

# PUPPIES!

## **Bringing Home Your New Puppy**

Congratulations on your new family member! Here are a few tips to help ensure a smooth transition for you and your new best friend.

Puppy proofing your home is extremely important for your puppy's safety (and your sanity) especially until you establish appropriate behaviours and household rules. Ensure all food products, chemicals and anything your puppy should not have are out of reach and eye sight. Give your new pup a small area to explore and live in for a bit while he settles; set up a crate and feeding station in this area. Provide fresh water for your puppy to access, but plan to remove it two hours before bed to help with potty training. Each day you will want to provide your puppy with food and exercise and we strongly suggest that you vary the TIME of day in which these happen, this way your dog does not become stressed if they are fed late for example. However, ensure a more consistent potty-training schedule. Attach a leash to your puppy and have it trailing it at all times for easy control without using physical contact. Do not leave leash trailing when your puppy is unsupervised.

### **Feeding**

We feed and recommend Royal Canin. Your adoption counsellor will have told you what your new pup is currently eating, and each bag of food has a feeding guideline on the back. If you have any questions, it is best to consult your veterinarian.

### **Crate training**

Crate training is ideal for puppies. Crates provide a safe and secure place for puppies and adult dogs to relax and stay out of trouble while they can't be supervised! This way, positive behaviours can be rewarded and undesirable behaviours can be avoided. The goal of the crate is to keep dogs safe while their humans are out and about, not to be used as punishment, or for long-term housing. The crate should be large enough for the dog to stand, lie down and turn around comfortably. Many wire crates are sold with dividers that can be moved as the dog grows which eliminates the need to buy multiple crates throughout your new puppy's growth.

### **Potty training**

On average, puppies can hold their bladders one hour for every month they have been alive, plus one hour. For example, if you have a three-month-old puppy, he can wait  $3 + 1 = 4$  hours (while in his crate). If you work longer than this, the best solution is to have someone (a neighbour, a relative, a dog walker) come in at an appropriate time to let your dog out. Dogs will not soil in their sleeping area unless they have absolutely no other option. Supervision is the key to houstraining. While you are at home, your dog must be supervised. Trailing a leash in the home is a great technique in being able to monitor your dog at all times, as the majority of accidents happen when your dog wanders off. The leash also gives you the ability to lead your dog outside should they give you an indication that they need to 'go' or, if they have already started.

Do not rub your dog's nose in the 'accident,' this will not help subsequent occurrences and will only hurt the bond between you and your dog. Potty training is SO important for you and your new puppy. The goal is to bring them outside (or to your designated area) often enough to be able to reward the elimination and avoid accidents. Setting a timer to go off every 20-30 minutes and taking your puppy out every time the timer goes off is a great way to ensure less accidents and more opportunities to reward good behaviour. It is SO important to remember that punishing your puppy for eliminating where they are not supposed to is counter-productive. They do not understand what they have done wrong, and it teaches them to fear you. If you reward them GREATLY for eliminating in their designated area once or twice, they will continue to go there in hopes of getting their reward. Do not remove the reward until they are consistently eliminating in their designated area, and then reward them for every other or every third successful elimination.

### **Obedience training**

The GTHS has resources for several obedience needs, if you have questions with regards to a specific obedience or behaviour need – please let us know! We only use positive reinforcement techniques. Positive reinforcement is so important for you and your puppy as it involves NO physical force i.e., do not push your puppies bum down to get him to sit. This is the best way to form a lasting and positive relationship with your puppy. We have some trainers that we recommend, but if you find a trainer outside of our list, and do not feel that their methods are inline with your values, find another trainer who is. There are MANY trainers with many different training styles.

### **Recall**

Recall is the term used for calling your dog, and having him come back to you. Recall must ALWAYS be POSITIVE. If its not, your new puppy may become fearful of you or of coming back to you, and may choose not to return. Recall should use very high rewards to ensure your puppy is always excited to come back. Do not remove the reward (it can be treats, praise, toys) until you are confident your puppy will return consistently, and even then, provide a reward on every other or every third recall.

### **Enriching and Exercising**

Puppies need lots of activities to keep them positively stimulated. Things like Kongs filled with puppy food, or other chew toys are great for calm activities. Puppies LOVE chewing; fulfilling that desire to chew by funneling it into appropriate chew items helps keep them from chewing things they aren't supposed to chew. Walks are a great way for dogs to explore their environment and be exposed to multiple stimuli. Several behaviours such as eliminating outside can be rewarded while on walks and it's a great opportunity to bond with your puppy.

### **Mouthing and chewing things they aren't supposed to**

Puppies LOVE chewing and using their mouths. Until they are taught otherwise, they do not know what is and is not an appropriate chew/play thing. If they are chewing an object they should not, try replacing it with something they can have, and praise when they choose

appropriate objects. Puppies also play with each other by biting, and usually try to play with their new humans like this as well; this is also not appropriate. You can try redirecting them to another toy, or *freeze* and wait for them to stop, once they stop, re-engage with them and praise them for polite play. Do this as needed, and add some puppy play to give them some appropriate ‘bitey’ play time.

### **Socializing your new Puppy**

Be sure to bring your new puppy with you to as many different places as possible so he/she is exposed to as many new things as possible. Bring treats with you so that when you meet lots of new people, kids, and dogs, all experiences are positive. Puppy classes are a great place for this, so are pet friendly stores. Puppy play is a MUST for puppies, it helps them build confidence, teaches them appropriate play skills, gives them an appropriate outlet for mouthing and teaches them how to socialize appropriately. Be sure to find other friendly and polite puppies to play with to ensure all play sessions are positive experiences.

#### **Support:**

Our Behaviour Support Team can help to provide resources and tips if you experience concerns in the home environment. With your adoption the GTHS will provide an over the phone consultation in order to provide you with tips and resources to set your new dog up for success. In all cases of dog adoptions, the GTHS recommends hiring a professional dog training or behavioural consultant to ensure your relationship with your new dog starts off on the right paw! A list of local trainers is enclosed in your adoption package.

Our Behaviour Support Team can be reached at [behaviour@gths.ca](mailto:behaviour@gths.ca)