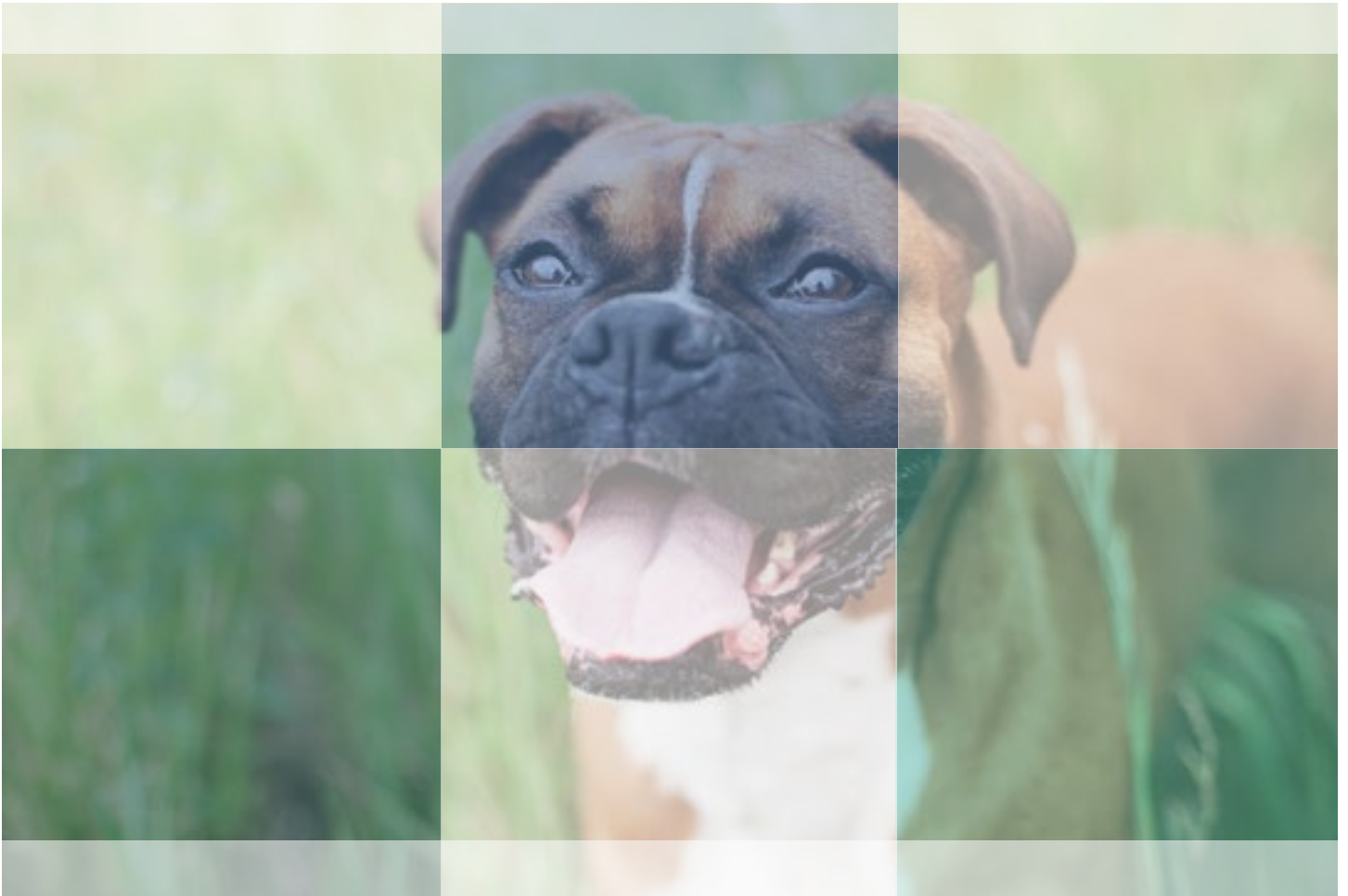




Bronte Village Animal Hospital

Infinite Care, Optimum Health

Puppy and Dog Training Guide



Puppy and Dog Training

Puppies are cute bundles of fun – curious and looking for trouble. They have no idea what is and isn't allowed, so it's important to be patient with them. Even adult dogs who are new to your home may need some training or re-training to help them learn how you want them to behave.

Chewing shoes, biting hands, digging, and elimination accidents lead to frustration. You are not alone; many owners have trouble addressing these behaviours.

Jump to your specific training challenge:

1. [Puppy and Dog Training 101](#)
2. [Housetraining](#)
3. [Destructive Chewing](#)
4. [Leadership Exercises](#)





Puppy and Dog Training 101

- **Don't Take Good Behaviours for Granted**

The best way for your puppy to learn to do what you want is by rewarding them when they have done something acceptable. Owners should actively look for desired behaviours so the puppy (or dog) can be praised (even when no command is given).

- **Set the Puppy Up to Succeed**

Puppies engage in predictable behaviours. They are active, inquisitive, and get into everything. Puppies will eliminate anywhere and chew on everything until trained. Constant close supervision and/or appropriate confinement may be necessary for some until they reach two years of age.

A puppy has a short attention span and is easily distracted. You can set your puppy up to fail if you train too long or ask them to do something in the presence of distraction.

- **Be Consistent**

The whole family needs to sit down and agree on acceptable vs unacceptable behaviours. All members must handle specific behaviours in the same way. If anything is inconsistent, your dog will be confused, learning will be delayed, and both the owner and dog will be frustrated.

- **Avoid Physical Punishment**

One of the most important things that a puppy must learn is that the human hand is a friend. Owners must understand that if they strike the puppy, the consequences could be:

- Hand shyness
- Fear-biting
- Avoidance of humans
- Aggression
- Submissive urination

Unfortunately, it can be difficult or impossible for adult dogs to unlearn their fear of physical punishment and associated behaviours. If you've adopted an adult dog who has been subjected to physical punishment at their previous home, you may want to work with a dog trainer to help your dog overcome this background.

- **Correction**

A loud, abrupt, semi-startling reprimand is usually adequate to interrupt/distract an undesirable behaviour. Once the dog has stopped, praise them and remove them from the situation. To be effective, correction must be given during the behaviour, every time it occurs, should be intense enough to stop the behaviour, and must stop when the behaviour stops.

If necessary, use a shake can, air horn, whistle, or other device if verbal corrections are ignored.

Don't rely on punishment alone to shape your new dog's behaviour; stop the bad behaviour and reward the good! It has been proven that dogs learn faster through positive reinforcement than punishment.





Housetraining

Housetraining can go smoothly if owners follow these simple rules:

- **Teach the Puppy or Dog Where to Go**

The speed at which the pup learns where they're supposed to eliminate depends on how consistently the owner accompanies them to the proper elimination area and rewards them.

- **Control Access to Food and Water**

Puppies should be fed 3-4 times per day for the first 16-20 weeks of life. At that point you can feed your dog 2-3 times daily (or as directed by your vet) at the same times each day. Only leave the food down for 20 minutes, and do not feed for 3-4 hours before bedtime. You will also want to take the water away 1-2 hours before bedtime to reduce overnight accidents.

- **Adequate Supervision and Confinement**

Until your dog has not soiled in the house for 4 weeks in a row, keep them either under constant supervision or confined to their crate/small room. A leash can be an important tool for preventing the pup from sneaking away. Inadequate supervision and confinement are the most common reasons for failure to housetrain a puppy or dog.

- **Teach the Pup to Signal when They Have to Eliminate**

You can help teach your dog to signal by keeping them on a leash indoors, especially during times when they are likely to have to eliminate. Puppies

and dogs learn to sneak away to eliminate so they can avoid a scolding – but when prevented from sneaking away, they'll become anxious and vocalize or fidget. Since you'll be nearby, you will be able to notice these behaviours and take your dog outdoors.

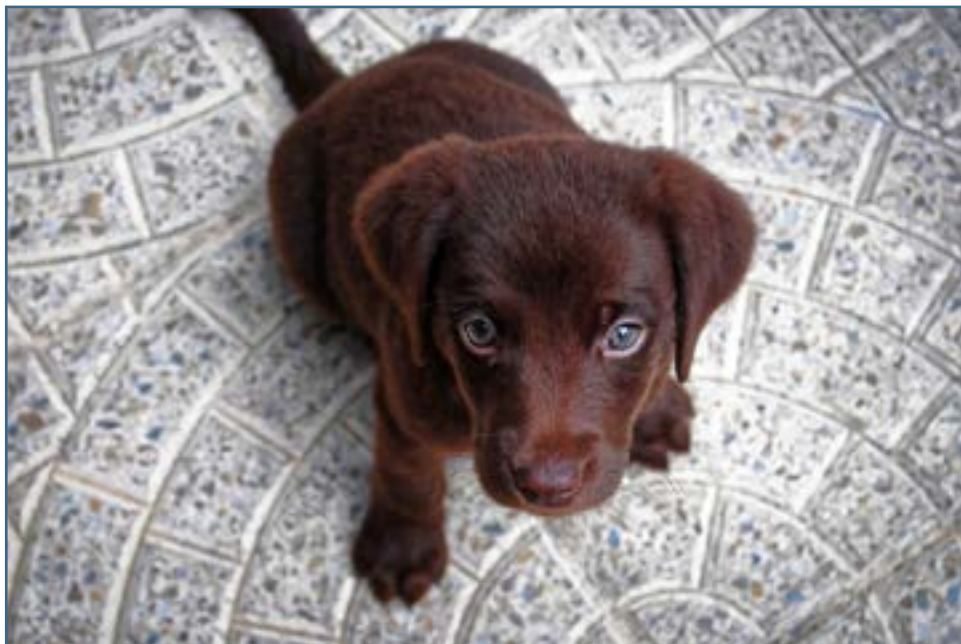
It doesn't take too many repetitions of this for the pup to learn that being close to an owner and vocalizing or fidgeting will result in a trip outdoors.

- **Odour Control**

Use a good commercial product made specifically for puppy or dog elimination odours. We have found K.O.E.™ to be an inexpensive but effective product. If a dog smells that another animal has eliminated in the area, they will think it is acceptable to do so as well.

- **Correction**

Punishment should be avoided. The only correction permitted is a loud "No" to interrupt the puppy or dog when they are caught in the act of eliminating in an inappropriate area. Submissive or greeting urination should never be punished.





Destructive Chewing

Controlling the destructive chewing propensities of a puppy or untrained dog is of utmost importance for most owners. However, it's important not to rely solely on punishment to correct unacceptable chewing behaviour – it's actually more effective to correct the problem by reinforcing positive behaviour!

This can be done by providing the pup with a safe environment where it has sufficient outlets and interesting toys to chew. Since an excess of unused energy can further contribute to the desire to explore, chew, and destroy, plenty of play and exercise is a must.

- **Selecting Appropriate Chew Toys**

When selecting chew toys, you should begin with a variety of toys and determine which types your pup prefers. Rotate through different toys every few days to keep them novel and interesting.

Be sure to reward the dog every time you see them chewing their toys by giving them affection or engaging in play.

Toys made of nylon and durable rubber are most practical. Toys that have cavities or depressions can be packed with food to capture the dog's attention (Kong Toy®, Bite-A-Bone®, etc.). Applying a light coat of meat juice, peanut butter (do not use peanut butter with the ingredient "Xylitol"), or cheese spread to toys will also help extend the length of time that they keep your pup occupied.

- **Preventing and Deterring Inappropriate Chewing**

Even with an excellent selection of chew toys, there are numerous household items that may still be more inviting. Until you can trust your new puppy or dog, you must keep them under continuous supervision or confined to a safe area (e.g. dog crate or exercise pen). As puppies grow older and are allowed more freedom around the home, you may need to take extra care to prevent mistakes.

Never give items to your dog to chew that are similar to household items. Providing items such as old clothing can lead to problems, since the dog may have difficulty distinguishing between old and new.

You can teach the dog to avoid your possessions by making them taste bad. Commercial sprays (Bitter Apple), oil of citronella, or a small amount of cayenne pepper (mixed with water) may be successful deterrents. Avoid physical or delayed correction methods.

Distract your dog from chewing on the not-acceptable item, reward the stopped behaviour, and provide them with an acceptable toy to chew.

- **Chewing on Plants**

Many house plants can be toxic to dogs. You can mist plant leaves with water and sprinkle them with cayenne pepper to discourage chewing, or hang motion-activated alarms in large plants or Christmas trees.





Leadership Exercises

You will want to keep these rules in place until you have good control of the puppy or dog, and they dependably listen and respond to commands.

The purpose of these exercises is to:

- Gain more control of the puppy/dog
- Increase the dog's dependability in responding to commands
- Provide structure and consistency in interactions between the pup and family
- Reduce impulsive behaviour

Like always, consistency is very important. The whole family must participate and follow the recommendations in the same way.

- **Nothing in Life Is Free**

Ask the puppy or dog to respond to a command, such as "Sit," prior to getting ANYTHING they want or need. This includes before you put their food down, before you give them a treat or toy, beginning play, etc.

- **Don't Tell Me What to Do**

Do not allow your new puppy or dog to successfully solicit attention from you. Any nudge, whine, bark, push, lean, etc. for attention must be ignored. Pull your hands in, lean away from the dog, and look away. Get up and walk away if they are exceptionally pushy and difficult to ignore.

Do not scold, say anything, or push the pup away from you – this is a form of attention, and the dog is "getting what it wants".

Once the dog stops soliciting for ten seconds, you can ask it to sit or sit/stay and give it some attention.

- **Sit... Stay**

Any time you begin to move from one area of the home to another, ask your dog to sit/stay and wait for a release command to follow you. Also, request a sit/stay prior to going up and down stairs, as well as in and out of the home. Remember, puppies specifically have short attention spans. You only need for a puppy to stay for one to two seconds, and you do not need to walk away from the puppy during the stay to do this properly.

It is not as necessary to be as rigid about this rule as you should be about “Nothing in Life is Free” and “Don’t Tell Me What to Do”. It is understandable that it may be difficult or impractical to have the dog sit/stay every time you move.

- **“Ruff” Play**

Puppies can easily get carried away when playing and they rely on their littermates to tell them when things are getting too rough. Owners and family replace littermates, so it is your responsibility to inform the puppy when things are getting out of hand.

When you’re playing with your puppy and it bites too hard, let out a loud sharp “ouch”. If the puppy stops the behaviour, wait a few seconds and resume playtime. If the puppy continues with the non-desired behaviour, play time is over and you should walk away.





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Visit Us

Hours of Operation

Monday	8:00am – 6:00pm
Tuesday	8:00am – 6:00pm
Wednesday	8:00am – 6:00pm
Thursday	8:00am – 6:00pm
Friday	8:00am – 6:00pm
Saturday	9:00am – 1:00pm
Sunday	Closed



Dr. Tina McGrath
Veterinarian and Animal Lover
Certified in Canine Rehabilitation



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