

Puppy Training

Get the whole family involved in puppy training.

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Rules for PeopleYour new puppy isn't the only member of the household that must follow a set of rules. The humans in the house must also agree to obey certain guidelines in order to help teach the puppy how to be a good canine citizen. The following rules should be adhered to from the first day of your puppy's arrival:

No rough play: New puppies love to wrestle and play tug of war both games they indulged in with their littermates. However, these kinds of games should never be encouraged with humans because they promote aggression and teach your puppy to battle with humans instead of respect them. "Games like tug of war and wrestling teach the puppy to fight people, and to use its strength against people," says Palika. These can be very bad lessons for the puppy to learn. Instead, play safe games with your pup, such as Hide and Seek (you hide with a treat and then let it find you), Find the Toy or Treat (hide a favorite toy or treat and let the puppy locate it) and Tug of Peace. "These games teach the puppy to think, to use its natural abilities and to do things for its owner," says Palika.

Specific commands: In order for a puppy to learn obedience commands and rules of the house, everyone in the family must use the same words when giving those commands. "It is very important for all family members to participate in training the pup," says Miller. Each family member needs to communicate in a clear and consistent way. Keeping everyone in the family on the same page helps your puppy know exactly what's expected of it and increases its feeling of security in its new home. You can help encourage this consistency by writing out a list of commands for each family member to learn, and encouraging everyone to use only these commands. When choosing the commands for your family, try to pick words that do not sound too similar, or are not the same as other commands. If you want your puppy to stop jumping on you, use the command off rather than down. Down is an obedience command that asks the pup to lay on the ground. When using the word no, try to attach another word to it to help the dog understand what it is not supposed to do. "No bite!" "No chew!" and "No pull!" are all examples of how to be more expressive with the word no. It's important that every member of the family participate in the training and handling of the puppy so the pup will come to view each family member as a dominant packmate to be respected and obeyed. With communication and cooperation between everyone in your family, your puppy's transition to its new home will be smooth and less stressful for both you and the puppy.

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