

**PUPPY LOVE SHELTIES**  
P.O. BOX 233  
29 PALMS, CA 92277-0233  
760-362-4022

## **TRAINING 1-2-3**

**P**uppies don’t come equipped with house manners. You must teach them. Perhaps the most effective way to do this is with obedience training, which gives you and your dog a common language.

**F**ortunately, your youngster is like a little sponge, ready to soak up all he needs to know if he is to mature into a well-behaved adult who’s a joy to live with and is welcome almost everywhere. In fact, you’re training your dog *every time you interact with him*.

**I**t’s never too early for a puppy to learn the basic obedience commands, but you should remember that puppies have short attention spans. Keep your training sessions brief - about 15 minutes each - and playful. Motivational tools and rewards, like toys, bits of food, and *lots of praise*, make training fun for a puppy.

**M**ost of today’s prominent trainers believe that you should ***NEVER*** use any physically painful (re: spanking) correction. You want to set up a relationship of trust.

**T**ouching the dog is good, as long as it’s gentle and playful. You want him to get used to being touched. You can even physically manipulate him into the proper positions for some of the exercises. This will make you aware of any negative reactions he has to being touched.

**F**ive easy-to-teach commands provide the foundation for future learning. If you say the command word or phrase as your dog executes the action, he will get used to hearing that word in context. In time, the word will work as a cue.

**Y**ou will probably use these commands every day:

### **SIT**

**METHOD 1:** Lure your puppy into a sit using a tin piece of cheese or a dog treat. Put the food in front of his nose, say “SIT” in a calm voice, and slowly lift the food over his head. He will probably sit as he lifts his head to nibble the food. If he backs up instead, put your other hand on his rump and gently guide him down the first few times. ***BE SURE TO PRAISE HIM!***

**METHOD 2:** Guide the pup into a sit. Squat down next to him, place one hand on his chest and the other behind his rear legs. Say “SIT”, apply gentle pressure on his chest and press behind his knees. **PRAISE!**

## **COME**

This command could save your dog’s life one day. Start in a quiet room. Squat down, open your arms, and say “Come”, then praise immediately, on the assumption that he will obey. DON’T WAIT TO SEE WHAT HE WILL DO; set a positive tone.

When he comes, *don’t grab at him*. Instead, let him come to you, and lightly scratch his chest. If he is small enough, scoop him up and tell him how wonderful he is.

Practice this indoor, but in a safe, enclosed area. Make a game of it by hiding from your pup and calling him. Or walk away from him and quickly call him.

If he doesn’t come, go slowly to him, put the leash on him, and guide him back to where you called him from, praising the whole time. This tells him that he has to do it but that you aren’t angry. NEVER scold him if he comes too slowly, sa this will only teach him to avoid you in the future.

## **STAY**

Have your puppy sit or stay at your side, then pivot around and face him. Command “STAY” and signal with your open palm in front of his face. Take a few steps away from your pup, but not so far that the leash becomes taunt, keep it loose.

After a few seconds, step back to him and place your foot on the leash as you stand close to him. This keeps him from jumping up as you bend down and calmly stroke him. Be sure you don’t make the leash tight enough to cause any pressure on his collar.

To release him, use the word you have chosen as your signal to him (your “release word”). which might be “OK” or “g”, and praise him enthusiastically

Only gradually should you increase the distance between you and your dog and the amount of time you ask him to stay. Do not train for distance at the same time as the initial stay.

After you have added distance and your dog’s stay is solid, you can add distractions. For example, have a friend stand nearby and bounce a ball. The puppy should not move out of the stay.

If your puppy does get up while in a stay, simply walk back to him, silently and calmly put him back into position, flash the hand signal, and walk away. Say nothing. If your puppy repeatedly breaks the stay, you’re increasing the time or distance too quickly.

## **DOWN**

**METHOD 1:** Begin with your puppy sitting next to you while you hold a treat in one hand. Rest your other hand on his shoulder blades and tell him

**“DOWN”.** Slowly lower the treat straight down between his paws, then slowly pull it away (make a capital “L”). **DO NOT FORCE HIM DOWN.** Once he is down, praise him and give him the treat.

**METHOD 2:** Stand behind your puppy. Reaching forward, place your right hand on the pup’s right shoulder blade. With your left hand, grasp the pup’s left rear leg and tell him “DOWN”. Gently encourage him to bend the leg.

Now lift his left front leg up off the ground and gently shift his weight to the left with your right hand. Gently place him on the floor and praise him exuberantly. You are guiding, not forcing your pup into this position. With extremely shy, fearful, or playful pups, who squirm, freeze, or become frightened by this, you are better off beginning with method 1.

## **HEEL, OR WALKING ON A LEASH**

Traditionally, when your dog heels, that means he is walking on your left, with the leash loose rather than taunt, and his head even with you knee.

Many current trainers prefer to say “Let’s go” or “Forward” as the cue, rather than “Heel”. And many do not believe that your dog must be even with your knee at all times, unless you’re preparing for obedience competition. Still, you don’t want him to get much ahead or behind you.

To begin training your dog to heel, hold the leash in your left hand and a toy or a treat in the right. Say “Let’s go”, and step off with confidence.

As you walk, hold your right arm across your body so the treat or toy is held above and slightly in front of your pup’s head. Encourage him to look up at you by teasing him a bit with the toy or treat. To get and keep his attention, speak excitedly and perhaps bob your hand up and down.

When the pup looks up at you, praise him warmly. If he is distracted, squeak the toy, get his attention, and praise him. After the pup has given you 20 or 30 seconds of attention, give him the toy or treat. Play a bit, relax, then work again.

## **SHAKE**

(reprinted from an article in Fall/Winter - 2003 “You and Your Dog” magazine)

With your dog sitting, reach down and take hold of his right paw with your right hand. Raise his paw gently as you give your dog the “Shake” command. Lift until his paw is level with his chest, and then shake it gently as though you were shaking hands.

As soon as you’ve shown him what to do, praise him lavishly. Speak to him in an upbeat voice, stroke his head and reward him with a treat.

Repeat this exercise several times a day for about a week. Then switch to just reaching out for his paw. If your dog offers his paw, take it, shake it gently and reward him profusely.

# **SOCIALIZE YOUR PUPPY**

**In your puppy’s early months - beginning at 7 weeks and continuing up to 9 months of age - he goes through a crucial stage of mental development that shapes his personality and behavior for the rest of his life. As soon as he finishes his puppy shots, give him lots of chances to visit new surroundings and meet new friends, neighbors, and even other animals (in SAFE situations). This process of exposing your puppy to different people and things is called socialization.**

**If possible, enroll your new companion in a “Puppy Kindergarten” class.**