

YOUR FREE PUPPY TRAINING GUIDE

5 Sure-Proof Habits for a Calm, Confident, Well-Behaved Puppy

Puppies have a way of pulling our heart strings. One minute they're snuggled up in your arms... Next, they're chewing your shoe, biting your hands, and peeing on the rug. *SIGH!* If you're tired, overwhelmed, or wondering "Am I messing this up?" — we're here to help you take a breath. You don't need to be perfect. You just need the **right foundational habits**. Start these 5 habits NOW to help prevent fear, confusion, and reactivity later.



HABIT #1



REWARD THE BEHAVIOR YOU WANT — CONSTANTLY

Puppies repeat what works. If they get attention for jumping, barking, or biting, that behavior grows. If they get rewarded for calm behavior... that grows. It's easy to assume they understand, but even when they look guilty, oftentimes they're reacting to your tone, but left confused. Focus less on correcting what NOT TO DO and more on rewarding what THEY SHOULD DO. Catch them being good.

- ▶ Sitting on their own? Praise them.
- ▶ Lying calmly? "Yes!" + treat between the paws.
- ▶ Walking beside you and engaging? Mark it!

Good behavior doesn't "just happen." It's built on purpose.

HABIT #3



TEACH CALM GREETINGS NOW

Jumping is cute at 10 lbs. Not at 70. As tempting as it is to let everyone greet your puppy, remember they're learning who/what to trust. Greetings can be overwhelming - teaching your puppy to be too excited (jumping) or fearful (reactive) later on down the road. A good rule of thumb is to control the interaction, letting your puppy explore without force.

Practice These Rules:

- ▶ Expose, but don't force → let your puppy explore
- ▶ Be the barrier → be the boundary that protects their space/well-being
- ▶ Guest Visits → wait to greet your puppy until it is calm
- ▶ Puppy jumps → turn away (no talk, no touch)
- ▶ Puppy sits or lies down calmly → give rewards & affection

Your puppy doesn't need more excitement. They need to learn safety and **calm = attention**. **Calm behavior opens doors. Wild behavior closes them.**

HABIT #5



REDIRECT, DON'T PUNISH

Chewing. Nipping. Stealing socks. Remember, this is NORMAL. We want to show them WHAT TO DO rather than tell them WHAT NOT TO DO.

Instead of scolding:

- ▶ Swap hands for a tug rope or ball
- ▶ Trade stolen items for their chew toys
- ▶ Give regular potty breaks
- ▶ Never let them roam without supervision (they'll earn that trust later)

You're not just stopping behavior — you're teaching *what to do instead*. This builds confidence instead of engraining fear.

HABIT #2



START LEASH SKILLS INSIDE

Walks shouldn't feel like waterskiing behind a land shark.

Before the sidewalk, practice indoors:

- ▶ Reward them for walking by your side
- ▶ If they walk ahead, immediately turn around to have them follow
- ▶ Reward eye contact and engagement with you

We want them to understand that **staying with you means good things happen**. Future you, who enjoys peaceful walks, will thank you for it!

HABIT #4



MAKE THE WORLD FEEL SAFE

Puppies go through sensitive learning phases and "fear stages". There will be periods where they'll be jumpier, shier, or more concerned than usual. Socialization doesn't mean forcing interaction within their environment. It means exposing them to all new stimuli and showing them that they're safe with you. What they see and experience now will shape their world in the future.

Expose them — gently — to:

- ▶ People of all cultures and walks of life (supervising with children)
- ▶ New sounds and moving objects (bikes, trains, roller blades, etc.)
- ▶ Different environments (parks, coffee shops, restaurants, public transport)
- ▶ Calm, balanced dogs

Pair all of these new experiences with treats, praise, and safety. That's how you prevent fear and reactivity down the road!

THE BIG PICTURE



You're not just training a puppy.

You're shaping:

- ▶ Their confidence
- ▶ Their emotional stability
- ▶ Their trust in you
- ▶ The dog they'll be for life

Remind yourself that small daily habits now = calm, enjoyable companionship later. We know it's hard work, but you've got this! And your puppy is lucky to have you.

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