

**The Perfect  
Little Training Handbook  
for the  
Imperfect Doodle Owner**

**By Edie Mackenzie**

Published by:  
Iolaire Capital Resources, Inc.  
16526 West 78<sup>th</sup> Street #161  
Eden Prairie, MN 55346  
Email: [edie@www.Labradoodle-Guide.com](mailto:edie@www.Labradoodle-Guide.com)

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or by any information storage or retrieval system without written permission from the author, except for the inclusion of brief quotations in a review.

### **Disclaimer**

This guide is designed to provide information about the subject matter covered. It is sold with the understanding the publisher, authors, and advisers are not rendering legal services or veterinary advice.

Every effort has been made to make this guide as complete and as accurate as possible. However, there may be mistakes both typographical and in content. Therefore, this text should be used only as a general guide and not as the ultimate source of legal or veterinary information. Furthermore, this guide contains information only up to the printing date.

The author and publisher shall have neither liability nor responsibility to any person or entity with respect to any loss or damage caused or alleged to be caused directly or indirectly by the information contained in this guide.

Copyright © 2006 by Edie MacKenzie  
First Edition.  
Printed in the United States of America

## About the Author



### **Edie MacKenzie**

Edie MacKenzie is widely considered one of the web's **leading authors on hybrid dogs**.

She has been featured on Dog Cast Radio on the subject of Labradoodles. You can listen to that interview [here](#).

Her **The Definitive Guide to Labradoodles** has been called “*The Labradoodle Owner’s Bible*” by Beverley Manners, cofounder of the Labradoodle dog, and her new groundbreaking ebook **The Definitive Guide to Goldendoodles** is the first book on this wonderful breed.

Edie is a frequent contributor to The Doodle Zoo and other dog forums and has been helping people discover the unique traits of hybrid dogs, through her frequently posted articles on dog web sites and her ebooks.

When she’s not working, Edie can be found spending time with her husband and their two dogs or traveling throughout the United States.

### **ebooks from Edie:**

**[The Definitive Guide to Labradoodles](#)**

**[The Definitive Guide to Goldendoodles](#)**

**[The Definitive Guide to Puggles](#)**

## **Table of Contents**

<b>Training – The Basic Commands .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Leash/Collar Training .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Training Your Doodle With Reward Training .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Training For Proper Dog Behavior .....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Training Your New Puppy The Right Way.....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Dog Training With A Head Collar .....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Training With A Training Collar Or Choke Collar .....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Crate Training .....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>House Training Your Doodle .....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Dealing With House Training Issues.....</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Eliminating Your Puppy’s Biting Behavior.....</b>	<b>27</b>

## Training – The Basic Commands

There are of course many reasons for owners to want a calm, obedient and faithful Doodle. For one thing, obedient and trained dogs are happier dogs, less likely to get into tussles with people or with other dogs. Another reason is that many communities require that the dogs living in their neighborhoods be well trained. This is especially true for many breeds thought to have aggression and behavior problems.

And of course, training your Doodle well will also make him or her a much better family companion, especially in households where there are young children. Many studies have shown that proper dog training makes a big impact when it comes to cutting down the number of dog bites and other behavior problems encountered by dog owning households.

When considering training your own Doodle or having someone else help you train it, there are certain basic commands that must be mastered in order for a dog to be considered truly trained. These basic commands include:

- Heel – it is important that any dog learn to walk beside its owner on a loose lead, neither pulling ahead nor lagging behind
- Respond to the word No – the word no is one word that all dogs must learn. Training your Doodle to respond to this important word can save you a ton of trouble.
- Sit – Training your Doodle to sit on command is a vital part of any dog-training program.
- Stay – A well-trained Doodle should remain where his or her owner commands, so stay is a very important command in dog training.
- Down – Lying down on command is more than just a cute trick; it is a key component of any successful dog-training program.

Dog training does much more than just create an obedient, willing companion. Training your Doodle properly actually strengthens the bond that already exists between dog and handler. Dogs are pack animals, and they look to their pack leader to tell them what to do. The key to successful dog training is to set you up as that pack leader.

Establishing yourself as pack leader is a very important concept for any potential dog trainer to understand. There is only one leader in every pack of dogs, and the owner must establish him or herself as the dominant animal. Failure to do so leads to all kinds of behavior problems.

A properly trained Doodle will respond properly to all the owner's commands, and will not display anxiety, displeasure or confusion. A good dog-training program will focus on allowing the dog to learn just what is expected of it, and will use positive reinforcement to reward desired behaviors.

In addition to making the Doodle a good member of the community, obedience training is a great way to fulfill some of the dog's own needs, including the need for exercise, the security that comes with knowing what is expected of it, a feeling of accomplishment and a good working relationship with its handler. Dog training gives the dog an important job to do, and an important goal to reach.

Giving your Doodle a job is more important than you may think. Dogs were originally bred by humans to do important work, such as herding sheep, guarding property and protecting people. Many dogs today have no important job to do, and this can often lead to boredom and neurotic behavior.

Basic obedience training, and ongoing training sessions, provides the dog with an important job to do. This is especially important for high-energy breeds like German shepherds and border collies. Training sessions are a great way for these high-energy dogs to use up their extra energy and simply to enjoy themselves.

Incorporating playtime into your Doodle training sessions is a great way to prevent both yourself and your Doodle from becoming bored. Playing with your Doodle helps to strengthen the all important bond between you – the pack leader – and your Doodle.

## **Leash/Collar Training**

There are many different styles of dog training, and finding the one that works best for you is important for creating a dog that is a talented, loyal and faithful member of the family. All successful methods of dog training work to reinforce the relationship between dog and handler, and the foundation of any successful training program is getting the respect of the dog. Fortunately, dogs are wired by nature to seek out leaders, and to follow the direction of those leaders.

This article focuses on one of the most popular methods of dog training – the so called leash/collar style of training. Other articles will focus on the other popular style of training dogs, often called reward training or positive reinforcement.

Both leash/collar training and reward training have been around for a very long time, and they have proven their effectiveness over time. The type of training that works best will vary from dog to dog, and from breed to breed. It is important to remember that each breed of dog has its own unique qualities, reinforced by hundreds of years of selective breeding.

Of course, personalities of individual dogs vary quite a bit, even within established breeds. You, as the owner of the dog, know better than anyone, which style of dog training will work best, so it is important to work with the trainer you choose to achieve your goal of a willing, obedient and friendly dog.

Leash and collar training is the best way to accomplish many types of dog training, particularly in situations where the dog must have a high level of reliability. For instance, dogs that have an important job to do, such as rescue dogs, police dogs and guard dogs, generally benefit from leash and collar training.

In leash and collar training, varying degrees of force can be used, ranging from slight prompts with the lead to very harsh corrections. The amount of correction used should be appropriate to the situation, since using too much correction, or too little, will be ineffective.

In a collar and leash based dog training program, first the dog is taught a particular behavior, generally with the leash. After the dog has demonstrated that it understands the command, the leash is then used to correct the dog if it disobeys, or when it makes a mistake. The leash is the main form of controlling and communicating with the dog in leash and collar training.

When using leash and collar training, the dog must be trained to trust the handler and accept his or her directions without question. In order for the dog to be fully trained, the handler must demonstrate the ability to place the dog into a posture or position he or she does not want to take. This does not mean using force, but it does generally require some level of physical manipulation. This manipulation is most easily and safely done using the main tool of leash and collar training – the leash.

It is important for every would be dog trainer to understand that the leash is simply a tool. While the leash is an important tool in this form of training, it is important for the dog trainer to be able to eventually achieve the same results using whatever tools are at hand.

Even when the only tools at hand are the owner's body and skill, the dog should be willing to obey. Creating a leader/follower relationship between handler and dog is still very important, and it is important to use the leash as a tool and not a crutch. A properly trained dog should be willing to obey whether the leash is present or not.



# Training Your Doodle With Reward Training

Reward training is often seen as the most modern method of training a dog, but reward training is probably much older than other methods of dog training. It is possible that reward training for dogs has been around as long as there have been dogs to train. Early humans probably used some informal kind of reward training when taming the wolf pups that eventually evolved into modern dogs.

Many principles of modern reward training date back many decades. However, what is called reward training today has only enjoyed its remarkable popularity for the past 10 or 15 years.

Many reward training enthusiasts are less enthusiastic about other methods of dog training, such as the traditional leash and collar method. However, the best approach to training any individual dog is often a combination of leash/collar training and reward training.

In addition, a training method that works perfectly for one dog may be totally inappropriate for another, and vice versa. Some dogs respond wonderfully to reward training and not at all to leash and collar training, while others respond to leash/collar training and are not at all motivated by reward training. Most dogs fall somewhere in the middle of these two extremes.

Clicker training is one of the most popular forms of reward training these days. While clicker training is not the answer for every dog, it can be a remarkably effective method of training many dogs. In clicker training, the dog is taught to associate a clicking sound with a reward, like a treat. The trainer clicks the clicker when the dog does something good, followed immediately by a treat. Eventually, the dog learns to respond to the clicker alone.

Most reward training uses some sort of food reward, or a reward that is associated with getting food. In most cases, complex behaviors can only be taught using this kind of positive reinforcement, and you will find that the people who train dogs for movies and television use reward training almost exclusively.

Reward training is used in all forms of dog training, including police work and military applications. Most scent detection, tracking and police dogs are trained using some form of reward training. Reward training is also a very effective way to teach many basic obedience commands.

Reward training often incorporates the use of a lure in order to get the dog into the position desired by the trainer. The lure is used to get the dog to perform the desired behavior on his or her own and of his or her own free will.

It makes a great deal of sense to get the dog to perform the desired behavior without any physical intervention on the part of the handler. Getting the dog to perform a behavior without being touched is important.

After the dog has performed the desired behavior, it is given a reward, also called a positive reinforcement. Treats are often used as reinforcers, but praise, such as “good dog” or a pat on the head, can also be effective rewards.

Making a dog that has been reward trained a reliable dog is important, especially when the dog has an important job, like police work or drug detection, to do. For that reason it is important to get the dog accustomed to working around distractions, and to properly socialize the animal to both people and other animals.

Many dog trainers make the mistake of only training the dog inside the house or backyard, and only when the handler is there. In order to become a reliably trained companion, the dog must be taken outside the confines of its safety zone and introduced to novel situations.

It is also important to teach the dog to pay attention to the handler at all times. Having the attention of the dog means having control of the dog. Reward training is very effective at getting the respect and the attention of the dog when used properly.

## **Training For Proper Dog Behavior**

There are many reasons for teaching proper dog behavior, and teaching such behavior has many benefits for both the human and canine partners. Dog behavior training is vital to such life and death issues as preventing aggression, controlling dog on dog aggression problems and teaching dogs to interact properly with both their handlers and with other members of the family.

Understanding how dogs evolved, and how dogs interact with each other, is very important to understanding how to properly train your Doodle to be a devoted, loyal companion.

The original dogs were probably orphaned wolf pups adopted by early humans. These wild dogs probably learned to perform behaviors that their human protectors valued, such as guarding the cave or scaring off predators. In exchange for these valued behaviors, the humans probably provided their new companions with foods, protection and shelter.

That kind of relationship still exists today, of course, and dogs still can, and do, perform valuable jobs for their human benefactors. Those jobs include herding and guarding livestock, guarding property, guarding people, and finding game.

When planning a dog training program, it is important to know that dogs are pack animals. In wild dog societies, packs are formed, and each member of the pack quickly learns his or her place in the pecking order. Except in the event of death or injury to the alpha dog, the hierarchy never changes once it has been established. The lower dogs know not to challenge the alpha dog, and the alpha dog understand his place as leader of the pack.

All the other dogs in the pack look to the alpha dog for leadership, in important survival issues like finding food and avoiding larger predators. In order to properly train your

Doodle and gain its respect, it is important for you to become the alpha dog.

That is because a dog that sees its owner as a superior leader will follow the commands the owner gives without question. Getting the respect of the dog is the most important step to proper dog training, and it will form the basis of all subsequent training.

The reasons for training a dog properly are many, especially in today's world. A well mannered, obedient dog is a joy to be around, both for the owner and his or her family, and for people in the community at large. In addition, seeing a well mannered dog sets people's mind at ease.

When training dogs and dealing with unwanted dog behaviors, it is important to understand the motivating factors behind those behaviors. For example, many dogs exhibit unwanted behaviors such as chewing and destroying furniture due to separation anxiety. Dealing with the sources of problem behaviors is an important first step toward eliminating those problem behaviors.

Many dogs exhibit unwanted behaviors as a result of stress in the animal's life, and its inability to cope with that stress. The goal of a good dog training program is to allow the dog to tolerate greater levels of stress without becoming a problem animal.

When dealing with dog behavior, it is important not to confuse human behavior with dog behavior. While there is a great temptation on the part of dog owners to see their dogs as almost human, in reality dogs and humans have very different motivations, and very different reactions to similar situations.

One trait that humans and dogs do share, however, is the need to form close social groups and strong bonds within those social groups. This bonding is important to both humans and dogs, but it has served vastly different ends as both species have evolved and changed over time.

# Training Your New Puppy The Right Way

Puppy training is very important, whether you are training your first puppy or your 20th. Properly training and socializing a puppy is vital to making it a valued member of your family and your community.

In some ways training a puppy is easier than training an adult or adolescent dog. One reason is that the puppy is essentially a “blank slate”, untroubled by past training techniques and other issues. In other ways, however, the puppy can be more difficult to train than an older dog.

One challenge to training a new puppy is that puppies are more easily distractible than adolescent and adult dogs. Everything is new to a puppy, and every new experience provides a new chance for distraction. For this reason, it is best to keep training sessions short when working with a puppy, and to end each training sessions on a positive note.

It is also important to allow the puppy plenty of time to play, and to interact with other puppies and dogs. Socialization training is vital to making your new puppy a good canine citizen, as dog aggression is a growing problem in many areas. A properly socialized dog learns how to play properly with other dogs, and overly aggressive play is punished by the other dogs in the play group.

This type of play learning is something that happens among siblings in litters of puppies. As the puppies play with each other, they learn what is appropriate and what is not. Inappropriate behavior, such as hard biting or scratching, is punished by the other puppies, by the mother dog, or both.

Unfortunately, many puppies are removed from their mothers and sold or adopted before this socialization has fully occurred. Therefore, puppy play sessions are a very important part of any puppy training session. Most good puppy preschool training programs provide time in each session for this type of dog interaction.

Introducing your puppy to new experiences and new locations is also an important part of puppy training. Teaching your Doodle to be obedient and responsive, even in the face of many distractions, is very important when training dogs and puppies.

One great way to socialize your puppy both to new people and new dogs is to take it on a trip to your local pet store. Many major pet store chains, and some independent ones as well, allow pet parents to bring their furry children, and these stores can be great places for puppies to get used to new sights, sounds and smells. Of course you will want to make sure the store allows pets before heading over.

It is important for puppy owners to structure their pet's environment so that the puppy is rewarded for good behaviors and not rewarded for others. One good example of this is jumping on people. Many people inadvertently reward this behavior because it can be cute. While it is true that jumping can be cute for a 10 pound puppy, it will not be so cute when that puppy has grown into a 100 pound dog.

Instead of rewarding the puppy for jumping, try rewarding it for sitting instead. This type of positive reinforcement will result in a well behaved adult dog that is a valued member of both the family and the community at large.

This type of reinforcement can also be used in potty training the new puppy. For instance, teaching a puppy to use a unique surface such as gravel or asphalt is a good technique. The theory is that the puppy will associate this surface with going potty, and therefore be reluctant to use other surfaces (like your carpet or floor for instance) as a potty.

## **Dog Training With A Head Collar**

The head collar has become an increasingly popular dog training tool in the past couple of years. Two of the most well known brands of head collar on the market are the Gentle Leader and the Halti, but there are many other brands that incorporate the basic head collar concept. The Canny Collar is also an excellent head collar.

Many people find the Gentle Leader easier to fit than the Halti, and in addition, the Gentle Leader is designed to fasten around the dog's neck. The advantage of this design is that even if the dog is somehow able to wriggle out of the muzzle, it is still wearing a collar. This safety feature is very important, especially during training outside or in novel situations. On the other hand, the Halti offers better control of the dog, and for this reason it is often favored when working with very aggressive dogs.

Training a dog with a head collar has a number of advantages over training with a traditional or training collar. For one thing, head collars are often easier to use for beginning dog trainers than are training collars. Head collars are also quite effective at preventing dogs from pulling, or controlling and retraining dogs that tend to pull.

Head collars can also be quite effective at controlling dogs in difficult situations, such as controlling a dog that wants to be with other dogs. Most owners know of some situations in which their dogs are difficult to control, and head collars can be quite effective at controlling these volatile situations.

Head collars can be excellent for controlling dogs that are very strong, or for working with a dog in an area that contains a great many distractions. For instance, head collars are great for when your Doodle is on an outing, or in an area where there will be other dogs and other distractions.

Even though a head collar can be a great tool, it should not be used as a replacement for effective dog training. A head collar is most effective when it is used in combination with strong and sensible dog training methods, such as reward training and other forms of positive reinforcement.

## **Disadvantages of head collars**

Even though head collars have many advantages, they have some distinct disadvantages as well. For one thing, head collars tend to make many dogs dependent on the equipment, and they quickly learn the difference between their regular collar and the head collar, and adjust their behavior accordingly.

In addition, some dogs, particularly those not accustomed to wearing a head collar, dislike wearing it and paw at it, try to rub it off or pull excessively. If your Doodle exhibits this behavior, the best strategy is to keep it moving until it learns to accept the collar. A good alternative is to have the dog sit by pulling up on the dog's head.

Another disadvantage of the head collar is the reaction that many people have to it. Many people think that a head collar is a muzzle, and react to the dog as if it may bite. While this is not necessarily a defect of the head collar, many people do find it troublesome.

In conclusion, training with a head collar is much like training with a training collar or any other equipment. While the head collar can be an important and useful tool, it is important to use it appropriately, follow all package instructions, and to combine its use with solid training methods. The eventual goal of dog training with a head collar should be to have the dog behave as well with a regular collar as it does with the specialized head collar.



# Training With A Training Collar Or Choke Collar

The basic dog-training collar goes by many names, including choke collar, choke chain, training collar, correction collar and slip collar. These training collars are among the most popular and most commonly used tools with both amateur and professional dog trainers.

While a training collar is an effective tool, like any tool it must be used properly in order to be effective for you and safe for the dog. Among the most important considerations when using a training collar are:

- ◆ How the collar fits the dog. It is essential that the training collar be properly fitted to the dog. A properly fitted training collar is easier to use and safer for the dog.
- ◆ Putting the training collar on properly. There is a right way and a wrong way to fit a training collar, and putting it on wrong will make it both ineffective and potentially dangerous.
- ◆ Using the collar properly. A training collar should be used as a sharp reminder to the dog, not as punishment. It is important that constant pressure be avoided when using a training collar.
- ◆ The weight of the chain and the size of the links on the training collar. It is important that the weight of the chain be appropriate to the size and weight of the dog.
- ◆ The placement of the collar on the dog. It is important to properly place the collar on the dog.

## **The Importance Of A Properly Fitted Training Collar**

Determining if the training collar is the right size is relatively easy. The ideal size training collar should fit snugly, yet comfortably over the dog's head. It is important that the training collar not fit too tightly, but it should not be too loose either. A training collar that is too tight will be too hard to put on and off. On the other hand, a training collar that is too loose can accidentally fall off of the dog's head when it lowers its head.

It is also important to know that a training collar that is too long for the dog requires a great deal of finesse to use properly. A collar that is too long can still be used, but it will require more skill on the part of the handler.

## **Properly Sizing And Measure The Dog For A Training Collar**

It is best to measure the dog's neck directly behind their ears with a tape measure, then add 2 to 3 inches to that measurement. So if your Doodle has a neck 12" in diameter, you would want to buy a training collar that is 14" in length. Chain slip collars are generally sized in two inch increments.

## **Fitting The Collar Properly**

When fitting a training collar, the part of the chain which is connected to the leash should be on the top of the dog's neck. With this type of arrangement, the collar releases the instant the leash is loosened. Training collars work by making the collar tight and loose in a fast manner. Tightening the collar is the first part of the correction, and making it loose is the second part of the correction.

If the part of the training collar that is attached to the leash is not on the top of the dog's neck, the collar can still be made tight, but it will not release back to a loose state easily. This constant pressure on the dog's neck initiates a counter response on the part of the animal, and the dog will quickly learn to pull and strain against the leash.

Finally, it is important to purchase a training collar that is well made and strong. Buying a high quality training collar, slip collar or choke collar is vital to the safety of yourself and your Doodle.

If the worst happens, and your Doodle's training collar does break, it is important not to panic. Most dogs will be unaware that they have broken the collar, at least for a few minutes. In most cases, if you act as if the leash is still connected, you can probably get control of your Doodle back quickly.

When securing a loose dog, the best strategy is to make a quick slip lead by running the snap on the leash through its handle and then slipping it over the dog's head. It may not be the best arrangement, but it will certainly do in a pinch.

When using a training collar, it's best to always have your Doodles regular collar on as well.

**\*\*\*\*\*IMPORTANT WORDS OF CAUTION\*\*\*\*\***

A training collar should only be used when you are actively training your dog.

**NEVER** leave any kind of slip training collar on your dog when you are not actively supervising your dog. The chance of your dog catching the collar and choking to death is too high to risk.

## Crate Training

A crate is one of the best things you can provide for your puppy. It serves as his own private “den,” where he will retreat to and feel safe and secure. Before bringing your Doodle home, place a couple of toys and treats inside. This will help him associate the crate as a positive location. Once he is home and meets the family, guide him to the crate and encourage him to explore and sniff around his new space.

There are many positive benefits of crate training to consider.

### Benefits Of Crate Training

- It provides a safe place to be away from others (dogs *do* get annoyed with people!)
- It allows the dog to do a complete shut down and provides a place for good **solid** rest. Often a dog not crated will have a high amount of “monitoring” and watching the house type behaviors.
- It can help prevent undesirable behaviors such as chewing and destroying.
- It can facilitate house training (dogs are naturally reluctant to soil the space where they sleep).
- It makes for a comfortable bed in a comfortable sleeping environment. It prevents them from roaming around the house at night.
- It serves as a temporary playpen when you aren’t able to monitor the puppy.
- It can be moved easily from room to room.
- It provides a safe way to ride in the car or airplane.

Crate training promotes positive discipline and routine for your puppy. It is your responsibility to teach your Doodle (no matter what age it is) the crate is the best thing in the world and a great place to be. You must make sure every interaction your dog has with his new den is a pleasant one. If you leave the house and your puppy is not in a crate, he will not know how to act. A puppy does not have the understanding to know what behaviors are permitted when unsupervised. They do know “how to act” it just isn’t behavior that we humans find acceptable. Most destructive behaviors are due to boredom, need for chewing during teething, or not being completely trained yet.

Do not go out and buy a crate, take it home and shove your Doodle into it, close the door and leave. Give your dog a few days to get used to his new den. Don't put it in the basement or some other out-of-the-way place. Make it part of the environment. Surround it with treats. Encourage your dog every time he goes near it "good dog."

Whenever possible, place the crate near or next to you when you are home. This will encourage the pup to go inside it without his feeling lonely or isolated when you go out. A central room in the apartment such as the living room or kitchen, or a large hallway near the entrance is a good place to crate your puppy.

## **How To Crate Train**

It is advisable to first crate your Doodle for short periods of time while you are home with him. In fact, crate training is best accomplished while you are in the room with your puppy. Getting him used to your absence from the room in which he is crated is a good first step. This prevents an association being made with the crate and you leaving him alone.

Upon your Doodle’s arrival and after settling him in with family introductions, guide him to his crate. Have some yummy treats or toys tucked inside. These surprises create a positive association with the crate. Close the door with your puppy on the outside. The goal is to get your puppy so interested in getting inside his crate that he paws and begs you to open the door. Open the door and let him enter the crate. When he enters, praise him with words such as “good boy” or “yes” and lots of loving pats. Let him out and ignore him. You want to downplay the exit so he doesn’t interpret “outside” of the crate

being better than “inside.” If he doesn’t enter right away, do not try to force him in. At this early stage of introduction, only inductive methods are suggested. The exception is overnight. You may need to place your pup in his crate and shut the door upon retiring.

Repeat this exercise several times. Each time increasing the amount of time the pup is in the crate with the door shut. Your puppy may show signs of agitation such as whining, barking, or scratching the door with his paws. In this case, his next confinement should be shorter than the previous. Again, you want this to be a positive experience, so give him an extra treat.

Once your pup has this routine down, start adding the word “crate” or “kennel” as he enters. Keep practicing this, holding the treat for longer periods of time and keeping inside the crate for longer periods of time. Now, move further away from the crate and repeat several times. Soon, your pup will know to go to the crate no matter where you are in the house. Doing this also reinforces the dog will get a nice treat when you leave, reducing the anxiety associated with being left alone.

The next couple of days should be spent practicing these crate exercises. While your Doodle is in the kennel, practice going in and out of the room, checking in every few minutes to get him accustomed to you coming and going. One great way to get your puppy used to being inside the crate without your full attention is to place the kennel in the kitchen while you prepare dinner. Stop periodically to drop him a treat and give plenty of positive praise while he remains in his kennel. Then step out of his line of sight to enjoy your meal in the dining room. Set aside some time during the evening or weekend to leave your puppy in his crate for 30–45 minutes.

Upon your return, quietly and calmly open the crate and direct him outside to the designated potty area. Be sure to keep the crate in the kitchen, mudroom, or anywhere close to the outside door. If the crate is in the bedroom on the third floor, your Doodle will never make it outdoors before eliminating. Finally, take the time to sit and settle down with your puppy to encourage proper greeting etiquette. Repeat this process a few times before you leave for longer periods of time. Always make sure your puppy empties his bladder before you leave and keep the TV or stereo running. This creates a comfortable and familiar atmosphere for your puppy to relax. Again, weekends tend to be a time where you are around to practice. Come Monday morning—POOF!—you

disappear for many hours. So start slowly and build up to longer visits away from your puppy while you have the time.

## **House Training Your Doodle**

House training is one of the most important parts of training any dog to be a valued part of the family. As with many other aspects of dog training, the best way to house train a dog is to use the dog's own nature to your benefit.

The great thing about dogs, and the thing that can make house training much easier, is that dogs are instinctively very clean animals. Dogs would rather not soil the areas where they sleep and eat. In addition, dogs are very good at developing habits regarding where they like to urinate and defecate. For example, dogs that are used to eliminating on concrete or gravel will prefer to eliminate there rather than on grass or dirt. It is possible to use these natural canine habits when house training your Doodle.

### **Setting Up The Toilet Area**

You will need to establish a toilet area for the dog. It is important for the dog to have access to this place every time he or she needs to eliminate. It is also important for the owner to accompany the dog each time until he or she gets into the habit of eliminating in the toilet area. This will ensure that the dog uses only the established toilet area.

A set feeding schedule makes the house training process a lot easier for both the owner and the dog. Feeding the dog on a regular basis will also create a regular schedule for the dog's toilet habits. Once you know when your Doodle is likely to need to eliminate, it will be simple to guide the dog to the established toilet area.

Once the dog has established a toilet area and is using it on a regular basis, it is very important to not confine the dog without access to the toilet area for long periods of time. That is because if the dog is unable to hold it, he or she may be forced to eliminate in the training area. This habit can make house training much more difficult.

## **Continuing The House Training Process**

After the dog is consistently eliminating in the toilet area and not soiling the training area, it is time to extend that training area to the rest of the home. This process should be done slowly, starting with one room and slowly expanding to the rest of the house. The area should only be extended once you are sure of the dog's ability to control its bladder and bowels.

When you first expand the training area to a single room, let the dog eat, play and sleep in that room, but only when supervised. When it is not possible to supervise the dog, place it back in the crate or original training area. Then, after the dog has accepted the room as an extension of the original training area, the area can be extended.

## **Speeding Up The Process**

If this process is too lengthy for your needs, it can be speeded up, but it is important to proceed cautiously. It is easier to take your time up front than to retrain a problem dog later. One way to successfully speed up house training is to praise and reward the dog each and every time it uses the established toilet area. It is also important not to punish the dog for mistakes. Punishment will only confuse the dog and slow down the house training process.

One method I have had great success with is the Bell Method. Hang a small bell (saved from Christmas or purchased at a craft store) at the height of your puppy's nose, by the door you will be taking your puppy in and out of for elimination. Each time you take him outside, physically take his nose or paw and "ring" the bells then open the door. Your Labradoodle will soon get the correlation between the two and will run to the door and ring the bells himself. There are a few downsides to using the bell method:

- The bells can't be heard all over the house.
- Some pups don't like bells and won't use them.
- Some pups will want to play with the bells for fun.
- If you are a houseguest, or if you stay in a hotel, you'll need to bring your bells along.



## **Dealing With House Training Issues**

The best house training uses the dogs own instincts to avoid soiling its bed to train the dog where and where not to eliminate. That is the basis behind crate training, in which the dog is confined to its crate in the absence of the owner, and den training, in which the dog is confined to a small area of the home. In essence, the crate, or the room, becomes the dog's den. Dogs are naturally very clean animals, and they try their best to avoid using their dens as toilets.

This type of training usually works very well, both for puppies and for older dogs. Problems with this type of toilet training are usually the result of not understanding the signals the dog is sending, not being consistent with feeding times, or trying to rush the process.

While the house training process can be sped up somewhat by consistently praising the dog and rewarding it for toileting in the proper place, some dogs cannot be rushed through this important process. It is always best to house train the dog properly the first time than to go back and retrain a problem dog.

If the dog soils the bed that has been provided in the den area, it is most likely because the owner has left the dog there for too long, and the dog had an understandable accident. Or it could be that the dog has not yet adopted this area as the bed. In addition, urinary tract infections and other medical conditions can also cause dogs to soil their beds. It is important to have the dog thoroughly checked out by a veterinarian to rule out any medical problems.

One other reason for house training accidents that many people overlook is boredom. Dogs who are bored often drink large amounts of water and therefore must urinate more frequently than you might think. If you notice your Doodle consuming large amounts of water, be sure to take the dog to the established toilet area more often, and provide the dog with toys and other distractions to eliminate boredom.

Boredom is the root cause of many dog behavior problems, not only house training issues. Chewing and other destructive behaviors are also often caused by boredom and separation anxiety.

Other problems with house training can occur when the dog's den is not properly introduced. In some cases, dogs can react to the den as if it is a prison or a punishment. Those dogs may exhibit signs of anxiety, such as whining, chewing and excessive barking. It is important for the dog to feel secure in its den, and to think of it as a home and not a cage.

The best way to house train a puppy or dog, or to re-house train a problem dog, is to make yourself aware of the dog's habits and needs. Creating a healthy, safe sleeping and play area for your Doodle, as well as a well-defined toilet area, is important for any house-training program.

House training is not always an easy process, but it is certainly an important one. The number one reason that dogs are given to animal shelters is problems with inappropriate elimination, so a well-structured house-training program can literally be a lifesaver for your Doodle.

# **Eliminating Your Puppy's Biting Behavior**

Bringing home a new puppy is always an exciting time. Introducing the new puppy to the family should be fun for both yourself and your puppy. One of the first challenges, however, to the excitement of the new puppy, is curbing inappropriate puppy behaviors.

## **Preventing Biting and Mouthing**

Biting and mouthing is a common activity for many young puppies and dogs. Puppies naturally bite and mouth each other when playing with siblings, and they naturally extend this behavior to their human companions. While other puppies have thick skin, however, humans do not, so it is important to teach your puppy what is appropriate, and what is not, when it comes to using those sharp teeth.

The first part of training the puppy is to inhibit the biting reflex. Biting might be cute and harmless with a 5 pound puppy, but it is neither cute nor harmless when that dog has grown to adulthood. Therefore, puppies should be taught to control their bite before they reach the age of four months. Puppies normally learn to inhibit their bite from their mothers and their littermates, but since they are taken away from their mothers so young, many never learn this important lesson. It is therefore up to the humans in the puppy's life to teach this lesson.

One great way to inhibit the biting reflex is to allow the puppy to play and socialize with other puppies and socialized older dogs. Puppies love to tumble, roll and play with each other, and when puppies play they bite each other constantly. This is the best way for puppies to learn to control themselves when they bite. If one puppy becomes too rough when playing, the rest of the group will punish him for that inappropriate behavior. Through this type of socialization, the puppy will learn to control his biting reflex.

Proper socialization has other benefits as well, including teaching the dog to not be fearful of other dogs, and to work off their excess energy. Puppies allowed to play with other puppies learn important socialization skills and generally learn to become better members of their human family. Puppies that get less socialization can be more destructive, more hyperactive and exhibit other problem behaviors.

In addition, lack of socialization in puppies often causes fearful and aggressive behaviors to develop. Dogs often react aggressively to new situations, especially if they are not properly socialized. In order for a dog to become a member of the community as well as the household, it should be socialized to other people, especially children. Dogs make a distinction between their owners and other people, and between children and adults. It is important, therefore, to introduce the puppy to both children and adults.

The best time to socialize a puppy to young children is when it is still very young, generally when it is four months old or younger. One reason for this is that mothers of young children may be understandably reluctant to allow their children to approach large dogs or older puppies. This is especially true with large breed dogs, or with breeds of dogs that have a reputation for aggressive behavior.

Teaching your puppy to trust and respect you is a very effective way to prevent biting. Gaining the trust and respect of your Doodle is the basis for all dog training, and for correcting problem behaviors.

It is important to never hit or slap the puppy, either during training or any other time. Physical punishment is the surest way to erode the trust and respect that must form the basis of an effective training program. Reprimanding a dog will not stop him from biting – it will simply scare and confuse him.

Training a puppy not to bite is a vital part of any puppy training program. Biting behaviors that are not corrected will only get worse, and what seemed like harmless behavior in a puppy can quickly escalate to dangerous, destructive behavior in an adult dog.

## **Bite Inhibition**

The first thing you want to teach your new Doodle is your skin is easily hurt and biting you is unacceptable behavior. This is called bite inhibition. Puppies have very sharp teeth and a weak jaw, so this means it can cause you some pain when mouthing or biting you. Thankfully, it doesn't cause any severe damage.

An adult dog has a more powerful jaw and duller teeth. That is why an adult dog can cause significant damage when biting. So always remember, any dog will bite given the right or wrong circumstances. Should a small child fall on your adult dog or stick a finger in the dog's eye, don't be surprised if the dog bites. If you do a good job teaching your puppy bite inhibition, you should get a grab and release without damage.

It's relatively simple to teach a puppy bite inhibition and this is the method I've found to be the most effective. Every time the puppy touches you with its teeth, say "OUCH!" in a harsh tone of voice and immediately stop all play and attention. This probably won't stop the puppy from mouthing, but over time, you should see softer and gentler puppy biting.

The commands necessary to teach a puppy not to mouth are simple. Hold a small handful of the puppy's dry food, say "take it" or "gentle" in a calm tone of voice, and give the puppy one piece of food. Then close the rest of the food in your hand and say "off" in the same calm tone of voice. When the puppy hasn't touched your hand for a few seconds say, "take it" or "gentle" and give the puppy one piece of food. We are teaching the puppy "off" means not to touch. You should do this with the puppy before every meal for at least 5 minutes.

This gives you an idea of some training and discipline you can provide your puppy. Consistency is how your Doodle will succeed. Work with your puppy everyday, in short sessions, several times a day.