



Top Ten Ways To A KissAble Puppy!

1) Have Fun!

Being a new puppy owner is hard work, but can also be really fun.

- The key is to make sure your puppy is having fun too
- Be your pup's advocate and make sure everything he's experiencing is positive
- Be silly and use happy talk! Don't be afraid to get goofy with your pup. Act like a cheerleader and encourage your dog.

2) PUPPY PROOF YOUR HOME

Puppy mischief never disappoints. Get one step ahead of the game and puppy-proof your house.

- Don't allow access to anything your pup can nibble on or destroy - the minute you turn your back, he will. The crate is your best friend when managing puppy mischief.
- Offer him this homemade toy for teething: a washcloth soaked in chicken broth and frozen becomes an irresistible chew. A Kong frozen with peanut butter is a great option as well.
- Puppies will chew, so it's up to you to help him make the right decision

3) PUPPY HOUSE RULES

The more structure you can provide your puppy, the better off both your lives will be!

- Teach your pup to "say please" – ask for a Sit before breakfast, a Down before the morning walk, etc.
- A puppy needs his person to be fair, calm, and consistent
- Establish what the rules are and make sure everyone is consistent: Where does the dog sleep? Who feeds and when is he fed? Where does he play? Is he allowed to be on the couch? Where is he when no one is home? Hold a family meeting to make sure everyone's on board.

4) A PUPPY PLACE – Crate-Training

Providing your puppy with a snuggly, safe den is a wonderful tool. Everyday he is experiencing new smells, sights, and sounds and a crate is a great way to provide him with a comfortable place of his own.

- The crate should be big enough for him to stand up and turn around in, but not too big. Providing too much space may hamper house training.
- Consider getting a crate with a divider, so as your puppy grows you can increase the size of the crate
- Toss a treat in the crate every time you walk by. Soon your pup will say "Look Ma! I'm in the crate, now where's my treat?"

5) Nice Handling

It is up to you to help your pup understand that being handled is part of being a good family pet.

- Puppies will encounter many situations in their life where they must be handled: at the veterinarian's office, getting nails trimmed at the groomer's, being picked up to get into a car, petting from strangers on the street.
- Here's a great way to teach him to like touch:
 - Trade him a touch for a treat - handle his paws, look at his teeth, check out his ears, gently tug his tail
 - Practice at bedtime or when you're settling down for some couch time

6) Socialization with People

Teach your puppy that people make good things happen. Help him understand that strangers may be strange, but they're not scary!

- Ask a stranger or a neighborhood child to give your pup a treat
- Has your pup met a person with an umbrella? A man with a beard? A child with a hat? An elderly person with a walker? If not, make a point to expose him to these situations and always make sure there's a treat involved!
- The more you can expose your puppy to positive situations, the more confident and friendly he'll be.

7) Socialization with Dogs

The sweet spot for dog-dog socialization is three months to 18 weeks. It is critical that you expose your dog to safe, positive dog-dog interactions during this time.

- Do not use the dog park for puppy socialization. One bad dog experience for your pup can seriously affect his social development. Stick with a controlled environment - if your puppy gets along really well with another puppy, schedule a play date!
- Play sessions should be short (no more than 20 minutes) and sprinkled with lots of breaks
- Puppy play should always be supervised. Make sure to interrupt play when it gets too rough.

8) Teach Bite Inhibition

At 8 weeks of age, puppies have 28 teeth. At around 4 months of age, puppy teeth start falling out and are replaced by a whopping 42 teeth - almost double the amount! All of this action in their little mouth sometimes results in a puppy piranha.

- When he starts to nip, play with you should end. Redirect him with an appropriate chew toy (and not your fingers).
- Teach a strong Leave It cue
- When it's time for the family to relax and puppy is still raring to go - give him a break by giving him a great treat in his crate. We don't want your puppy to practice biting, so if you need a break from training make sure you set him up for success. Idle paws are the devil's tools...

9) Home Alone

Your puppy needs to learn that being alone is not so bad after all. Help him learn that alone time is fun time!

- Practice alone time while you're home. If your puppy is crate trained, put him in his crate with a delicious treat while you're making dinner or doing laundry. This will help him learn to entertain himself and enjoy his alone time.
- Make Hellos and Goodbyes boring – ignore him for the five minutes before you leave and the five minutes after you return home. He'll start to realize that coming and going aren't that exciting after all.
- Always remember to give him an extra special treat when you leave. The more your pup's munching, the less he'll pay attention to you leaving.
- Separation Anxiety is much, much easier to prevent than it is to correct. Get ahead of the game!

10) Train, Train, Train!

There is a myth out there that folks should wait until six months or a year before training a puppy. FALSE! Puppies can be trained from day one. Get that puppy brain working early and your life with him will be much more enjoyable.

- Always use rewards to motivate your puppy and never harsh corrections. We want your puppy to enjoy training with you. When learning is fun, your pup will be a quick study!
- Mealtime is one of the biggest missed training opportunities. Use your pup's kibble to work on Sits, Downs, Settle, and Come.
- A well-mannered dog is a happy dog!