



## Puppy Homework • Week 4

Heather James, Instructor

### Gamble for Goodies

It's time for your puppy to stop getting a treat for every little thing. As long as you're working in a low distraction environment, and asking for commands your puppy is familiar with - it's time for your puppy to learn to gamble. In your living room or other quiet area, ask your puppy to sit, say "yes" and reward. Now see if you can get a sit/down/sit, then say "yes" and reward. Your puppy just completed three commands and got one treat. The goal of this exercise is to teach your puppy to listen and follow commands hoping there's a treat in the end- not only when there's a treat after every request. Remember to keep using those life rewards tool

### Loose Leash Walking

Keep practicing! Work on walking towards something your puppy wants on a loose leash. Put down a favorite toy or his food dish with part of his dinner, and practice walking towards it. Only move forward if that leash is loose. If the leash becomes tight, it's penalty time, and gradually back away from the object of your puppy wants. When your pup returns to you, and that leash is loose again, you can resume your approach. You want to set your puppy up for success too, so it's okay if you have to hurry the last couple steps. If you were practicing with your pup's dinner, let him have it! Refill with another part of his dinner and try again until the meal is complete. If you were practicing with your pup's favorite toy, take a break and enjoy a nice little play session before trying again. Keep it fun and keep it up!

### Come

Try using one of your puppy's favorite toys and running away from them calling them to come. Keep this command as exciting and enthusiastic as possible! Recall practice is also another great way to get some much needed exercise in for your puppy. Can you practice calling your puppy off leash in a secure, fenced in area and be successful?

### Groundwork for Stay

The formal "stay" command is difficult for a puppy. There's a lot happening everywhere, and they just have to see it all! But now that you have a release word, it's time to build some groundwork for that stay command. Ask your puppy to sit, smile at them, give them some positive reinforcement – which will encourage them to hold that position – then say "yes" reward and release. Practice increasing the duration of your puppy's sits. Once your puppy is comfortable with this for a sit, try working on that down. See if you can build a nice 5-second down, show me you've been working on it, and I'll give you five Lucky Bones!

Puppies put things in their mouths, and getting them to let it go can be a very valuable skill! I love to go up to my puppy when they have something appropriate, show interest in it, and exchange something else, or even just give it back-just to get my puppy accustomed to me taking things from them. Sometimes your pup will have something they are allowed to have, and you can give it back, sometimes you'll want to offer something else, and sometimes you'll just want to take it away. You want your puppy to be used to you trading them for things, and investigating what they've put in their mouth.

Then if you discover your puppy has found a sock, you can easily remove it, or offer a toy in exchange, and not have to chase your pup all over the house, turning it into an inappropriate game.

The easiest way to teach your puppy to drop something is to offer up something they want even more in exchange. Using a toy your pup likes (but maybe not their very favorite, just yet!), initiate a gentle tug session. Put a soft, smelly and delicious treat directly in front of your puppy's nose and say "drop". The puppy will release their toy to take the treat. Say "yes" and reward with the treat, then resume the game. Practice this with many different toys, and before too long, the reward for dropping can just be more playing!

***Don't forget to keep practicing those tricks!***