



Puppy Preschool – Week 3



Chewing

These puppies love nothing more than to destroy their toys! All puppies will go through a chewing phase while they are teething, and chewing is normal behaviour while puppies experience the world. However, some puppies are obsessive with their chewing and will become destructive of furniture and the house if not given something to chew.

Ensure that you have plenty of heavy duty chewy toys or treats making sure that you keep these interesting by rotating them regularly. With rubber toys you can even soak them overnight in low salt stock or in summer freeze them in a block of ice.

The most important thing to do is ensure that you are always thoroughly inspecting any toys that you have left with your puppy to make sure they are intact. Biting off more than they can chew is common with these puppies and the last thing you want is for your puppy to swallow any of these pieces.



Toys to try:

- Busy buddy toys – Barnacle, Waggle/Chuckle, Squeak N Treat Booya
- Kong toys – Marathon toy & treat combo, Genius series, Dental series
- Chewy treat balls
- Aussie Dog Products – Monster treat ball, The Chook

Digging

It is a little more difficult to provide enrichment for these obsessive diggers and does require some training. For some dogs, using other forms of enrichment will help to 'distract' your dog from digging, but true diggers won't be happy unless you provide them with an outlet.

First and foremost, you need to provide an acceptable place for your dog to dig. Sand pits can be great for this. Then you need to train your dog to dig in this location and nowhere else.

- Start by spending time near the sand pit and showing your dog that you have buried a toy there. When they come and dig it out, reward them with a treat or verbally.
- When you are with your dog and see them start to dig somewhere inappropriate, use your negative marker ('uh-uh') and then direct them to the sand pit. Reward them when they start to dig in the appropriate place.
- When you are not at home, bury toys in the pit that your dog is able to find.
- If you are finding that your puppy is continually digging in an inappropriate place while you are not home, you may need to do some modification of your puppy's environment. Restrict access to 'high-value digging areas' while dogs are unsupervised. This may mean keeping them a little more confined during the day when you are not home. You may also need to fence off areas or use deterrents.



Basic Training – LEAVE IT

This is a command which can be both a life saver (if your puppy is lunging at/eating something it shouldn't) and help prevent problem behaviours (barking at birds, chasing cars etc). However, this is another command which can take a little while to teach. As with everything, consistency and patience are your best training tools.

Below in the advanced training, there are the instructions on how to teach your puppy to 'Drop' or 'Give'.

Verbal command: Leave it

No hand gesture

How to train:

- Hold a piece of food in your fingers, leaving only a bit sticking out so your puppy does not have easy access to it. Extend the food towards your puppy giving the "Leave it" command.
- If your puppy moves their nose closer to the food, use your ("uh-uh"). When your puppy starts to move away from the food use 'yes' and praise them, eventually giving them the food.
- Repeat this several times until your dog consistently makes the decision to move away from the food. If your puppy doesn't make any move at all, this is still counted as a success and should be rewarded.
- Once they are consistently moving away or leaving the food, increase the difficulty by having the food in an open palm. You should also have another treat in a fist behind your back – making this one higher value can help in the initial stages of this training.
- Show your puppy the treat in your open palm and say, 'Leave It'. This is going to be much more difficult as your puppy can actually see the food. If your puppy goes for the food, close your hand into a fist and use your 'uh-uh'.
- If your puppy does not go for the food, or if they move away, use your 'yes' and reward them with the even higher value treat behind your back. It is important during this stage that the eventual reward treat comes from somewhere else and that they are never allowed to have the food they have decided to leave.



Basic Training – WALKING NICELY ON A LOOSE LEAD

This is an essential lesson for your puppy to learn as you will be more inclined to take them out for a walk or on outings if they are well behaved on their lead. Walking provides opportunities not only for physical exercise, but also environmental enrichment, social awareness and mental exercise.

Whilst your puppy pulling on the lead now may not be problematic, they are adults they can be taking you for a walk and in bigger dogs can even cause injuries. Allowing puppies to walk around the full length of the lead (about 2 meters) will give them the ability to explore their surroundings, but you shouldn't allow them to drag you along or pull excessively while walking.

How to train

- Have your puppy fitted properly with a flat collar or use a head halter. This should be comfortable before you start doing any training. A veterinary nurse can help you with this. Be aware, that with a lot of puppies using a chest harness will encourage some puppies to tug more on the lead. Chest harnesses are for dogs that already walk well on a lead.
- Fit your puppy with a light lead that is appropriate for their size. The buckle/clip that attaches to the collar should not be too big and heavy for your puppy's neck.

- Hold a treat in front of your puppy's nose with one hand and move forward with the lead in the other hand.
- Encourage your puppy to follow the treat while keeping the lead loose. If your puppy surges too far ahead, stop and wait until they turn around or stop pulling, then move forward again. Reward them when they stop pulling.
- This is going to take a long time to train and it may be better to practice in your house or backyard before venturing out into the exciting distracting world.



When your dog pulls, stop in your tracks. Wait.
As you wait, pretend you have no dog.

When your dog backs up or turns to you,
click and feed a treat at your pant seam.

Then move forward again.

- Only move forward when the lead is loose. Stop walking when it starts to go taut until your puppy responds and moves back to you.
- Hold the lead loosely. Your puppy is more likely to try to pull against a lead that is tight.
- If your puppy is surging ahead, get their attention again by calling them back and giving treats and praise. Then slowly start to move forward again.
- Remember that moving forward is a reward, so intermittently treat your puppy when they are walking close to you.
- If your puppy is reluctant to move forward while on the lead, use lots of encouragement and treats to persuade them. Give your puppy lots of praise and rewards as they move forward. Remember to use your happy excited voice to keep your puppy excited and engaged.