



Puppy Homework • Week 3

Heather James, Instructor

Rewards are Everywhere

When your puppy is learning a new behavior, we use food as a reward because it's quick, easy, and it works! As your puppy learns and grows, a better understanding of what you want develops. Your puppy's concept of sit, watch, down, etc. will become clearer and you can reward with life rewards instead of treats! Maybe a down while you prepare his dinner; a sit while you clip on his leash; a watch before you toss his toy-the rewards are everywhere!

Loose Leash Walking

Teaching your puppy to walk on a loose leash is challenging yet rewarding. If your puppy can walk nicely, you'll be able to take him more places, and enjoy those important social outings and lovely strolls together. Start in your living room or other low distraction environment and practice just a few steps at a time, and reward! Make sure your leash is slack and comfortable. If at any point your puppy gets ahead of you or starts to pull stop and/or change directions. This will show your puppy that pulling just won't work, and you're not going to follow him. Set your puppy up for success by practicing after some exercise and in a nice, quiet environment. If you're having trouble, ask us about alternative equipment such as a front clip harness, or head harness.

Come

Make those recalls fun and exciting! Try hiding from your puppy in your house or your yard and calling him to come. Have a great toy and/or treats ready and have a party when your puppy comes to you. Make it the best game you and your puppy share together. A solid recall can save your puppy's life, but your puppy is just learning right now, keep it fun and set your puppy up for success.

Collar Work

Being able to grab and lead your puppy by the collar can be incredibly useful in the real world. If your puppy is ever loose in the neighborhood, a stranger might need to capture your pup by the collar. It's also something you'll want to be able to do in your own home, even if it's just to clip on their leash. Gently touch your puppy's collar and say "yes" and give a treat. Do this many times, so your puppy learns that a collar touch means something good is happening. As you continue to practice, grab the collar and gently wiggle it, then give a treat. Repeat.

Now that your puppy is pretty comfortable with you touching and wiggling their collar, you can take them by the collar and lead them towards something positive. Place a few treats on the ground or floor, a few feet apart, then lead your puppy by the collar to these little rewards. You can also practice leading him to a favorite toy or food bowl. Keep it light and fun! If your puppy is shying away, or having a difficult time with this, just keep practicing a collar touch followed by a treat.

Get Outside

While your puppy is young and confident is the time to see the world! Try to meet new people every day! Meet men, women, children and people of all ages and races. I like grocery store and home improvement store parking lots and storefronts. With your puppy securely leashed walk around and watch all the people, sights and sounds coming and going. Give treats and reward your puppy for being brave. There will be shopping carts, loud noises, and a lot of people! Try to take your puppy three new places they've never been this week. Tell me where you went, and I'll give you five Lucky Bones!