

# Life with a puppy



**Raising a puppy**.....3 important steps to raising a healthy, happy, behaviourally sound puppy. ..from TATE Animal Training Enterprises July 2019

## **Be prepared:**

- Puppy proof your house to ensure they can't freely roam around everywhere getting themselves into mischief.
- Utilise management tools like baby gates, puppy pens and crates to help prevent your puppy from getting into danger (This also helps to build independence.)
- Try to organise some time off when you first bring your puppy home to work on building up their confidence and contentment in being left alone.
- Make or buy lots of enrichment and tug products!

## **Puppy school:**

Research a local, qualified and reputable puppy trainer and contact them sooner rather than later. Puppies have a critically important learning period where they absorb information at an alarming rate between 3-16 weeks of age roughly. The earlier you get your puppy booked into puppy school, the more time you have to help them during this period of their life.

## **Emotional support:**

Focus more of your energy and time on the emotional development of your puppy rather than behaviours such as sit, drop stay, roll over, beg, shake etc. YES they are important (and fun to train), but despite how the saying goes, you CAN teach an old dog new tricks, however rewiring a dog's brain from the suffering of entrenched fears, phobias or anxieties is far more difficult. Areas worthy of attention include:

- Sounds exposure; unpredictable noises in the environment can develop into noise phobias down the track, especially things like storms and fireworks. Check out the [Sound Proof Puppy Training App](#) for more information.
- Appropriate socialisation and exposure to everything life has to offer. In a nut shell, short, sweet pleasant interactions or sightings with everything you will expect your pup to cope with as an adult.
- Independence building: Take slow steps and measures to help your pup develop confidence and contentment being left alone. Avoid throwing them in the deep end.
- Puppies are highly social and intelligent little animals that need a lot of time, training, love and support to grow and develop into healthy and happy adults.

## Socialisation

Whatever a puppy has never experienced in a positive way before 14-16 weeks of age is likely to cause fear later. This brief time is called the sensitive period. It is when they soak up new experiences and say “this is what my life will contain and it’s all good”. Socialisation is not just about letting your puppy meet/interact with other dogs – it is about introducing them to different people, experiences, sights, sounds, smells, surfaces, objects and textures in a controlled way.

- Because this critical period involves a time when their vaccinations are not complete you need to get inventive with how you go about it. A reputable breeder will have started the process but it is up to you to make sure your puppy experiences a great variety of experiences in a non-frightening way. Encourage your puppy to focus on you (treats help this process enormously) when experiencing novel situations .
- Trips to the beach are possible as long as you carry your puppy from the car and across the dry sand and only let him walk on the hard sand right by the waterline. Keep him on a lead so he doesn't dart off into the soft sand. Don't let him mingle with or play with any other unknown dogs on the beach.
- Trips to Bunnings to ride around in one of their trolleys is a great way to socialise puppies ( and lots of strange sights and sounds plus the experience of riding in a trolley and lots of pats from other shoppers) –make sure you carry him to and from the car. You can also do trips to outdoor cafes where he can sit on your lap or on a rug/towel on the pavement.
- Set up some surface patches in your garden so puppy can experience walking on wet and dry gravel, grass, paving, wood chips, sand. Let them experience the sound of vacuum cleaners, hair dryers, leaf blowers, traffic, trucks etc. Introduce puppy to the wheelie bin. Get them used to having their paws, ears, mouth and tail touched and inspected by you and other people. Make grooming (brushing and bathing) a pleasurable experience by feeding treats and praising calm behaviour.

### Read more about socialisation at :

In the link below you will find a checklist of suggested experiences for Australian puppies

<https://www.walkervillevet.com.au/blog/puppy-checklist-social-distancing/?fbclid=IwAR03aDtHzINVNpNA03SQ0GUCit4RVDRzsVMeMBC4ViKwLuPPjF8FPnL3uII>

<https://www.preventivevet.com/dogs/socializing-your-puppy-while-social-distancing?fbclid=IwAR0wMpwEqDDIOQO-BGZlrLsHrG170BEU6RH1JcCYqkAtmbhLSy0lynut8>

### The 10 Most Important Things to Teach A Puppy....Whole Dog Journal

Your new puppy will learn his most vital skills through lots of appropriate socializing and positive training techniques. [https://www.whole-dog-journal.com/puppies/puppy\\_training/the-10-most-important-things-to-teach-a-puppy/](https://www.whole-dog-journal.com/puppies/puppy_training/the-10-most-important-things-to-teach-a-puppy/)

**How to settle a puppy in a new home.....** article from Walkerville Vet. This article is for settling in a puppy in **the first few days** after adoption. If your puppy is crying at night during these early nights, most of the advice you find online is not just unhelpful, it might even be harmful.

<https://www.walkervillevet.com.au/blog/puppy-crying-at-night/?fbclid=IwAR1FjrWqMNKGZ45GNdBrvmFOFlqMdMnh6RDGkTBg05snZq1hj64qA2vpjCE>

**Introducing your new puppy to the family dog or cat .....**Introducing a new canine member to the family is a special and exciting time but can be a little overwhelming for all concerned. However, this can be managed with planning, so that everyone feels safe and there is minimal stress. It is important that you manage the introduction to your family carefully and that your new dog or puppy and cat are always supervised until you are sure everyone is comfortable and safe. <https://kb.rspca.org.au/knowledge-base/how-should-i-introduce-my-new-dog-or-puppy-to-the-family-cat/?fbclid=IwAR3hmigeJFYuxRqjjxgUIV3WV15Rj7Jt8URbvB1MZqFzIwR2CXhEj3odD2Q>

**Puppy chewing.....**You really have to keep all chewable items out of reach for some years....puppies and young dogs discover the world through their mouths and whatever looks new and interesting goes in.

- Redirect, redirect, redirect! Give the puppy things it is allowed - cardboard boxes are a favourite! Frozen stuffed kongs, frozen carrots, nyla bones, roo tendons, bully sticks are good suggestions. Also ensuring that puppy is properly mentally stimulated. Puppies become most destructive when they're bored.
- Keep rewards in multiple rooms in your house and in your pockets to access quickly to reward giving up forbidden items or playing the swap game.
- If you cannot supervise and practise the redirection method described above you have no option (for the safety of the puppy and to keep your valuable items intact) but to keep them out of their reach and bar entry to places like garages ( which can house some very hazardous materials) by keeping doors closed and using baby gates and puppy playpens. Never trust them with access to the garage or leave remotes, headphones, charger cords, phones, cushions where they can reach them when you are not there. It only takes a moment for them to pick something up and it could lead to tragedy.

## Puppy biting

For new puppy owners whose puppies are going through a mouthing (biting phase) or a heads up for prospective parents:

- Puppies discover the world with their mouths and the BITING/ MOUTHING IS AN ENTIRELY NORMAL PHASE they go through, especially around teething time. Use a playpen and a chew toy for time out when the puppy gets particularly hyper and bitey so he can calm down.
- If you have young children separate them from the puppy using a playpen or baby gates when he is being hyper and try to discourage them from squealing and running round as this only revs the puppy up more. Most puppies have spent their first 8 weeks playing bitey with their littermates (it's just that they have a thick layer of protective fur). They see children as large littermates.
- Every time the puppy mouths you or the children, replace with a toy and treat when he/she chooses the toy. Just be careful not to reward negative behaviour accidentally, and keep it super consistent. Be like a magician – always have a toy ready to pull out of anywhere – keep a small squeaky toy in your pocket at all times.
- It tends to happen more when the puppy is over stimulated and /or over tired so time out for a snooze in a crate/playpen or behind baby gates can help.

<https://optimalcanine.com/dog-articles/understand-overcome-puppy-biting/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JRI1FhIBeKc>

## The adolescent puppy

Just when you thought it was all getting easier, your puppy turns into a little monster! At roughly 7 months of age, your puppy is hitting the peak of adolescence. Puppy hood is full of hoops, hurdles, and challenges, and puppy adolescence is one of the most challenging stages to navigate through. Adolescence is a natural part of development, and this “teenage phase” is typically characterized by increased pushiness, rebelliousness, and momentary lapses in judgment.

[https://www.pupbox.com/training/7month-old/?fbclid=IwAR2wn\\_RGar-QJ8ZefbhvnNDB9dswqFdi\\_Q0N1PHL44NPsjY5EyfTZWWhjYhk](https://www.pupbox.com/training/7month-old/?fbclid=IwAR2wn_RGar-QJ8ZefbhvnNDB9dswqFdi_Q0N1PHL44NPsjY5EyfTZWWhjYhk)

## Car Sickness

Start with lots of small trips, not even 5 minutes, just 100m to start with and gradually build it up. Don't feed a large meal immediately before the trip. Try giving Ginger nut biscuits before and during the trip and a couple of drops of peppermint oil on the collar or blanket plus plenty of fresh air.

Using an Adaptil calming collar or putting a bandana on the puppy sprayed with Adaptil has helped some puppies. Others have been helped by wearing a thunder shirt or t touch wrapping the puppy/ dog

Some have installed an "Car Anti-Static Strap", and this helped immensely. With these straps more expensive isn't any better as all they do is earth the vehicle to stop static electricity build up inside the vehicle which can effect some dogs.

This is a really useful article with lots of suggestions...it also suggests that many young puppies are often car sick due to the balance mechanism in the inner ear not being fully developed.

<https://vcahospitals.com/know-your-pet/motion-sickness-in-dogs#:~:text=Motion%20sickness%20in%20dogs%20is,are%20about%201%20year%20old>

This link explains how to do t touch wrapping:

<https://www.whole-dog-journal.com/behavior/ttouch-practitioners-explain-canine-body-wrapping/>

## **Puppy Strangles**

Puppy Strangles is also called Juvenile Cellulitis or Sterile Granulomatous Dermatitis and Lymphadenitis. Golden Retrievers, Dachshunds, and Gordon Setters seem to be pre-disposed to the condition. Puppy strangles is NOT contagious. It is an autoimmune disease, which means the dog's body has produced antibodies that are attacking its cells and tissue. There is no known cause – nothing can be done to prevent it. It is not caused by anything the puppy parents or breeder has done or not done.

- It comes up suddenly, manifesting as marked swelling of the muzzle, eyelids, and face in a puppy between the ages of 3 weeks and 6 months of age...it is easy to think the puppy has been bitten by a stinging insect or a spider.
- Soon the lymph nodes of the throat become spectacularly enlarged, giving the puppy the appearance of having the mumps. It doesn't take long for the swelling to give way to pimples that rupture, bleed, and crust. The inner surface of the ear flaps are commonly involved as well and occasionally lesions in other body areas occur. Lesions are painful more than they are itchy.
- Fever, joint swelling, and loss of appetite occur in approximately 25 percent of patients. If treatment is delayed there can be permanent hair loss in the most severely affected areas. If the puppy is sick enough, the condition can be life-threatening.
- Treatment for this condition is immune-suppression - high doses of corticosteroids such as prednisone are needed as the condition appears to be an immune-mediated disease. In other words, the puppy's immune system is acting excessively and inappropriately and it must be subdued. Antibiotics may be needed for the secondary infections but antibiotics alone will not treat this condition.
- Once suppression of the overly active immune system occurs, improvement is usually rapid. The condition generally resolves in 10 to 14 days and does not recur. Scarring, especially around the eyes can occur due to the puppy scratching. Aside from that there are no other known long term effects from Puppy Strangles.

**For further reading check out the following links:**

<https://www.gsroc.org/strangles-the-puppy-disease/>

<https://www.caninejournal.com/puppy-strangles-treatment-cost/>

<https://vcahospitals.com/know-your-pet/juvenile-cellulitis-puppy-strangles>

## Pet Insurance

The subject of pet insurance is a very complex one...some people say they wouldn't be without it, some say it's a waste of money. Some people prefer to put a designated amount each week/ month into a special savings account instead but this may not cover any large vet bills in the first 12 months (eg if your puppy needs emergency surgery for an obstruction having swallowed a piece of a toy or a corn cob etc).

- Many breeders offer free pet insurance for a limited period of time as part of the purchase price – take advantage of it if you want insurance. If you decide to get pet insurance you need to purchase it very early as any conditions the puppy has been treated for prior to taking out the insurance will be classed as "pre-existing" and won't be covered in the future.
- You need to check that your insurance covers conditions like bowel obstruction, Elbow dysplasia, Hip dysplasia and cruciate ligament disease as these are the most expensive conditions you may occur. (except illness or accident) This is especially important if you have purchased a puppy from a breeder whose breeding stock are not health tested. Many of the cheaper policies do not cover elbow or hip problems.

Here are links to 3 informative articles from Walkerville Vet on the subject:

Do I really need Pet Insurance?

<https://www.walkervillevet.com.au/blog/do-i-really-need-pet-insurance/>

Is Pet insurance worth it?

<https://www.walkervillevet.com.au/blog/is-pet-insurance-worth-it/>

How Pet insurance works

<https://www.walkervillevet.com.au/dog-cat-insurance-comparison/>

## Toilet training

Puppies have tiny bladders. They do not get the message from bladder to brain until they are 21-22 weeks old. They may seem good at going outside at an earlier age but they are not toilet trained. Never punish when they go inside as they'll get sneaky and start to hide to do it instead.

Rugs probably feel like grass - you might want to temporarily remove them until puppy is older. If there are accidents wash the rug/floor with an enzymatic cleaner so you get rid of the urine enzymes. You can get this from a pet store - it will break down all the urine enzymes. You can also use the washing power Biozet as it breaks down the urine enzymes. Don't use home-made remedies like vinegar or ammonia as it can make it worse and make them pee more as it only does part of the job and doesn't break down all the urine enzymes. It only masks the smell for humans not dogs and cats.

Remember:

- Every time they eat, wake up, drink or play they usually need to go, so make sure you take puppy outside to the same spot on the grass and encourage him to go.
- Take outside immediately after waking, eating and drinking and before going to bed. Also take outside every hour on the hour. Use a timer on your phone.
- Use a cue word like toilet or wees etc. Then as soon as puppy wees or poos when outside in the grass say good boy/ girl really excitedly and give a treat and pats so they associate outside and peeing as a great time and will start doing it more and more.
- Take the puppy out on a lead if they are inclined to want to play or wander off. Once they have done the business bring them straight back inside, no playing and put them back to bed or in their crate.
- Watch for signs of sniffing and circling when inside - it usually means they are about to go!

<https://kb.rspca.org.au/knowledge-base/how-can-i-toilet-train-my-puppy-dog/>

<https://www.rspcasa.org.au/puppy-toilet-training/>

<https://www.walkervillevet.com.au/puppy-toilet-training-tips/>