

# WELCOME HOME, PUPPY!



## Tips & Tricks for a great start with your new puppy

Brought to you by Neighborhound Dog Training



# Hello,

and congratulations to your new family member! How exciting that you've welcomed (or will be welcoming?) a new puppy to your home - who you will get to teach all about the world, who will teach you a thing or two about dogs and yourself, and who will make you laugh and sometimes cry.

I'm so happy that you get to go on this adventure, it's one of the best life has to offer (in my opinion..).



Enjoy every moment of it, and don't panic when things don't go as planned. Dogs are resilient and flexible and they can learn new things and behaviors throughout their lives.

And don't be afraid to get help - after all, living with another species is something special and sometimes requires a bit of translation. Me and other positive reinforcement dog trainers are here to help!

But for now I hope that what you find some useful ideas and tips on the following pages!

# Julia







## WHERE TO GET STARTED WHEN YOU BRING YOUR PUPPY HOME?

When you bring your puppy home you'll be excited to start training - but where to start best?

It's important to recognize that your puppy just had a major change in her life and while most puppies adapt quickly and well, we do want to give them time to adjust and not overwhelm them. So let them explore, make sure they're happy and make them feel safe. They're a very social species and they need you to stay close to them in this time of transition.

But of course there are things you can start with right away, and in this workbook we'll cover some of them.

We'll start with **socialization (pg 4)**. Socialization should be your focus for the first weeks with your puppy, but make sure to learn how to do this right. Socialization is much more than just taking your puppy everywhere - you'll learn all the details about it here!

Next up: **potty training (pg 9)**. This is something you'll want to tackle right away of course, and that's great from a training perspective, too. The fewer accidents your puppy has in the house, the more quickly she will learn.

You can also start training right away, but maybe differently than to what you expected. Instead of teaching your puppy to do behaviors when you ask them, you'll want to focus on catching your puppy when they get it right (and they often do!) and reward them for it. Learn more on **rewarding good choices on page 11**. You can use this approach for all sorts of situations and it will help your puppy to figure out how to live with you and in the human world.

And as a little bonus on **page 14: a shopping list** with all the items that I believe are essential to raising a puppy.





## **SOCIALIZING YOUR PUPPY THE RIGHT WAY**





# WHAT IS SOCIALIZATION?

Socialization is a term you've likely heard before, But what exactly does it mean and why is it so important?

Socialization is the process whereby our puppies learn how to interact with the world around them. They learn social skills with dogs, people and other animals, as well as building an understanding of how things work in the world around them.

They learn what is safe and enjoyable as well as what is scary and should be avoided.

In order to help our puppies to develop into confident, resilient adult dogs, we need to ensure that we are careful with how we introduce them to new experiences.

## WHAT'S THE GOAL?

The goal of socialization is to ensure our puppies are well-adjusted and feel confident with everything they will likely experience throughout their life.

We are looking for them to be calm and relaxed, not easily startled by things and also not over excited by the world around them.

It's really important that as well as allowing our puppies to interact with people and dogs, we also teach them the art of watching at a distance whilst having fun with you instead. This will help a lot when it comes to getting your puppy's focus or calling them back to you when they're off the lead.

We also have to teach them to be calm and confident with many other stimuli and experiences.

1

**Build positive associations**

2

**Allow your puppy to watch from a distance**

3

**Don't force your puppy to confront their fears**



## LESS IS MORE

It is really tempting to allow our puppies to meet as many dogs and people as possible during their development.

However if we allow our puppies to interact with everyone there are 2 common issues that arise:

Our puppy becomes over excited whenever they see another dog or person. They know seeing people and dogs is really fun and they become excited and desperate to get to them. This will lead to problems with focus on us and could result in our puppy ignoring calls to come back when off lead.

Our puppy becomes overwhelmed. Some puppies are wary of new people and if we don't know what signs to watch for when they are uncomfortable, it's really easy to create a negative association with strangers. This can lead to fear, growling and barking at unfamiliar people.

A good rule of thumb is to let your puppy greet every second person and every second dog (if all involved consent to this) and to watch every other person and dog calmly from a distance.

## "GIVE YOUR PUPPY THE CHOICE TO INTERACT OR NOT"

## "BE YOUR PUPPY'S ADVOCATE"

Rather than focusing on the number of interactions, it's more important to ensure the quality of the interactions our puppies do have.

If your puppy holds back or moves away allow them the choice not to interact. Prevent people and dogs from forcing our puppy to engage as this will build up their trust and confidence far more than overwhelming them will.

Allow your puppy the chance to approach a dog or person in their own time. Have the stranger crouch and offer their hand out to the side of their body, **away from your puppy (not towards your puppy's face!)**. If your puppy chooses to approach, make sure the person doesn't grab them. Be your puppy's advocate and prevent bad experiences by standing up for what's in their best interest.

If your puppy seeks contact, keep interactions short and enjoyable before encouraging your puppy to move away with you again.





# WHAT YOUR PUPPY IS TELLING YOU

Now, how do you know how your puppy is feeling about the experience? One of the best ways we can guess is by observing their behavior and body language.

When you expose your puppy to anyone or anything, you'll want to watch your puppy's response and body language closely, and ensure that your puppy looks happy. Anytime your puppy looks fearful you need to adjust what you are doing! This can mean that you just help your puppy out by moving further away from the "scary thing" and feed your puppy treats, but sometimes (especially when your attempts to make it easier don't help) you might want to stop altogether and rather come back to it another day.

If you find that your puppy reacts fearful all the time, or doesn't warm up to the "scary thing" you'll want to get a professional, force-free and positive reinforcement trainer involved!

Let's have a look at some pups, what their body language is telling us and what our actions could look like:

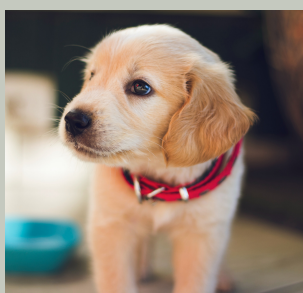


## Happy

Open mouth, big smile  
Loose, wiggly body  
Squinty eyes



Great, keep going!  
Every once in a while, you can do a "consent test" by picking your puppy up or removing her from the situation - when you put her back down, is she going straight back to what she was interacting with?



## Neutral

Closed mouth  
Body and ears still relaxed  
Soft eyes  
Not wiggly, but also not trying to get away



Watch your puppy closely. Feed treats or play with your pup and check if that makes a positive difference.  
If your puppy doesn't respond positively to treats/toys, end the experience rather sooner than later.



## Fearful

White of eyes visible  
Makes himself small, stiff body, tail tucked  
Might be hiding behind your legs or furniture  
Might bark or growl



Stop, get your puppy away from what is causing the fear and regroup.  
Try again later, with greater distance, less intensity of the "thing" your puppy was scared of and feed treats.  
Also: take notes and get professional help if you observe the same reaction repeatedly.

# Puppy Socialization Bingo



Have your puppy experience each of these sights, sounds and smells at least once, but better more often and in different settings

Jogger	Firework sounds (recording if needed)	Kids' playground - sights and sounds	Watch large dog on leash	Sight and sound of a shopping cart
Bike passing by	Dog barking (recording if needed)	Sight and sound of a vacuum cleaner	Guests coming over, ringing the doorbell and entering the house	Person with sunglasses
Visit to vet parking lot and watching dogs from car	Walking on slippery surface (e.g. lid of plastic crate)		Umbrella opening and closing	Paws being touched, followed with treats
Car ride	Sight, sound and smell of other species (e.g. cat, horse)	Sight and sound of a skateboard	Visit to pet store	Recording of baby crying
Sudden noise (e.g. spoon dropping on floor)	Ears being touched, followed with treats	Visit to parking lot of a mall and watch people from car	Thunder (recording if needed)	Visit to groomer (for treats only)

## Remember:

- to keep it fun for your pup, and follow up with treats as needed. Stop or make it easier if your puppy seems scared
- to not go too close - watch children from far enough away, and dogs from the safety of your car; drop spoon when puppy is in adjacent room, not next to you, and playback sound recordings at low volume
- that this is not an extensive list, but hopefully a fun way to get you started!





## **10 TIPS TO POTTY TRAIN YOUR PUPPY SUCCESSFULLY**

# POTTY TRAINING TIPS

## 2: SUPERVISE OR CONFINE

Prevent any accidents in the house. Have an area gated away with exercise pens or keep your puppy in his crate for times when you can't actively supervise (make sure your puppy likes the confinement space by offering chew toys, treats and food puzzles in that space).

## 4: TIMES YOUR PUPPY NEEDS TO POTTY

You'll also want to take your pup out: immediately in the morning and before you go to bed, after your puppy has eaten, after bouts of play or other exercise in the house, after anything that excited your pup (e.g. visitors coming over), and after releasing her from confinement.

## 6: STAY OUTSIDE AWHILE LONGER

Does your puppy love being outside? Give your pup some extra sniff or play time outside after she was successful, otherwise she might learn that holding her bladder, once outside, comes with more exploration time for her!

## 8: KEEP IT BORING AND SAFE

Keep your puppy on leash during potty breaks (even if you have a yard) and bring your puppy to a boring and safe environment with few distractions. This way she can more easily focus on the task at hand, and doesn't get distracted or worried.

## 10: IF ACCIDENTS HAPPEN

Don't punish your puppy in any way, but clean accidents up without making a big fuss. Use an enzymatic cleaner to remove the odor (that your puppy will otherwise use as a signal for where to go next time). Keep track of accidents to see if there's a pattern.

## 1: TAKE YOUR PUPPY OUT OFTEN.

Bring your puppy out often enough so that the bladder never "spills over" – young puppies can't control their bladder yet. Err on the side of caution and take him out often, every 30 minutes, and get a feeling for how often he actually goes potty, then adjust your schedule accordingly.

## 3: SIGNS YOUR PUPPY NEEDS TO POTTY

In addition to the regular scheduled times, bring your puppy outside as soon as you see any behavioral indicators that she might have to go. These may include sniffing the floor, circling, looking restless or going into a room she has previously toileted in.

## 5: REWARD YOUR PUPPY FOR GETTING IT RIGHT

Reward your puppy with treats or play after going potty outside. Timing is crucial: reward immediately after your puppy is finished. Reward too early and your puppy may learn to interrupt himself, reward too late (e.g. after you called your puppy to come to you) and you will reward for something else (e.g. coming to you), not actually going potty outside.

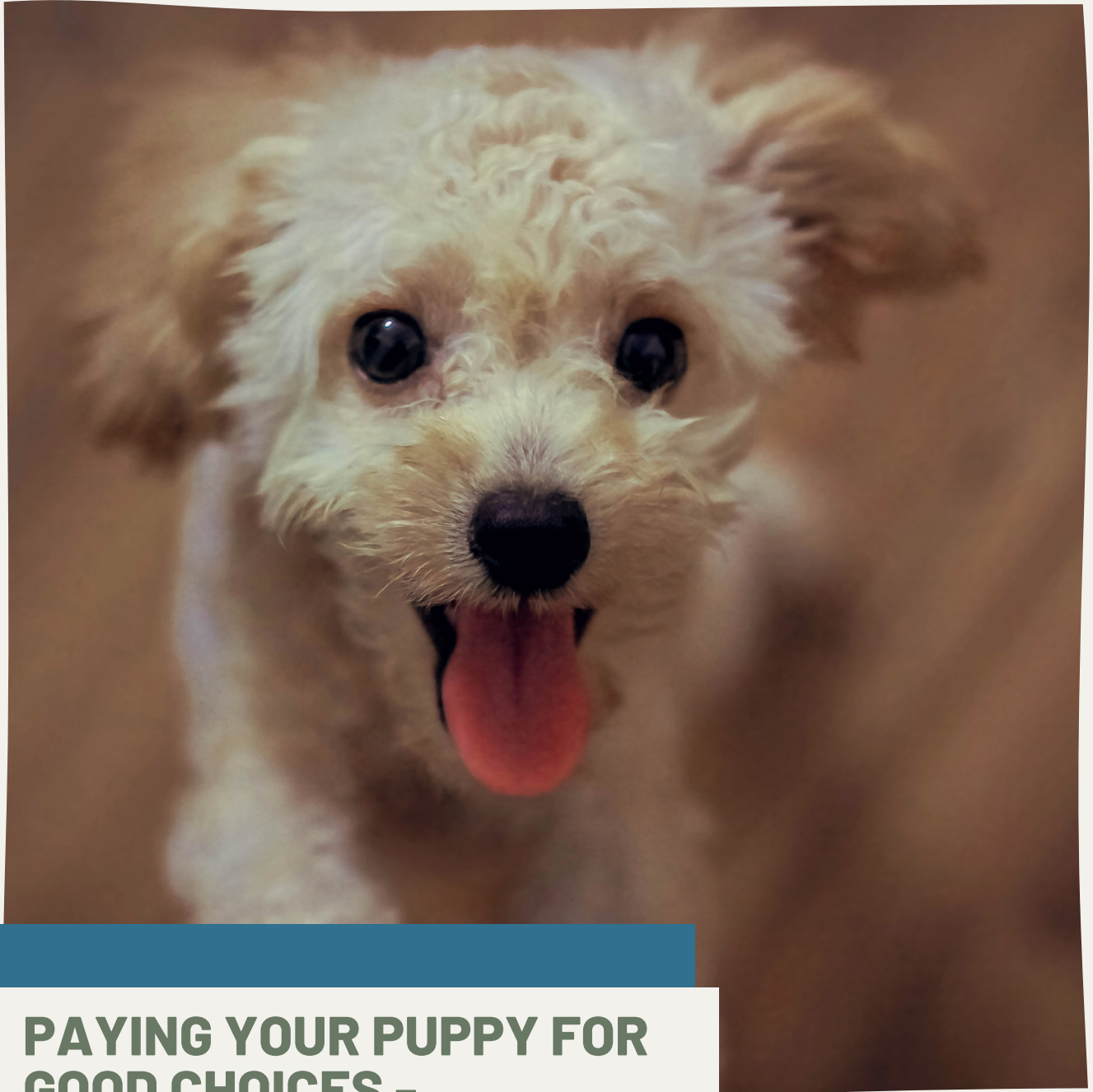
## 7: PUT GOING POTTY ON CUE

Teach your pup to go potty on cue – "Hurry up" is a favorite one! Say the cue the instant you see him get ready to potty, wait for him to finish, then reward as usual. Through repetition your puppy will learn and you'll eventually be able to ask him to go potty on cue.

## 9: IF YOUR PUPPY DOESN'T GO OUTSIDE BUT SHORTLY AFTER YOU BRING HIM BACK INSIDE.

If your puppy didn't go potty outside, after you come back inside, keep your puppy on the leash, wait for a minute or two, then go right back outside. Alternatively, you can confine your puppy in his crate, set your timer for 5 minutes, then bring him back outside.





**PAYING YOUR PUPPY FOR  
GOOD CHOICES -  
EVERYDAY TRAINING  
MADE EASY**

# PAYING YOUR PUPPY FOR GOOD CHOICES

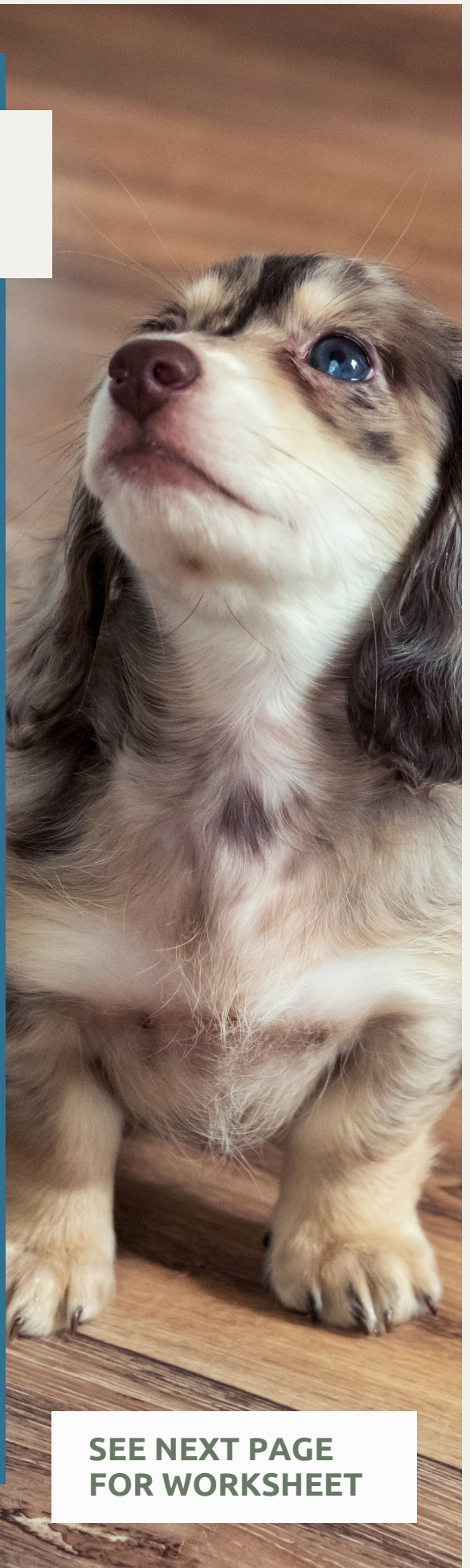
## Your #1 Super Power!

Dogs do what works for them -and this is true for your puppy the second you bring him home. He will learn with every single interaction, with you and with the environment, what gets him stuff that he likes and what keeps things away that he doesn't like.

So, your #1 superpower when raising your puppy is to be clear about how you'd like your puppy to behave - now and when he's a fully grown dog - in various situations, and *be ready with a treat when you see her behave that way.*

For example, many puppies will automatically sit when they see other dogs on a walk - you like that calm response? Feed a treat! Most puppies will come running to you when you say their name - You like that? Feed a treat. Many puppies will pay a lot of attention to you - you like that? Feed a treat when they do. Let your puppy know that you like his choices and that these choices lead to good things for him.

Remember, dogs do what works for them. If we don't give our puppies feedback for their choices that we like, they will often grow out of them.



**SEE NEXT PAGE  
FOR WORKSHEET**



# PAYING YOUR PUPPY FOR GOOD CHOICES WORKSHEET

Behavior you want to reward: \_\_\_\_\_

(e.g. looking at you, sitting, settling calmly on the bed)

(can mark with clicker or verbal "yes", or simply give a treat)

Start date: \_\_\_\_\_

(stick with this behavior for at least 7 days, but vary where you reward the behavior, e.g. in your home, backyard, on a walk)

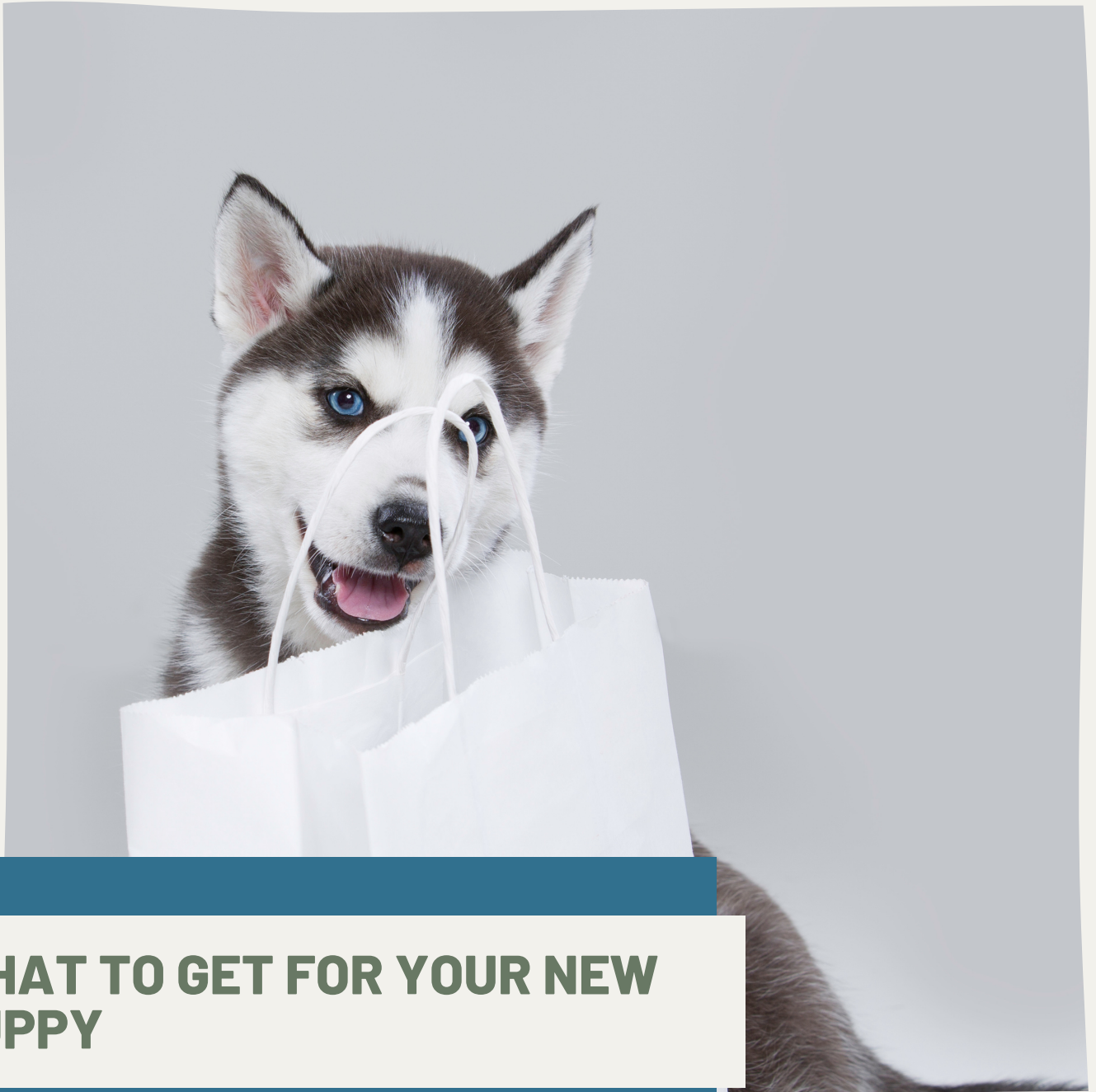
Day	Number of treats set aside (at least 20)	Place where you'll reward the behavior (e.g. kitchen, backyard etc.)	Before end of day, did you run out of treats? (yes/no)
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			

## How to play

Count out 20 (or more) treats or pieces of kibble in the morning (for example when you get your puppy's breakfast ready) and have them readily available, e.g. in a container or multiple containers that you keep out of your puppy's reach around your house, or in your treat pouch.

Pick a behavior that you like that your puppy does. For example, looking at you when you're out on walks, or settling on the bed, or sitting to get your attention. Feed one treat when your puppy does the behavior. Note that for this exercise, you don't ask your puppy to do the behavior, you rather catch them in the act and reward their good choice. Your goal is to run out of treats by the end of the day.

(This game is inspired by Kathy Sdao's SMART game.)



## WHAT TO GET FOR YOUR NEW PUPPY





## NEW PUPPY SHOPPING LIST

### 01 Buckle collar, harness and leash

I personally like a bit longer leashes, 8-9 ft, to give puppies more space to move freely, and harnesses that don't hinder their leg movement (Y-harness) with a head through fit. Don't forget to get an ID tag in case your pup gets lost!

### 02 Longline (15-30ft leash)

A longline comes handy for puppies and is a great tool for teenage dogs as well. It gives them an off leash experience while keeping them safe and it gives you the opportunity to practice off leash reliability. I prefer those made of biothane.

### 03 Crate and/or Play pen

Preventing your puppy from learning unwanted habits is one important strategy for success. I especially love exercise pens as they give your puppy more room than a crate when you can't actively supervise.

### 04 Stuffable food toys

My favorite ones are WestPaw Toppl, Kong and lickymats. I usually use wet food to fill them, keeping my pups engaged in a calm way. Having your puppy learn to entertain themselves with a toy will pay off throughout their lives, and certainly while they are young!

### 05 Toys

You'll also need toys to play with. You'll want toys of different textures, but long ones made of fleece come especially handy for nippy & bitey pups as they keep your hands far away from those sharp puppy teeth, and they are usually a puppy favorite.

### 06 Food puzzle bowl or snuffle mat, water bowl

I love using meal times to create mental enrichment opportunities for puppies. I love Outward Hound products, and snuffle mats. This even works for picky eaters. You'll want to have at least one water bowl, ideally made from stainless steel.

### 07 Treat Pouch

Will you want your pup to listen outside as well? I thought so :) You'll need to practice all exercises outside as well and be sure to reward your pup. A treat pouch makes taking treats a no-brainer and will make your training so much easier. I like the ones from RC Pets with a big opening for my hand.

### 08 Bed(s)

Puppies (and teenage dogs) need lots of sleep. And they need to learn how to settle while you're working or having guests over. Having at least one or rather multiple options for them to get cozy will help them choose to relax on their bed.

### 09 Enzymatic cleaner

Chances are that your pup will have accidents inside the house. Using an enzymatic cleaner to clean those up will remove the smell and with that help your pup understand that your carpet is not the correct potty area.

*And now,  
have fun!*

Enjoy the time with your puppy, and make sure to take lots of pictures while they're still little and cute and get into all sorts of trouble.

You can even share a picture of your puppy with me (that would make my day!) - and your completed Bingo card!

Send it to me directly ([julia@neighborhounddogtraining.com](mailto:julia@neighborhounddogtraining.com)) or tag me on instagram @neighborhounds - there's nothing that I love more than seeing cute puppies enjoying their lives, and I would love to hear how going through all the Bingo challenges has been going for you and your pup!

With the very best wishes,

*Julia*

from Neighborhound Dog Training  
[www.neighborhounddogtraining.com](http://www.neighborhounddogtraining.com)