

Training Your Chihuahua Puppy

A solid education in obedience and leadership is essential to teach your Chihuahua the rules of his new human world.

Your Chihuahua will usually be full of himself, and often even a little too cocksure. However, when he first arrives home, do not be surprised if he lacks a bit of confidence. Everything will be completely new to him. There will be no familiar sights and sounds, and even the smells around your home will be unfamiliar. It will be up to you to build up his confidence and give him the encouragement he will need during the early stages of training.

Begin by getting him used to the immediate members of your close family. Instilling confidence in your Chihuahua will help with his early socialization, and you will soon be able to introduce him to your wider family and friends. Please try not to bombard him with too many new people and situations all at the same time, as he will be overwhelmed.

Depending on the age of your puppy, and whether his course of vaccinations is complete, you may or may not be able to take him out in public places immediately. Whichever the case, allow him to settle down at home for the first few days before venturing further. There will be lots you can do with your Chihuahua puppy at home, so you will both undoubtedly have great fun, but please allow him to get sufficient rest, too.

If restricted to your home territory for a little while, you can play games with your puppy using suitably safe, soft toys, but do not allow him to tug on anything too strongly. Check regularly that sharp or unsafe parts, such as squeakers, do not become detached from the toy. These can cause injury, and your puppy's teeth will be very sharp, so toys can easily be damaged.

Whether or not you plan to show your Chihuahua, it is always good to do a little early training, getting him to stand calmly on a table and to be gently groomed. Both will be helpful on numerous occasions, including visits to the vet, when it is much easier to deal with a well-behaved dog. You will be so proud of your clever companion!

Accustom your puppy to being on a lead, which is always a strange experience for a tiny youngster. Begin by just attaching a simple collar, not too tightly, but not so loosely that he can squirm out of it or that it can be caught on things, causing panic and possible injury. Just put it on for a few minutes at a time, lengthening each period slightly until your puppy feels comfortable in his first item of clothing. Don't expect miracles; this may take a few days.