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When Should I Start Training My Puppy?

By Adam G. Katz

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If you have a puppy, you must start training early, but do it gently.

Your puppy has to have confidence in you before he can begin learning. Remember that puppies are like children – they have growing bodies, short attention spans, and will only learn things when the conditions are right and when they understand what it is you're trying to teach them.

That said, the earlier you start training dogs, the better. More specifically, it's best if you start "socialization" from 8 weeks, simple commands like "come" and "sit" from 12 weeks, and more intensive training at 5 to 6 months.

While some early training can be started as soon as you bring your puppy home, the optimum time to begin obedience training is somewhere around 9 to 12 weeks of age.

Keep in mind that training can cover a broad range of topics - I'm not suggesting that you begin training your puppy at 8 weeks of age for agility competitions! Your training should start off with the basics - teaching him "No!" and beginning house-training.

Socialization skills are next - experts tell us the best window for your puppy to learn socialization skills is between 3 and 16 weeks - that's the best time to insure that your puppy grows into a well-adjusted adult.

And remember, socialization isn't about teaching him the right fork to use at the dinner table - it's about giving your dog the self-assurance to deal correctly with any social environment he finds himself in is one of the most valuable and lasting lessons you can teach him.

A well-socialized dog will interact well with all types of people and situations, even those he has never been in before. With appropriate social skills, your dog will show little or no fear of most objects, people or other animals, and even if startled, will recover quickly and won't panic.

Bottom line, a well-adjusted dog is one that is comfortable in a variety of situations and surroundings. He may be excited in a new setting, but not fearful. The key here is to create positive experiences as you expose your dog to more and more new situations.

Even training your puppy for 5 - 10 minutes per day as soon as you bring him home will make a big difference in the social skills and adaptability of your puppy.

Keep in mind that puppies have very short attention spans, so keep your lessons short and fun. How short an attention span? That depends on the age of the puppy, his breed and how mature your

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individual puppy is - but a good rule of thumb is to keep the training sessions within that 5 –10 minute range.

Depending on your puppy's age and maturity level, sometime between 3 and 6 months of age you should be moving the training into the area of the basic commands such as Sit, Heel, Down, etc. It's important you have realistic expectations about your dog's capabilities at this point - I don't expect a puppy to be responding to the basic commands with any degree of regularity until they've reached 6 months of age.

For more: <http://tinyurl.com/4efaq>

Author, "Secrets of a Professional Dog Trainer!" which you can read more about at:<http://tinyurl.com/4efaq>

Even Lassie Had Her Moments

By Chris Sutton

Lassie! Now THERE'S a dog! If you said SIT, Lassie would sit. If you said FETCH, Lassie would fetch. If you said PLAY DEAD, Lassie would just about quit breathing. Why, you could just imagine Lassie bringing you dinner each night, couldn't you? Now THAT was a well-trained dog!!! Guess what? Lassie wasn't born that way; she had to go through puppy training!

Puppy training is very important if you want a well-behaved dog! You have to start training them when they are young and you have to be consistent. Baby dogs are just like baby people; they don't know how to do anything when they are just starting out. You have to teach them and you have to be patient.

There are lots of new things your puppy needs to learn but three of the most important things are it's name, the word "no" and the word "good dog." Those words are the words you are going to be using constantly during your puppy training period.

The puppy name is how the new puppy learns to identify itself. She has to know when you are talking to her. She has to know when you are calling her. She has to know her name!

You will be using the word "no" during your puppy training to let the dog know that she is doing something wrong. If you continually use different words to let the dog know she is doing something she is not supposed to do, you will have one very confused puppy. You have to be consistent in what you say so the new puppy will understand what it is you are trying to say.

The same thing goes for the words "good dog." You will want to say that to your new puppy every time she does something right. Your new puppy wants to please you and you need to let her know when she does.

Don't just scold your dog all the time and forget to tell her when she has done something right. The two things go hand-in-hand with your puppy training and you MUST be consistent. Tell her "no" when she

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has done something wrong and tell her "good dog" when she has done something right.

Chris W. Sutton, Easy Puppy Training,

– Want to know how to train

your puppy? Visit our Puppy Training website for a free course on "Welcoming Your New Puppy Home and Puppy Training".



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