

## BEHAVIOR & BONDING: A GUIDE TO YOUR NEW DOG

### 1 Dogs Do What Works For Them

Dogs are motivated by food, play, and social relationships and their behaviors are often attempts to meet one of these needs. Be sure to reward behaviors you like – waiting patiently, sitting, or playing gently – with food, play, or affection.

### 2 Avoid Rewarding Behaviors You Don't Like

This can happen in the most unintentional of ways! Does barking get your attention? Does nipping get you to pick up a toy to “redirect” those sharp little puppy teeth? Both of these habits will only make the barking and nipping continue as the dog gets exactly what they want.

### 3 Take Away The Motivation for Behavior You Don't Like

If your puppy nips you in play, walk away. If they jump up to get your attention, turn around and ignore them. If they chew on furniture, make that furniture taste bad. (I highly recommend Grannick's Bitter Apple Spray for this!) Removing the thing that motivates your puppy's behavior, or giving the opposite response, will cause them to give up on that behavior and try something new. Be sure you are teaching them appropriate ways of getting what they want as well, so that they don't just resort to another unwanted behavior.

### 4 Avoid The Use of Painful Punishments

Shaker cans, water bottles, physical displays of dominance, and more may stop your dog's behavior in its tracks in the short term. We all tend to stop what we are doing when startled or afraid. However, these techniques don't address the underlying reason why your puppy is behaving in an unwanted way. Worse yet, they damage your relationship and can cause long-term damage, leading to fear and aggression later in life.



### 5 Socialization Is Key

Puppies younger than fourteen weeks are rapidly learning what is safe and what is not. This is the time to introduce your puppy to new people, places, things, and other dogs in a positive and healthy way. Be sure your pup is enjoying the experience and is not overwhelmed and talk to your vet about appropriate vaccines to keep your puppy healthy. Dog training classes – where the environment is controlled and all dogs are required to be vaccinated – can be an excellent place for early socialization! Missing out on this key element of your puppy's development can lead to fear and aggression later in life.

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