



So you have a new puppy, what now?

It is an exciting time to bring a new puppy into your home. Now is the time to expose your puppy to the world and begin your training journey and reward-rich lifestyle together.

Where to start?

Learning about life skills and exposing your puppy to people, traffic, other animals and environments is vital throughout the early weeks and months of your puppy's life.

A good puppy school will help you get started and teach you how to raise your puppy to grow into that great dog you have always wanted. Spend some time to investigate your local puppy school and observe a class in action to ensure that the trainers use force-free positive methods and that the school will be a good fit for you and your puppy.

Puppy schools will teach you about managing such things as toilet training, biting and chewing, barking and whining, and other things you may have thought came pre-programmed when you picked up your pup.

Puppy school is for pups aged 8 to 16 weeks and will teach you positive and force-free training methods for your pup.

So, your first step is to find a puppy school run by a qualified puppy class trainer.



What makes a good puppy class trainer?

This is someone who is up to date with the latest scientific dog training methods. The person should only use force-free and positive training methods. They should be able to show you that they hold a recognised dog training and behavioural qualification.

The trainer will demonstrate how to teach your puppy basic cues such as sit, drop, stay, and mat or crate training. Puppy training should include the basics of calmness training and allow you to ask as many questions as possible about your new puppy.

The trainer should also make learning materials available (either physical or electronic) on every topic they teach. These handouts will help refresh your memory when you return home to train your puppy.

Your trainer may also talk about nutrition and health care, and while these are important, they should not be about product promotion. If you have any health issues with your puppy, please get in touch with your veterinarian.



How social should the puppy classes be?

Puppies need to learn to interact appropriately with other dogs, but this should be done in a safe and highly-monitored environment to prevent accidents between puppies.

Your trainer should carefully supervise playtime and allow a maximum of two or three puppies of similar temperament to play together. During this play session, ensure each puppy is enjoying the experience and learning good manners. Your trainer will also teach how to redirect your puppy to prevent over-excitement and rough play.

The aim is to make dog-dog interactions well-balanced events that don't cause your puppy to become overwhelmed and make poor behavioural choices before and after play.

Will puppy school teach my puppy how to behave?

Basic training starts at puppy school. The trainer will not train your puppy for you but instead give you the skills to manage all those issues you will have with a new puppy in your home.

Training your puppy does not stop after puppy school. It continues throughout your dog's life. Your trainer should discuss what you will encounter as your puppy matures and progresses through different life stages, especially during the critical adolescent period.

What's next after puppy school?

Consider joining a class for senior puppies followed by an adult pet dog class where you and your pup will learn more advanced skills.

The puppy class trainer should know of trainers and clubs in your area who can help you with this next stage of learning.

You may decide you need not continue past puppy classes. However, while puppy classes give you the skills to cope with a puppy, a good trainer will recommend that you continue with further training to continue your dog's education once out of the puppy stage.

The next stage of training should again be based on positive and force-free methods. The training will grow and maintain a strong relationship with your dog.

This promotes a dog that is always welcome in your home and community.

