



Managing Your Puppy's Behavior

Puppies come with a set of pre-installed behaviors: urinating and defecating when they feel the urge, chewing anything that fits in their mouths, whining and crying if they find themselves alone, eating any food they encounter (not to mention many NON-food items!), greeting by excitedly jumping up, and play-biting all living things. These are all normal behaviors for any puppy or untrained adult dog. Notice that there is little on this list that humans approve of.

In order to have a dog that chews only his own toys, eliminates outside, relaxes alone, greets without jumping up and plays without biting, we must gently mold his behavior. Here are some important rules for managing your puppy or newly-adopted adult dog:

- Confine any puppy or untrained dog to one room, like the kitchen, to make dog-proofing the room, clean-up and supervision easier.
- Supervise like crazy: interrupt housetraining and chewing lapses and re-direct the dog to the right place or toy. Never punish a dog late: it is abusive.
- Help him get it right: provide chew toys and praise him when he uses them, take him out often (every 30 minutes for a young puppy) and praise and reward him immediately when he eliminates outside. Enroll in a reward-based training course.
- Don't reward barking when the dog is left alone by returning to the dog. Get him used to being alone by coming and going many times for very short periods the first few days you have him, all done very matter-of-factly. If you need to crate train him, do it right (see our *Confinement and Crate Training* handout).
- Burn your dog's energy, both physical and mental. Tired dogs are well-behaved dogs. Teach him basic behaviors and tricks with treats; play fetch, tug and hide & seek with his toys; get him out daily for walks and runs; go on trips to new places, and give him regular opportunities to play with other dogs. If you work long hours, consider a dog-walker or daycare. This way you come home to a happy, tired dog.

