



Camp Canine

Dog Daycare, Boarding & Dog Training

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New Puppy Tips / FAQs

How long can my puppy "hold it" in his crate?: The general rule of thumb or "formula" followed by most trainers and veterinarians is: your puppy can hold it his age in months (converted to hours) plus 1 hour. So if your puppy is 4 months old + 1 hour = he can hold it for 5 hours.

How do I housebreak my new puppy?: Dogs and puppies are creatures of habit so design a schedule for your new pup and stick with it. Always take your puppy outside first thing in the morning, last thing at night, after naps, about 10 minutes after eating, after coming out of the crate, after exercise or playtime, and when they act like they need to go (i.e., sniffing & circling). Gradually increase the time between the bathroom runs. For a young puppy, you may start with trips every hour. But as the weeks go by, you should take him out less frequently as he learns to hold it longer. It is important to correct your new puppy when you catch him soiling in the house. Correct him with a startling voice correction and hand clap. You want him to be clear that you are unhappy, but you do not want him to be afraid of you. If you find a mistake but do not catch him in the act, you must simply clean it up and forget about it. The only learning experience here is for the owner, who must redouble his supervisory efforts in the future! Don't forget to reward your puppy for doing it right. When the puppy "goes" outside be sure to reward the pup right away with praise, treats, and attention!

How do I pick the right food to feed my puppy?: Canine nutrition is a complicated, highly researched, & debated topic. Most of the time the puppy's breeder or the pet store will tell you what food they've been feeding the puppy when you bring it home. You should begin by feeding the same food and take the time to review its quality and ingredients. If you're not comfortable with the quality or the ingredients then gradually switch the puppy over to a food with which you are more comfortable. A variety of feeding options exist; from home made meals to raw diet to store bought kibble or wet food. Since most people choose to feed their puppies store bought kibble some guidelines for choosing the right kibble for your dog are listed below:

- Take a few moments to review the top 10 ingredients from the label on your bag of dog food.
- Look for a whole meat source as one of the first two ingredients. Even better would be two meat sources among the top three ingredients.
- Look for whole unprocessed grains, vegetables, and other foods. Better yet would be little or no grains at all!
- Beware of Food fragments. These are lower cost by-products of another food manufacturing process.
- Watch out for meat-by-products. By-products are not intrinsically bad, in fact many are highly nutritious. By-products, however, are less expensive and not always handled as carefully or as quickly as more expensive foodstuffs. Poor handling and slow transport decrease flavor and destroy nutrients. It is just easier to avoid by-products than to try to confirm their quality with the dog food manufacturer.
- Avoid these ingredients if at all possible: Generic fats and proteins (such as "Animal fat"), Artificial preservatives such as BHA, BHT, or Ethoxyquin, Artificial colors (your dog doesn't care what color his food is), and Sweeteners (sweeteners are added to lower-quality foods to make your dog want to eat them).

How do I prevent undesirable behaviors (i.e. jumping up and mouthing)?: There are 4 steps to handling any undesirable behavior.

- Prevention: if you can prevent it from happening in the first place, do it! For example, don't play with your hands around the dog's mouth if you are working on teaching him not to mouth you.
- Redirection: if you see the dog about to engage in an undesirable behavior, distract him with an acceptable behavior. For example, when the pup is about to jump up, tell him to "Sit". Give attention only when all 4 paws are on the floor.
- Correction: a correction is meant to startle the dog just enough to make him stop the bad behavior. I.e. clap your hands or stomp your foot to startle him and distract him from the bad behavior.
- Time Out: A time out is 2 minutes in the crate. If the dog engages in the same misbehavior again when he comes out, it's back in the crate with him! He will quickly learn that if he doesn't abide by your corrections, he will lose his freedom and lose out on much-needed attention!