



Behavioural Notes

Toilet Training

Toilet training is a very important part of a puppy's development. Pups will naturally move away from the nest and bed area to toilet as early as 3wks of age. At 5wks of age, they select a toilet area and by approximately 9wks of age this toilet area is much more specific. It is up to the individual owner to make sure that the area that the pup has selected is an appropriate one !!

Training is most effective when good behaviour, i.e. toileting in an acceptable area, is rewarded. Punishment in the form of a firm 'NO' should only be used if the puppy is caught in the act of toileting in an unacceptable location. Once reprimanded, the puppy should be lifted outside. It is important not to use outside as a punishment area. Pups are stimulated to go to the toilet by:-

- Exercise
- Eating and drinking
- The smell of a previously soiled area

It is important therefore to take the puppy outside immediately after waking, after eating and drinking and at hourly intervals. It is important that the owner accompanies the puppy outside to give praise if toileting occurs. Praise should be enthusiastic and be given either as petting or as a food reward within minutes of toileting.

Outside must always be perceived as a pleasant place therefore playing with the puppy while waiting for it to toilet is a good idea . During the training period the puppy should be closely supervised and if any pre-elimination signs are seen i.e. sniffing , squatting etc then the puppy should be taken outside immediately .Once the puppy is fully vaccinated and can go out in public the smell of other dogs toilet will encourage further toileting . The same is true however of toileting indoors and therefore it is very important to clean previously soiled areas carefully .

It is better to train directly to outside garden area if possible and avoid paper training . Paper training usually necessitates training again , away from paper to the garden . If this is necessary , i.e. there is no garden or if the puppy is already paper trained , place the previously soiled newspapers outside . Gradually decrease the number of newspaper put down and praise toileting when it occurs away from the papers .

All puppies develop at different rates . With patience they all get there eventually. !! In summary :-

- Be consistent .
- Take the puppy outside at regular intervals .
- Try to spot pre-elimination behaviour i.e. sniffing , squatting.
- Take the puppy outside after eating , drinking , sleeping and playing .
- Reward good behaviour .
- Say 'NO ' firmly if puppy is caught in mid toilet . Take the puppy outside immediately .
- Clean soiled areas carefully .
- Supervise closely during training .

GOOD LUCK !!!