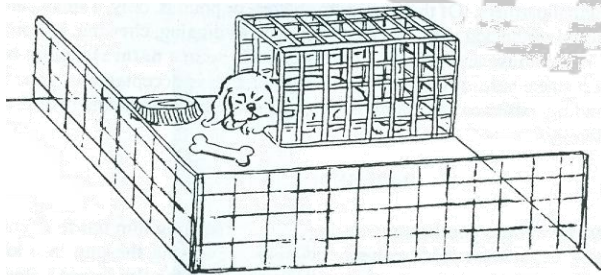


## HOME TRAINING ISSUES

A well-mannered dog is a joy to live with. When you bring a dog into your family's domesticated environment, it is only fair to teach him the rules of your household. Less than thirty percent of all dogs live out their lives with their original owners. Of those taken to shelters, only a small percentage gets adopted. Misbehavior such as digging, chewing, jumping up, house soiling and wildness in the house are frequent complaints. **These are natural canine behaviors.** It is our responsibility to redirect these natural instincts into behavior that is acceptable in our family environment.

**POTTY TRAINING:** Teaching your new dog not to eliminate in the house is usually the first training experience most owners encounter. Showing him in a kind way and taking responsibility for helping him do what you want will set the tone for the future. Rewarding the dog for eliminating where you want him to and controlling his environment will make the task go faster. Before bringing the new friend inside:

- Designate a part of the yard that will be the toilet area.
- Take him there each time you want him to eliminate.
- Keep this area picked up, leaving one stool in order to give him the idea.
- Stand still and allow him to sniff and investigate. This may take awhile.
- Choose a word, such as "potty, or "hurry up," that signals what you want him to do. Family members should always use the same word.
- As the dog "goes," **softly praise, then immediately give him a treat.** If this new place and distractions prevent him from performing, take him inside. **Do not leave him unsupervised in the yard.** You will not see what or if he performed.
- Take him outside again in about twenty minutes.
- While inside, be aware of signals such as sniffing the floor and circling that indicate he is looking for a place to "go." This is all new to the dog; so **do not overcorrect if he soils the floor. This can result in his thinking he should not eliminate in your presence and find a place to hide next time.**
- Feed on a regular schedule. This will help you predict when he will need to "go."
- Until he is old enough to hold his bladder, confine him in a safe area until you are able to take him outside.
- Use a commercial product to eradicate the odor. White vinegar and water can also be used. **Never use ammonia.** Scheduling, awareness, proper clean up and common sense is the key to successful potty training.



*Puppies need a lot of sleep. Block off a corner with a couple of dog gates or an exercise pen. Place a waterproof cover over carpeted areas. Choose an area where he can be kept safely when not supervised and which is not isolated from the family. Lots of exercise before and after being confined is essential.*

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**CHEWING:** Puppy-proof the house and yard before you bring a new dog home. Be sure you have several suitable chew objects, such as Kongs, sterilized bones, Nylabones and safe squeaky toys available. Chewing is a normal canine pastime. It keeps the teeth and jaws healthy. Give your dog things he is allowed to chew and keep “un-chewables” where he cannot get them until he learns to distinguish between the two. When a dog is chewing on an unacceptable object, use your “stop” word and trade him a stuffed sterilized bone or other acceptable object. If he is chewing on furniture, say your “stop” word as you lure or take him to another area and say, “Chew this,” as you give him something acceptable to chew on. There are products such as Bitter Apple that can be sprayed on objects to discourage chewing. Supervise your dog when you are at home. Confine him in a safe place if he must be left alone. Be consistent and your dog will learn to go find their “chewable” objects and leave forbidden things alone.

**FURNITURE:** Decide now if the dog will be allowed on the furniture, especially your bed. Either choice is fine, but be consistent. Begin by teaching him to sit before you give permission. Since dogs like to sleep near family members, teach him to sleep on his mat or in his crate in your room. The dog cannot distinguish between old and new chairs, muddy or clean feet. If you wish to teach him that he can be on only one piece of furniture, “his chair,” establish that rule in the beginning. Place his mat or blanket on it so he will know that this is his chair. Use the command “Off,” not “Down” to remove him from the furniture.

**RESOURCE GUARDING:** From the time you first bring your new puppy or adult dog home, teach him that he does not have to be possessive or protective of his food, toys, and chewies. If at all possible, never free feed your dog. **Feed him from your hand the first few days when he joins your family.** Later, allow him to watch as you prepare his meal. Feed him a couple of bites while holding the bowl. Next, place the bowl on the floor and drop a tasty treat into the bowl while he is eating. Walk a few steps away, return and drop or toss another small high value treat into the bowl. Repeat this a few times. He will learn that when a human approaches his bowl, good things happen. Later on, practice removing the bowl to add other special treats. Teach him to say, “Please,” by sitting before you place the bowl in his feeding area. You can trade him a yummy treat for a toy if he displays signs of guarding possessions.

**THE DOOR:** To avoid having your dog bolt out of the open door, possibly being lost or hit by a car, train him to wait and exit on command. Tell him to sit and wait while you open the door, step through, then turn and call the dog through the door. Tell him to sit and wait while you close the door.

**THE CAR:** To avoid your dog interfering with the driver, possibly causing an accident, teach the dog to ride in the back seat of a car or in the **floorboard in the front seat of a pickup.** Use THE MAT initially during the teaching phase to show the dog where his spot is. There are canine seatbelt restraints that make it safe for your furry friend. When he understands the concept of “Stay,” tell him to stay until you open the door, attach his lead and call him out of the car. **DO NOT** permit him to ride with his head out the window (eye injuries) or in the bed of a pickup (injuries or thrown out in event of accident)

**SUBMISSIVE URINATION:** While on their backs, young puppies are cleansed by the mother dog. Dogs who greet their owners in this manner are insecure. This act of submission must not be confused with a lapse in housebreaking. Overcorrecting during the housebreaking routine may be a part of the problem. If you reprimand the dog, it will only make matters worse. Make your return home as low key as possible. If the dog is in the house, ignore him and walk directly to the back door, go outside and throw a ball or toy, and play retrieve for a few minutes. If this is a problem when he comes into the house from the yard, exercise him before allowing him to come inside. Keep him in the kitchen with you while you busy yourself with some task for a few minutes. Build his confidence by taking him on walks and to the park. Teach him to sit and shake hands while friends kneel down to say hello. Avoid towering over him when you greet him. Non-coercive obedience training will build his self-esteem and confidence.

**WILDNESS IN THE HOUSE:** Your dog may be excited about getting to come inside the house because he has been alone in the yard or confined all day with nothing to do. Dogs are social animals and need a lot of human contact. They also need a lot of exercise, so make sure you provide activities that will tire your dog. Throw a ball or toy before inviting him to come inside. Teach him to sit on command. Reward immediately with praise and a tasty treat. You might try some of the following suggestions, but be patient and consistent.

- **Attach a short leash to the collar and walk him around in the house.** Use the obedience commands he has learned in class and do not allow him to pull. Tell him to lie down on his mat by your side while you watch T V.
- **Sit on the leash** or tie it to your chair.
- **Tie his leash to your belt loop** and make the dog stay within 6 feet of you for an hour or two for several days.

Allowing your dog to be with the family and teaching him how you want him to behave can be rewarding for both you and the dog. Consistency will be needed to condition the dog to exhibit good house manners.

**REARING UP ON COUNTERTOPS AND TABLES:** Place a piece of cardboard on the table or counter top and let it extend two or three inches over the edge. Weight the other side of the cardboard with ten or twelve aluminum soda cans containing a few pennies. When his paws hit the edge, the cans will come down, making a horrible racket. Make sure food is not placed on the cardboard. You do not want it flipped to the floor and reward the dog.

**STEALING FROM GARBAGE CANS:** Use a garbage can with a secure lid, or store the container in an area that is not accessible to dogs or children.

**STOOL EATING (COPROPHAGIA):** Observing a pup or adult dog eating his own or others' stools can be distasteful to pet owners. Stool eating could be caused by one of several things. Puppies observe their mothers keeping the litter box clean by eating feces and they may be imitating her. It can also be related to boredom. Pups may entertain themselves by playing with hard or frozen stools. Physical conditions such as pancreatitis, over feeding, intestinal infections or allergies, causing malabsorption could be contributing factors. These conditions can produce stools that contain under-digested nutrients. Be conscious about keeping the yard picked up. Spraying hot sauce or some other distasteful product on it might be effective. Your vet may suggest sprinkling FORBID on the stools. Feeding an easily digestible diet such as chicken or lamb based food without artificial colorings may be helpful. Two meals a day can rule out the "empty stomach syndrome." If your dog is confined to a bathroom or kitchen all day, make sure he has emptied his bowels outside before you leave for work.

**JUMPING UP:** Jumping up is a normal attention seeking behavior. All family members must have the puppy or adult dog sit before they receive any attention, such as praise, petting or food reward. Teaching your puppy to shake hands when he sits to say hello is a good alternative to jumping up. Bend down, shake his paw, softly praise and treat. If an excited dog launches toward you as you come through the door, fold your arms, turn away and look at the ceiling or the wall. When the dog has 4 feet on the floor, tell him to sit while you praise and reward. Body blocking is another way to discourage jumping up. As the dog comes toward you, quickly turn sideways as you step into his space before he reaches you. Use your stop it word and tell him to sit. A dog cannot sit and jump at the same time. Toss a few treats into another room for him to scarf up. When he returns for more, have him sit.

**DIGGING:** There are several reasons why dogs dig; boredom from being left alone with nothing to do, making a cool place to rest, seeking shelter, or burying bones and just for fun. If digging in the flowerbed is a problem, use chicken wire under the mulch. Plants will grow through the holes. Leave stuffed Kongs or other safe toys outside. You can also prepare a 'digging pit' and let him observe while you loosen the soil and maybe add sand to it. Invite him to help you dig. Hide things in it for him to dig up. Be sure your dog gets to interact and play with family members each day. Provide plenty of exercise.

**BARKING:** Not all barking is bad. Barking to extremes is the problem. The largest category of nuisance barking is caused by boredom. Dogs left outside all day with nothing to do sometimes bark at anything that moves. If your dog barks at people on the street when he is in the house, close the blinds when you are gone. You can leave a radio on to lessen the noise from outside. An effective way to control barking is to teach your dog to "speak" or bark on cue. Choose a time when you will be at home and entice him to bark. Example: Ask a partner to stand outside the door and either knock or ring the doorbell when you say, "Speak," the doorbell rings, the dog starts barking and you praise. Repeat several times. When he gets the idea, wiggle a treat in front of his nose after about three barks. He cannot sniff and bark at the same. As he stops barking, tell him "hush," or "quiet." Praise and treat.