

THE ANIMAL CARE CENTER AT GRANVILLE PUPPY KINDERGARTEN MODULE 4

TOPICS COVERED

- A. Introduction to obstacles
- B. Jumping up on people
- C. Door bolting
- D. Beginning retrieving
- E. Coming when called
- F. Tips for introducing the puppy to new people, animals, etc.
- G. Exercising your puppy
- H. Supervision around children or other animals
- I. Teaching shake
- J. Parasite control
 - 1. External
 - 2. Internal
- K. Winter tips
- L. Summer tips
- M. Identification

INTRODUCTION TO OBSTACLES

In addition to formal obedience training, the confidence to tackle various obstacles helps make your dog more well-rounded. Learning to maneuver various obstacles during the 6-16 week period will help your puppy in the future--provided that all the experiences with obstacles are positive. As in many of the other topics we have covered, a negative experience during this period may affect the pup's attitude toward that issue for life. Although we don't believe in allowing a puppy to begin jumping hurdles until at least a year of age, there are many other fun and creative challenges you can provide your pup with. You may have to show him what you expect the first time or two, or use food treats as an enticement to get him to try something, but remember to keep the experience fun and happy. For example, if you wish to teach the pup to go through a fabric tunnel, you will probably have to go through first, calling him as you do. You may then progress to having someone hold the pup at one end while you call and encourage from the other. Some examples of things you can have the pup try: walk around cones or pylons, walk up or down a ramp, walk through tires laying on their sides, walk through a tire or hoop held upright, or hold him steady on a teeter-totter while a helper gently raises and lowers the other end. This particular exercise will help him adjust to elevation changes, but care must be used that he is firmly steadied on the plank and that the teeter totter is NEVER allowed to bounce or hit the ground hard.

JUMPING UP ON PEOPLE

Most puppies are naturally enthusiastic and happy to greet you when you or someone else walks in the door. A typical doggy greeting might be to jump up on the newcomer, muddy paws and all, whether that person is wearing their Sunday best or blue jeans (the pup can't tell the difference). It is wise to teach the pup not to jump up ever, although some people do assign a special word and have the dog jump up on command. To correct jumping issues, begin by putting the collar and leash on the pup and making him sit at the door. Have someone knock

and enter, but require the puppy to hold its sit position as the newcomer then bends down to pet the pup. Praise for holding the sit. If the pup tries to jump up, quickly jerk the leash and say "No, OFF." (Do NOT use the word DOWN as this means lie down as in our previous lesson). It may be harder for you to remember to use OFF than it is for the pup to learn what it means! You must be consistent with this process until the pup is reliable. It only takes a second to snap the leash on when someone knocks.

DOOR BOLTING

This exercise is similar to having the pup wait to get out of the car. Teaching the puppy not to bolt the door could also someday save his life. It is applied to both the doors of your home and the door of the puppy's crate, and MUST be used consistently. Since the puppy already knows how to 'sit' and 'wait,' application of these imprints to the door is very simple. With the pup on leash, walk to the door and tell the puppy to sit and wait. Be sure he is far enough away from the door so that you may open it without bumping him. Firmly grasp the leash and then slowly open the door. If he hold his position, praise him, and if he gets up, give a firm jerk to the leash and say "No, sit" and then "wait." Praise him when he does. Once he is holding his sit, step through the door and then back to his side. Test him several times by again stepping through the door. Then step back to his side and say "okay" as you walk him through the door.

To prevent bolting from the crate, stand in front of it, blocking the pup's path. Begin to open the door as you firmly say "wait." Praise softly if the puppy does, but if he tries to bolt the door, quickly close it in his face and say "no, wait." Continue until you can open the door entirely after telling the pup to wait. When you want him to come out, say "okay."

BEGINNING RETRIEVING

A dog that is a happy and willing retriever is also one who nearly "self-exercises." A lot of energy can be burned up in a brisk game of ball or kong. It also helps teach the "Come" command.

Begin by placing the puppy on a lead. Roll the toy on the floor in front of the puppy as you say "Take it" or "Fetch it." As he begins to chase the ball, you must follow along and keep pressure off the leash. As soon as he gets the ball, use his name in a happy tone and tell him "Come." Run backwards while holding the leash (you may have to give a light tug on it to get him to start back towards you). Encourage him and when he gets to you use the "Thank you" command he has previously learned to get him to release the object. If he tries to run the other way in a game of chase, walk on the leash until you reach him and then command him to release the object. If he refuses, use the technique described in Module 3 about taking objects from his mouth. As soon as he releases, praise heavily. Then throw the ball for him again. Eventually he should learn that if he brings the ball back you will throw it again which is FUN and the leash will be unnecessary in the house or a fenced environment.

COMING WHEN CALLED

Failure of a dog to come when called is perhaps the number one complaint among dog owners. It is not an easy command to teach and certainly does not happen overnight. It takes time, consistency, patience, and more time. Any failure in the process on the puppy's part requires backing up a few steps and starting over. There are some basic rules that must be followed in order to be successful with this process.

1. NEVER call the puppy or command "Come" to punish him or for something he doesn't like (perhaps a bath, having his nails trimmed, etc.)
2. NEVER give the "Come" command if you cannot enforce it. Only give the command ONCE.
3. Always praise when the puppy does come.
4. Be consistent with the word you choose to represent the come command. Never vary it.
5. Never trust the puppy to come in an unfenced area until he is 100% reliable in a fenced one and you have repeated the training exercises in sequence for training in the contained area in the unfenced one.

To begin the process, you will teach the pup to come in a variety of small steps. Once again, if he fails at any, go back to the previous step and spend several days on that before progressing. The first week, start by calling the pup, "Puppy (his name), Come!" when you are ready to feed him. Call only once and place his food down, praising him for coming. You may also use the command at any time he is already coming toward you (indoors or out) and you are positive he will come. He CANNOT have the opportunity to not respond. Another basic exercise you may start is to take the puppy to a fenced area that is safe, place him in the middle of the area, and quietly walk away from him with your back facing him. (You still have the leash in your hand, but do not apply any pressure). Keep an eye on the pup to see if he is following you. If he does, stop and allow him to catch up, and praise him. Then move on in another direction. Try to keep the leash slack, but, if he doesn't begin to follow you, you may give a gentle tug to start him in your direction. You will not use a command for this exercise. The goal is to get the puppy following you. Try it in different areas (make sure they are safe) to encourage the pup to follow you for security in strange places.

The next step is like a game of ball between two people, but the pup is the "toy." While one person holds the puppy steady, the other walks up to the pup and shows him a treat. This person will then back away while holding the treat out, encouraging the pup and keeping his attention. If attention is lost, walk back to the pup and again show the treat. When the distance is 8-9 feet, the person with the treat should stoop down, and with the treat extended, say "Puppy, Come!" while the first person lets the puppy go. Timing is very important here. When the pup arrives at the treat, give a small piece and lots of praise. Then reverse roles. Each time the puppy must be restrained and the treat shown to him. He should become more excited to get to the treat each time and the distance can be extended. If you must do this exercise alone, you may stand in front of the puppy while showing him the treat and get his attention, then run backwards for a distance while giving the come command. When he comes running to you, give a small piece of treat and lots of praise. This exercise may be practiced indoors and out (in a contained, safe location). Continue to extend the distance.

As a puppy gets older, he typically becomes more independent. He will also become more easily distracted. The next step is to introduce distractions with this command. Keeping in mind that we must have a way to enforce the command, we will attach a long line to the pup's collar. (One used for horses works well). Take him outdoors and allow him to wander a short distance away--no more than 10-12 feet. Let him become very interested in something--a weed, a stick, a bird, etc. and then give him the come command. You will most likely have to give a sharp tug on the line as you say this to get his attention back on you. Run backwards for a few steps to encourage him to come, and give him a small piece of treat and lots of praise when he does. If he ignores you when you call him and keeps exploring the distraction, you may need to give several sharp tugs on the line until he comes--however, only use the command once and run backwards if necessary for additional motivation. Do not tug on the line if it is wrapped around the puppy's legs or belly. You will first have to untangle him in order to prevent possible injury. When he is 100% reliable for the short distance, gradually increase it to 30 or 40 feet. When he is reliable in his own yard, begin the process over in other environments--a schoolyard (when school is out of session) or a park. Begin to decrease the food reward to 3 out of 4, but continue

to praise lavishly both verbally and physically. The goal is to be able to allow full length of the line with different distractions in different locations.

Next it is time to teach the pup to sit in front of you when called. For this exercise, you and the puppy will begin walking toward something that will probably distract him. Allow him 8-10 feet of line and permit him to go toward the object. Just before he reaches the end of the line, give the come command, a tug on the line, and begin running backwards. When the pup reaches you, use the sit command, making him sit in front of you, and then giving him his treat. As he becomes proficient, allow more and more line until he can do this exercise successfully full extension.

Your puppy should now be coming 100% of the time on one command both indoors and out with the line on. Remember to praise him as he is coming, reward with the treat about 75% of the time and lavish praise 100%, making him sit in front of you. You may now try a short come without the line in a fenced outdoor situation. Remember to run backwards to encourage him and to reward him appropriately. If he does not come, walk quietly to him, snap the line back on, and correct him with a tug and a "No, come." Then back your training up a few steps. This is about as far as we would trust a puppy without more formal obedience training, but it definitely lays the groundwork for more complicated situations when the pup is older.

INTRODUCING THE PUPPY TO NEW PEOPLE, ANIMALS, ETC.

The general rule of thumb is safety first. Keep the puppy on a leash and make him sit to meet new people--no jumping up. However, it is sometimes necessary to teach people how to properly approach the pup as well. Have them stoop in front of the puppy and offer their curled up hand, palm up, slowly toward the puppy below his chin. This is much less intimidating to the pup. They should speak quietly and allow the pup to come to them on his terms. If he shows any shyness, allow them to offer the pup a treat to boost the friendship. When introducing the pup to another dog, extreme care must be taken. Puppies can be very exuberant, and older dogs may not be so tolerant. It is best for both to meet on neutral territory and both on leash. Keep the situation controlled and watch for signs of aggression--raised fur, stiff tails, growling, etc. An attack can happen in a split second so be very aware. Gradually introduce the pup to cats--again, keep him on a leash. The cat may scratch his eyes. Do not allow him to chase the cat. Small animals such as rabbits, hamsters, birds, reptiles, and ferrets, to name a few, do not make good companions for a puppy. The smaller animal is no match for a pup's innocent playfulness, so are best left in inaccessible areas to the pup.

EXERCISING YOUR PUPPY

Puppies are non-stop bundles of energy. If they do not have appropriate outlets for this energy, they become, much like a small child, very bored. This boredom is usually manifested in some undesirable behavior such as digging, chewing, or excessive barking. Different breeds of dogs have different exercise requirements--a sporting breed such as a retriever will need much more exercise than a tiny Chihuahua. Irregardless, they all need a minimum of 15 minutes of undivided attention daily. A walk, a brisk game of ball or Frisbee, or the running back and forth "come" exercise will help keep both mind and muscle toned and healthy.

SUPERVISION AROUND CHILDREN AND OTHER ANIMALS

Puppies tend to regard children as littermates or pack equals, perhaps because children are more prone to roll around on the ground with the pup. For that reason, puppies must be taught

to respect children and vice versa. Small children should NEVER be left alone with any animal. If they do something that causes the animal to defend itself by biting (such as poking little fingers into eyes), the animal is usually the one blamed and subsequently punished. A dog is NOT a toy-- it is not to be carried around, dropped or squeezed. This type of incident could not only lead to injury but a dislike or fear of children. Children should never be allowed to tease a dog. His first line of defense is his teeth. If the puppy is expected to live in a busy, noisy household of children, he should have a quiet space where he can be away from them. Care must be taken not to step on a sleeping pup and to wake him first with your voice rather than touch.

A puppy should also never be left alone with any other animal. If there is another animal in the household, the puppy, at very least, should be crated and in a place inaccessible to the other animal. Tragedies occur all too often when two animals unfamiliar with each other are left alone together.

TEACHING SHAKE

This is a very simple trick for a dog to learn. Start with him in a sit position facing you. Hold out your hand and say "Shake" as you slide the forefinger from the other hand gently under the pup's knee and lift the paw into the outstretched palm of the other hand. Repeat 4-5 times each session with lots of praise. The puppy should learn very quickly.

PARASITE CONTROL

Parasite control is very important for the health of your puppy. You and your veterinarian can determine a worming schedule suitable for your pup's needs. There is a wide variety of products on the market today for this purpose, and your doctor can recommend appropriate ones.

External parasites consist of such creatures as fleas, ticks, lice, and mites. Fleas, of course, are the biggest problem, for they also carry tapeworm larva. When ingested by the dog, he will eventually develop tapes. There have been great strides made in parasite control in the last several years with the development of COMFORTIS, a monthly anti flea pill. Using an insect growth regulating hormone, it prevents flea infestation by causing the larva in the flea egg to lack the egg tooth needed for chipping out of the egg. It also begins to kill adult fleas within 4 hours of ingestion of the tablet. FRONTLINE PLUS is a topically applied product that kills adult fleas, ticks, and keeps flea eggs from hatching. Flea collars, powders, and shampoos have limited if any effectiveness. Care must also be taken when purchasing different products (such as a shampoo and a flea collar) that the products are compatible and that they are for use ON PUPPIES. Many products are too toxic for puppies.

Mosquitoes pose a dangerous threat as the carrier for heartworm. There are both monthly and daily preventive tablets available from your veterinarian. These are a must for every dog owner.

Internal parasites are largely various worms--hook, whip, tape and roundworms are the most common. A large number of some of these species attach to the intestinal tract and drain the body of nutrients. Make a habit of taking a stool sample from your dog whenever you go for a routine exam.

A complete discussion of all the parasitic issues animals face should be conducted with your veterinarian to develop a regime of prevention.

WINTER TIPS

Dogs can get frostbite of their extremities during severe cold just like people. A dog who has a short coat and who has been raised indoors will have trouble adjusting to cold. A large dog is not necessarily suited to outdoor life (Doberman pinschers, although a large breed, have a

short, thin coat that offers little protection in winter temperatures). In snowy conditions, ice balls may form between the pads of your dog's toes. These can cause soreness. The salt used to melt ice on driveways can be dangerous for a dog if he licks it off his feet. Be sure to wash any salt away after he has been outside. Water bowls tend to freeze over in the winter--dogs need plenty of fresh, clean water to survive, not ice! Antifreeze is lethal to pets. It has a sweet taste that animals are attracted to. They will lap it up readily--a very small amount can kill them! Also, the holidays pose extra challenges with tinsel and decorations, lights and holiday plants. Poinsettia and holly are very poisonous for dogs. If ingested, tinsel can cause intestinal blockage and lights offer cords to chew on that can result in serious burns or death from electrical shock. One additional winter danger is the freezing and thawing of ponds and lakes. Dogs do not understand that ice can be thin and break, and so they should be supervised around it to prevent a drowning tragedy.

SUMMER TIPS

Heatstroke is probably the most dangerous summer problem for dogs. Breeds with pushed in noses such as Boxers and Pugs are more prone to this deadly condition. Exercise on very hot, humid days should be kept to a minimum. Asphalt can burn pads very quickly, and lawn chemicals can be toxic for your puppy. Never leave a dog alone in a car--on a 70 degree day with the windows rolled down 2", the interior of a car can heat up to 120 degrees in just a few minutes. It's better to leave the pup at home when you are running errands where you must leave the car.

IDENTIFICATION

A dog should wear a buckle collar with a rabies tag, license, and name tag at all times. If you are traveling with your dog, you must attach a temporary nametag to the dog with the name and phone number of the people you will be visiting. Unfortunately, dog napping seems to be on the rise, so further measures may be taken to insure identification of your pet. Keep current pictures taken at from all 4 sides, and note any special or identifying characteristic. Tattooing and microchipping (done by a veterinarian) are two permanent methods of identification. All dogs should have some form at all times.

The staff at the Animal Care Center at Granville hope this brief outline and the exercises it contains will start you on the way to a long and lasting relationship with your new puppy. If you have any questions or problems, please call at (740) (587-2229).