



## **Training Your Best Friend**

Welcome to Puppy Kindergarten Class! What a wonderful time to begin training your new companion. The period between 3 ½ weeks to 12 weeks is optimum time for you to begin teaching your pup the basic cues and develop his social skills. By introducing your puppy to as many new things as possible, he'll grow into a calm friendly submissive dog you'll be proud of. It's the perfect time teach your puppy polite manners.

Like certain brand of paper towels, puppies are the quicker picker-uppers. They absorb everything they see, hear, smell, taste and touch, storing incredible amounts of information about people, places and behavior in their highly intelligent puppy brains.

Housetraining is the most obvious example of why it's good to train your puppy as soon as you get him/her home. Starting early is the key. It's essential to take puppies outside on a regular schedule so they learn to anticipate potty time and hold their urine or stool until then.

Take your puppy out early and often. Physiologically, the puppy won't be able to hold his urine for long periods until he is older, but he can and will learn that outdoors is the place to go.



## **Basic commands & subjects covered:**

**Crate Training**

**House breaking**

**Leash training**

**Proper Leashes/ Harnesses**

**Proper Toys**

**Healthy Boundaries**

**Proper Socialization**

**Setting up proper structure and everyday**

**Playtime**

**Sit**

**Come**

**Down**

**Wait**

**Stay**

**Leave it**

**Watch me command**

**Behaviors issues covered:**

**Nipping**

**Mouthing**

**Destructive Chewing**

**Barking**

**Whining**

**Home alone**

**Exercise & playtime**

**Treats**

**Shyness**

**Jumping on people**

**Meet- N- Greet people & other puppies or dogs**

**Kids- n- puppy play**

**Puppy beds**

**Fear of people**

**Handling for toe nail trimming, vet care, grooming**

**Puppy personality development**

## **Proper Leadership:**

Being a good leader to your pet involves positive body language and voice control. You must consistently project a calm assertive energy with your canine if he/she is to listen and focus. No yelling or using a soft voice or yanking in the leash. You must project a medium voice tone assertively when giving commands. Training your best friend involves you, your family, and your dog. Everyone must be on the same page always. If your canine senses that you are feeling fearful, frustrated, angry, you will lose their trust

Commands & Cues are to be clearly communicated. Rules Boundaries and Limitations are to be enforced. In other words- Follow thru when giving commands each time. It is very important share to this with friends and family when they are visiting your home during the training.

Learn to converse with your dog the way another dog speaks to him using body language and good eye contact. Always look your dog in the eyes when giving commands. Connection is the language of energy. It is the cornerstone of the life long bond between you and your dog.

Setting boundaries is essential to ensure that your best friend grows into a well-balanced canine that has a clear understanding of rules, boundaries and limitations. By training and conditioning your companion early- he will respect limits, take on new challenges in the form of games and new tasks and respond to verbal commands. You are actually helping his/her brain develop to its fullest potential.

A puppy does not come into this life wanting to be a leader. They look for leadership and guidance. A puppy looks for a kind yet firm hand that show him the right ways to things and rewards her with a nice touch, a smile, an acceptance into the home.

A good leader doesn't project emotional or nervous energy, so neither should you. In the wild, the pack leader uses calm-assertive energy to influence how the dog interacts with his/her surroundings. She enforces

these laws in a quiet way, as is the case when a mother picks up a puppy the scruff of the neck if he strays outside the den.

## **Training**

Training your dog is essential. It establishes lines of communication so that you can understand each other. It builds a strong bond between you and your companion. And it gives your dog confidence.

Confidence is very important. A confident dog is relaxed, alert, happy and secure. He's not trying to control you or the environment he finds himself living in. Instead he knows that he can rely on you to protect him & meet his needs- not merely his physical need to be fed and exercised, but also his very real need for stimulation, affection and play.

Training is not about imposing types of behavior on your dog that alien to his nature. It's not about making your dog fearful or breaking his will. It's giving him the tools to live in your world. A trained dog is not only better behaved, he's safer and happier.

## **Rewards**

Giving your dog a reward when he does what you ask will motivate him to do it again. We all need motivation. Food treats work well with most dogs.

Rewards such as squeaky toys, tennis balls, petting, praise, exercise and play to a dog vary the motivators that you use in training, so they won't become boring.

Food and toys are primary rewards to a dog because they are things that dogs really want. Playtime and a walk are powerful rewards for good behavior.

Always give praise to your dog. This adds value to what you are giving and makes him learn faster.

## **Timing**

Timing is everything! Communicating with your dog effectively relies on perfect timing. You must deliver your feedback within one second of the behavior.

Split- second timing is important for another reason. You are teaching the dog to take action immediately and not to hesitate when a command is given.

## **Consistency**

Consistency is very important when it comes to teaching your dog to function in this strange domestic world that they live in. Dogs see black and white while we humans have a lot of gray areas.

Consistency is also essential in training. Everyone in the household should use the same commands and gestures including pet sitters.

## **Essential Tips**

Training is for life.

One to two sessions of between five and eight minutes a day are recommended for training. Keep sessions short and fun.

Only give a signal once. If you have to repeat the cue word wait 10 seconds before repeating. No conversation in between.

Vary your body positions. Your dog should respond when you are sitting, crouching, or standing, not just when you are standing and facing him.

Start close and then move farther away. Increase the distance between you and your dog.

Be patient and accept your dog's failure- It's three steps forward and one step back.

Train your dog in a quiet environment at home. Once your dog is responding well, move to a stimulating environment. This is called – varying the picture.

Training should be as much fun as playing and needs to be solid.

## Keys to successful Training Your Dog

- **Respect the dog** – dogs are amazing beings, they are intelligent, extremely social with a complex range of emotions. They are not objects to be programmed. They are not slaves, nor are they employees. In the best case, they are our partners, friends and allies. We should be the same to them.
- **Create motivation to do something rather than to avoid something** – Training should primarily be about getting the dog to things, not simply avoid punishment. The quickest fix isn't always the best fix. It's worth it to take a bit more time to build a desire to work.
- **Be clear** – A dog who doesn't understand what is expected cannot consistently achieve those expectations. Good teachers do everything they can to ensure their students understand. As trainers, it's vital that we be good teachers.
- **Be consistent (but not rigid)** – Consistency goes along with clarity, but a good teacher knows when insistence on absolutes will discourage a student. Often, it's better to treat genuine effort as success.
- **Always do what's best for the dog** – Ultimately every great trainer is in the business to help dogs. To do this, it is essential that we understand the dog we are looking at. Canned responses are nice, but knowing when they aren't the answer is essential.
- **Failure to create consistent results reflects on the trainer, not the dog** – It's a poor teacher who blames the student for failure to learn. Motivation is part of the teacher's job.



- **Be joyful** – The best trainers I have ever seen all love their work and it is evident when you see them with a dog. Never train a dog when you are angry, frustrated or upset.
- **Never stop learning** – Perfection is a goal we can never reach, but the best trainers are always trying anyway.

### **On Force, Punishment and Compulsion:**

At Training Your Best Friend, we do not believe or condone punitive harsh handling with dogs. We never want a dog doing something primarily because they are afraid of not doing it. We want the dog to work from a desire to achieve; to love training and love working with their handler.

Our approach is to first teach the dog what is expected and build motivation to meet those expectations. At the same time, you must understand that your dog has emotional, physical and mental needs that must be fulfilled. It is up to you as their parents to fulfill those needs



## **Training Your Best Friend, LLC**

Puppy Kindergarten gets your puppy off to great start! The first 3 months of a puppy's life is critical. Puppies are most responsive to new experiences during this stage of life. Much of what puppies learn about their behavior and their environment is lasting.

### **Requirements for Class**

1. 4 ft. heavy duty nylon leash.
2. Easy walk harness for dogs 24 lbs. & up,
3. Regular harness for small dogs
4. Training treats & training treat pouch or apron for quick treating
5. Poop bags

### **Please note:**

**Retractable leashes, prong collars six- foot leashes, leather or rope leashes are strictly prohibited.**

### **Puppy Parent's Responsibilities**

You will receive educational material and written weekly lessons to be utilized at home between training. My class is to train YOU to train your dog. You should practice with your dog a minimum twice a day every day days between classes in increments of 5 to 8 minutes twice a day.

## Consistency

Consistency with your puppy means: doing the same things at the same time, such as feeding at the same time every day or training in the same way every time. If you have rules for your puppy, you can't let him break the rules one time and then enforce the rules at another; it can be very confusing and is not the way to properly train. Being inconsistent when training your puppy means that you're giving your puppy mixed messages. Your puppy will not learn properly this way. For example, if your puppy is playing with your shoes one day and you laugh, and you think it's adorable but then the next day you tell him not to play with your shoes, he's going to be very confused and not understand what you want. You must be very consistent with training and especially potty training. You have to take your dog out 20 minutes after every time he eats. If you don't take your puppy out and he poops or pees in the house and you get upset with him, it's your fault, please remember that, it's not the puppy's fault. I can't stress this enough, please be consistent with your puppy's training and feeding.

## Puppy socialization:

Socialization is the most important part of any puppy training class. Socialization refers to exposing puppies to as many new people, places, and situations as possible. The idea is that the more things a puppy is exposed to while he's young, the more accepting he'll be of different people and experiences later in life. He's less likely to become fearful or aggressive. While it's important to work on other training with your puppy, socialization is what truly sets him on the path of a lifetime of good behavior.

Working on socialization in a puppy training class is ideal. It allows you to work on introducing your puppy to new things under the supervision of an experienced dog trainer.

## Our Policies

**Training your Best Friend. LLC supports children who have an interest in dog training. If your child would like to attend classes, please see insurance regulations below:**

- Children must be 7 years old and accompanied by a parent or non-participating adult at all times while on the premises.

- Children under the age of 7 are not permitted to attend.
- Children may not interact with any dog in the classroom at any time other than their own dog.
- Children are not to run or interrupt during training This is a liability. You will receive one warning only. If this happens again, your child will not be allowed to attend class with you.
- There should be one primary handler who attends every class and up to one assistant.
- Family members other than the primary handler and assistant are welcome to attend, but for consistency sake, should watch the class and then participate in training at home, under the direction of the primary handler.
- All owners must clean up after their dogs when on the premises of the facility.
- All dogs must remain on leashes when on premises.
- **Female dogs in heat are not allowed in the building or on the training grounds. Owners may request a transfer to the next available class at no charge.**
- There is a \$25 fee for insufficient check return
- Classes are 7 pm to 8 pm. Please arrive a few minutes early so that we can show you to your place. Classes will end precisely at 8 pm. We will allow a few minutes before 8 pm for any questions. If you have questions that take longer than a few minutes for me to answer- please contact me the next business day by phone or email.
- Dogs are not allowed to touch noses or interact when they enter the facility and classroom.
- Dogs are not allowed to participate in class without the proper equipment. **No exception!**
- You are expected to practice training skills at home. If you fail to practice on a consistent basis, do not expect your dog to progress as expected.
- Everyone in the family should be on board with the training.
- We are obsessed with keeping it clean and sanitized. To prevent accidents and soiling our carpet- we require that upon your arrival – please take your dog out for pee break before entering Pet People. You may take your dog out to the bushes in front of our facility. We will give you a break after 25 minutes during class to allow your dog to relieve themselves again.

- If at any time during class, you feel your dog needs to relieve himself, please take your dog outside. We will not be offended. Dogs get thirsty during class from eating salty treat and drinking water and need to relieve themselves.
- We want you to enjoy class and have fun training. At the same time, we need your full attention. No talking or socializing during class. We need your full attention. We have one Trainer and one Assistant Trainer. We will demo each cue twice to show you how to perform it correctly. Please do not jump ahead and begin training your dog until the instructor tells you to do so. We will make our way around the group to specifically work with you and your dog.
- **We are 100% positive trainers. If we see you rough handle your dog, we will speak up. We will not tolerate any form of punitive handling in our class. You are here to learn to train your dog in a humane way which is the only way to train your pet.**

## **Refund Policy**

**Because we keep our classes small and consistent, we are unable to issue refunds or class credits for any reason. This policy is outlined on our Website as well.**

## **Absentee Policy**

- Owners should sign up for a class session that they can attend.
- In fairness to everyone, and in an effort, to keep class sizes and learning consistent, make- up classes will not be available.
- Please know that any absence will have a significant effect on your dog's progress and will put your dog behind the rest of the class, thus slowing progress of entire class.
- If you miss more than one class, your dog cannot graduate.
- **Certificates are not mailed out.** If you miss graduation, your certificate will be left at our front desk for one week. Please call ahead to set up a time to pick it up. If after one week you have not picked it up. We will throw it away.



## Watch Me Command

Sometimes we get frustrated because we can't get our dog's attention. Often it's because we are asking too much. Take a look at this if you struggle sometimes to get your dog's attention

Depending on the situation your dog can have an extremely short attention span. And in those situations, often times we humans are asking our dogs to jump through hoops. Okay, maybe not literally jump through hoops, but in a situation where we can barely get our dog's attention, the last thing that we need to be asking for is more advanced things like sitting or lying down.

The first skill that needs to be worked on is a cue that gets the dog to look at the human. This is often referred to as a "watch me" cue. This is the first thing I recommend teaching to your dog. I don't currently have a video on it so I will do my best to explain it. Firstly, start teaching new cues in your own home. Do this in a room that has limited distractions. (eg cats, dogs, other humans etc.) Start off by taking a small piece of food that your dog finds enticing and bring it to your dog's nose. From there, take that piece of food up to your eye and wait for your dog to make eye contact. When he does, tell him "good" and give him the the small food reward. Do this a handful of times until your dog is really getting it. From there, you're ready to move onto the next step.

The next step is getting this new behavior on a hand signal. For this, you will mimic the same motion you made with the food, but without the food in your hand. Basically, you'll point at your dog's nose and then up to your eye. Once your dog follows your finger and looks into your eyes, tell him "good" and then give him a small food reward from your treat pouch. Do this a handful of times until your dog is really nailing it. From there, you're ready for the next step.

The next step is adding a verbal cue for this new behavior. I say, "watch me." To introduce this new cue, say the word, "watch," wait a few seconds, and then do the hand signal that you previously introduced. Reward your dog for following the hand signal. Do rep after rep and before you know it your dog will be looking into your eyes when you say the cue, "watch."

Why did I go into such depth on how to teach this behavior? Because this is what you really need to be working on if your dog is easily distracted. Teach this to your dog in your home in a room that has limited distractions like I mentioned above. From there, teach this to your dog in the back yard, and then the front yard. Start off at the very first step when starting in a more challenging environment if your dog needs it. The end goal is to get your dog to respond to the verbal cue in any environment.

**Here's the take away:**

This will make your life a lot easier. To make this successful, do lots of reps with lots of reinforcement. (Reinforcement in this case means food rewards.) If you pay your dog, your dog will continue to work for you. Just make sure you're using something that your dog really enjoys. Working on a very solid foundation of a watch cue is the place to start. If your dog is looking into your eyes, he's not looking around at everything else.