

# Have a Routine

Most dogs thrive on having a **routine**. They like knowing when to expect activities such as mealtimes, walks, playtime, and more. The following ideas will show you how establishing a routine can benefit your dog training program:

## Feeding

It's a good idea to give your dog or puppy his meals at the same time every day, but always after you eat. Puppies usually eat several small meals over the course of the day, while adult dogs get one or two larger meals. Talk to your veterinarian to figure out the best type and portion of food for your dog.

The benefit of feeding a dog at the same time every day is that it makes it easier to predict when he'll need to relieve himself. This makes a big difference when you're trying to housetrain a dog.

## Toileting

Dogs should get outside to go relieve themselves at about the same time each day. Puppies need frequent potty breaks, while older dogs can hold it for longer periods of time. Keep this in mind when creating a schedule for your dog.

Putting this on a schedule will greatly enhance your housetraining efforts. Dogs will be more likely to hold it if they can reliably predict when they'll get a chance to go outside and relieve themselves.

## Walks and Playtime

Plan on spending at least an hour each day walking and playing with your dog. The dog should be walked on the lead for at least half that time. All dogs will benefit from this type of exercise and mental stimulation. Getting this activity every day can help curb destructive behaviour.

## Training Time

It's a good idea to add training time to your dog's schedule every day. It helps improve his behaviour, and it provides him with some mental stimulation. There are a few ways to add training to your schedule each day:

- **Training sessions:** Training sessions are short (about 10 minutes) periods you set aside a few times each day to work on a particular skill, such as basic commands. This is a great way to train a dog to do new behaviours and to reinforce them.
- **Opportunity training:** This involves using different opportunities that arise throughout the day to reinforce your dog's training. For instance, while your family is sitting down to a meal is a great time to work on a "send away" command. While you're

watching television in the evening is a good time to work on capturing behaviours with a clicker.

Adding both of these methods to your schedule is sure to create a better behaved dog.

**Teaching the sit** command to your dog is usually quite simple, as dogs tend to sit naturally. The key is for your dog to associate the word with the action. This command sets the groundwork for other commands like stay and down.

**Time Required:** 2-3 minutes 3 times per day

**Here's How:**

1. Get your dog's attention and show her that you have a treat in your hand.
  2. Hold the treat just above your dog's nose (not too high or she might jump).
  3. Say your dog's name followed by the word "sit," spoken clearly and firmly.
  4. Move the treat back towards your dog's ears.
  5. As soon as your dog's rear lands on the ground, say "good sit" in an upbeat tone.
  6. Give your dog the treat followed by petting and praising.
  7. Repeat 5-6 times.
- If your dog does not sit on her own after a few tries, avoid pushing her into a sitting position. Instead, spend some time watching her. Anytime she naturally sits, say "good sit," then praise and reward her.
  - Hold short training sessions throughout the day in various locations, both indoor and outdoors. Include the front door and food bowl as regular training locations. This will make her more likely to sit when greeting guests or before feeding.
  - Once your dog becomes an expert at sitting, you no longer need to give a treat every time – only occasionally. However, rewarding with praise is always a good idea.

**What You Need:**

- A big handful of very tasty ham/chicken/cheese/hotdogs thinly sliced