

Ask
The
Trainer



Puppy Training... A to Z

Part 2 by Devin Inglove, Professional Trainer



HOUSE TRAINING

In our last article we talked about the importance of starting off on the right foot with our puppies. In this article I will focus on nuisance barking, "coming when called", house training and other general training tips to prepare your pup for life as an adult dog.

One thought to always keep in mind when puppy training is "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." Do not let unwanted behavior get started, that way you do not have to correct it later.

A very good example with which everyone deals is when pups jump up on people. When a pup jumps on us, our natural inclination is to reach down and pet it and tell it what a good pup it is. We see this behavior as cute, friendly, and view it as an extension of the new pup's love. To some extent this is true, but how much will this still be true when the pup becomes a yearling with athletic ability and strength and weight?

At that point, the pup's behavior is going to be very difficult to change for the following reasons:

1. A pup, any pup, jumping up on people is the first sign of showing dominant behavior and also that the pup likes being dominant.
2. Not only does the pup like being dominant, but also we have been rewarding the pup's dominant behavior with our praise.
3. Dogs are creatures of habit and by the time the pup gets older, it becomes more difficult to correct this behavior - especially when this behavior has been positively reinforced.

The bottom line, is to STOP unwanted behavior in a pup the first day the pup becomes a part of your

life. Use gentle, firm, and consistent correction tempered to the pups age and personality, but stop unwanted behavior before it gets started. Remember, "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure."

Two behaviors you need to start developing in your pup are: 1) tempering nuisance barking with negative reinforcement, and 2) the 'come when called' command with positive reinforcement.

Tempering Nuisance Barking With Negative Reinforcement

Stopping habitual barking that is occurring for no reason can be extremely difficult at an older age. The methods used at older ages are usually "Band-Aid" type methods such as:

- ◆ Electric Bark Collars
- ◆ Figure 8 muzzles
- ◆ Spraying with the water hose, etc.

These methods work while applied, but the methods soon lose their effectiveness when taken away.

To stop habitual barking (barking for no reason) you must start corrective action as a pup. First, be sure the pup is not in some sort of trouble. Your pup must not be a victim of isolation, inactivity, or mental stagnation - symptoms or behaviors associated with this are digging, chewing, habitual barking and self-mutilation. Give your pup plenty of exercise and attention. The best way to ensure your pup gets plenty of exercise and attention is through **training**.

To stop habitual barking, I like to implement the "**QUIET**" command. This command will be used throughout the pups life, especially later in a kennel situation, dog truck or dog trailer. To condition the dog and im-

plement the command, take a small spray bottle and mix a solution of 2/3 water and 1/3 vinegar. Taste the mixture to be sure it is sour and unpleasant (don't pass up this step as it will also give you an idea of what your dog will taste). While the pup is barking, go to it, hold it firmly, spritz the vinegar/water solution into the pup's mouth, and use the command "**QUIET**". The solution will be sour and make the pup start licking and mouthing trying to get the sour taste out of its mouth and the barking will stop -- at that moment leave without saying a word. Repeat as necessary when the pup starts barking until the pup stops barking when you command "**QUIET**".

If the pup stops barking when it sees you coming, go ahead and spritz it anyway. You are attempting to make a negative association with the quiet command so that later on when you tell the pup '**quiet**', it will associate the command with the spray and bad taste - the association will be made whether or not the barking stopped before the actual spray was applied.

Negative association training takes a different twist than conventional training with positive reinforcement. Negative reinforcement is mainly an attempt to build negative association with a command early on in the pup's life to form a better behavior pattern. As the pup grows into maturity, the band-aid methods of bark control mentioned earlier will not have to be applied. Even in a kennel situation when the '**quiet**' command is given to the general kennel population the pup that has been negatively reinforced in this manner will understand the '**quiet**' command and obey.



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Come When Called Command With Positive Reinforcement

To begin, have yourself and another person in an area with no distractions (a house would be perfect if possible). Put the pup on a short, 6-foot, light lead so that the lead control is not difficult to handle. Have your helper hold the pup away from you, but facing toward you. You hold the lead and call the pup to you by its name and say "here". As you give the command, gently tug on the lead as your helper releases the pup. When your pup gets to you hold it calmly by the collar and give it a treat. Repeat this process with one change - you hold the pup and the helper holds the lead and calls the pup. Alternate the processes, but keep sessions short to 3-6 repetitions 2 times daily. Gradually increase the distance over several days.

Repeat the process increasing the distance until the pup responds consistently with no lead and at a distance of about 15 feet. Next have your helper hold the pup while you hide out of the view of the pup while the pup is off lead. Call your puppy and when it finds you hold its collar and give it treats and praise. Repeat this until pup will find you and/or your helper in any room in the house.

After your pup becomes consistent with this process, go outside with the pup on a 15 to 20-foot lead. Outside, have your helper create distractions while you call your pup with the command. Don't expect too much the first time or two as more than likely the pup will ignore the command. Give a sharp tug on the lead and pull your pup towards you. Praise it very highly when it gets to you. Repeat this process until the pup will turn on its own and come to you on command. This simple but effective command will go a very long way when formal training starts with basic obedience.

House Training

If you are going to have your puppy in the house, it must be house trained. This is an easy step to achieve, but it is a commitment of time and consistency, with consistency being the key.

STEP 1: Crate Training -- Crate training is the most effective and humane way to house train a pup. Get your puppy comfortable with a crate by first giving it a treat in the crate, then advance to feeding in the crate until it is happy about being in its crate. Gradually extend the amount of time your pup spends in the crate. When you let your pup out, use praise for the pup being a good puppy in the crate. Never use a crate for punishment – the crate should be a safe, happy place.

STEP 2: Schedule -- Set a schedule for feeding and exercise. Remember puppies have small bladder/bowel capacity and must empty many times more than adult dogs. The frequency will lessen as your puppy gets older, but until 6 months don't expect the pup to last more than 3-4 hours during the day. Young pups, when active, will go more often. Most pups can last through the night while sleeping, but if your puppy is up and yelling at you "I need to go out", **you must get up no matter what** (time or frequency) or a pattern will not be established and house/crate training will be very difficult.



STEP 3: Routine -- Keep a routine **everyday**. You must maintain the same schedule even on weekends, holidays or whatever changes that may occur in YOUR daily routine. A pup's routine **cannot** change until its house training is complete.

Example: (This is only a rough schedule as times may vary due to your personal schedule).

6:30 a.m. --- Go Out
 7:00 a.m. --- Feed
 7:15 a.m. --- Out/Exercise
 8:00 - 12:00 (noon) --- Crate Time
 12:05 p.m. --- Go Out
 12:20 p.m. --- Feed, then out again.
 1:00 - 5:00 p.m. --- Crate
 5:05 p.m. --- Go out/Exercise
 6:00 p.m. --- Feed
 6:15 p.m. --- Go out (Exercise or Train)
 7:00 - 11:00 p.m. --- Play (inside) and watch pup closely. If it needs to go out, then take it out.
 11:05 p.m. --- Go out (if necessary, but it is best to make sure before crating at night).
 11:10 p.m. --- Crate for the night (you must get up if the pup lets you know it needs to go out).

Feeding on schedule is very important to get your puppies bowels and digestive system on schedule. There are also things to avoid that can cause GI trouble and make house training more difficult. These include:

- ◆ Changing Feed Types/Brands
- ◆ Overfeeding
- ◆ De-Worming
- ◆ Stress

Remember - if your puppy has diarrhea, it cannot control its bowels. Be tolerant and try to get its system healthy as soon as possible.



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Feed Pups - Check manufacturer's daily feeding amounts and divide this by # of times daily.

Age	Feed
7-16 weeks	4 times daily
17-28 weeks	3 times daily
29 weeks	2 times daily

Fresh water should be made available to your puppy all day. After 8:00 p.m. water can be taken away so your pup (and you) can last through the night easier.

Step 4: Establish Toilet Spot -- Select a toilet spot and always go to that same area to have your puppy empty. Try to select a spot in a straight line from your house. Carry small puppies. As it gets older, use a lead to go to the toilet area. So that the pup can concentrate on emptying, **do not move around.** Teach a command like "Do your business" or "Go potty", etc. Be patient until your pup empties. Praise it lavishly and go back to the house or allow the to exercise outside.

STEP 5: Consistency - You must take your puppy out to its spot after eating, drinking, waking or playing.

Watch your pup if it starts circling and/or sniffing the ground -- it needs to go out. If it is raining, you must make sure your pup empties -- dogs don't like being out in the rain any more than you do.

STEP 6: Accidents - If your puppy has an accident, under **NO** circumstances call it to you and punish it. As with **all** training, **never** call a pup/dog to you and punish it. **IT IS TOO LATE.** It will not help training, and will only make your puppy wary of coming to you.

DO NOT swat with an object, for example, rolled up newspaper -- it only makes your puppy fearful of you as the newspaper is an extension of your arm.

DO NOT rub your pups nose in the accident. It does no good and is extremely unsanitary.

Dogs become house trained in spite of these things and not because these methods work.

If you get mad when you find an accident and your puppy sees this reaction in you, it only knows that you get mad when you find an accident. Your puppy cannot make the connection between making the mess and your anger. If your pup has an accident, keep calm. Put your pup out of sight,

it doesn't see you clean it up. Use white vinegar as a cleaner. Don't use ammonia based cleaner as the ammonia will attract your puppy back to the same spot. If you catch your puppy in the act, call the pup and clap your hands. If your puppy stops, take it to its spot outside, finish and praise. If the pup doesn't stop, don't get mad and drag it outside -- it will only make your job harder. Calmly take the puppy to its spot outside. Let it sniff and see if it can finish, if not, lightly praise pup at its spot and go back to the house and start clean up procedure.

Note: Until you can trust your puppy, don't let it have free run of the house unattended.

Remember consistency is of utmost importance. If your pup regresses, check your routine. If the routine is consistent, maybe your pup is teething or ill.

Next in this series of articles is: **BUILDING A POSITIVE ATTITUDE FOR FUTURE TRAINING.**

If have any questions or comments, please feel free to e-mail Devin at dogman@centercreekkennels.com

Good Luck,
Devin Inglove



What do you call 8 Boykins on a chain?

A) A South Carolina Chain Gang
 B) Trouble!
 C) Chow Line
 D) All of the above

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