

## SUBORDINATION

Winning the Puppy Over

*Regardless of why you acquired a puppy, in order for your pup to develop into an asset instead of a burden, you'll have to win it over — you, not the dog will have to be the leader.*

How to Spot a Dominant Dog

Dogs that are leaders within their "human packs" bark like crazy when there's a disturbance within their territory, and cannot be quieted by their owners. They may growl at, nip or bite anyone who disciplines them or asks them to do things they don't like. They'll most likely challenge the individual who tries to groom them, bathe them, or clip their nails. They may also threaten visitors who enter "their" home, grow when anyone attempts to take things away (especially food or bones), and mark the inside of the home with urine or stool. Such dominating dogs may only come when called if it's to their advantage and frequently wander away from home. Several of these behavior patterns may indicate a dog that has taken a leadership role in the household — a dog that hasn't been properly assigned its subordinate role in the "human pack."

Most Pups are Pushy

The process by which a pack animal is transformed into a full-fledged member of the group is referred to as subordination. With dogs, it begins shortly after the third week and continues throughout early development. Subordination has been occurring for thousands of years, but it is only recently that researchers have discovered how it functions.

The normal, healthy puppy is basically a pushy animal. His tendency is to advance as far as possible within the social order of the pack. The most likely reason for this is because the pack, in order to survive, must from time to time replace its leaders. Therefore, there must be a leadership pool to draw from when that time arrives.

However, most pack members learn to control their "pushy" or dominant behavior, because the pack has only *two* leaders — one male and one female. This is one of the keys to successful puppy rearing — to establish yourself as *pack leader* and maintain that position throughout your dog's life. Also, all able family members should establish leadership roles with the dog. These relationships are arrived at individually so you cannot establish a leadership role for anyone except yourself.

The Spoiled Dog

Many people try to win the puppy over by letting him have his own way. They shower love and affection on him just because he's so cute and cuddly, and because they want him to grow up to be their friend. From the studies (lone on pack behavior, we now know that this is not the way to win the pup over. This kind of treatment only serves to reinforce those pushy behaviors which lead to behavioral problems in the home.

Pack Subordination

In the wild, before the cubs are four months old, the adults grab them around the head or neck, and gently, but firmly, pin them to the ground. The cubs soon learn that adults must be greeted with "respect." They approach the adults using a slightly crouching posture, with ears back, tail down and wagging, and they lick the adults' muzzles. These are signs of respect and affection, not fear, and are called the *subordinate display*. Their function is to keep peace and harmony within the pack.



Building the Relationship

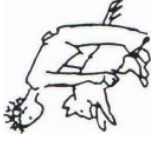
The following exercises are

designed to begin establishing a leader/follower relationship between you and your puppy with you as the leader. Once you establish this relationship, you'll be able to prevent behavior problems. If you're a good, just leader, your pup will seek you out. He'll want to be with you, and he'll treat you with respect and affection — you'll have won him over.

What you are teaching your pup by performing these exercises is that you have control over him *physically*. The pup doesn't learn about social relationships through an intellectual process. You can't sit him down and discuss how he should conduct himself. He must be reached on the *physical* level. Once he learns to submit to your handling, all other physical tasks such as grooming, nail-clipping, medicating, and removing objects from his mouth will be much easier to accomplish. But first he must be shown that you have the power to handle him, and that handling doesn't lead to physical harm — he must trust you and all other able family members, and at the same time be subordinate to **EVERYONE**.

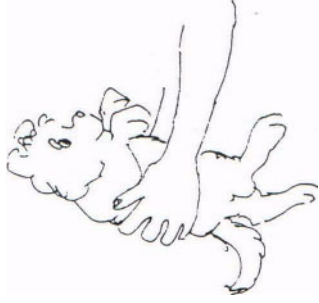
fingers together.

3. Lift his front legs off the ground for 15 to 45 seconds (vary time).
4. If he struggles, raise your voice saying "Erhhh," and free one hand to quickly shake him by the neck scruff.
5. When he's quiet, talk to him in a soft, pleasant voice.
6. Repeat steps H6 through #8 from Exercise I



### Exercise I — Elevation

1. While seated on the floor, support the pup with both hands by holding him just behind his front legs. He should be facing you.
2. Hold him away from your body at arm's length and look directly into his eyes.
3. If he struggles, raise your voice and give him a quick shake. (I've found it best to have a special sound that only means "no" for the puppy, so instead of raising your voice and saying "no," try using "Erhhh" instead. Use a guttural, growling tone when saying "Erhhh.")
4. When he is quiet, talk to him in a soft, pleasant voice.
5. Maintain this position for 15 to 45 seconds (vary time).
6. Repeat this exercise until he no longer struggles.
7. Next time work at a different location in the house, and continue changing locations. When he no longer struggles, have other able family members do the same exercise under your supervision.
8. Introduce the exercise in the presence of friends or relatives and have them pet the pup when he is quiet.



### Exercise n — Inversion

Sit on the floor. Cradle the pup with one hand underneath his head and the other supporting his back so that he is in an inverted position on his back in midair. (Larger puppies can be held across your lap.) Hold him for 15 to 45 seconds and follow the above procedures #3 through #8.



### Exercise III — Standing Over

If you cannot perform the first two exercises due to the size of the dog or other reasons, substitute the following:

1. While the pup is standing, straddle him with one of your legs on each side of his body. Face the same direction as he is.
2. Place your hands under his chest, just behind the front legs, and lock your

### Exercise IV — Subordinate Position

1. Gently place the pup on his side on the floor with all four legs pointing directly away from you. Use one hand to hold him firmly by the neck scruff, and the other to press down on his mid-section. Keep this hand away from his head and mouth. Talk to him in a soft, pleasant voice *after* he's quiet. This may take several minutes. If he lifts his back leg up by himself to expose the groin region, you're getting somewhere!
2. Do not allow him to struggle, get up, nip or mouth your hands. If he tries, raise your voice by saying "Erhhh" and shake him sharply, and firmly, by the scruff of the neck as his mother would do. Praise him *lavishly* when he stops.
3. When he's quiet, place your fingers around his muzzle and press briefly, but firmly while praising.
4. Repeat steps #6 through #8 from Exercise 1 while he's still on his side on the floor.
5. After he is reliably quiet in that position, handle all four paws with moderate pressure. Also open the pup's mouth and briefly place your fingers between the teeth. Praise him enthusiastically when he tolerates the handling. Raise your voice and shake if he objects.



During early development, these exercises should be performed five times a day for the first week, and once daily thereafter. DO NOT use them for discipline as their main purpose is to teach trust and respect. Once you are convinced that you and other able family members can physically handle the dog with complete confidence, no matter where you are or what's going on, you've achieved your goal.

Unfortunately, very young children cannot do these subordination exercises. Until they are older, children should be watched closely when they interact with a

puppy. If not controlled, the youngster may begin leashing the dog, or treat it roughly. On the other hand, the pup may attempt to dominate the child — an equally undesirable state of affairs. You should always be present when the two are together so things don't get out of hand.

## BODY LANGUAGE

### A Method of Communication

*Evolution has provided the dog and his wolf relative with an elaborate social communication system. Dogs use sounds, smells and body positions to convey messages to others — and to you as well, if you learn how to read their signals.*

### Rank Within the Pack

At the core of pack life is a system of rank order — two wolves, a male and a female, take on dominant or leadership roles; all others become subordinates or followers of the leaders. In order to communicate status within the pack, canines rely heavily upon body signals. The family dog uses the same signals within his "human pack." Your understanding of these signs is vital to successful puppy rearing, because this knowledge will allow you to help your pup develop into a welcome, well behaved family member — a follower instead of a leader.

### Early Social Development

About the third week of life, normal, healthy pups begin interacting socially with each other, displaying pushy or dominant behavior, as well as submissive postures. After repeated playful fighting, the pups learn when to act pushy and when to back down. Although capable of both behaviors, most puppies tend to behave in ways that will advance them as far as possible within their social order — to push their way into leadership positions. It is this tendency you must control early if you want to raise a *SuperPuppy*.

If your pup has not been isolated from people at an early age and likes to be around them, he'll attempt to interact with people just as he would with litter-mates. In such interaction or play, you and other family members should assume a leadership role and discourage pushy behavior in the pup.

### Is Your Dog a Leader or a Follower?

Learn your dog's body language now, and begin to curb any signs of dominance at once. Following is a list of dominant (pushy) and subordinate (submissive) behavior signs to look for. They will help you understand what role in your family "pack" your pup is assuming.

### Dominant Signals and Behavior

1. Nipping your skin or clothing or mouthing your hands.

2. Snarling and/or growling at people.
3. Guttural barking at people (as opposed to whining or howling).
4. Pilo erection (hair standing up on back).

5. Tail elevated and slowly wagging while standing erect on all fours during greeting.

6. Curling the lips to expose teeth

7. Mounting or thrusting of the pelvis anywhere on your person.

8. Riding up on people.

9. Prolonged direct eye contact.

10. Resistance to removal of food.

11. Resistance to the removal of possessed objects.

12. Stealing food in your presence.

13. Elimination within the home occurring after houstraining (marking).

### Subordinate Signals

1. Ears back, head lowered, body lowered, and tail down and wagging vigorously during greeting.

The mouth may be open and the lips drawn back in a "grin."

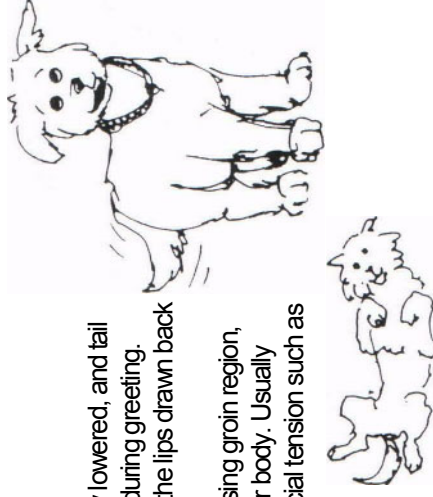
2. Lying down on side while exposing groin region, ears back and tail tucked under body. Usually occurs during times of high social tension such as a discipline situation.

3. Licking hands or face.

### Guidelines to Follow

Here are guidelines that will help you and other family members assume and retain leadership relationships with your dog. Starting now will insure that your puppy learns appropriate behavior quickly, and will help prevent behavior problems later.

1. Immediately discourage your pup's pushy behavior toward you or others. Use only enough unpleasant discipline to get the job done. Then follow with plenty of praise.
2. Be consistent. Each and every time the pup displays one of the dominant or pushy signals, you or other able family members should follow through with corrective action.



3. Don't unconsciously encourage him to act pushy. Never play "tug of war," or any other teasing game. Instead, make a point of playing with something other than your hands, like a ball or other retrieving toy. Don't encourage him to bark at people. Never roughhouse so that he thinks he's won or dominated you.
4. From time to time, remove his food dish while he's eating, and have him sit briefly before returning it. Immediately discourage any barking, growling, or mouthing of hands or clothing. Make sure other able family members can do the same.
5. Perform the subordination exercises regularly. Continue until he allows physical handling by you and other able family members.
6. Never discipline your puppy for misbehavior unless you CATCH HIM IN THE ACT. Use only enough discipline to make him immediately stop what he's doing; then praise him for slopping. 1. Make sure he receives twice-daily exercise, through "play retrieving," or other running games. He needs to be tired out, at least two times a day, while he's young and active! (See page 34.)
8. Use food rewards after every corrective action that startles him. Also use food to help him overcome any fears or other stressful situations. Most puppies won't eat if frightened or stressed, so getting him to eat will help reduce fear and apprehension. Having him eat a treat before and during any possible discomfort, such as an inoculation, will also distract him and help block stress.
9. When you use treats as a reward, the dog shouldn't know for sure he's going to get one. The reward should come from "nowhere" the INSTANT following the behavior you wish to encourage. It should always be accompanied by praise and petting, as these will be his rewards when he's grown-up. (I've found most pups will work hard for freeze dried liver. Another reason I like it is because it's 100% natural and very light, so it won't interfere with his regular meals. Break into small pieces and keep in your pocket. It's available from most pet shops, and is made by Rcdi®\*.)

Raising your puppy to be a low-ranking member of your household is a key to having a SuperPuppy. This will not "break his spirit" or inhibit his development into a normal, healthy dog. Rather, you are giving him a defined position in your family, behavior guidelines to follow, and a sense of trust and respect for you, his leader. Remember, most pack members are subordinate.

## **SOCIAL STIMULATION**

### **Acquainting Your Pup With New Situations**

A young pup is continually learning about his new environment. Every situation in which he is placed, every person he meets, every pleasant or unpleasant incident in his early life can have a long-lasting effect on him.

## **Puppies are Impressionable**

One of the major discoveries concerning dog behavior was made during this century. Researchers found that isolating a puppy from all human contact between the third and sixteenth weeks of age led to a fear of people. Puppies who were so isolated would run from people if they could. If prevented from escaping, they'd huddle trembling in a corner, and would even snap at people who tried to touch them.

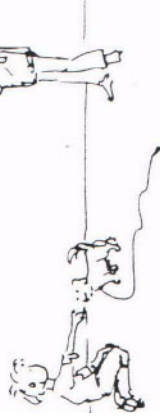
Although this is an extreme example, it is true that young dogs must be regularly handled by people at an early age if they are to develop into good companions. Dogs that are uncomfortable with humans are difficult to train, often develop into "fear biters," relate poorly to children, and may frequently run away from home. Puppies who have very little early human contact can grow to be extremely shy dogs, and bringing a shy dog out is a difficult, painstaking process that isn't always successful.

## **Preventing Problems**

Not all breeders are willing or able to take the time to handle their puppies. In order to overcome any shy tendencies your pup may have, carefully follow these recommendations:

1. Guard against isolating your pup for prolonged periods of time. Destructive digging, chewing, and scratching often occur because the pup is kept outdoors by himself. Puppies are highly social animals and need social contact for proper development. In nature canine cubs are never, ever alone.
2. Expose him to all types of people — boys, girls, men, women, youngsters and oldsters.
3. Expose him to as many new situations as possible, but be sure he has good experiences.
4. Get him used to being in crowds or places where there is a lot of activity. Don't hesitate to use a special treat to distract him if he seems fearful or hesitant.
5. When you take him to the veterinary clinic or groomer's also take some special treats. Use them to distract your pup from possible discomfort or apprehension.

6. If your pup tends to be somewhat shy, make sure that any discipline is not excessive. But it's very important *not to baby* a shy pup, as this could reinforce his shyness. Encourage him to overcome shyness by going forward or holding his ground, not retreating. Praise and treat him for going forward \_ and making progress, and prevent him from hiding out.



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7. With your supervision, encourage him to explore his new home. The sooner he investigates everything, the more comfortable he'll be. Encourage him to investigate new objects and praise him when he does. However, make sure his first experience isn't frightening. Gradually acquaint him with steps, the vacuum cleaner, cars, baths, grooming, etc.

8. Teach him to go down stairs by putting him on the *bottom* step first. Then have a special treat available when he solves the problem. Gradually move back up the steps until he's learned to maneuver them. This can be done over a period of days.

9. Make sure that the pup is *gradually* introduced to very loud household noises, like that of the vacuum cleaner. Use a food reward when you do it. Quickly and repeatedly turn the machine on and off when the puppy is at a distance. Slowly accustom him to the full intensity of the sound. Many puppies develop a fear of loud noises because thunder, firecrackers or guns shots were the first loud noises they were exposed to without prior

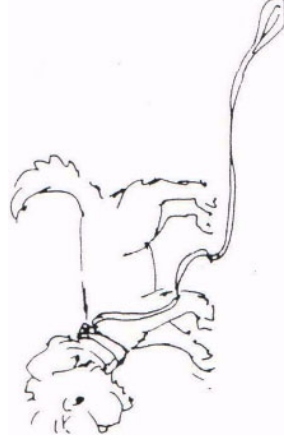


preparation.

10. Acquaint him with grooming, nail clipping and bathing by making sure his first experiences are very mild. At first, make very light strokes with into regular combing and brushing. Use a similar approach for bathing or nail clipping.

11. Begin collar training by introducing the pup to a buckle collar. Simply put the collar on before feeding and periodically throughout the day. Leave it on for about 30 minutes. Keep an eye on the pup, however, to guard against his getting caught on something. He may scratch at the collar like crazy until he becomes used to it. You can distract him with a toy or play.

12. When the pup is fairly comfortable with the collar, you may begin leash training. Use a fabric or leather leash that has been made chew-proof (see page 25). Attach the leash and let the pup drag it around, using play and toys as distractions if necessary. After he becomes accustomed to the leash, pick up the end and follow *where the pup leads you*. NEVER pull or jerk on the leash in order to get him to follow you! The next step is to coax him to follow you by bending down and using food rewards, if needed. This should be



done for short periods of time on a daily basis until he walks easily with you.

Leash and collar training should be done both inside and outdoors.

Remember to never, ever drag a frightened or reluctant pup.

13. NEVER, EVER use isolation as a form of discipline. Puppies should be trained to be comfortable when alone. It isn't necessary to introduce your new pup to everything the first several days. Do it gradually so that he's not overwhelmed. As he learns about New sounds and situations, he'll discover that they really won't harm him, and he'll be more comfortable when he meets them again.

## CONTROL IN YOUR ABSENCE

### *An Ounce of Prevention*

Complaints about puppies frequently concern some mischief occurring while the pup is alone in the house. From the young pup's point of view, being alone may be stressful. It's at this time that household damage might occur. Your understanding of why the pup chews, whines or barks when isolated will help you in controlling such behaviors in your absence.

### *The Separation Reflex*

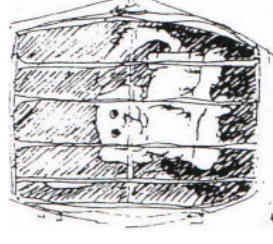
*In the wild, when young cubs are isolated from their pack, they become very emotional and begin whining, barking or howling. If they are trapped in deep brush, they'll dig and chew in order to free themselves and be reunited with the pack. These behaviors are genetically based and increase the chances they'll survive.*

*The family dog has retained these tendencies, and that's why the puppy may become highly emotional if left alone. Chewing, scratching and nervous elimination can be expected to occur if the pup experiences stress due to isolation.*

### *Heading Off Problems*

*An excellent method to combat*

*these tendencies is training the pup to be comfortable in a den-like enclosure. A good device to use as his den is a collapsible wire dog crate or enclosed airline shipping kennel available at most pet shops. These devices not only have the immediate benefit of reducing isolation-induced stress, but are also extremely helpful during housetraining. Even after your pup is housetrained and familiar with his new surroundings, you'll want to restrict him to his den when no one is around to watch him, because the normal, healthy pup will generally cause some mischief if unattended. The tendency to learn about his surroundings is too strong for him to control, and learning means chewing, scratching, and digging. If your puppy isn't able to get into trouble, destructive habits won't be formed.*



## The Dog Den — Pro or Con

You may feel it's cruel to confine a dog to a crate. It would be cruel to just close him in the crate and leave the house. But if you take time to introduce the den properly, you'll find that your pup will come to prefer it for sleeping and being alone.

All too many people give up their pups to an animal shelter because of the damage done while they're unattended. Since 80% of these pups are put to sleep, it is kind, rather than cruel, to den-train a pup and head off behavior problems.

If your pup is to be left by himself for an extended period of time, a den isn't recommended. You should then provide a larger, damage-proof, inside area with water, and a place for him to eliminate. A collapsible, wire barrier called an "exercise pen" can be used to create a damage proof, safe, inside area, and is available at most pet shops. If, however, you can schedule your absences so that he's not alone for more than three hours at any one time, use the den. As he grows, he'll be able to wait longer without eliminating. Except for overnight sleeping, regular den confinement approaching eight hours should be carefully thought over.



### Acquainting Your Pup With His Den

The following steps are designed to teach the pup to be comfortable in his den. Follow the instructions

carefully, as his first exposure to it is extremely important.

1. Acquire a den that will be large enough to house the pup after he's full grown. As an adult he should be able to lie comfortably on his side as well as stand, sit and turn around without difficulty.
2. Set it up with the dog out of the room, so as not to startle him. If he's not housetrained, and if he's not already accustomed to being inside the house, you should put the den in your bedroom at night. By doing this, you'll provide overnight social contact, and will also be able to tell by his restlessness if he needs to eliminate.
3. If you're using a wire crate, place an old blanket or sheet over the top and sides in order to create a den-like atmosphere. Take care to tuck or tape the ends of the covering under the crate so that he can't pull them inside to chew. Put it in a room you can make dark, and have a radio handy.
4. When it's time for his feeding, place the bowl just outside the den, leaving the gate open. Make sure nothing startles him.
5. Between feedings, place several small pieces of food inside the den while he's watching. If he attempts to eat the food, praise him after he does so. If he hesitates, just ignore him and leave the food in the den.