

Training your new dog

Before it trains you!

It's exciting to get a new puppy and we have great expectations of what life will be with your new pet. Too soon, reality sets in. Routines of feeding, exercise and play to be established. Health and an education regime must be started.



After the first few days of fun many discover that the puppy is quite a handful and too often behaviour problems are allowed to compound, eventually leading to a very unhappy situation within the household and possibly the puppy being passed on to someone else. Yet caring for and training a dog at an early age is easy and fun. Anyone can do it with a little expert guidance; the key is taking care of potential problems before they arise at the earliest of ages.

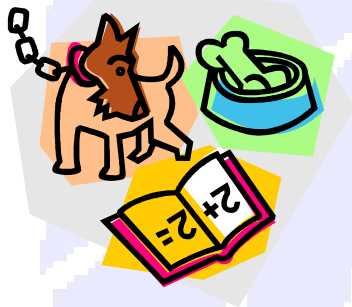
Ask your Veterinarian about spaying/neutering. These routine sterilisation procedures are your dogs' contribution to keeping the pet population under control. They also bestow significant long-term health benefits on your dog. The only reason not to spay or neuter is if you have plans to show your Miniature Schnauzer at Breed Dog Shows. Obedience dogs are permitted (actually encouraged) to be spayed/neutered. This is part of the Agreement of Sale (see for conditions).

Training should begin as soon as your new puppy is brought home. Start a housetraining program right away but keep in mind that a puppy may not be reliable until about 5 months of age. The younger the puppy the less likely he will be able to go for long periods. One of the first things to do when housetraining is to establish an outdoor toilet spot. This should be a small area just big enough for him to move around a little. First thing in the morning is the time of utmost urgency, a young puppy will not be able to make it all the way to the spot on his own and will therefore relieve himself in the first convenient place. You want to train him to use his spot, as it keeps your yard cleaner and makes cleaning up easier. When he uses his spot, point to it and praise your puppy, making a big fuss over it and give him a small treat. You have to let him know that he did the right thing. Do not play with him on the way to his designated spot as his business comes before pleasure. Walk your puppy outside on a regular schedule. Taking him to his spot first thing in the morning (even before you go to the bathroom) 10-15 minutes after eating and when he wakes from a nap, plus whenever he is excited or active or has not been outside for some time. **THE KEY IS REGULARITY.**

What to do if your puppy has an accident? Never scold the pup for the mess and should you catch the puppy in the act you can tell him NO in a firm voice and tell him to "go out" as you take him outside. If you encounter the mess after the fact DO NOT

RUB HIS NOSE IN IT as it is counter-productive, as dogs are not bothered by the smell but it will probably encourage him to take off when he sees you coming. Your actions are seen as giving attention, which reinforces the behaviour.

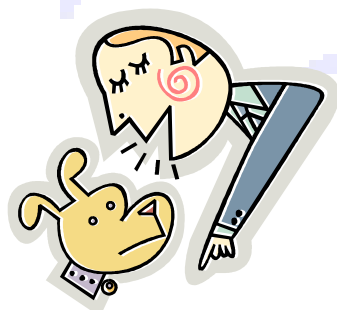
Clean up any mess thoroughly but not in front of the puppy, place him outside until you have finished. Dogs use smell as a guide to where to do their duty. They will go back to the same spot again and again. You want that fragrant spot (he likes) to be outside, not inside. Do not use any cleaning agent that is ammonia-based, as it will smell like urine to a dog. You can use white vinegar (one part vinegar to three parts water) in a spray bottle. Clean affected area first by picking up and then spray well with the vinegar/water solution and blot up (never rub as this will spread the scent). Repeat again and blot very well with paper towel. Do the same with urine stains by first blotting as much as you can with kitchen paper towel and then soak well with vinegar/water solution from spray bottle, blot well and repeat, this way you will have no stain and no smell.



Enrol your puppy in a Puppy Kindergarten class (at your local Vets) as this is excellent for socialisation. The weekly classes offer the training basics of sitting, staying and coming when called and general good manners towards other puppies and people. They help build the bond between you and your dog and help teach your dog the canine social graces to help them in their future lives of being a GOOD CANINE CITIZEN. When your puppy completes his kindy

classes he should be ready for adult obedience classes should you decide to continue with the training.

Ask your Vet or Breeder who gives classes in your area and get started as soon as possible. The critical time for training is the first six months when the puppy is eager to learn and will learn very easily (good manners as well as bad, if allowed). His personality and character will be determined by the habits you allow him to develop in those first crucial months. It is your actions or lack of action that will determine the personality you have to live with FOR LIFE.



If the puppy starts 'biting' or 'chewing' you stop this immediately by taking him by the scruff and growling NO at him and staring him in the eye and keep staring until his looks away first. This must be done as some dogs, male or female, try to be dominant and you must remind him you are the dominant leader not him. Never allow your puppy to disobey you, as you must correct him immediately. Anything the dog 'gets away with' is considered by him to be allowed. Animals do not understand ENGLISH (they are not little humans)

they only understand actions, the tone of your voice and permission granted by your inaction or by praise.

If you have difficulty training your dog or if the dog shows any aggression toward you or anyone else, consult a professional dog trainer/behaviourist or myself. Puppies are like two years olds, you cannot reason with them and every time you let them get away with something you will make it harder to correct next time.

REMEMBER CONSISTENCY AT ALL TIMES. Do not allow something one time and not another and the puppy must know its place in the family at all times.

