

DogWise Ireland

General

Having a new puppy/dog in the family can be a very exciting time.

From day one it is important to set the ground rules and get into a good routine, this will make life easier for both you and your new puppy/dog.

As well as your training, play, feeding and toilet training times, you should also establish quiet times, teaching them that there are times during the day to settle down and have a nap or simply chill out. Making use of a crate or playpen can really help this.

As we have covered in the Toilet Training document, don't allow them unsupervised access to areas of the house. It can help greatly to confine them to one or two rooms of the house to begin with.

Even before your puppy has all its vaccinations complete, you can start introducing them to the sights and sounds of the world outside. Carry them out the front door and let them see – cars, bicycles, motorbikes, other dogs and people. By keeping them in your arms you are not risking them picking up any germs etc., and you are also giving them the reassurance that if things look a little scary, you are there to keep them safe.

Exercise

I find the best way to tire them out is through mental activity rather than physical walking. Very often you can take them out for a long walk and they are still bouncing around when you come home.

With puppies, the general guide is that they should be doing 5 minutes exercise for everyone 1 month of age, this includes your training and play time. Instead of taking them out for a long walk, let them do some brain work instead, it will be far more beneficial.

Grooming

If you have a dog that you can groom yourself, ensure you only use dog specific products for washing etc. The handling and grooming videos will help with your puppy/dog.

If you decide to use a groomer, contact them when you first get your puppy/dog, they will advise you on when is good to get started with them and how often you will need to get your dog groomed.

Using a Crate/Playpen

Using an indoor crate or play pen, can be hugely beneficial for both your toilet training and also to teach them about times to settle down without being under your feet. It also means that you can leave them unsupervised for short periods of time without worrying about the house getting chewed up.

Gradually introduce them to a crate, cage or play pen, with the door closed over. If they are not used to any of these you will need to teach them it is a good place to be, don't use it as a punishment.

Make sure that they have been out and relieved themselves fully before confining them.

Start off by feeding them in their crate. Pop them in the crate when they are tired (after play or training time etc.). They may cry for a short time but will give in quicker if they are tired.

You can also get them used to going into their crate by themselves while you are around - tie a toy with food in it on the inside of the crate, that way they can go in a play with it or eat the food out of it but they can't bring it out of the crate.

I also like to teach them to run into their bed and wait for a reward, which can be food or a toy, this is covered in the 'Into Bed' video's.

Be a responsible owner

When you are out and about with your puppy/dog you must always be aware of where they are. If you cannot see them you can't know what they are up to.

Don't allow them to rush up to other puppies/dogs or people.

I come across many reactive dogs who bark and lunge at other dogs, the majority of these dogs are fearful and are trying to keep other dogs away. The most common reason has been that, as youngsters, these dogs were jumped on by **overly friendly** dogs, became frightened and are now reacting out of fear.

For this reason, even if your dog is really friendly, don't allow them to rush up to other dogs, particularly if they are on the lead. Put your own puppy/dog back on the lead before approaching or passing another person or dog. If you stop to chat to the other owner, ask if their dog is happy to say hello to yours and only then allow any interaction. As with most situations you want to be the one making the decisions, not your puppy/dog.

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