

WEEK 11

Weekly Focus

The rule of three says after being home for three weeks, your pup will start to settle in for good.

TIPS & TRICKS

“Puppy Blues” are common at this time – with inevitable potty accidents, early morning wake ups and a lot of puppy energy most owners feel overwhelmed at this stage. This is completely normal! Look for ways to cope; this may include talking to a friend with a dog, reading forums and/ or finding safe ways to get out of the house with your puppy.

Remember to take some pictures! As your puppy changes, try to capture their expressions, mannerisms and physique as they grow and mature.

Practice leads to learning, be patient.

TRAINING

Single commands – With practice, your pup should respond to single commands, such as “down”, “come” or “stay”. It is also good practice to introduce sitting at thresholds to teach patience and impulse control.

Loose leash – Practice walking in a heel using a treat to lure. This can progress into a loose leash walk. When your pup looks up and makes eye contact, reward them for checking in. In these early days, encourage them to follow your lead and look to you for guidance.

Tug-o-war – Tug and Release is a good variation on the classic game. In this game, start by you and your puppy both pulling on a towel or rope. Then when you want your puppy to release the item, stay very still and look uninterested. They will naturally drop the object and you can resume play again. Later, you can pair the dropping with a command such as “out” or “drop it”.

Sit – Teach this skill in a variety of ways. Sit on different textures. Sit to greet people. Sit before going outside. Sit, come, sit, come! Building a strong foundation now will be invaluable later!

SOCIALIZATION & EXPOSURES

People – If your puppy has done well with the members of your home, consider exposing them to more people. Invite friends to go for a walk with you or meet up at a park with some family. Often, dogs can be more protective and uneasy meeting new people inside their homes, so meeting on “neutral ground” is always best for dogs and people alike.

New experiences – Keep your exposures short and sweet. Don’t keep going until they’re frustrated, bored, uncomfortable or overwhelmed. When your puppy is having a good time, start to wrap up. Try to always leave on a high note so your puppy wants to go again! One option may be to take some food in a portable bowl and find a nice bench on a sidewalk. As your pup eats (positive feelings) they can notice the pedestrians going by and begin to form a positive outlook on people. This is the foundation to having a dog that is not afraid or overly protective of strangers. This early socialization is particularly important for protective large dog breeds. If your puppy loves people now, do not be surprised if that changes once they reach adolescence.

HEALTH

Your puppy can likely wait 4 – 6 hours between potty breaks now. Still monitor your puppy’s behavior for sniffing the carpet or floor and keep practicing going outside!

Your puppy may be due for some routine medications. Check with your vet regarding their DHPP vaccine, parvovirus, flu, rabies vaccine and heartworm preventative medication.

Make sure you don’t put your puppy down on the ground in a new place if they aren’t fully vaccinated. If you are struggling to lift them, you might want to invest in a harness, or puppy backpack!

When exercising, watch your puppy for signs that they are tired. Do not over exercise them but be sure they get their fill.

