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## STARTING OUT RIGHT

### Bringing your dog home:

**It is important to be prepared, so here are some items we recommend you have before the arrival of your new pup:**

#### Food:

- Everyday meals
- Chews

#### Equipment:

- Long (15'/30') leash
- Short leash (6')
- A flat collar for home
- Martingale collar
- ID tags

#### In-home management:

- Crate, preferably a travel crate
- Pooper scooper/poop bags

#### Toys:

- Rope toys
- Plush toys
- Soft and hard rubber toys
- Kong
- Treat ball

#### Dog care tools:

- Canine dental care antlers/bone
- Toothbrush and toothpaste
- Nail clippers
- Dog shampoo/conditioner
- Brush

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### Training equipment:

- Marker noise (the same concept as a clicker except you make the noise. Some people use the word "yes", others make a kiss noise) and
- Treat bag
- Training treats (Natural Balance, dried liver, chicken, hot dogs, etc...)

### Transport:

- Dog gate or crate for the car (If your car is big enough you can use the same travel crate as the one your dog will sleep in at night.)

### Home Setup.

Before bringing your dog home, set up a confinement and limited access area/boundaries. One of the most important steps is to establish boundaries of where your puppy will be allowed/not allowed to go; for example, up/down stairs. At the beginning you will need to have eyes on your puppy at all times, this sounds overwhelming but that is where confinement and limited access area comes in.

Limited access area is an area where the puppy can roam but is within line of sight of you; for example, the kitchen or living room areas where they have enough room to run about but are blocked from other areas of the house. You can block these areas off by using baby gates. If being in one place is not an option during that time, you can also use the tethering technique. This is done by taking your lead and attaching one end to the puppy's collar and the other to yourself; your puppy will be following you wherever you go!

Confinement area, this may sound harsh as we think/feel negative when we hear 'confinement', but we assure you, this is something your puppy needs and will love. The confinement area is a place for your dog to stay when you can't provide 100% supervision. For example, when you are out or busy around the house and can't keep your eyes on him/her the entire time, you put your puppy in their crate. Remember that dogs are naturally den dwelling and love close quarters.

The most important thing is to make sure that the confinement area is a place of positivity! People often give a new dog the run of the house right away and forget the puppy needs to be monitored at all times. Then, when he/she has an accident on the carpet or chews on the couch cushions, put him/her in their crate and confinement then becomes a punishment and will from then on be seen as a negative place. So, how do you make his/her confinement area a positive place? You can do this by using treats and/or feeding them in their crate. One thing to avoid is putting pillows, blankets, and/or toys in the crate; this is due to safety reasons. We do not want the dog in boredom to start chewing/ripping/eating whatever is in the crate.

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The ideal confinement area is easy to clean and easy to close off with a door or baby gate, we suggest the use of a crate as it will make potty training easier as well. Having too big of an area will allow the puppy to potty in one area and still have enough room to move and play without having to be around the mess they just made. The area should be mostly free of furniture and safety hazards. If you don't have access to a crate, the best places for a confinement area are the kitchen, laundry room, sunroom, or bathroom.

### The First Day with Your Dog

#### Home Introduction

Step 1. When you arrive home, take your dog out for a walk or bathroom break. Remember to have a party for your little one if he/she does potty outside!

Step 2. Introduce him to his new home on leash, including the confinement area.

Step 3. Introduce him/her to her family members. There is a delicate balance to introductions. Ensure a calm environment when introducing your puppy to other family members; and remember that your puppy feeds off of those around him/her, so if your son/daughter is calm the more calm your puppy will be. During introduction do not allow the puppy to jump up and/or nip. This is VERY important as it will set the tone for what she/he is allowed to do. Also keep in mind that the new environment in itself may be overwhelming already so keep the number of people and that amount of time short and sweet.

Step 4. After steps one through three, your pup should be exhausted, so place him/her in their area (confinement/limited), take off his/her leash, give him/her a chew or stuffed Kong, and leave him/her. If your dog howls, whines, or barks, wait until he/she has been quiet for at least ten seconds before interacting. Otherwise, he/she will learn that whining or barking is what gets them attention, which will in turn encourage longer, and/or louder barking or crying. They will self sooth, just as babies do.

**Start alone-time training now.** You will want to spend every minute with your dog, but it is better to prepare him/her for a normal routine right away. He/she must learn to be relaxed, calm, and settled when alone – and this doesn't come naturally to dogs as they are social animals.

**How?** Start by leaving your dog alone in their confinement area while you are in another part of the house. Vary the length of your absences, from 30 seconds to 20 minutes, and repeat them throughout the day. If your dog seems comfortable, you can increase the amount of time he/she is left alone, eventually getting to

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a point where you can run errands. Remember, it may take several days or weeks for your dog to make the transition to his new home, so whining and barking may be an issue at first.

## House Training 101

Potty accidents will happen with your puppy, but remember, this happens with adult and previously house-trained dogs too. It is not at all obvious to dogs that the bathroom rules in one place apply everywhere. Teach your new family member to distinguish between indoors and outdoors by getting him/her to go in a designated area. Each time they potty in the designated area mark and reward! With a little patience and supervision, your dog will soon be fully versed in toilet etiquette.

### Catching Them in the Act.

Praise or correction at the right moment is key, i.e. the second he/she finishes 'going' in their designated area reward with a treat and praise. If he/she has an accident in the house or unwanted area, YOU MUST CATCH THEM IN THE MOMENT!!! Do not wait until they are finished going to scold them. This will only make them connect liquid on the floor as bad, not the act of going inside as bad.

**Prevent Accidents.** Supervise your dog in the house at all times, and use a crate/confinement area when you cannot watch your puppy.

- Until your dog is perfectly house-trained, don't leave him alone except in his confinement area.
- If you see your dog sniffing and circling in the house, take him out immediately.
- Praise and reward your dog with a treat when he relieves himself outdoors.
- Never yell or punish your dog for a potty accident after the fact. Catch him/her within 1.3 seconds or mid-stream of his potty, say no and scoop him/her up to go outside. Once he/she finishes potty you can then praise and treat.

### Crate Training.

As mentioned earlier, another good habit to start right away is crate training. A crate is a terrific training and management tool, useful for house-training, brief alone-time, settling, and any form of travel. Most importantly, a crate teaches your dog to hold it when he has to go to the bathroom, settles his/her energy level, and gives him/her a safe place of their own. A crate helps your dogs in many ways – and saves your carpets.

**Get started.** Throw small tasty treats into the crate one at a time. Praise your dog when he/she goes in to get the treat. When your dog is comfortable going into the crate, practice closing the door for 1-2 seconds, then treat him through the door. Let him back out. Repeat this step several times, gradually building to 10

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seconds.

## **Bedtime Routine.**

Dogs prefer to sleep indoors where it is quiet and warm. At first you will need to determine the bed time for your pup and put him/her in their crate. Eventually, they will pick up on "bedtime" and the crate means sleep; and they will start going themselves. At night, put a chew toy in your dog's crate or sleeping area and leave the dog. He may have trouble settling in at first, but should eventually relax and go to sleep. It is important not to let your dog out of his confinement area if he cries or barks. Remember the amount of time he/she is in the crate for the night will also depend on how young your puppy is and the potty schedule you have him/her on.

The bottom line is, if you give attention when he/she is making noise, he/she will do what works for him/her and cry/bark/whine up longer and louder next time. It is hard to do, but wait your pup out. Just like a baby cries themselves to sleep, your pup should do the same (It's normal for your dog to cry a little for the first few nights, but he will quiet down quicker each night.)

## **4 Keys to Long-Term Happiness with Your Dog**

### **1. Exercise.**

Give your dog plenty of exercise, and you will have a happier, healthier, better-behaved dog. Well-exercised dogs bark less, chew less, sleep more, and rest easier if left home alone. They are also much less likely to rummage through the trash or attack the couch cushions.

Leash walks are great, but your dog needs to run, swim, or do something else that gets his heart pumping for at least 30 minutes every day. For example: Chasing a ball or Frisbee, Swimming, active play with other dogs, and/or off-leash romps or hikes. Also keep in mind that activities with a lot of running, jumping, or any high impact on joints should be held off until the puppy reaches about 8 months. This is because their bones, ligaments, etc. are still building their strength and injuries can occur making them more susceptible to injuries in the future. Letting puppy run around the yard or somewhere with a soft ground will help absorb impact.

### **2. Mental stimulation.**

**Toys Galore:** Toys are a great way to engage your dog's brain. Dogs have distinct individual toy preferences, depending on the day, time, and situation. Do some detective work and find out what truly tickles your dog. For puppies try and stay away from any hard plastic toys or anything that may break

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their teeth or hurt their gums. Remember they are already teething, so they will need toys conducive to making their gums feel better. Toys that squeak are often high value for dogs as the squeak reminds them of the noise an animal would make. Finding the perfect toys for your pup should be just as fun of a process for you as it is for them.

**Work to Eat:** Biologically speaking, your dog is not supposed to have a bowl of kibble plunked down in front of him. He is a hunter by nature, meant to work for his keep. Mimic this by serving your dog's food in a Kong or treat ball. Your dog will spend the first part of the day figuring out how to get at his food and the rest of it recovering from the mental effort.

You can also split his/her food in half and use the first half of food to train and get their mental stimulation going. Once the training session is over you can give the remainder of food to them in their bowl as long as the show proper manners. Many dogs/puppies get excited about dinner time and will rush you and/or the bowl to get their food faster. Teach them that patience is what the need to have. You can do this with your puppy by showing him/her that you are preparing food. Put them in their crate and return to put the food bowl down where they can see you doing it. When you open the crate door do not let them shoot out towards the bowl. Help teach them proper etiquette by showing them what you want. Ex: place them in a sit or just waiting until they calm down and release to let them eat.

**Kong Stuffing for Pros.** Don't just throw in a few cookies – take your Kong stuffing prowess to the next level. Kong makes treat toys of all different levels, start with easier Kongs and then make them tougher, so your dog succeeds while developing perseverance.

Easy stuffing: Loosely packed food and pieces small enough to fall out. Ex: training treats/kibble

Difficult stuffing: Tighter packed food, with some big pieces that take effort on your part to get into the Kong. Ex: jerky strips mixed with peanut butter.

Stuffing tips:

- Use a matrix (peanut butter, cream cheese, baby food) to hold in smaller bits
- Stuff with meat and mashed potatoes and freeze
- Stuff with cheese cubes and then microwave briefly to nicely coat the inside
- Plug the small hole with peanut butter, then fill the cavity with broth and freeze to make a 'Kongsicle' (can be messy, so give it to your dog outside)

A sample recipe for an advanced Kong (courtesy of Jean Donaldson):

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Layer 1 (deepest): Roasted, unsalted cashews, blueberries, freeze dried liver bits

Layer 2: Kibble, cookies or liver biscotti, cheerios, sugar-free/salt-free peanut butter, dried banana chips

Layer 3: Baby carrot stick(s), turkey and/or leftover ravioli or tortellini, dried apples, dried apricots

Pack the layers as tightly as possible. The last item in should be a dried apricot or piece of ravioli, presenting a smooth finish under the main hole.

If your dog has lots of energy, give him all his food this way. And remember to clean your Kongs regularly with a bottle brush and/or in the dishwasher.

\*For more recipes visit the Kong website:

<http://www.kongcompany.com/recipes/>

### 3. Preventing mistakes.

**Chewing.** Chewing is normal and healthy canine behavior, but it can still be a problem – for you and your furniture. You need to teach your dog what is and isn't okay to chew. In other words, give him/her plenty of appropriate things to chew right away to get him/her hooked on those instead of your shoes.

*Prevent chewing mistakes.* When you can't supervise, put your dog in his confinement area with a sanctioned chewie.

*Interrupt chewing mistakes.* If your dog tries to chew the wrong thing, interrupt and trade him/her for something he/she can chew on. Praise liberally when he does.

**Barking.** Generally falls into five categories:

*Boredom barking* happens when a dog is left alone often and doesn't get enough exercise or mental stimulation.

*Barrier frustration barking.* Mostly happens on leash, in cars, or in backyards.

*Demand barking.* Dogs that bark to get something, e.g. to have balls thrown, doors opened, or for attention.

*Watchdog barking.* Triggered by passersby, slamming car doors, a cat on the lawn, etc.

*Separation anxiety barking.* A symptom of underlying anxiety about being alone.

To cut down on any kind of barking, give your dog plenty of exercise and arrange for mental stimulation when he is left alone. Feed him using puzzle toys or stuffed Kongs. If any type of barking is becoming a problem, give us a call

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**Jumping.** Dogs jump up to say hello, quite simply. They don't know how humans prefer to be greeted, and it never occurs to them that they might knock us over or ruin our clothes. Thankfully, consistent anti-jump training can quickly solve the problem for good.

*Anti-jump training.* Whenever your dog greets you by jumping up simply turn your body away from him/her, look away, and say "no". Try your best not to push him/her down or use your hands in any way to get him/her off, as he/she will see this as a form of praise. When he/she stops jumping, turn around to reward. If he/she jumps again, simply turn away again and say "no". When he stops jumping, pet and praise him.

*Arriving home.* Open the door a bit. If your dog jumps up, close the door. Repeat until you can step through the door without your dog jumping up. Once inside, if your dog jumps on you, turn away. If he keeps jumping, go back outside. When he stops jumping, re-enter and pet and praise him.

*Outside the home.* If your dog jumps up on someone approaching you on the street, tell him "Too bad" and walk a few feet away. When your dog settles, try again – if the person is willing.

### **4. Preventing Aggression.**

The majority of canine aggression can be blamed on poor breeding, medical issues, or a lack of socialization. All require professional help, so call us for advice if you think that's your dog. But aggression is a normal response to stress even in well-adjusted dogs, which is why avoiding stressful situations is crucial in the first few weeks and months. Some pointers:

**Don't overwhelm your dog.** Give him time to settle in. He doesn't have to meet the extended family, all your friends, and the neighbors on day one.

**Provide enough downtime.** Give your dog plenty of quiet time, especially in the beginning. It will help him adjust to his new environment. Yes, take him out on a nice walk, but give the block party a miss.

**Monitor interactions.** In the beginning (and always with kids), don't leave your dog alone with new people or dogs. Be there to supervise and step in to end the interaction if your dog appears uncomfortable (tail tucked, ears flat, crouching, backing away/avoiding contact).

**Use treats liberally.** Sweeten all introductions, scary noises, and new sights with a tasty treat. That will help your dog form positive associations with these things.

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**Let eating dogs be.** Possessiveness of food bowls, bones, toys, garbage, sleeping locations, etc. is natural dog behavior. To us humans it seems less than polite if our dog snarls when we reach for his food bowl, but it makes perfect sense to the dog.

To avoid problems, don't approach your dog when he is eating or chewing on something particularly good. If you need to take something away from him, offer something better. Toss a couple of tasty treats on the floor away from the contested object and remove it while he eats the treats. Remember you are new to the dog and he may not be willing to share until he knows you better. (If the behavior worsens or there are children in the household, call us.)

**Hold the hugs – for now.** Allow time for you and your dog to get to know each other before you try to handle him completely. Dogs can be just as particular as humans about being touched by strangers and as long as your relationship is brand new, proceed with respect. You wouldn't ask for more than a kiss on a first date, right?

To make it a pleasant experience for your dog to be touched, offer a treat every time you touch him in a new area. Any kind of grooming or holding should be minimal at first and always combined with lots of delectable treats. If your dog is on medication of some kind, be extra gentle and careful. A good rule of thumb is to let the dog initiate petting sessions until you know each other well.

### **Finally... Have fun!**

Don't forget that you are taking in a living being that needs to have fun just like you do. Sure there's a lot of responsibility that comes with owning a dog, but the main reason that you probably got a dog in the first place was to have a best friend to play and have fun with.

Enjoy every moment with them. Be patient. And love them all of their life. You're going to be a great owner! How do we know that? Because you took the time to plan ahead and read this article to make sure you would be a fantastic friend. That says a lot about you!