



Puppy Intermediate Homework • Week 1

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Adolescence

Adolescence begins around five months and continues until your dog is approximately two years old. Your dog will most likely challenge you (as you did your parents!) during this period of time. It is normal for your dog to become more experimental and independent. It is also normal for your dog to be very distracted by things.

To successfully navigate your dog's adolescence, there are some key things you need to provide:

- fair leadership
- structure
- daily training
- consistency
- confinement/dog proofing if your dog is not trustworthy while unsupervised
- physical & mental exercise
- continued socialization

Sit & Down

Puppy Push-Ups: Teach your dog to master multiple sets of sit & down without a lure.

- 1) Practice at your dog's meal time and use her dog food as rewards. Place the dog food in the bowl and leave on the counter. Take a piece of dog food out of the bowl and lure her into five sets of puppy push-ups (i.e. sit+ down + sit+ down + sit+ down +sit+ down + sit+ down) then say yes/click and reward.
- 2) Now make the exercise more difficult. Use the same hand signals and try for one set of push-ups (sit + down) without food in your hand as a lure. Say yes and reward. Next, see if your dog can do two sets of push-ups without a lure. Stop the session on a successful note. Throughout the week, gradually work your way up to five sets of push-ups. Remember to reward your dog with a piece of food when she gets it right.

Say "Please" for the Food Bowl: Teach your dog to have self control and remain in a sit until food bowl is on the floor and she has been released.

Hold the food bowl and tell your dog to sit. As soon as she sits, begin to lower the bowl towards the floor. If she gets up, say "eh-eh" and raise the bowl out of her reach. Tell her to sit again. Continue this process until you can set the bowl on the floor, then quickly use your release word (i.e. ok, break, free, etc.) and let her eat. If your dog is successful, start to build time your dog can hold a sit with the food dish in front of her. Set the food dish down and wait a couple seconds, then release your dog. Continue to gradually increase the time your dog remains in a sit.

Sit at Street Corners: Teach your dog to sit politely at street corners instead of dragging you into traffic.

While out on walks with your dog, tell her to sit at each street corner. Use your release word when it's time to cross the street.

Down on a Dime: Teach your dog to down regardless of excitement level & distraction.

- 1) Interrupt play sessions by telling your dog to down. You can lure a down to start if necessary. As soon as your dog is in a down, say YES and reward with more play.
- 2) When you notice your dog starting to get excited about something, tell her to do a down. Say YES and reward.

For both exercises, increase the amount of time your dog can remain in a down by delaying the YES and reward. Work toward getting your dog to hold a ten second down.

Tips for a reliable down:

- Gradually increase the excitement/distraction level as your dog is successful.
- If your dog is unsuccessful, decrease the excitement/distraction level accordingly.

Recall/Come

- 1) When your dog is playing, call her. When she arrives in front of you, tell her to sit and touch her collar as you feed her the treat. Now release her to play again. This teaches your dog two important lessons: First, that playtime isn't over when she's called. Second, that a hand on the collar is a good thing.
- 2) Get a partner and practice calling your dog back and forth. Make sure you tell your dog to sit when she gets in front of you and grasp her collar as you feed the treat.

Tips for recall:

- Only call your dog if you can guarantee it will happen
- NEVER call your dog to punish her or to do something unpleasant to her (i.e. toenail clipping)
- Use a leash until your dog proves to be reliable.
- Be fun and enthusiastic!
- Practice inside and outside in non-distracting environments this week
- Get close to your dog and/or use a lure if necessary
- Increase distance incrementally

Food Dish

- 1) Make sure your dog is comfortable and happy with people near her food bowl. Sit down next to your dog while she's eating and calmly praise and pet her. Be low key and don't put a lot of pressure on her.
- 2) While she's eating, put a bit of meat (something better than regular dog food) into her bowl. If that goes well, randomly continue this throughout your dog's life to maintain the happy association between people and the food dish.

****If your dog starts eating quite a bit faster, or gets stiff and growly, stop and contact your trainer immediately!***