEHAVIORS

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There are various ways to learn or teach new behaviors, and while each person may have a preference for how they learn and teach, there is no right or wrong here. Sometimes, however, some ways will be easier, faster, or more clear for your dog. We'll stick to the top 3 methods.

## Luring

Luring is the method most often used for training those first behaviors. When we use luring to teach a puppy something new, we have something the puppy wants in our hand, and we move that so that the puppy follows it and does the desired behavior.

Luring has some aspects we must be aware of, which are listed below.

- Unless you want food in your hand forever, the lure will need to be faded and removed at some point and replaced with a different cue.
- Some dogs are so distracted by food that they can't think straight! You may need to switch to a lower-value lure or an alternative approach
- Using a lure can be difficult or impossible to teach more complex, chained, or behaviors at a distance.

## Shaping

Shaping is defined as training by "successive approximations." This means that while we may have a picture of the final behavior in our heads. For example, lying all the way down, to teach it, we will break that picture down into its component parts. In that example, we might begin by marking and rewarding bent elbows and gradually move on to any movement towards the down, until we have the goal behavior.

## Capturing

In capturing the trainer is simply seeking to "capture" and mark and reward the target behavior in its final form. For this reason, capturing is only applicable to behaviors that the dog performs on their own anyway, like sitting, or lying on a mat. If your puppy offers it, You can capture it!

The use of a clicker is very popular in shaping and capturing, as it's a precise communication tool that can pinpoint the exact moment that they did the desired behavior for the dog. If you don't wish to use a clicker, a verbal or other marker is fine!





# MARKER TRAINING



Marker training is a science-based teaching method that efficiently communicates with your dog what behavior is correct and desired by the handler. A food reward will follow up with a marker. It's feedback for your dog in its simplest form. The marker can be a word or a sound. (We like to use "Yes!" or "Yip!") or a sound such as a click from a clicker. This sound works as a secondary reinforcer- it tells your dog that they did the thing you asked for and food (or other reinforcement) is on the way. It buys you a little time to deliver reinforcement— most trainers say you have about 1.3 seconds to reward a puppy effectively!

## How it works

It is fabulously simple. First, we teach your dog that the mark/"YES" means they have earned a treat. Then, we use the mark to tell them when they have done something we like.

It's like taking a picture of the exact behavior you want to see. The mark or click is the sound of the shutter.



## "Charging" the marker

Teach your puppy that "YES" (or whatever you say) means a treat.

- Grab a handful of really yummy treats cut into small pieces.
- Every time you mark/"YES", give your puppy a treat.
- Be careful not to mark and treat at the same time; the treat must follow the mark/"YES", not precede or coincide with it.
- Do this standing, sitting, inside, outside, with a fox, in a box, etc.
- Do the exercise a few times a day for a few minutes at a time until, when you mark, you notice that your puppy is eagerly anticipating the treat.
- Keep a still body. Be careful not to reach for a treat or reach toward your puppy with the treat before you mark. Train yourself to insert a count or a word before you hand over the treat: "YES". One one thousand. Treat.

## Marker rules

- Mark only once.
- If you mark, you must treat. It's a promise you make to your dog. Once you make that promise you shouldn't break it.



# VOLUNTARY ATTENTION

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Your puppy's attention to you is key to training. Your puppy watches you and your family all the time. They are constantly learning from observation. Now we want them to learn that watching you is fun and rewarding, too!

## How to Train

1. You'll need lots of pea-sized treats in a treat pouch, or your pocket.
2. Your puppy will probably be suspicious about the treats you just prepared. They will likely look into your eyes, but if they are distracted, you can make a kissy noise (or a big sigh!) to get their attention.
3. Mark, pause for a second, then toss the treat away to reset.
4. Repeat this throughout the day. Any time you catch your puppy checking in, mark and toss a treat.

## What about "Watch me?"

Voluntary attention is more effective than "Watch me" for several reasons:

- It builds natural attentiveness. When your puppy chooses to make eye contact independently, they engage with you rather than respond to a cue. This helps develop a puppy that naturally checks in with you.
- It strengthens the human-dog bond. Voluntary eye contact indicates a meaningful connection. "Watch me" creates a dynamic where attention must always be requested rather than freely given.
- Dogs who offer eye contact are likely to do it in different situations and environments than only when given a specific cue. If a puppy isn't in a receptive state, no amount of "watch me" will override.
- When your puppy learns that choosing to look at you leads to good things, it becomes easier to teach other behaviors.
- It reduces dependency on treats/lures. You'll reward voluntary attention initially, but dogs often maintain this behavior without constant rewards because it becomes naturally reinforcing.

## Training Tips

- Be the most fun for your puppy, and you will get eye contact!
- If your puppy is unable to make eye contact, you need to make changes in the environment until they are able to make eye contact.
- Remember, whatever you reward, you will get more of.
- Start where your puppy already pays attention to you, like the kitchen.



# PUPPY BITE INHIBITION

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Puppies are little biting machines. They bite things that move, things that don't move, each other, your hands, anything. Not only is this normal, it's an essential part of development. When puppies play, they learn from their playmates' yelps and body language when a bite is too hard. Over time, a puppy figures out how to gently use their mouth to keep play going.

## **Why you should allow some biting.**

Your puppy must learn that human skin is fragile and can't be treated as roughly as a fur coat. Let your puppy bite you every now and again so you can communicate which bites are too hard. Otherwise, they won't learn bite inhibition and may cause serious injury if they were to bite when startled.

## **How to teach your puppy to bite more softly.**

Rate how hard your puppy bites

- 1 – You can feel it, but barely.
- 2 – There's some pressure, but you barely flinch.
- 3 – Wow, those little teeth are sharp but tolerable.
- 4 – Ok, that hurts a bit. It might even leave a mark.
- 5 – Ack! That hurts, and your hand is now bleeding.

For one week, time-outs for level 5 bites. The following week, time out anything that is a 4 or above. Continue this process until your puppy consistently delivers only level 1 bites.

- Hard bites should result in a time-out. Stop playing and leave your puppy alone, or put them in a time-out area for one minute.
- Each week, ask your puppy to bite a little softer by implementing a time-out for the hardest bites.
- Don't phase out play biting altogether until your puppy is reliably biting softly. Then, you can re-direct to toys or time-out for all bites.

## **Training Tip**

Think about when your puppy is most likely to play bite and be ready to deliver a time-out if necessary. For example, when playing tug, when your puppy is excited about something, and when you come home from work.



# FADING THE LURE/PROMPT

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As soon as your puppy performs the cue consistently with the lure, you want to start fading it out. Otherwise, they will associate only performing the behavior with the presence of the treat and can become dependent on it.

To see if your puppy is reliant upon the lure, give the verbal cue for the behavior or the hand signal for the behavior, but don't use a treat. If your puppy does the behavior, they know it well. But if your puppy doesn't, they are likely reliant on that lure. The easiest way to fade a lure on a skill is to gradually decrease how obvious your lure is with the below steps.

## How to Train

1. Give your verbal cue, but make the lure less pronounced. Say you want your puppy to sit, and you trained the behavior by using a treat on their nose to lure their head up and their body to sit down. Now, when you say sit, move your hand up the same way without a treat in your hand. Mark and give them a treat after they're successful.
2. When your puppy consistently performs the behavior without a treat, you can start to make your hand signal less pronounced. With the sit example, move your hand up in a less exaggerated gesture while using your verbal "sit" cue. Mark and reward when they perform the behavior.
3. Continue this process, making your physical signal less pronounced each time until you just have a small physical cue for a behavior. You can also continue fading to eliminate the physical cue entirely, and your puppy knows to do the skill just on a verbal cue.

## Training Tips

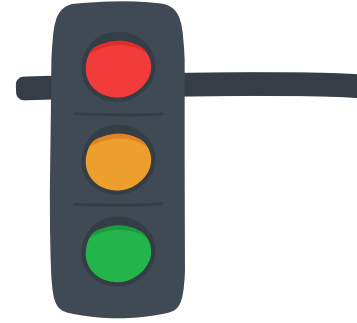
- Keep your body still, and avoid talking too much when cueing your dog. Dogs seek clear cues, and excess movement can be confusing.
- Don't carry treats in your hand. This can be distracting.
- Mark, THEN reach for the treat and deliver. Use the cue before the action.
- Don't repeat cues. Say your cue, and be patient. If your puppy does not comply within 10 seconds, re-evaluate the situation.

**cue → behavior → mark → reward**



# NAMING THE BEHAVIOR

A cue is a word, phrase, or visual signal that indicates reinforcement is available if the puppy chooses the behavior associated with that cue. If your puppy responds, they get access to a reinforcer. With repeated usage, the cue becomes associated with that behavior.



A cue is a green light that signals your dog to do something.

## Adding the Cue

Adding a cue is usually fairly straightforward, but please remember.

- You can only add the cue once you can predict the behavior will happen and once it looks how you want it to. Can you bet \$100 that your puppy will do it? Yes? You can add the cue.
- Cues can be verbal, gestures, or even context or environment cues.
- When you are ready to add a formal cue, could you give it just before the behavior happens? Over time, this allows your puppy to make the association between the cue, the behavior, and the reward that is coming.
- If you give multiple cues simultaneously (such as a verbal cue and a hand signal), one will likely overshadow the other. Dogs pay attention to the most relevant cue!

### A good cue is

- **Simple.** It should be contextual and easy to remember.
- **Consistent.** It should look or sound the same every time.
- **Clear.** This is a kind way to communicate with your dog.

## Cue vs. Command

Modern puppy trainers use the word “cue,” rather than “command.”

A command is an order that requires a puppy to obey. Commands come with the threat of punishment. Do what I say or else.

A cue is an invitation to perform a behavior to earn a reward.

These words affect how we view our dogs and how they view us. I prefer my dogs to work *with* me rather than *for* me.



# CUE PLANNING

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## A good cue is

- **Simple.** It should be contextual and easy for you to remember.
- **Consistent.** It should look or sound the same every time.
- **Clear.** This is a kind way to communicate with your dog.

**Behavior**

**Cue**

**Behavior**

**Cue**

**Behavior**

**Cue**

**Behavior**

**Cue**

**Behavior**

**Cue**

**Behavior**

**Cue**

**Behavior**

**Cue**

**Behavior**

**Cue**



# HAND TOUCH

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A hand touch is used to get your puppy to touch their nose to your hand. This simple behavior has so many practical applications!

- It teaches the puppy to orient toward you and come close, which is useful for regaining their attention in distracting environments.
- You can use it to guide your puppy away from something, into position, or through spaces, without pushing or pulling them.
- It's an excellent "default" behavior when your puppy is unsure what to do - giving them an easy, familiar action they can perform to earn rewards.
- It's a natural building block for more complex behaviors.
- It's very easy for most dogs to learn since investigating with their nose is a natural behavior, making it a confidence-building early training win.
- You can use it to separate naughty behavior from cued behavior. For example, you can reward the hand touch instead of the barking.

## How to Train

1. Cut up a large number of small treats. Use a clicker or your marker word.
2. Present your hand, palm open, a couple of inches away from your dog's face. Mark and treat for any interest they show, whether an actual touch of his nose to your hand or just looking at it. After the first few times, mark and treat only for a full nose touch.
3. Repeat this until your puppy reliably touches your hand.
4. Now, add the verbal cue. Before presenting your hand, say, "Touch" and then put your hand down. (Be sure to pause briefly between the cue and reaching down.)
5. When your dog responds reliably to the verbal cue, increase the distance of your dog's head from your hand by a few inches and switch hands.
6. Keep increasing the distance little by little. Also, move your hand to different positions, higher, and lower, toward the side of your dog's head.
7. Try the exercise in different rooms of the house.

## Training Tips

- Hold your hand still; it's your puppy's job to come to you!
- This is a great way to practice marker training.
- If you mark, you must treat.
- If your puppy makes several mistakes in a row, go back a step and make the exercise easier. Even if they are doing great, throw in an easy version every now and again for motivation.



# SIT

Every puppy should have one behavior they can do anywhere, anytime. Sit gives your puppy a way to say “Please,” and can become a default greeting, which stops them from jumping on people.

## How to Train

1. Grab a bunch of small, delicious treats and face your dog.
2. Lure your puppy to sit by putting the treat to its nose and slowly moving the treat backward and up. Keep the treat lure close to your dog’s nose. If you move your hand up too quickly or far away, your puppy may give up and lose interest.
3. As soon as your dog’s bottom hits the ground, mark and treat. Repeat several times, using a tossed treat to reward/reset.
4. You can say the verbal cue “sit,” as long as your puppy reliably sits.
5. Repeat the exercise several times over a few days.

## When to Practice

- before throwing a ball
- before giving your puppy a treat
- before putting their bowl down
- before opening a door
- before putting on a leash
- before taking off a leash
- before hopping in the car.
- before jumping onto the couch

### Fading the Lure for Sit

- When your puppy sits reliably, remove the treat from your hand and use the verbal cue alone.
- If your puppy makes a mistake, first try luring without the treat.
- Only return to luring if all else fails.

## Troubleshooting

If you have trouble with this exercise, try practicing with your puppy standing in front of a wall or fence. They have nowhere to go but into a sit.



# THE NAME GAME

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The Name Game is a foundation skill that encourages attention and engagement with you. It's a check-in behavior that helps with general communication.

If/when your puppy gets away from you, your family and your neighbors will call your dog's name. You want your puppy to hear it and want to come to you. This is a kindergarten-level recall. So, train it well and use the good treats.

## How to Train

1. Start in a low-distraction area inside your home, and have some small delicious treats ready.
2. Wait for your puppy to look away or get distracted.
3. Say their name once in a cheerful tone.
4. When they turn to you, immediately mark and reward.
5. Practice where your puppy can be successful for short sessions (2-3 minutes) several times a day.

## Building the Behavior

- Gradually wait for longer eye contact before treating
- Then, practice in different rooms
- Then, move to your yard
- Try when there are mild distractions
- Eventually, practice in new environments

## Training Tips

- Only mark and reward when your puppy makes eye contact. No cheating allowed.
- Don't say their name if you don't think they'll turn to you.
- Don't repeat their name if they don't respond the first time.
- Don't use their name for negative things.
- Never call your puppy to do something they don't like.



# STAY - INTRO

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To train a successful stay, build it one step at a time: First duration, then distance, and finally distraction. Once your puppy is good at all three, you will put them together.

## Stay - Duration

1. Grab a bunch of small, delicious treats and choose a quiet place to work.
2. Stand in front of your puppy and ask your puppy to sit. Tell your dog, "Stay" in a cheerful tone, pause for a second, then give the stay hand signal: Hand out in front of you, palm facing dog. Mark and treat. Repeat a couple of times to get your puppy into the game.
3. Cue your puppy to stay, pause for a second, give the stay hand signal, and take a small step back with both feet. Pause for one second (one-one-thousand). Return to your original position. Mark and treat. Repeat several times.
4. Slowly increase the number of seconds you wait before you return to your original position. Remember to mark and treat each successful try. (Note that we don't add distance now. This exercise is for learning duration, and we start at the kindergarten level to make it easy and fun for your dog.)
5. Eventually, you will be able to wait for a considerable time before you return to your original position. When you can stand 2 feet away for 10 or 15 seconds without your puppy getting up, it is time to work on the second component of stay: distance.

## Training Tips

- Vary the length of the stay; for example, do some that are 20 seconds and some that are 5 seconds.
- If your puppy pops up, do not reward them for sitting in position. You will have rewarded them for breaking the stay.

## Troubleshooting

If your puppy is making more than the occasional mistake, you are going too fast. Go back to something easier and work your way up from there. Remember, the secret to teaching stay is to start easy and go slowly



# DOWN

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Down is a great behavior for dogs who need to learn to relax in one place for long periods. It is also excellent for jumpy dogs because jumping up from a down is harder than from a sit. And lying down can be helpful for big dogs by making them less intimidating when meeting people.

## How to Train

1. Grab a bunch of small, delicious treats and face your dog.
2. Hold a treat in your hand. Lure your puppy into a down by putting the treat up to their nose and slowly moving it down to the ground. Keep the treat close to your dog's nose. If you move your hand down too quickly or too far away from their mouth they may give up and lose interest.
3. As soon as your dog's knees and elbows hit the ground, mark and treat. Keep treating them to keep position. After a few seconds, tell them, "Free!" and encourage your puppy to get up. When your puppy is reliably lying down, you may add the verbal cue.
4. Repeat steps 1-3 many times. When your puppy gets into the down quickly, it is time to take the treat out of your hand and use the verbal cue alone. If your puppy makes a mistake, first try luring without the treat. Only put the treat back in your hand if all else fails.

## When to Practice

- before throwing a ball
- before giving your puppy a treat
- before putting their bowl down
- before opening a door
- before putting on a leash
- before taking off a leash
- before hopping in the car.
- before jumping onto the couch

## Training Tip

Only say the verbal cue once. Say it, pause, then lure.

## Troubleshooting

- If you can't quite get your puppy to lie down, break the exercise into smaller steps such as: following the treat to the ground, then for bending an elbow, then for bending both elbows. Jackpot when you get a full down.
- Reward your puppy when they naturally do something you are working on teaching them. If you find them lying down, calmly mark and pet them.



# BASIC RECALL

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Training your puppy to come when called can save their life!  
Train it correctly from the start so you can bet your puppy will come to you when it really matters!

## The 5 Rules of Recall

1. Never call your puppy for anything unpleasant. This could be nail clipping, bathing, clipping their leash to leave the park, or anything that might give them pause the next time you call them.
2. Never call your puppy if you are not sure they will come. All recalls should be successful recalls. Work at your dog's level. If they have a kindergarten-level recall, don't give them a graduate assignment like being called away from a cat in a tree.
3. If you call your puppy and they do not come, make it happen! Run over and put a treat in front of their nose, backing up so they follow you.
4. Never repeat the cue. Resist the urge to call over and over and over. It only teaches your puppy to tune out the cue. Call once and, if necessary, use rule 3. Make the recall happen.
5. Fabulous rewards get fabulous recalls. If you want your puppy to stop whatever they are doing and come running to you, make it worthwhile. Use extra yummy treats or a well-thrown ball if that is your dog's thing.

## How to Train

1. Make yourself interesting. Clap, whistle, squat, throw your arms out, back away, and cheer your puppy in. You may even turn and run a few steps.
2. Call your puppy when they are ON THE WAY to you. Cheerful tones produce better results. Ensure you are loud enough to be heard, especially in busy environments. Remember to give the official cue ("Fido, come!"); your dog's name alone is not a recall.
3. When your puppy arrives, have them sit, then reward most liberally. If appropriate, release them to go back to whatever they were up to.

## Training Tip

- Find a treat your puppy has never had, but you think they will love (baby food, Cheez Whiz, liver paste). Hide it around the house. Once or twice a day, call them and reward with the extra special treat.
- When working outside, practice in enclosed spaces or on a 20' leash until your dog's recall is reliable.



# RECALL GAMES

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## Catch Me

While walking your puppy on-leash, get their attention, turn around and run a few steps. As your puppy moves with you, say your dog's recall cue. After a few steps, stop and reward with a treat or a play with a toy. Before you run, make sure your puppy is paying attention to ensure the leash does not yank at them.

## Find Me

Once your puppy has gotten the hang of a recall, you can build speed by calling them from another room. When your puppy finds you, offer lots of praise and rewards. This high-energy game is so fun for dogs!

## Hot Potato

You'll need two or more friends or family members and high-value treats. Stand apart and take turns calling your puppy between you. Reward each time your puppy comes to the person who called them. The more people, the less predictable it is!

## Dinnertime Recalls

Have your puppy sit or lie down and stay while you prepare their dinner. When the meal is ready, move a few feet away and say the recall cue. When your puppy gets to you, put their dinner bowl down. Once your puppy is really good at this game, continue to have them stay while you take the food bowl into another room. Call your puppy to you. Getting to eat their yummy meal is the reward.

## Two Ball Recall

Have two balls ready. Call your puppy to you, and as they comes to you, click or say "Yes!" for the sit or finish, and then instantly throw the ball. When your puppy gets the ball and has turned back toward you, say, "Come!" – yes, even though your puppy is already running your way! Click or "Yes!" when your puppy gets to you, and throw a second ball in the other direction as the reward. This game can be fast and furious; it's great fun for ball-driven dogs.



# PLACE

Think of the mat or mat as a target. The goal is for your puppy to place their whole body on the target. A combo of capturing, luring, and shaping may be used for this behavior.

"Place," "mat," "spot," - whatever you want to call it, *go-to-a-spot-and-settle* is your new favorite behavior! The benefits go on and on.

- It provides a designated spot for your puppy to relax, which can help manage excitement and create a calm space in distracting situations.
- It provides a positive alternative behavior to engage in.
- Place training teaches your puppy to "chill out" and self-regulate.
- By targeting their body to a mat, your puppy gains body awareness.
- Take your dog's mat with you to provide familiarity in stressful situations.

## Training Tip

- A trained Down and an understanding of targeting is helpful.
- Crumbly treats that fall apart to help get a little duration.

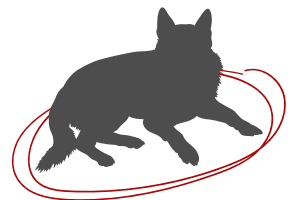
## How to Train

### Introducing

1. Place the mat or mat on the floor. Lure your puppy to the mat and crumble treats there so your puppy wants to be there.
2. When your puppy finishes the treats and looks at you, lure them into a sit, or, even better, a down. If you have a verbal cue for down, don't use it. You'll have one cue for the behaviors: go to the spot, lie down, and settle.
3. You can toss a treat off the mat to reset, but pay big for being on the mat to create contrast.

### Refining (in a separate session)

1. Your puppy should be lying down on the mat 4/5 times.
  - If your puppy is settled with a hip turned in, give them some crumbs or tiny treats to keep them in that position.
  - If your dog's knees are pointed to the sky, use a food treat to lure their head to the side they are most leaning. Deliver the treat when their head is turned and the corresponding back hip slides down, creating a relaxed (looking) body. True relaxation comes later!
2. Toss treats off the mat and use your release word.
3. When your puppy reliably gets on their mat and lies down, add a verbal cue such as "place" or "park it" or whatever you like.





# PARK IT/FIND IT

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This sequence progresses from being cued to Place, staying during the handler's absence, searching for a treat, and then autonomously returning to the starting point. It's a fun game with maximum benefits.

- Your puppy will learn that their actions can control their environment.
- The game gives your puppy a way to communicate with you.
- Your pup will learn an implied stay on the mat while you are out of sight.
- It adds value to the mat, supercharging its magnetic effect on your dog!
- It's nosework and problem-solving! What a brain workout!

## How to Train

### Place ("Park it")

1. Teach your puppy to go to and remain on a specific mat.
2. Reward your puppy for going to and staying on the mat.
3. This stay should be implied. Your puppy understands the concept of staying in place. We want them to understand that the behavior *go-to-a-spot-and-settle* also means staying there for a short amount of time.

### Find It

1. Ask your pup for a stay (gently hold their collar if they don't have a stay)
2. Place a treat behind a corner, furniture leg, or your foot about an arm's length away.
3. When your pup is not pulling, and you have a millisecond of calm, release with an enthusiastic "Find it!" and help them find the treat. Even though they just saw you hide the treat, they likely have no idea where it is.
4. When your puppy finds the treat, congratulate them!
5. Start close by, where your puppy can see you, and stay in place and slowly move to new places as your puppy is successful.

## Training Tips

- Only hide a treat at a time so your puppy knows when the game is over.
- If your puppy pops up before you say, "Find it!," you need to be able to pick up the treat. They must not get the treat for breaking stay. The clear and gentle consequence is what makes this game so powerful.

## Troubleshooting

- If your puppy won't budge from the mat, toss treats to get them going the first few times until they understand the game.



# LEAVE IT

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“Leave It” is great for calling your puppy away from things not intended for them, like food on your coffee table or dangerous items left on the street.

## Warm-up

1. Place a treat in your closed hand. Your puppy will show interest in your hand, hold it still and keep your hand closed to keep your puppy from getting the treat, but don't move your hand away.
2. When your puppy pulls away or loses interest, mark and treat from your other hand. Use a better treat than the one you asked your puppy to leave.
3. You can say the verbal cue “leave it,” when your puppy is reliably leaving

## Table exercise

1. Place treats on a dining table, coffee table, or counter. Stay within arm's length in case you need to cover up the treats.
2. When your puppy shows interest, tell them, “Leave it.” If they look away or hesitate, mark and reward with a separate treat. If they go for the food, cover up the food. When your puppy stops trying to get at it, mark and reward. The reward treat should not come from the pile on the table, and should either be the same type of treat or something better.
3. When you get a 100% success rate with 10 trials, add distance between yourself and the table. Ask someone to help protect the food, if needed, or have your puppy leatheyd to stop them from getting to the food.

## Floor or ground exercise

1. Repeat the above exercise but with the food on the ground. You can also use anything else you want your puppy to be able to leave alone.
2. Next, put food or trash on the ground and practice while you and your puppy walk by. Begin by passing at a distance and work your way closer and closer to the enticing object as your puppy gets better at the exercise. When your puppy notices the object, say, “Leave it” and reward looking toward you. Be sure to stay far enough away that your puppy can't reach the object.

## Training Tips

The sooner you give the cue, the better. If your puppy is already intrigued by an object, it is much harder for them to leave it alone



# LEASH MANNERS

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Pulling gets dogs to what they want faster. As a strategy, it works. It is best to teach dogs leash manners as early as possible. Pulling is rewarding to the dog, so the more it occurs, the harder it is to remedy. If you have an expert puller, however, don't despair. Any puppy can be taught nice leash manners.

## How to Train

### **Step 1 - Your puppy learns to stand calmly beside you without pulling.**

- Load one hand with treats.
- Mark and treat when your puppy is standing calmly next to you.
- If your puppy pulls away from you, turn into a statue. Don't yank the leash, and don't reel them back in. Stand still and wait quietly, for as long as it takes, until they return to you. Reinforce if your puppy looks at you.
- Mark and treat when they come back to you.
- Praise them enthusiastically.

### **Step 2 - Your puppy learns to stay close to you while walking.**

- With your puppy standing calmly beside you, say their name and, "Let's go."
- Mark and treat after the first step, as long as your puppy doesn't pull.
- Keep walking and mark/treat every other step.
- Gradually, increase the number of steps in between marking/treating.
- If your puppy moves away from you or starts pulling, stop and stand still. Wait until they return to your side. Then take a step with him and reward him quickly for walking near you.
- Continue this procedure for the remainder of your walk. Don't move forward if the leash is tight.
- Keep them guessing. Sometimes reward after 1 step, sometimes after 5, then again after 2, then after 7.

## Training Tips

- Try practicing walking after your puppy has had some vigorous mental or physical exercise. They will be much easier to work with then.
- Try training this in your house or backyard, first. Gradually add distractions after you have achieved success inside. Start with Step 1 each time you walk in a new area or add distractions.



# PUPPY TRAINING GAMES

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## Puppy Ping Pong

With one or more people, position yourselves around the house or a fenced yard. Take turns making a bunch of fun, exciting noises to get puppy's attention and when they get close to you, say your puppy's name and give a treat. Only reward when it is your turn - otherwise, your puppy will just go around asking for treats! Your puppy learns that when they come to their name, they get a treat.

## Follow the Leader

Walk around the house or fenced yards with some treats. Anytime your puppy walks along right next to your side (not behind or in front of you), toss a treat to the ground right in front of their nose. Don't have them on a leash or lure them to your side, just reward them when they are nearby. Your puppy learns that it pays to walk by your side!

## Hand Touch

- Hold both hands behind your back, then bring one hand out flat in front of you, close to your pup's face.
- If your pup touches your hand with their nose, say "yes!" and reward with your other hand.
- It's like a puppy nose-five!

## Hide and Seek

While your puppy is distracted, go into another room or behind a piece of furniture. Then make lots of high-pitched silly noises until your puppy comes to find you! Say their name and reward when your puppy gets there. Your pup learns that it's rewarding to come to you, no matter where you are!

## The Eyes Have It

Don't say anything to your puppy; just start saying "yes!" and giving a tiny treat each time they look up at you. See how long your puppy takes to figure out what you are rewarding for! If you master this in the house, take it outside and start over - it might take a long time for her to look at you out there, but praise heavily when she does! Your puppy learns it pays to pay attention to you, whether you have asked for them to or not.



# PUPPY ENRICHMENT

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## Stuffed Kong

This will be helpful for you to help survive puppyhood. Use your puppy's meals + peanut butter, cheese, or cream cheese to fill a Kong toy and keep your puppy occupied. Experiment to find her favorite combination of foods. Buy 5 kongs and rotate them (they are dishwasher safe!) so you aren't constantly searching for your kong somewhere. We like to keep one in the freezer for whenever we need to keep puppy busy.

## Crinkle Sock

Take an empty plastic water bottle and remove the cap, ring, and label. Slide it an old tube sock and tie a knot on the chew end. Don't leave this with puppies unattended in case they get through the sock and start shredding the plastic water bottle. Some puppies will love the crinkly noise and texture, while others might be afraid of it. Don't force your pup if they're afraid!

## Tug, Three Ways

- Take an old t-shirt, cut into strips, and braid with a big knot on either end.
- Take 3 strips of fleece and braid them together.
- Cut a hole through 2 sides of a small tennis ball and slide it over the braided fleece. Tie a knot at both ends. This is perfect for tug!

## Chew Toys

It's a good idea to have a mixture of rubber-type chew toys and food-based chews. Be careful with your food chews - don't leave anything that can splinter easily with puppy while you are gone (choking hazard) and check ingredients for safety! Did you know rawhides are often bleached with dangerous chemicals?

## Snuffle Mat

A snuffle mat will stimulate your pup's natural foraging instincts by mimicking the hunt for food in grass and fields.

You can make a "snuffle mat" for your dog by tying fleece strips around a rubber mat with holes. Search "DIY Snuffle Mat" on YouTube for details & instructions.



# CONGRATULATIONS!

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*Cheers to you and your pup for a job well done!*

You and your puppy have completed your Good Human Dog Training program.

Keep practicing to maintain your skills.

If you enjoyed this course, you and your puppy might consider more advanced training. There is always more to learn!

