




The Puppy Raiser's Survival Guide



The struggle is real!

Tips and tricks for staying sane and overcoming these common puppy raising challenges:

-  **House Training** *no more puddles and piles everywhere*
-  **Puppy Biting** *tame those puppy piranhas*
-  **Socialization** *cultivate a dog-about-town*

House training tips for puppies and dogs

The basic steps:

1. Have treats handy at all times.
2. Take pup outside *on leash* so they don't get distracted.
3. Wait quietly in one spot. Be boring.
4. As soon as they eliminate, praise and give a treat where they are.
5. If they like being outside, let them play a little *after* eliminating.
6. If elimination hasn't occurred within 5 minutes, go back inside.
Crate or closely supervise; try again in 10-30 minutes (shorter for young puppies, longer for adult dogs).



In case of accident;

Calmly interrupt & take outside if you catch them in the act.

Never shout, scold or punish:

You need them to feel comfortable about eliminating in your presence when you're outside together.

Clean up accidents

with a commercial enzymatic product that destroys protein odors.



Age-related rules of thumb

How long can you leave them?

A quiet, crated puppy typically can wait for as many hours as their age in months plus one. If you're lucky, they can hold for longer at night.

Complete control of their body develops around 6 months:

A puppy younger than that can understand the concept of house training but realize too late that they have to go out. It's up to you to provide timely opportunities to go outside.

House training tips continued



Set your dog up for success



During the house training period, keep your puppy or new dog in your direct sight if they're out of their crate or pen.

- Use a leash, pen or baby gates to limit access to other rooms.
- Use a crate or pen if you're distracted or not in the room.

Keep track of the timing

- Set a timer to remind you to take them out.
- Gradually increase time between outings (depending on age and activity of pup).

Develop a system of communication

- Keep a record of meals, activity and elimination so you can learn to anticipate their elimination needs (see the log sheet on page 3).
- Learn to recognize your dog's "I need to go" behavior. This can be mistaken for attention-seeking behavior.



Common pitfalls and solutions

Most dogs avoid eliminating in areas where they sleep and eat, so they'll seek a room where they haven't hung out with you.

Solution: Restrict access to rooms where you don't spend time together.

Dogs don't necessarily generalize their understanding to stores & other houses.

Solution: Be watchful the first few times you go visiting.

Many dogs instinctively seek an absorbant spot to urinate.

Solution: Supervise extra-closely around rugs..

Some dogs are "double poopers." They have two bowel movements a few minutes apart.

Solution: If your dog had a bowel movement and then has another soon after you go back inside, plan on a little extra outside time in future.

Puppies need to urinate more often when they're active.

Solution: Take young puppies out every 10-15 minutes when playing vigorously.

Use this sheet to learn to predict your pup's need to go out

During the house training period, take the dog out after:
waking, eating, drinking, active play, before leaving them alone

Date	Time	Action (eat, play pee, etc.)	Location (yard, hall, etc.)	Notes (e.g. after 10 min. walk)

You may copy this page and use the Activity & Elimination Log above to learn when your dog needs to go out

OUCH! My puppy won't stop biting!

How to survive your puppy's biting phase



Did you adopt a fuzzy shark instead of a puppy?
Your puppy is biting you, your clothes and more...

Don't panic! In most cases, puppy biting is normal.

It usually diminishes naturally by 5-6 months.
Here are tips to keep you intact in the meantime.

Four reasons puppies bite & some tips for self-defense

1. Exploration:

Just as human babies grab everything in their little fists, puppies explore the world with their mouths.

2. Seeking attention and play.

When puppies play with one another it includes lots of mouthing, especially on the head & face.

Closely supervise all interactions with children. Give them a toy for puppy to bite.

Tips:

When you're a moving target, drag a toy on a long rope, or toss a treat ahead of you with each step.

3. Puppy is stressed, over-tired, over-excited, frustrated or feeling unwell

Just as children get cranky when they're too wound up, need a nap or don't feel good, so do puppies. They express their grumpiness by jumping and nipping.

Tip: *If your puppy won't play with a toy you offer in place of your body, kindly transfer them to their pen or crate.*

Provide a toy smeared with peanut butter or soft cheese to help them decompress. Chances are they'll soon be asleep.

4. Teething

When the adult teeth are coming in, your puppy's gums may be sore. Provide soft toys for them to bite. Make sure they don't swallow pieces they tear off.



More ways to minimize biting & encourage calmness

1. Reward behaviors you like:

Carry treats (your pup's kibble is fine) so you can reward moments of calm and polite behavior.

2. Teach a variety of behaviors you'd like to see:

For example, sitting to ask you to open the door, instead of jumping & biting. (I'm happy to help).

3. Be patient & persistent:

Remember that most puppy biting is normal. It will diminish naturally when managed appropriately.

What not to do

1. Don't lash out:

Smacking your puppy or grabbing their muzzle damages trust and creates stress, which can lead to escalated nipping.

2. Don't squeal:

On rare occasions this might work with a sensitive pup.. More often they assault with renewed vigor, perhaps thinking you're a squeaky toy.

3. Don't push them away:

Bouncing paws off one another is a key part of puppy play. When you push on a puppy it's an invitation to come right back at you.

When is a puppy's biting something to worry about?

Seek help from a certified positive reinforcement pro if your puppy:

- Snaps or growls at children
- Growls, barks or snaps (not in play) when encountering new people
- Stiffens and stares before biting
- Makes a low-pitched growl and/or snaps or bites when someone approaches their food, toy or resting place.

Pro tip:

Never punish a puppy for growling!

We need them to be able to warn us when they're uneasy so they don't learn to bite without warning.

[Click to see the full Puppy Biting Survival article with more tips & information](#)

Socialization Safeguards

Tips for building confidence in puppies & dogs



Ensure your pup's peace of mind

Make sure your puppy or dog is able to retreat if they choose.



Respect their caution, refrain from luring or coaxing when they hesitate.

They can benefit from observing at a distance.

They don't have to interact directly with a person or animal if they are hesitant.

Avoid overwhelm by limiting the intensity of exposure:

Start at a distance where pup is curious and relaxed.

Only take a young puppy or timid dog to an event if you can control conditions or are free to leave.

Learn to recognize early signs of stress (time to leave)

Watch their eyes, ears, facial muscles, tail, posture:

Is body language relaxed and confident?

Are they able to take and enjoy treats calmly?

Snatching or refusing food could indicate stress.

[Click to learn more about dog language:](#)

Less is more.

Quit while your puppy or dog is still calm & happy. Allow a restful day or two after a challenging outing.



Tips if you want to wait till they've finished vaccinations

Varied experiences from 8-16 weeks optimize lifelong confidence & resilience.

Park your car somewhere interesting. Let puppy observe from the safety of your lap with the door or window open to let in sounds & smells.



Introduce unusual experiences at home (see next page for ideas)

Use a leash as needed for safety.

Approach at the puppy or dog's pace, only as close as they remain relaxed.

They don't have to interact with the thing or person (especially animals & babies).



Treat generously, *after they've noticed the thing or person.*

Deliver treats in the opposite direction from a scary thing: they get relief by moving away from it & gain the opportunity to approach again if they choose.

Be generous with treats & play rewards.

Keep it fun.

Aim to provide a variety of pleasant experiences.

Consider your dog's confidence level.

Seek mild challenges from which the pup or dog can recover easily.

Remember that distance is your friend.

If your puppy or dog is consistently fearful, contact a behavior professional for help.



Ideas for experiences (This is a menu, not a checklist)

Types of people

Mail carrier, Delivery people,
Person in wheelchair or walker,
Man with beard,
Person in hat, helmet, uniform
Children of different ages,
Family members in costumes,
Persons of different ethnicity

Things that move (start at a distance)

Motorcycle, bicycle, skateboard, stroller
Automatic door at the pet store,
Shopping cart, Umbrella opening
Garage door opening and closing,
Person sweeping & mopping,
Rabbit, horse, chickens, confident cat,

Take an outing to:

Vet or groomer - just for treats,
Gas station, drive-through,
Elevator ride,
School: outside the fence at recess,
Dog friendly store

Sounds: (Reduce volume by distance, closed doors)

Vacuum, hair dryer, coffee grinder,
Nail clippers or grinder (clip or grind a piece of raw pasta),
Baby crying, traffic noises





Potty on:

Grass, gravel, mulch (flexibility can make road trips easier)



Would you like help with other puppy issues?

I can help with training and mischief reduction

-  Canine kleptomania*
 -  Stop jumping on people
 -  Walking on leash
 -  Respecting the cat
- And more!

***Click to see the payoff for teaching my puppy "Trade."**



Private Puppy Packages: Custom in-home solutions

Option 1

I do it for you.

Let a multi-certified trainer do the training.

Option 2

Private coaching.

Enjoy economy & bonding time.

Option 3

Puppy Smart Start consult.

Solutions specific to your needs while awaiting a class.

[More about puppy programs](#)

[I'm ready to schedule](#)

Meet Wendy



Raising a puppy sometimes feels like a trial. I'll help you find more of the joy.

It's a delight to witness the unfolding of your pup's personality as they grow.

You can minimize frustrations when you learn some tricks of the trade.

I love sharing my experience to help you maximize the joy and minimize the frustrations of raising your puppy.

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**Enjoyable
Dogs**

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