



# MISSISSAUGA HUMANE SOCIETY

## BRINGING A NEW DOG HOME

♥ A LOVED DOG would live longer!

### THE FIRST DAY

Before entering your home, leash-walk the dog outside your house, or the apartment building so that he can take in the smell of the turf and relieve himself. Pick a special place and encourage him to potty there. Be patient, it may take 10 or 15 minutes. Always praise warmly when he relieves himself in an approved spot.

Next, enter the home. **Keep him on leash when showing him around the home.** If he lifts its leg, give him a quick leash correction (a quick yank of the leash, immediately letting it go slack) and tell him "No" to disrupt the action, and then take it outside immediately.

Introduction of your dog to all members of the family should be carried out on lead.

### DOG PROOF YOUR HOME

Given the chance, most dogs would dash out from a new home! **Instruct every family member to ensure all doors - front, back, patio, screen, garage, backyard - are closed properly all the time, never left ajar.** Also:

- Pick up children's toys.
- Move food/mediation from counter.
- Move all precious & breakable items.
- Remove frayed electrical cords.
- Anti-freeze and gasoline in your garage/driveway can be hazardous.

### INTRODUCING YOUR NEW DOG TO OTHER DOGS

Prior to the introduction, leash-walk the new dog outside. Then bring out the other dog(s) on leash, making sure you are relaxed. Make the meeting fun with a walk and some treats. Introduce gradually and calmly. You can bring the dogs inside after the introduction on a neutral territory.

### USING A LEASH INDOORS DURING THE TRANSITION

For the first couple of weeks, leave a leash attached to the dog's buckle collar while indoors with you, so you can stop her immediately if she starts doing something you don't want. **Timing is everything.** Correct immediately when an unacceptable behavior occurs, not afterwards, then **praise enthusiastically** when your canine modifies her behavior. When you leave your dog alone, remember to remove the leash for safety reasons.

It may take a few weeks before you can train and trust your dog with free run of the house. Until then, when you cannot supervise her, confine her in a cozy and safe place such as a crate or baby-gated area. You should not crate your dog longer than 4-hour intervals during the day.

### SETTING UP A ROUTINE

**Dogs are creatures of habit and thrive on routine.** Your dog will be excited and anxious about his new home. Don't be surprised at panting and pacing, housetraining accidents, excessive drinking or chewing, or gastric upset in the first few days. A **consistent routine** for feeding, exercising, and potty time will help your dog adjust much faster. Eventually he will relax.

Spend 10 or 15 minutes of quality time alone with your dog each day - **play, cuddle brush, massage...** It means a lot to him..

### FEEDING

Puppies are fed 3/4 small meals a day. Adults and seniors are fed twice a day. Cookies/treats can be given in between. A mix of wet and dry food is recommended.

### EXERCISE

**A tired dog is a good dog!** *All dogs, whether big or small, need at least one good long walk daily.* The best is to take him to a leash free park! Consider hiring a dog walker if you work long hours. At home, set aside 'playtime' too!

### SOCIALISATION

**Dogs are social animals.** Expose your dog to a variety of situations gradually and under controlled circumstances so he feels at ease with other people and animals.

### SEPARATION ANXIETY

**When you first bring your dog home, you SHOULD NOT spend the whole day with her.** Instead: Have her bed, safe chew toys, and water ready in the confined area in which she will stay when you're gone - whether it's a crate or in a gated-off kitchen area. Take her to that area, tell her to lie "down," give her a chew toy and a treat and praise. Next, step away. If she remains quiet, good; don't talk, because that will distract her from this desired behavior. Before she begins to grow restless, take her back outside again to play or walk. Return her to the crate, and then go into another room for longer periods. Next, leave the house and come back in right away. Gradually make those trips longer and longer; vary the duration you're out. Your dog will be less anxious as it learns that you eventually come back. Before you leave your dog for extended periods, exercise her vigorously. Then, for 20 minutes before leaving the house, go about your business calmly - then just leave. **Don't make a fuss saying good-bye.**

# TRAINING

## YOU ARE THE LEADER

Dogs are **PACK** animals who need **LEADERSHIP** and **RULES** to survive.

Dogs want to know their place in the family pack, otherwise they are stressed. Most often, an "aggression" problem is really a "stress and confusion" problem.

Training does not mean just having a trainer teach "*sit-stay-heel*". It means: YOU as the owner learning about dog behaviour and training, and then YOU teaching and guiding your dog so that he learns how to behave in a world of humans. **YOU train yourself to be your dog's LEADER!!**

If your dog tries to dominate you or someone else in your household, it's probably because it sees role confusion and responds by taking charge. Training will make your dog a **trustworthy** and **socialized** family member. All family members should participate in the training.

Dogs are not little humans; they are predatory pack animals who follow a leader. **Behaviourial problems stem from an unbalanced Pecking Order of your dog.**

Your dog nips when you try to take a toy from him...ignores your request to exit the couch...or yanks ahead on walks. If you feel like your dog is challenging authority, then he probably thinks he is the "alpha" of the home. He needs to be taught a **new, well-defined pecking order** - and a **lower place in the family hierarchy**. **He needs YOU to become his LEADER.** Otherwise, he'll rebel, growl and possibly bite when faced with a challenge.



## ATTITUDE OF THE LEADER

**"Alpha" (Leader) is an attitude.** It is not achieved by force or punishment. Rather, it is earned through **confident, authoritative and consistent behavior on the part of the owner**. **Be patient, firm, consistent and keep control at all times.** You the owner will walk with confidence...stand up straight...use a firm tone of voice. And that voice expresses commands as a directive, not a question. ("Come...? Come on, come...?") The dog realizes this person makes the decisions. Dogs can sense who's in charge immediately; they are continuously reading your body language and are aware each time their people don't enforce commands. They will respect and **listen to you as the LEADER.**

**Reward Good Behaviour - Reward and repeat:** If a dog does something that results in reward, she will most likely do it again. **Use petting, feeding, playing and walks as rewards.** Small edible treats work well too. **Always accompany them with verbal praise and positive body language.** This is reward-based training.

**Correct Bad Behaviour - Timing is essential:** **Correct immediately** (a quick yank of the leash, immediately releasing) when an unacceptable behavior occurs, not afterwards, then **praise enthusiastically** when your canine modifies her behavior.

**Ignoring** can be the best medicine: Many modern-method trainers advise to ignore misbehavior such as jumping or grabbing at a sleeve. Just turn away - then praise as soon as your dog calms down. Take that opportunity to instruct the dog to engage in a positive action such as "*sit*".

## HOW TO BE THE LEADER

### NO MORE "Freebies"!!

From now on, your dog **must behave** in order to **earn the good things in life - petting, treats, meals, and walks.** These are rewards you can use as you reinforce the new rules of behavior. The idea is to convey to him that you decide when to begin and stop petting. The same should apply to playing, feeding and going for walks. It is essential that everyone in the family practice the same techniques.

**Feeding.** Before setting down the food bowl, instruct your dog to "*sit*". Say it only once. He receives his food - and you praise lavishly only when he sits calmly.

**Lead the way.** Don't let the dog bolt ahead of you out the door or drag you on walks. Keep your dog on leash, instruct him to sit, cross the threshold first and don't let him out until he complies. If he pushes through the door as you open it, slam it shut each time his nose approaches the opening. After a few repetitions, he'll learn!

**Jumping.** Jumping and mounting is a dominating behavior; although dogs sometimes just jump out of excitement. Often, jumping can be discouraged by simply ignoring the dog until he settles down. **Just turn and walk away,** or command "Off" or "No." Praise and pet the dog only when he sits.

You can correct the bad behaviour of your dog by providing leadership with consistent and persistent training, based on reward and correction.

**BE A GOOD LEADER &  
YOU WILL HAVE A GOOD DOG**