

THE NATIONAL DOG TRAINING ACADEMY

E-Book



**Train your Puppy
with Fair but Firm
Positive Reward Training**

Becoming A Dog Trainer

I'm Sandra Lawton and I've owned many dogs of different breeds over 40 year...but my life changed 12 years ago, when I brought home Rolo, my gorgeous 12 week old flat coated retriever puppy.



Lessons Learned

- The first lesson I learned... bringing home a 12-week old puppy can be very different to bringing home an 8-week old puppy.
- The second lesson, was what it means to have a 'working' dog.
- The third lesson was just how important it is, to find the right professional training, that will support you and your dog on this journey.
- But the most vital lesson I learned, was **how important** it is to train your puppy in a kind, fair but firm way.

Even now I still find it hard to believe that any dog training school would ask someone to leave, because their puppy is too disruptive. No offer of any other help, just 'we don't want the rest of the class disrupted.' That's exactly what happened to me with my Flatcoat puppy. Not once, but twice! And I've met many dog owners since, who've had a similar experience.

Fortunately, because Rolo is a gundog breed, I was able to seek help from some expert gundog trainers, who despite the reputation of gundog trainers, offered kind but firm training solutions.



Becoming A Dog Trainer

Continued...

Being a dog trainer is as much about teaching people as it is about teaching dogs, yet very few dog trainers ever undertake adult education training or teacher training.

How I became a Dog Trainer

I was fortunate that I already had built up skills, experience and qualifications from past Jobs in adult training.



So after my bad experiences with various dog trainers, I then spent the next year learning how to train dogs by attending Steve Mann's courses and through his mentorship I built up a wealth of knowledge and experience, which I now pass on to you.

This book will introduce you to my set of training ideas and beliefs. It will help you get puppy settled in to his/her new world and get you started on the right path from day 1 of your new life with your puppy.

Any reference throughout the book to '**him**' or '**he**' includes both genders and is simply to make the text more readable.



Puppy Training Principles

Teach your pup what you'd like him to do

- Set firm, fair boundaries
- Use as little 'nagging' as possible
- Be consistent, persistent and insistent
- Use kind, but firm methods
- Show your pup how to settle into your human world. I'm going to show you how to do this too.

Its important to remember that we all have different ideas about what is acceptable and what isn't. There're some behaviours that are an absolute 'must have,' such as coming back when called, learning not to puppy bite humans and going to the toilet outside.

Other behaviours are a matter of choice and it's up to you to make those choices and set those boundaries from the offset.



Let's Get Started...

Preparing for the 7 Steps...

Before pup comes home, one of the things you should definitely invest in, is a crate. It will need to be large enough for pup to stand up, stretch, and turn around in.

At this stage it should also have enough space for a bed, as well as free space which can be used to feed pup and create an emergency toilet area, for when pup is alone.

Your puppy needs to recognise his crate as a great place to be and a **'safe haven'** for when he wants to rest or sleep.

I can't stress this next point enough, it's really Important that children are taught to **not** disturb the puppy when he is in the crate.



Step 1

Collecting your puppy

- **Pick Up Time:** Try to arrange your pick up time for in the morning bring, as this will give you the whole day to get him settled into his new home.
- When you get pup home, and once he's had a chance to have a 'weeeee' (toilet time), give him a bit of time (supervised) to wander around and get used to all the new smells.
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Step 2

Sleeping Arrangements

I'm not a dog trainer that says 'don't have your dog on the bed', you decide, set your boundaries and be consistent with them.

However, in the early days I would suggest you teach pup to settle alone at night in his own bed or crate. This teaches pup independence and will help prevent separation anxiety at a later stage.

[Click here](#) for more information on crate training.



Step 3

Toilet/house training

Teach pup where it is you want him to go right from the start. Don't be fooled into thinking puppy knows he has to go outside. He doesn't.

Take pup out regularly,

- After eating/drinking
- On waking
- After playing
- Every hour to hour and a half



As everything we do with our pups it has to be consistent. It is tiring and in the winter it's hard. If you haven't already got your pup you might want to consider the time of year when you do get one.

The key is to prevent accidents in the home. Every time pup goes in the house you are starting to build the wrong habit and it will take longer for the habit of going outside to develop.



Step 4

Feeding your Pup

Your puppy needs to learn to eat well, at set mealtimes. Don't allow puppy to get into the habit of grazing throughout the day.

Grazing means food will have less value for them, and you'll find it very difficult to use food for positive reward-based training. It's also harder to assess how much your pup is eating.

Top Tip:

A great way to feed any dog or puppy is to 'hand-feed.' This means no food in a bowl at all.

I recommend measuring out your dog's quota of food for the day, then use this for training throughout the day. You can scatter some of it in the garden or in the park, giving puppy a chance to do some searching and use his brain. Some of it can even be given in a Kong.



The advantages feeding of doing this is that is that you need less treats for your training and pup becomes more focused on you.



Step 5

Toxins

It would be impossible to list all of the human foods that are toxic or harmful to dogs so I suggest you always check when necessary.

Here's a few of the common ones:

- Chocolate – particularly dark chocolate, tiny quantities
- Grapes
- Onions
- Currants/raisins – careful with your Christmas cake/Hot Cross Buns
- Mouldy foods contain a lot of toxins
- Xylitol – artificial sweetener found in some brands of peanut butter
- Nicotine - E cigarettes, cigarette butts (not food I know but I didn't know where else to put it!)

The garden can be a very dangerous place for your puppy too. Lots of plants are toxic to dogs.

Many plants are harmful too

For a list of toxins and symptoms, following ingestion, please follow the link below.

<http://www.petpoisonhelpline.com/pet-owners/>



Onions



Currants



Raisins



Grapes



Chocolate



Garlic



Xylitol



Step 6

Socialising Your Pup

Remember everything we take for granted day to day is new to your puppy.

Meeting people:-

This needs to include people wearing different clothing, glasses, hats and so on.

Don't force puppy to confront things or to be met by people. Let puppy do this slowly and in his own time.

The most important thing is to get pup as used to as many different things, in a positive way.

Give your puppy as much life experience in those early days as possible. Support him firmly but kindly when he comes across something he's unsure of.

If puppy does show signs of being nervous or scared avoid the 'there, there, pamper' approach. This will just make puppy more nervous.

Avoid picking puppy up, this removes his option to flee. Just have a no nonsense, everything is ok attitude.



Step 7

Puppy Biting, Nipping and Mouthing

Puppy biting is natural puppy behaviour. Your puppy might also make growly noises when he plays which is normal behaviour.

Your pup will continue to play-bite his litter mates and other dogs but he does need to learn that putting his teeth on a human is **not acceptable**.

How to stop puppy biting/mouthing/nipping

Don't shout at pup when he is biting – pup isn't doing anything wrong. He just has no idea that he's not allowed to do this.

If your sitting quietly with pup, gently stroking him and he starts to nibble your fingers, just a gentle, but firm, 'no' or '**ahah**' and remove your hand. If pup stops you can praise him calmly, if he doesn't get up and walk away.

If you are playing with pup and he starts to bite you, stop immediately, again a firm, '**no**', or '**ahah**'. Make it clear it is not acceptable and if you find yourself in the position that your pup is hanging off your arm, at this point so remove him with a firm '**off**'.

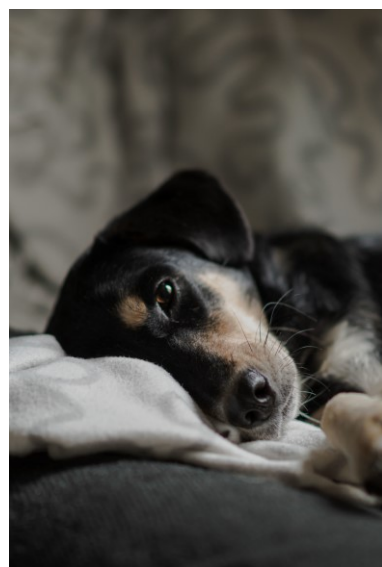
Once pup stops and understands you are not happy, send him off to play with a toy away from you. **Don't use the toy as distraction while he's still biting you.**



Step 7...continued

If pup becomes over excited, then maybe it's time for a rest. Help pup to calm down by putting him in his bed or crate if you are using one. (crates must be trained properly and happy being in his crate before being used for 'timeout')

The same principles apply if your pup bites your clothes, hair or anything else human...feet are particularly exciting to puppies. I'd recommend encouraging children to wear slippers for a while.



Often a puppy will have a time of day where they go "nuts". They'll have a burst of energy, run around, nip at everything they can find and seem almost uncontrollable. Usually this is when pup is getting tired.

Teach him to go to his bed for a rest **BEFORE** the behaviour starts. Pop him in his crate with a lovely tasty Kong, this will help him to relax and he'll most likely sleep.



The end of our 7 Steps

All puppies should come with a User Manual. So often people are at crisis point before calling for help. As humans we often feel a failure if we can't cope.

Everyone else seems to be coping. Trust me they aren't. If you need help, ask for it.

Just make sure the help you get is not randomly off the internet. Go to a qualified, experienced professional who uses modern, positive reward-based training. Check people out. Do they have any qualifications? This is a totally unregulated industry.

- Train your puppy **NOW** and train him well.
 - Train him consistently.
 - Don't wait until pup reaches adolescence and suddenly realise you didn't train him properly.
- ...or you'll have a dog that won't listen or do anything you ask.

If you put the work in with your new pup, you will end up with a loving, loyal friend for life.



The next steps...

We firmly believe in training our pups outside, with distractions and it's better to meet those distractions, when you have support around you to help guide you what to do.

One last piece of advice from me...train in a village hall at your peril.

- [Sign up for our 6 week](#) puppy program.
- Can't get to our classes? - Take our [online puppy programme](#). (full course details by video with weekly video support calls).

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