

HELPFUL SUGGESTIONS FOR TRAINING YOUR NEW DOG

Training is fun and very rewarding for you and your puppy. Dogs have an amazing capacity to learn complex commands quickly, and can learn at any age.

1. Start training as soon as you bring your new dog or puppy home. Puppies learn very rapidly but their attention span may be short, so spend 10-15 minutes twice daily at least 4 hours apart instead of trying longer periods once daily.
2. Training should be conducted when the home environment is quiet and least stimulating. Once the puppy has learned a response in one environment, move the training sessions to progressively more complex and stimulating environments. That is, the puppy will have to be trained in each environment that you wish him to respond in. This is one of the reasons why dog or puppy classes are so valuable as you can expect your pet to respond to you amidst distraction when they have graduated from their 'schooling'.
3. Learning occurs more readily if one person does the training first, and then other members of the family get involved when puppy understands what is expected. Train using one word commands to come, sit, down and heel.
4. Reward appropriate behavior as soon as possible after getting the right response (best within 1/2 second). Give lots of praise and touching every time your pet responds correctly, but do not get him overly excited as you will have to wait for him to calm down before continuing. When beginning to train a new exercise, praise every correct response, then intermittently praise as the behavior becomes permanent.
5. If your dog fails at any level of training, stop, don't reward and start the training again at a simpler level. How consistently a dog responds to a command is a function of the degree of training. Think of training as a pyramid - there must be a good foundation on which to build towards a more complex pinnacle. If your dog starts to respond only when it wants to, or when the environment is quiet, start again at a less complex level.
6. The longer an unwanted behavior has been established, the longer it will take your dog to be retrained.
7. Be patient, never punish. The opposite of reward is no reward, not punishment. Punishment causing pain or excitement does not generally work and causes problems that will also need to be dealt with. Punishment may also interfere with the owner animal bond. If your dog is doing something that is inappropriate, distract it or give a command which is not compatible with the unwanted behavior. Use your deep tone of voice as a reprimand if necessary.

A TRAINED DOG IS A HAPPY DOG AND A BETTER COMPANION!