

## **Bringing Puppy Home**

You have gone to the store to get all of the puppy supplies and have puppy proofed your entire home and now it is finally time to bring the puppy home! While you are busy bonding and enjoying time with the puppy, you will also want to work on potty training and getting the puppy to use to their crate (crate training).

### **Bonding With the Puppy**

Bonding with the puppy is a very important part of the puppy building a trusting relationship with you. This will be especially helpful once you start attending your obedience training classes because the puppy will focus on you more. You will want to continuously bond with the puppy everyday throughout the twelve months that you are together. A few ways to bond are quiet time, play time, walking, and training sessions, which are described below.

### **Quiet Time**

Set some time aside from your busy day and spend time with the puppy. This means no distractions like T.V., cell phones, video games, etc. Take the time to figure out what the puppy enjoys the most; for instance, do they enjoy belly rubs or scratching behind the ear better? Regardless, take the time to get to know the puppy and it will strengthen your bond and build trust.

### **Play Time**

Similar to quiet time, you want to take the time to find the games that the puppy loves to play the most. Do they enjoy fetch, hide and seek, or tug of war? Find out what games seem to be the most rewarding. Playing games will also help to release some energy. While younger puppies will have less stamina, as they become older they will want to play longer. Make sure to watch their body language and when they start to slow down, give them some time to rest. Please see the 'List of Games' page to find games to play with the puppy.

## **Walking**

Walking shouldn't be just to let the puppy relieve themselves, but to also be outside and explore their surroundings. Going on walks helps to stimulate the puppy's mind and body. This can be a great experience for both of you to get out and explore together. Take different routes each day and make sure that your the puppy has 100% of your attention, so no cell phones or other distractions. Also, walking gives you a chance to practice your loose leash walking every day.

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## **Training Sessions**

Having short training sessions throughout the day is also another great way to bond with the puppy. Whether you're teaching sit, name, recall, impulse control, loose leash walking, or whatever it is that you learned in obedience class that week, the puppy will enjoy the one-on-one time, not to mention all the treats and praise! Just remember to keep these sessions brief. If the puppy is losing interest, end the session on a positive note and allow them to rest. You don't want to have long training sessions to the point of frustration for yourself or the puppy. We never want training to become a negative experience. Keep your training sessions short, fun, and full of treats and praise!