

Miscellaneous Puppy Helpful Quick Tips A-Z

CA Leash Laws:

Respect Leash Laws both for the safety of your puppy/dog, but for the safety of others in public! The only place your puppy or dog should be off leash is on "private property you own", in a "County or State recognized enclosed off leash dog park area", or other safe fenced in areas that are dog friendly. Please respect areas that are clearly marked no dogs.

Please keep in mind CA Leash Laws are in place to protect your puppy or dog from being hurt, as well as protect others from your dog or puppy. Remember even though your puppy or dog may be friendly, that does not mean that other people and dogs want to meet your puppy or dog.

Please be courteous to others, both people and animals alike: many people (adults, seniors, and/or children) and other dogs out there are very afraid of "**all**" dogs no matter how big, small, friendly, or vicious.

Also, it is not safe or fair for your unleashed puppy or dog to run up and blast into a dog's space who is on leash with its owner (you are setting up the dog on leash to become reactive and have to defend its space, as it is trapped on leash)!

Potential risks to a loose dog: could run away, be hit by a car, attack or be attacked by a wild or domestic animal, be bit by a snake, pick up dangerous fox tails, eat something poisonous or dangerous, get pepper sprayed or maced by a person protecting themselves or their animals, disturb wildlife, to name a few.

Bottom line: please keep your puppy or dog safe and please do not intentionally make your puppy or dog someone else's problem! "Think before you unleash your puppy or dog, safety should be a priority". **Keep it safe and fun for all!** **Thank You!**

Children & Puppies:

Supervise Child/Puppy Play at all times both for the child's **and** puppy's safety. Take the time to teach them both how to play nicely. It is easy for children and/or puppies to get amped up and out of control. Give them both time outs if needed. Teach them fun games to play nicely and safely. Include children in the training process. Use trick training to gain their interest. Having children teach puppies to "Sit" is very handy as a sitting puppy is not a jumping puppy! **Read:** Raising Puppies & Kids Together - Pia Silvani

Demanding Behavior:

Set your family up to a nice future. **Remember** “Demanding Behavior” gets nothing! Ignore demanding behavior. Get up and walk off if you need to (go in another room and close the door if needed). No eye contact, no talking, no playing or petting. Once your puppy has wandered off to do something else and has been gone for at least 2 minutes, you may call them back, ask them to work (like a “Sit”) then you may play or pet them.

Dogs who figure out that demanding behavior works, it gets worse and worse, especially if you are a push over. Example: puppy tosses a ball in your lap over and over again while you are sitting down to talk on the phone or watch T.V. until you get frustrated & toss the toy (whoops! in this case win for the puppy/loss for you long term ~bummer!). Pretty soon you cannot watch T.V. or talk on the phone anymore, because the puppy has made everything about him! They keep pushing in hopes you will give in. Be strong, **hang in there**, when you put your foot down finally, expect the behavior to get worse (over about 2 weeks) before they give in and things get better! “Instead reward and give attention to nice, polite, and appropriate doggy behavior”.

Teach them that you control the resources and give them on your terms (whether food, treats, praise, play, pets and loves, inside/outside, leash on, etc.). **Simply take those little opportunities to work on training.** Keeps things small and fun. **Puppies in the end can have everything, but you initiate.**

Make training part of your everyday life. Get the family involved. Take a few seconds here and there, they add up over the long run. Keep it fun! Program “Sits” for everything (**remember a sit is better than jumping!**). A nice Sit is a great way for a puppy or dog to ask nicely.

Door Safety:

Set up a safety system for doors and gates in the house and yard, until you can properly train your puppy or dog for door manners and recalls (come) with distractions.

Have a leash “always” hanging on the door and gate. Make it a family rule that the puppy always has to be either leashed up or put in a puppy safe area before doors and gates get opened. Period, no excuses.

or

Have a double gate system set up at gates and doors (for example, an exercise pen as a cushion between the house or yard and the outside world), think of it as a safety net (if you were learning to walk a tight rope, it would be nice to have a safety net below you! Same goes for your puppy and the outside world!

Down versus Off Cue (Be clear/consistent in your cues):

Please keep in mind as puppies do **not** generalize, please stay consistent in your cues! Think before you ask: once you have in mind what cue you should give, proceed by asking for the appropriate cue.

2 Examples:

Down means to **lie down**, body on the ground.

Off means **get off of whatever** it is you want them off of (you, counter, couch, an object).

Generalizing:

To ease potential frustration it is important to keep in mind when training puppies that “Generalizing” is a natural “Human Trait”, it does **not** come natural for dogs! Try not to fall back on accusing your puppy of being “Stubborn!” or “Stupid!”; when in fact he simply does not understand what you are asking him in reality. If you are getting refusals on your cues, stop and give it some thought first. Remember if you are frustrated there is an excellent chance your puppy is frustrated too, if not more so. Breathe, get your patience back, relax, and try again. Keep training fun, not too serious so your puppy or dog does not shut down.

Keep in mind anytime you change how you ask for a cue (a normal hand signal versus an over exaggerated one, a left hand versus your normal right hand signal) or place that you are asking (say you normally work at home with no or limited distractions and now you are asking at the park or on your walks where distractions are a-plenty!), the game (if you think of training as a game) has drastically changed in the puppy’s eyes and comprehension! Do not be afraid to go back to the baby steps of training, pretend you are again teaching him something new he does not know, because in reality you are teaching him something new! As training progresses over time and experience, the puppy can start to understand that the “Training Game” can be played in lots of different places and with lots of different types of distractions and mean the same thing. Be patient most of all, keep it fun, and make yourself the most exciting thing in his world.

Lure versus Bribe:

A **lure** can be used and faded out, **no** longer used once a puppy understands the new cue (for example a treat in your hand to teach a “Sit” hand signal). The puppy is actually rewarded **“after”** he completes his task. The lure is there only to help him understand.

A **bribe** is exactly as it sounds, it is a bribe, once you get into that loop if the puppy does not see the bribe first the action you are looking for will not occur (example: puppy is playing in the back yard and will only come if you shake a treat can first before calling him to come, no treat can shaking, no come). The only time you want to use a bribe is in an emergency, the puppy ran out the front door and is heading for the road, "bribe away!", shake the treat can, say lets go for a car ride and head for the car, fall on the ground, or take off running a different directions; do whatever it takes to get him back to safety of you and the house.

Pick Up Your Dog's Poop:

Carry poop bags with you anytime you take your dog out in public: whether you are going to the park, the pet store, a walk along the river, **or** out in the country! Responsible dog owners pick up after their dogs at all times. Carry some Ziploc bags with you as well, so if you are walking a distance you can put the poop bag in an air tight bag to keep the smell away as you walk. Dispose of the poopy bags when you find a public trash can.

People, who do not pick up after their dogs, end up ruining it for those of us who do pick up after their dogs. Please keep in mind State Parks, local parks, hotels, beaches, and other areas end up banning dogs completely due to owners not picking up their dog's poop!

Gross thought, but reality: dog poop does not go away and accumulates quickly! It stays where your dog goes for a long, long time! Not only is it an eye sore, but it is unsanitary for other animals and people. It can spread disease easily to other animals. It is not fair to leave your dog's mess for someone else to potentially step in.

On your home turf, remember to **keep poop picked up** throughout the day as well. Poop that is left out attracts flies, insects, and is unsanitary. It can be tracked into your house and transferred to counters and other surfaces. Leave it out long enough and some dogs discover it is fun to eat as well! That last gross thought alone should promote good pooper duty diligence!

Playing/Quality Bonding Time (& teach take, give/drop, & leave it cues):

You might ask how do you make yourself the most important thing in your puppy's life, yet still maintain his ability to be independent (meaning be able to quietly hang out in his crate, kennel, or bed area with out having vocal temper tantrums)? Keep in mind tired puppies make for happy owners. Tired puppies take naps!

Remember to create fun times with your puppy. If you are physically able, get down on the floor with your puppy and play (side effect, makes the floor a fun place for your puppy, good times happen there versus bouncing off the furniture)! Keep it fun, but safe and constructive quality fun time. Get out some fun toys (toys he can retrieve a tug toy). Have

some yummy treats ready. Teach your puppy to take the toy gently from you (a **“Take” cue**) and then program a drop cue (like **“Drop” or “Give” cue**). Simply place a treat in your hand by his nose, ask for a give or drop, when he spits the toy out give his reward mark (“Yes!”) and treat. Then toss his toy and repeat the process. You do not chase him and the toy, if he wants to play keep away, you go off a different direction (change the game on him, remember you are playing by your rules now).

Once you have a solid give and take cue (“both”), you can play a **game of tug**. Rules are you ask him to take the tug toy, sometimes he wins/sometimes you win (you can rotate who wins/keep it fun for both of you), but whenever you say his drop cue (“give” or “drop”) he must comply (use your treat if you must to remind him to spit it out ~ then reward, also start small and ask before he gets too adrenaline rushed). If at any point his teeth come in contact with your hand (body), say **“OUCH”** in a high pitched voice, and the game stops and the toy goes away, until you are ready to play again (30 seconds to 2 minutes)! Then start back up again. “For puppies play tug very gently as their jaws, teeth, and bones are not fully developed and can be hurt with rough play”.

Use the play time, to teach patience. First hold a treat in your fist, present to your puppy, don’t say anything and wait. As soon as he takes his nose away from your hand (even by accident, looks away, etc.), say “Yes!” and treat. Then repeat in the opposite hand. Once tipping nose away easily every time, the next time just before you present the leave it treat hand, say **“Leave It!”** in a firm low deep voice (but not shouting voice). As soon as he takes his nose away from your hand (even by accident, looks away, etc.), say “Yes!” and treat. Then try having him sit and place it on the floor, and say “Leave It!”, but be ready have your hand close enough you can quickly scoop up if he moves towards the treat. Then progress from treats to toys. Then use on your walks (example please do not roll in the smelly dead skunk ~ “Leave It!”). Keep it fun. If you have two oops (failures), go back and make the game easier before making harder again.

Talk With Your Veterinarian:

Talk with your Veterinarian about Micro-Chipping your pets! Keep the reported information up to date! **License your pets with the County** you live in. **Keep pet tags current** on their information. **Have current photos of your pets.** The scariest feeling in the world is losing a pet and not knowing if you will be able to find them and bring them home safely. Be proactive; think before you have to react.

Talk with your Veterinarian before starting your puppy on high impact exercise (like jogging, bike riding, Frisbee, agility, etc.), make sure it is safe to start as you want their growth plates, joints, and bones to be able to handle (or you can potentially cause long term health and lameness issues).

Be Proactive: Keep up to date on not only vaccines, but Heartworm Medicine, Flea & Tick Control, and Physicals! Talk with your Veterinarian and address concerns, earlier than later. Take the time to be proactive on possible health issues.

Teach Tricks:

Keep it safe (no jumping for puppies). Trick Training is a great way to have fun and bond with your dog! A great book to read for Trick Training is: **The Only Dog Tricks Book You'll Ever Need - Gerilyn J. Bielakiewicz** and can be found at www.amazon.com.

Train:

Take the time to train (& bond) your puppy or dog. Review our website, or e-mail or call us, for what "The Right Steps" can offer you and your puppy or dog for Training (from Basic Training, Advanced Training, Specialty Fun Classes, Private lessons, and much more). Keep your puppy and dog well socialized with people, animals, and different environments. Your goal should be to have a confident dog and well trained dog you can enjoy spending time with whether kicking back at home or taking out in public for a fun outing.

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