

TRAINING

What sort of socialisation issues should I be considering with my new puppy?

Puppies are all cute but they don't come into our world automatically knowing and trusting humans or the myriad of sometimes scary life situations. Puppies need to be gently taught about visitors, cars, the vacuum cleaner, bikes, children and so much more. If they are not quietly exposed to people and other animals, and normal stimuli in their environment, they may grow up to become anxious, fearful, antisocial adult dogs.

The first few months of a puppy's life are the most critical for the development of confidence and trust. This process obviously begins whilst puppy is still with its mother. Puppies that are taken from mother too early are deprived of that all important developmental stage. Puppies left longer (3 months) with their mother tend to grow into much healthier (mentally and physically) adult dogs.

As soon as you get your puppy start with simple, quiet, positive one person instructions, and gradually include more people in noisier situations. Invite patient, gentle friends and their pets to come to your home to meet and play with the pup. **DO BE CAREFUL TO NOT OVERWHELM AND SCARE YOUR PUPPY!!** Children often are too rough with pups carrying them in a hurtful manner, playing with them in rough style or falling or tripping over them. This can scare the pup for life and they will always mistrust children.

An excellent way to promote early socialisation is to take your puppy to Puppy preschool classes. Basic classes in obedience, tricks and elementary agility can build confidence in your young dog.

Can I take my pup for long walks?

DEFINITELY NOT. Do ensure that you don't over exercise your pup. Up until 8 months their little bones are soft and developing. By taking them for long walks (what we might consider is a short walk is huge to a little dog) you can compromise and damage developing joints causing much suffering as the dog ages with arthritic changes. Free play in a confined area is absolutely the best. Encourage your puppy to play fetch with toys. Give them time to bond with you by lots of gentle, happy play. Havanese so love other house hold dogs and will have more than enough exercise rushing about the house with them. The Havanese tend to exercise themselves, hence our name for them, little rush arounds or as Kathryn Braund author of *The Joyous Havanese* describes Run like Hell Fur-heads.

Once your puppy is lead trained without pulling on the lead and over 8 months, they will just love outings.

Are Havanese easy to toilet train?

I have been absolutely surprised and thrilled at the amount of time it has taken to toilet train my 2 Havanese. Grimsby at just over 5 months and Twinkle slightly longer. **NEVER SCREAM** during, or **NOSE RUB OR DISCIPLINE** after the act is done. This simply confuses and frightens the puppy. If you note a puddle on the carpet or floor after the act is done **DO NOTHING, SAY NOTHING** but simply spray on a 50/50 dilution of white vinegar to water and soak up with a paper towel. This will take away both odour and stain.

Toilet training requires **CONSISTENCY AND CALMNESS**. Puppies most frequently urinate and defecate upon awaking, after eating and drinking and after or during play. Their clues are sniffing the ground, walking in small circles or walking with a slightly arched back. As you note this, quietly pick them up and take them to a spot outside where they have been before and give them whatever command you choose to go wees. I have found crate training my puppies brilliant. I simply ensure that before I put them in their night crate bed that they have been outside (have waited with several commands go wees) then once gone to the toilet they have been confined overnight in their comfy crate bed (which they would loathe to soil). Then, first thing in the

morning, out like a shot to relieve that full bladder. After eating and playing I take the puppies outside with the appropriate command. Initially I am taking them out approximately every hour or so. They quickly get the message. There is ALWAYS an open door or doggy door for them to get to the outside. Some people use the newspaper method but I have always been successful with outside training which to me seems so much more natural. Once they know that the outside is the place to go they will sit, cry or paw a door to ask to go outside.

Is it OK to smack my dog to discipline it?

NO, NO AND NO. NEVER HIT YOUR DOG! You will cause it to be a fearful and cringing dog. How could anyone abuse a defenceless darling little dog that has such unconditional love for its owner? All dogs just love to please and if we are firm in tone yet gentle in our training you will have a well adjusted friend. On a few occasions I have used time out in the bathroom, just for a few minutes to get a point across.