

STOFER'S LABS

Foundational Obedience Training for Puppies

By investing time teaching your puppy foundational obedience, you will develop your puppy into a mellow, well-behaved dog. A well-trained dog will result in a deeply valuable family member that you can proudly take anywhere.

Establish a Trainer's Mindset

Praise your puppy 80% of the time; discipline no more than 20% of the time. To ensure that your puppy understands what he did right, reinforce positive behavior with lavish praise. Your puppy will have a lot to learn in the first year of their life, catch your puppy doing things right and praise her...often!

Ultimately, your goal is to have your puppy respond the first time you give a command, this will indicate that the puppy has successfully mastered the foundational skills.

Warning: *If you do not make this your expectation, the puppy will quickly learn to ignore you.*

Foundational Skills

Basic Commands

(See detailed instruction sheet at the end of this document)

GENTLE	SETTLE	SIT	DOWN
STAY	COME	HEEL	LEAVE-IT

- **Tools:** We recommend you use a *slip-collar lead* when training your puppy.
- **Location:** In the early days of training, conduct the training in a quiet location familiar to the puppy. Minimizing distractions will increase your puppy's ability to focus on you and result in greater training success and less frustration for the two of you. Introduce new locations and distractions as the puppy gains greater mastery of each skill.
- **Reward:** Give the puppy kibble and praise as a reward; in addition, you can scratch his chest, back, or behind his ears. Do not scratch your puppy's stomach during training as this may lead to obsessive rolling over, which is inappropriate behavior when you want your dog to focus. *At approximately 16 weeks of age, stop using kibble and only use lavish praise and a loving scratch as a reward.*
- **Pop:** In addition to voice commands, you will need to "pop" the lead to gain a distracted puppy's attention. Learn your puppy's sensitivity. Use a gentle pop of the lead when the puppy needs a gentle reminder to focus and use a sharp pop of the lead when the puppy needs immediate corrective action.
- **Repetition:** Practice each of the following commands a minimum of 15 times each day.

Tip: Every day you work with your puppy, he will gain greater mastery of the foundational skills. When your puppy has mastered a skill, you should expect him to respond to your commands the **first time** you ask. If your puppy fails to respond to a command the first time you ask,, it is good practice to immediately put the puppy on a leash and practice a series of commands until you achieve the desired behavior from the puppy. Your high expectations, hard work, lavish praise, and patience will pay off!

House Training

Potty training: Within 15 minutes of eating, drinking, or waking from a nap be sure to take the puppy to the designated area you would like them to potty. If your puppy does have a potty accident in the house, grab him by the scruff (excess skin on his neck), put his nose up to the potty (hold this position for 4-5 seconds for emphasis) and at the same time, say, "**No**". Bring your puppy to the potty spot.

Throughout the day, bring the puppy out to the potty area every hour or so, say, "Go Potty" and give him a lot of praise when he goes to the bathroom. Within a week or two your puppy will learn to potty in his potty area.

Tip: If you have a doggy door, place a crate up against the doggy door on the inside and slowly increase the puppy's inside play area with an exercise pen. This strategy usually results in a puppy potty training himself!

Crate training: Your puppy will ultimately feel secure and confident in his crate. By 9 or 10 weeks old the puppy can sleep through the night in his crate from approximately 9:30pm to 6:30 or 7:00am. During the day, put your puppy in his crate for various lengths of time; for example, when you leave home to run errand. Be sure to take your puppy out to potty before placing him in the crate. A good training guideline is at least 1 hour of crate time per day.

Temperament Training

To develop the puppy into a mellow, patient dog, routinely put a leash on her and keep her near you as you go about your routine household business. In addition, take your puppy in the car with you on occasion so he will become comfortable with travel and develop good car manners.

To develop the puppy into a social good-natured dog, schedule doggy play dates with other healthy puppies/dogs several times a week. This will also curb the puppies desire to chew on inappropriate objects such as hands or furniture.

Puppy Behavior Modification

When a voice command is not enough to stop a puppy's negative behavior, you will need to employ an additional method of getting the puppy's immediate attention.

One method that works well is to make a sudden loud noise, immediately following your firm voice command. To make the loud noise, you can roll up a newspaper and slap the palm of your hand with one end; this will startle the puppy without making him feel physically threatened.

An example of when this method can be of use: If the puppy continues to bark incessantly as you are preparing his meal, even after you have firmly given the command: 'QUIET', give the command 'QUIET' a second time and include a sudden loud noise. And remember, never reward the puppy by feeding him just to keep him quiet.

BITING: If your puppy bites, even if he is just trying to play, push your thumb down on their tongue and wrap your other 4 fingers under his jaw, hold tightly for 4-5 seconds. Resume petting your puppy's head and if he tries to bite again squeeze a little harder.

CHEWING: If your puppy chews on something that he is not supposed to, say "**LEAVE-IT**" in a firm voice and replace the item with one of the puppy's toys. Leave the object that is off-limit where the puppy can see it and if he goes for it again say "**LEAVE-IT.**" Add the sudden noise to get the puppy's attention if the puppy continues to try to chew or lick the item that is off-limit.

WHINING: Do not give any positive attention to a puppy that whines to get your attention. In a firm voice say, "**QUIET**" and push him away. If the puppy is in his crate, say "**QUIET**" and walk away until he remains quiet for at least 10 minutes. If the whining continues you can tap the crate with a metal bowl or shoe as you repeat the 'QUIET' command.

BARKING: Most of the time when a puppy barks he is engaging in negative attention seeking behavior. When your puppy barks, say, "**QUIET**" in a firm voice. You may need to slap the newspaper on your palm if your puppy challenges your authority by continuing to bark.

GROWLING: If your puppy growls to challenge your authority or simply to exert his dominance during playtime with you, correct this behavior immediately. Grab the scruff on your puppy's neck and pin him close to the ground and in a firm voice say, "**NO**". As an alternative, you can startle the puppy with a loud noise, such as the newspaper slap to your palm, and say, "**NO**".

JUMPING: If your puppy jumps up on the crate or the fencing or puts its paws on furniture, push his paws off and say, "**OFF**" in a firm voice. If your puppy jumps on you, bring your knee up firmly; this will make it uncomfortable for your puppy to jump up on you. Never allow your puppy to jump on people. When greeting people, put the puppy on a lead and have him sit quietly as he receives a pat, remember to praise lavishly for good behavior.

Foundational Skills - Basic Commands

<p>GENTLE</p> <p>Anytime you reward your puppy with a treat, train your puppy to take the treat from your hand with a gentle mouth. If the puppy lunges for the treat in your hand, and in the process, nips your hand or fingers, say "GENTLE" while quickly closing your hand around the food and withdrawing your hand so the puppy does not receive the treat until he takes it with a gentle soft mouth.</p>
<p>SETTLE</p> <p>Use this command to train your puppy to wait patiently for your cue.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Stand or sit in place with the puppy on lead.2. Say, "SETTLE" and give a gentle pop to the lead every time the puppy pulls on the lead.3. Praise and pet the puppy when he settles quietly by you.
<p>SIT</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Place a piece of kibble between your thumb and index finger.2. Hold the kibble above the puppy's nose.3. Say, "SIT" and move the kibble slowly back towards the puppy's back. The puppy will follow the kibble with its nose into the SIT position. <i>Tip:</i> If the puppy does not move into the sit position, gently pull up on the lead as you push his haunches down and repeat the SIT command.4. Give the puppy his treat and praise him as soon as he sits.
<p>DOWN</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Start with the puppy in SIT position. With kibble in hand, point to the ground in front of the puppy and say, "DOWN". The puppy will follow the kibble to the ground with his nose.2. Give the puppy the treat and plenty of praise when he is in the full down position with his stomach touching the ground. Pet the puppy on the back but remember to avoid rubbing his stomach during training. <i>Tip:</i> If the puppy needs further encouragement to move into the down position, either place the palm of your free hand on his upper back and gently push downward OR gently extend the puppy's front legs forward until he is in the down position.
<p>STAY</p> <p>Work on having the puppy remain in the sit or down position, for various lengths of time, by using the STAY command. In the beginning expect the puppy to remain in position for 3-seconds before giving him praise.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. When your puppy is in the desired position, hold your palm out toward the puppy and say, "STAY".2. Move backwards, leaving a gap between you and the puppy. Leave only a small gap at first and increase the gap as he learns the STAY command.3. Say, "OK" in a praise tone of voice when you are ready to release the puppy from his position. <i>Tip:</i> If the puppy moves out of position before you have said OK to release him, physically place the puppy back in position and then repeat the STAY command as you return to your original position.
<p>LONG-STAY</p> <p>By 4 months old, your puppy should be able to hold a down-stay or sit-stay position for 5 minutes or more.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. When you puppy is in the desired position, hold your palm out toward the puppy and say, "STAY".2. Move backwards, leaving a gap between you and the puppy.3. Walk in circles around the puppy while he remains in STAY position.4. Every so often lean down and pet the puppy's back and give him a gentle praise just to reinforce his good behavior, repeat the command STAY as you move away from him and continue to walk around or simply appear distracted.5. Say, "OK" in a praise tone of voice when you are ready to release the puppy from his position. <i>Tip:</i> Practice the extended stay position in a variety of places and situations. For example, while you are sitting at your computer or watching T.V., place the free end of the puppy's lead under your leg so you can easily grab it and give a gentle tug if the puppy tries to move from his stay position. Or, when working in the kitchen, tie the lead to the leg of a table so the puppy can watch you as you come and go about the kitchen. Stay close enough to the puppy to administer any corrective action needed.

COME

This is a very important command for your puppy to master for his long-term safety and your piece of mind. Once he masters this skill while on the lead, it is safe to practice off the lead.

1. From the SIT-STAY position, say, "**COME**" and tap your chest.
2. If the puppy does not come to you immediately, reel the puppy in by pulling the leash toward you.
3. Say, "**SIT**" when he reaches you.
4. Reward the puppy with lavish well-deserved praise.

HEEL

Teach your puppy to walk next to you. Your puppy should fluidly mirror your moves and ignore environmental temptations. Ultimately your puppy should not pull on the lead to exert her will but remain in tune with your will. If your puppy experienced success with the SETTLE command, HEEL will be a natural extension of his training. When beginning to teach the HEEL command, walk in a small tight oval, which lends itself to frequent turns. Frequent turns will keep the puppy focused on you and speed up learning. Vary your route as the puppy gains mastery of HEEL.

1. Start with the puppy sitting beside your left leg.
2. Hold the lead allowing a small bit of slack.
3. As you move your left leg forward to walk say, "**HEEL**".
Tip: The first few times you teach your pup to HEEL, pull her forward with the lead as you give the HEEL command. Immediately return slack to the lead as the puppy walks beside you.
4. Encourage the puppy to walk next to you by giving a gentle pop to the lead whenever the puppy strays from your side. After the pop, return the lead to slack position. Keep your trajectory and pace consistent as you correct the puppy.
5. Turn and walk in the opposite direction.
6. If your puppy does not follow your turn, give a quick sharp pop on the lead to get him in position and heading in the right direction.
7. Make approximately six turns.
8. Stop walking and say, "**SIT**". The puppy should sit next to you as in the start position.
9. Praise lavishly.
10. Repeat HEEL training several times.

LEAVE-IT

Use this command when your puppy, while on lead, gets suddenly distracted by an object and loses focus on the task at hand.

1. Say, "**Leave-it**" while you simultaneously give the lead a sharp pop.