

PUPPY PRE-SCHOOL HOMEWORK 2



1. CONFIDENCE

Continue as per socialisation checklist. How many different people, including children, can you get to give a treat to your puppy this week?

2. BODY HANDLING

Gradually increase the invasiveness and duration of your handling. For example, if you were able to briefly squeeze your dog's paw - without the dog struggling / trying to withdraw the paw - now handle individual nails and touch between toes. Then increase the duration of handling. Always give treats after you start handling.

3. TRAINING

Follow the training rules from week 1 and repeat each level until the dog has a success rate of at least 80%.

- SIT & DROP / DOWN:

Level 2:

Put the treat in your other hand behind your back. Repeat the same luring motion as in Level 1 but this time with an empty hand. Then quickly 'pay' from the other hand the moment your dog sits or lies down.

If your dog doesn't sit or lie down for the empty hand, have a treat in both hands or rub some food on your prompting (luring) hand. But always pay from the hand behind your back.

Level 3:

Put the treat in your other hand behind your back. Make a luring motion with your empty hand but less pronounced than before to prompt the puppy to sit or lie down. For example, make a shorter upwards movement (sit) or move your hand only half way to the floor (drop). Quickly pay from the other hand the moment your puppy sits or lies down.

- WALKING ON LEASH

Walk your dog on a front-clip harness for immediate relief from pulling.

If you want to teach your dog to walk on a loose leash, start at home. To protect your training teach the dog the difference between training (rules apply) and real life walks (rules don't apply). You could do this by using a special cue, e.g. "let's walk", whenever you are training but not at other times. Or you could attach the lead to the dog's collar when training but to the front-clip harness during real life walks.

Level 1:

Walk your dog around the home or yard without distractions and encourage them to follow you. Whenever the dog is at your side (left or right - you decide), give a treat. Use direction changes and happy talk to prompt your dog to stay with you. This exercise can be done on or off lead.

Level 2:

Put your dog on lead and give a treat. Do not change the length of the lead and do not try to move your dog using the lead. Walk with your dog in the driveway or on the sidewalk outside your home at a quiet time. Pay your dog at high frequency whenever they are walking by your side with the lead being loose. If your dog charges ahead stop immediately, signal them back to your side, walk backwards or do a u-turn, encouraging your dog to follow. If your dog wants to sniff at a tree or similar, use this as a reward: Move towards the source of smell as long as your dog keeps the lead loose and stop immediately (or even go backwards) if your dog pulls towards the smell. This requires lots of repetition so be patient and practise often. Never let your dog pull you since this will reinforce pulling.

- STAY:

If your dog has the habit to get up from a sit or drop immediately, e.g. before or while the reward is being delivered, use the following strategies to get "sticky" sits and drops:

- Always deliver the treat in the position you asked for, i.e. pay while the dog is in the sit or drop position.
- Stand still in front of your dog before you deliver the treat, first for one second, then two seconds.

Stay rules:

Immediately return to your starting position (in front of the dog) when your puppy gets up or rotates their paws!

Level 1:

Signal your puppy to sit or lie down and reward them. Take one step to your left and then step back in front of the puppy. If the puppy stays, reward. If they get out of position, say "Oops." (optional) and start over.

Level 2:

Signal your puppy to sit or lie down and reward them. Take two steps to your left and forward so you are next to your puppy, then step back in front of the puppy.

Level 3:

Take three steps until you are almost behind your puppy, then step back in front of the puppy.

Level 4:

Walk a full circle around your puppy.

Level 5:

Repeat levels 1 - 4 in the other direction.

Next, practise stay with other distractions - such as having another person walk through the room, jumping on the spot or tossing a ball - before adding distance and eventually duration.

- WAIT:

Level 1:

With your puppy on a loose leash, open the front door (or any other door) just slightly. If the puppy rushes towards the door, quickly close the door again (be careful not to knock or squash your puppy with the door). Repeat this until the puppy pauses for 1 second, then say "OK" or "let's go" and immediately walk out the door with your puppy. Never use the leash to pull your puppy back but use hand targeting and verbal encouragement.

Level 2:

Same as level 1 but the dog has to pause for 3 seconds.