



SHILOH GARDEN STANDARDS

BASIC TRAINING FOR FIRST TIME POODLE PUPPY OWNERS

Important! Put a collar and leash on your puppy before you get out of the car, many puppies are lost because they are not yet secure with their new people and don't know where they are or where they are supposed to go, so the puppy may run. Typically the puppy will stay by your side and come by calling puppy or baby or if a known name has been used, call by name. But always take every precaution.

Puppies have had their FIRST vaccination at appx. 7 ½ weeks of age. We give "ONLY" the Parvo/Distemper vaccination and the second booster is given at 11 weeks, so every caution must be taken in what location you potty your puppy, until all boosters have been given and are complete.

1. Never strike your puppy. Poodles have very sensitive nature and their spirits can be damaged easily. Discipline with a firm voice and slapping your hands together saying something like "no" or "stop" depending on the type of offense, much as you would for a toddler in training. A pop can filled with coins or rocks and shaken can also be used and works for stopping certain behaviors.

There are generally two types of poodle behavior :

type a: turns into a clown when disciplined, is more impulsive, curious and shows more personality . This type requires more patience in training.

type b: are crushed by a harsh word and handclap. These are quieter, more willing to play alone, more independent, often almost training themselves. "These are the thinkers."

2. Both types of poodles make wonderful working and companion dogs. The "clowns" usually make better show dogs. Because they show such vitality even under adverse conditions, and adapt to change almost instantaneously, and do wonderful in obedience, agility, field and herding events, as well as excel as service dogs in many arenas. The second type does just as well but usually carry themselves with more dignity, take a few days to a week to adapt to drastic change, and sometimes become slightly apprehensive if their security is threatened, again much like a toddler at this age.

3. If you get your puppy at 3-6 mo. Of age, basically that is what you are getting- a toddler. Still needing encouragement with house training, can usually last 6-8 hours at night if not longer, but needs to go out frequently during the daytime, for at least 10 minutes at a time, to avoid accidents in the house. They will usually wet in the first 3 minutes, the other job takes awhile longer. Again the "clown" will wake up immediately and need to "GO", where "Dignity" takes 5 minutes to wake up and then will decide if she needs to "GO", & when "Dignity" does decide, needs to go immediately. Poodles do not bark when they need to go outside. As your pup gets older it will either nudge your elbow or your tummy, or start pacing, these are all often a sign that they need to go out. Then of course, they could always go to the door & scratch or they'll just sit there, & expect you simply know what they want. I've brought a puppy home at appx. 10-12 weeks of age & never had more than 1 or 2 accidents, holding it for 12-14 hrs at a time so expect the unexpected, they will always surprise you, "pleasantly".

4. Leash training will not have been started when you get your puppy at 8-11 weeks, but will have been already started for you if you get your puppy after 3 months. We put a leash on and walk backwards coaxing the puppy. Usually they will walk on a leash comfortably if there are not a lot of

distractions in the home within 10-15 minutes. They love to travel and go wherever you go and behave remarkably well on the leash the very first time out, even with a lot of distractions. Do be careful around vehicles with air brakes the first time as this can really startle even grown dogs not expecting the loud hissing sound, causing them to pull backwards out of their collar & can cause serious injury to your poodle if they dart out into traffic out of fear.

5. Crate training will have been “started” on your puppy beginning at 6 weeks, which is essential for a puppy that is to be shipped by air or land transport, or is going to a “working couple” home, or to a show home. This prepares them for traveling, staying in motels or campers, etc. We never, ever keep the puppies in a crate for an extended period of time. We also suggest a crate as an “escape valve” for homes with small or very active children. Remember at this age the puppy is a toddler & needs naps and quiet times too. Have the bottom of your crate well padded, especially the crates that have big circles in the bottom of them (this kind is intended to have a grate, but most don’t come with them, and most stores don’t routinely stock them). They now have wonderful soft sided crates that are collapsible and absolutely awesome for home or travel. The pup does need to be accustomed to a crate prior to using one of these as they can be chewed right thru if the pup is not crate trained properly. Have a small rawhide chew bone for your puppy, a raw beef bone is preferable, a sock knotted in the middle, or a favorite soft toy. Goodwill or Salvation Army is an excellent place to purchase stuffed animals as they can be washed and they make great pillows and snugglies. Be sure and take all detachable parts off, eyes, etc. Do not give chews out of compressed rawhide-these are dangerous and pig ears are also not good for them.

6. We do not feed our puppies table scraps while we are having a meal. We do not encourage “begging” at a meal. When I give all my poodles a treat, I line them up & call each of them by name & give them their treat, making them all learn to wait their turn. This also teaches courtesy in your poodle & helps teach them not to take food from a stranger or out of the hands of small children. Remember 2 toddlers will fight over a cookie, this is no different than a small child and a toddler puppy, both have to learn when it is ok. Doggie treat recipes are in with the feeding information.

7. Being greeted at the door!!!! Oh, my! It doesn’t matter if you have been gone for 2 minutes or 5 hours, poodles will greet you at the door as if you have been gone for hours. You can break this habit, with difficulty. We have simply learned to just be prepared for it, and accept it as what it is, their desire to show they care about us vigorously. Be sure to have small children or the elderly out of the way until this greeting is over with, then everything settles right down.

8. This leads us to the issue of jumping up! Probably the only fault a standard has & it’s due to their overwhelming human-like love & affection. This is a natural to poodles, they love to be hugged! So we have a hug command, tapping the chest and saying “hug” means it’s ok. All other times train the puppy to stay “off”. I always allow the puppies a “hug” before I take them off the grooming table, or I kneel on the floor to start teaching this command while they are young. If they are allowed their “hugs”, they seem to be willing to obey the “off” command. When they jump up when it is not desired, we just hold their front feet away from us and don’t let go, making them balance on their back legs until they are tired, and keep repeating the “off” command.

9. All puppies play together by nipping and grabbing each other, therefore it is natural that when they get removed from the group, their natural instinct is to try to play with humans in the same way. Just grab the muzzle and squeeze lightly if they are nipping or grabbing clothes or something you are carrying. Usually once or twice is all it takes. If a pup is a little stubborn about this then squeeze the muzzle until the puppy whimpers, if it bites it’s tongue then it feels discomfort just like you do when it nips and it relates to the pain. Never strike your puppy in the face, it will become head shy and create a lot of problems in teaching a stay command and in grooming.

10. Our puppies are taught to be groomed on a table and our adults are taught to get “up” unto the table with that command. We also use the sit, stand, and stay commands during grooming. We train the pups to have the bottoms of their feet groomed while laying relaxed on their back in my lap.

They are always put in positions at this age, in which they are made as comfortable as possible by holding them close or by being cradled in some way, to enable this to be a loving and gentle process. The puppies are accustomed to being groomed weekly from 4 weeks on and this process is recommended to continue weekly or bi-weekly at first, then going to longer periods of time in between so the work that has been accomplished on the grooming table will not be lost. Treats are also always encouraged.

11. We use the “in” command for going “in” the vehicle of choice, “in” their crate, or “in” a kennel.

12. Teach your puppy the perimeters of your yard immediately. If you have a long driveway as we do that leads to the road or a large piece of property, I wait approx. 2 weeks or so until the area immediately around the home is established. Then I take them the perimeter of the property establishing those boundaries & finally to the end of the driveway. Give your pup the sit command, then a stay command, both of which should be a learned behavior by this time, pushing your palm against their nose, then go across your street, continuing to give the stay command. Do this for several days, even if you do have a fenced yard. That way if a gate gets left open your poodle will still know its boundaries and is less apt to suffer injury. Remember a new puppy will still be looking for “home” & familiarity for a few days.

Also, be sure and take the puppy to the exact area where you want him/her to eliminate themselves on a regular basis. The first few times, carry them to the area, then carry them 3/4 of the way and putting them on the ground to walk the rest of the way for a few times, then 1/2 way, 1/4 way, until the pup will follow you out to the exact area before going to the bathroom.

13. “Boogie Man” stages.: Your puppy will go through 2 “Boogie Man” stages. One at approximately 4-6 months of age. This is a stage when they are startled or sometimes scared by natural phenomenon (thunder storms; images in a mirror or dark window; lights coming through a dark window). A puppy usually just needs encouragement and security to get through this stage. It is a stage that usually passes fairly quickly. The second “Boogie Man” stage is a little more prolonged and a little more difficult to help your puppy through. This occurs in single dog homes at app. 7-11 months or in multi-dog homes where there is already a “defense” dog at app. 13-16 mo. This stage is where your puppy decides this is his home and his to protect, this is his vehicle and his to protect, you are his people to protect etc. This can be a confusing stage for your puppy, much like a teenager that is part child and part adult. Your puppy is trying to make the transition from puppy to adult and isn’t quite sure what is expected of him/her. & quite how he/she should bring it about. They are leery of strangers and even family members that do not actually live in the home. They will bark more than usual, will back off from what they conceive as strange situations. This is all perfectly normal. There is nothing wrong with your dog. Again a dog in this stage needs a lot of encouragement. Praise when they defend, but not for undue aggressiveness. Your dog should never be swatted for this behavioral change, but should be given as much understanding & security as possible. This is a good time to be working with your dog on leash, introducing him to people you want him to know, but do not force him to meet strangers (especially sales persons). Use the words “bad behavior” and gently squeeze the muzzle for undue barking or growling or this may be a good time to use the pop can of change and shake it if readily available. Do not encourage your dog to be friendly, just accepting at this time. Overly friendly dogs are often the ones that can end up kidnaped. Be sure to call us if you have any questions or need suggestions during this stage.

14. Enjoy your puppy training! Please be sure to call if you have any questions at all. We want our puppies and their new owners to be totally happy!!

15. Many puppy training resources are available via books and videos. Many are mentioned on my website for reference. SitStay.com is a good source in which to find some of these. Ian Dunbar has some wonderful videos available on puppy training.

