

### Socialization

Handler's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Puppy's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Help your pup achieve his or her full potential by providing a wide variety of positive experiences and associating new experiences with praise and treats. Dogs that are well socialized are more comfortable with new situations and experiences later in life, and are less likely to become fearful or anxious when faced with novel situations. Socialization is most critical for puppies under 6 months old but should be continued throughout your dog's life. The goal is for you and your pup to experience as many of the following as possible. If you find that your pup is fearful or anxious in a particular situation, use a happy voice and move farther away, then talk to us and we'll be happy to help. Feel free to add your own ideas and remember to keep it positive and fun!

#### Your puppy meets and gets a treat from:

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> adults                 | <input type="checkbox"/> seniors                       | <input type="checkbox"/> children and teenagers                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> people wearing glasses | <input type="checkbox"/> people wearing hat/head scarf | <input type="checkbox"/> people with beards                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> people wearing coats   | <input type="checkbox"/> people wearing gloves/mittens | <input type="checkbox"/> people in uniform                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> people in costume      | <input type="checkbox"/> people with backpacks         | <input type="checkbox"/> people with rolling suitcases              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> people in wheelchairs  | <input type="checkbox"/> people using crutches or cane | <input type="checkbox"/> people on bicycles                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> people on skateboards  | <input type="checkbox"/> joggers                       | <input type="checkbox"/> people of different races or ethnic groups |

#### Your puppy experiences:

- |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> baby stroller            | <input type="checkbox"/> children playing       | <input type="checkbox"/> toys/remote control toys  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> scooter/skateboard       | <input type="checkbox"/> child's sporting event | <input type="checkbox"/> parade or street festival |
| <input type="checkbox"/> play with a friendly dog | <input type="checkbox"/> meet a calm cat        | <input type="checkbox"/> see livestock             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> opened umbrella          | <input type="checkbox"/> automatic doors        | <input type="checkbox"/> riding in a car           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> riding on a boat         | <input type="checkbox"/> riding on an elevator  |  |

#### Your puppy hears:

- |   |   |   |                                      |
|---|---|---|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> ringing phone          | <input type="checkbox"/> doorbell           | <input type="checkbox"/> knocking on door | <input type="checkbox"/> loud voices |
| <input type="checkbox"/> traffic noise/car horn | <input type="checkbox"/> vacuum cleaner     | <input type="checkbox"/> dishwasher       | <input type="checkbox"/> lawn mower  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> snow shovel            | <input type="checkbox"/> snowmobile         | <input type="checkbox"/> four wheeler     | <input type="checkbox"/> train       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> garbage truck          | <input type="checkbox"/> construction noise | <input type="checkbox"/> sirens           | <input type="checkbox"/> thunder     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> dropped keys           | <input type="checkbox"/> crying baby        | <input type="checkbox"/> hair dryer       | <input type="checkbox"/> fireworks   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> flapping plastic bag   | <input type="checkbox"/> loud music         |   |                                      |

#### Your puppy feels:

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> ears gently handled      | <input type="checkbox"/> paws gently handled | <input type="checkbox"/> nails trimmed            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> tail gently pulled       | <input type="checkbox"/> being brushed       | <input type="checkbox"/> getting a bath           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> being dried with a towel | <input type="checkbox"/> tile floor          | <input type="checkbox"/> going up and down stairs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> grass                    | <input type="checkbox"/> sand                | <input type="checkbox"/> wood                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> gravel                   | <input type="checkbox"/> cement/pavement     | <input type="checkbox"/> wobbly surface           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> swimming or wading       | <input type="checkbox"/> rain and snow       |   |

#### Your puppy visits:

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> vet's office for a treat | <input type="checkbox"/> pet supply store  | <input type="checkbox"/> groomer              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> pet-friendly store       | <input type="checkbox"/> city neighborhood | <input type="checkbox"/> country neighborhood |

## Crate Training

Many dogs enjoy the den-like environment of a crate. A crate can help with housetraining, prevents your dog from chewing on inappropriate objects, and gives your dog a safe, quiet place to take a break or even snooze. Of course, many puppies are used to sleeping with their litter mates, so being alone at night can be scary. Here are some suggestions to help you teach your new pup to enjoy going in the crate.

- It may help to place the crate in your bedroom at night. Sometimes placing an old-fashioned ticking alarm clock (wrapped in a towel) in the crate can help comfort the pup. Earplugs will help you get through the first few nights.
- Feed your dog in the crate - put the food bowl in the back of the crate and walk away. Leave the door open while your dog is eating. The goal is to create a positive association with the crate.
- Teach "crate" or "kennel up" by tossing a treat or a toy into the back of the crate. When your dog goes in the crate, say your cue word and praise. Leave the crate door open. When your dog comes out of the crate, toss another small treat or a toy into the crate. Repeat a few times, then take a break.
- Once your dog is willingly going into the crate, repeat as above but close the door for a moment, then open the door and let the dog out. All good stuff - toys, treats, praise - should occur inside the crate. Short sessions - five reps, then take a break, and try to do several sessions a day. Over several days, gradually increase the time that the crate door is closed. Work up to closing the crate door and leaving the room or going outside the house for a few minutes.
- In the crate, give your dog a Kong toy (or another hollow toy) stuffed with some kibble and something yummy like peanut butter, spray cheese or canned dog food. Having a special treat associated with the crate will encourage your dog to look forward to crate time.
- Build "crate drive" by putting a stuffed Kong or favorite toy inside the crate and closing the door so your dog cannot get at it. When your dog appears eager to get to the item, open the door and let the dog get it (leave the door open so your dog can get out of the crate if he wants, for now).
- Use music, talk radio and/or white noise (like a fan) to soothe your dog and to block out external noises. Many people have found that dogs are soothed by hearing slow-paced classical piano music; you can choose music from your own collection or purchase a "Through a Dog's Ear" CD from [www.throughadogsear.com](http://www.throughadogsear.com).
- Further reading:
  - [www.whole-dog-journal.com/issues/8\\_5/features/15713-1.html](http://www.whole-dog-journal.com/issues/8_5/features/15713-1.html)
  - [www.petexpertise.com/dog-training-article-crate-training-your-dog.html](http://www.petexpertise.com/dog-training-article-crate-training-your-dog.html)
  - [www.whole-dog-journal.com/issues/14\\_11/features/If-Your-Dog-Hates-His-Crate\\_20388-1.html](http://www.whole-dog-journal.com/issues/14_11/features/If-Your-Dog-Hates-His-Crate_20388-1.html)

Follow these tips, and soon your dog will be comfortably resting in the crate.

## Housetraining

One of the most important things you can teach your dog is where to eliminate. Even adult dogs may need a refresher course on housetraining, since the stress of moving to a new home can cause mistakes. Here are some tips to make the process easier for everyone.

### Stay on Schedule

Your puppy's age in months + 1 = the maximum number of hours your puppy can "hold it." This means your puppy will need to go outside frequently, especially:

- immediately after waking up
- immediately after playing
- 15-30 minutes after eating or drinking
- immediately after giving an "early warning signal" like circling, sniffing the floor, pacing, whining, stopping in the middle of an activity, or walking away from you
- once or twice during the night

If the puppy wakes up during the night and starts to cry, it's time to go out! You'll soon learn the difference between whining that means "Can I get out of my crate?" and whining that means "Hey, I gotta go!" If you don't believe the puppy needs to go, ignore the whining. Otherwise, your pup will learn that crying makes that crate door open like magic. Try to wait until your pup is quiet before letting him or her out of the crate.

Keeping a housetraining diary will help you stay on schedule. Every time your puppy eliminates (including accidents), note the day, time of day, type and location. This can help you identify any problem areas in your housetraining plan.

### Time to Go

While your puppy is young and still learning, carry him to the potty area – touching the floor can trigger an accident.

Take your puppy outside on a leash (even in the yard) to guide your puppy to the potty area in your yard, and to ensure your pup does not wander around exploring or playing – there will be time for that after the pup does his "business." Once housetraining has progressed, you can take the puppy out without leash, but only in a securely fenced-in area. Always be safe!

As soon as your puppy squats, praise in a calm voice by saying "Good potty!" or "Good pee!" or "Good poop!" When your puppy has finished, immediately say "Good dog!" and give a treat if you like.

Take some time to play with your puppy before returning inside. Otherwise, your puppy will learn to postpone elimination for as long as possible (and may even wait until returning indoors) in order to extend the time outside. Resist the urge to rush back inside during bad weather!

If your puppy does not eliminate, put the puppy back in the crate and try again in 15-20 minutes.

### Ring the Bell

You can train your puppy to ring a bell when it wants to go outside. Hang a bell (or jingle bells or Poochie Bells) from the doorknob, then place a small amount of peanut butter on the bell. When your dog licks the peanut butter, the bell will ring. Immediately say "outside!" then open the door and take the puppy

out. After a few days, stop using the peanut butter. The puppy will learn that ringing the bell means the door will open. Of course, the puppy will probably ring the bell when it wants to play in the yard, too, but the bell can be a handy tool for housetraining.

## **Avoiding Accidents**

Here are some keys to preventing housetraining mistakes:

- Know your puppy's schedule for elimination (use the Housetraining Diary to track patterns).
- Recognize your puppy's "early warning signals."
- Always keep your puppy under close supervision – in the same room, and in visual range or tethered to you – when not in a crate or confined in a "puppy-proof" area.

If an accident happens, DO NOT PUNISH THE PUPPY! Punishment will slow down the housetraining process, can lead to accidents from fearful or submissive urination, and may make your puppy afraid to eliminate in your presence. If you catch your puppy "in the act," you can say "no!" or make a noise to interrupt, and then immediately whisk your puppy outside. Then encourage the puppy to "go potty" and praise the puppy when it squats. If the accident has already occurred, simply put the puppy in a crate or confined area and clean up the soiled area. Use a pet odor neutralizer such as Nature's Miracle or Simple Solution to eliminate scent, and use baby gates or a piece of furniture to block access to "the scene of the crime."

## **Crate Training**

Proper use of a crate will greatly speed up the housetraining process. Crate training encourages your puppy to control the urge to eliminate, and also gives your puppy a safe place to relax and sleep. The crate should only be large enough to allow your puppy to stand up, turn around, and lay down comfortably.

Crate training is not a substitute for regular walks. Your puppy will still need to eliminate at least 6-8 times per day. Therefore, someone – you, a dog walker, or a neighbor – will need to let your puppy out of the crate periodically, based on the schedules set out above. If this is not possible, consider adopting an older dog that is already housetrained – but remember, even adult dogs need to stretch their legs during the workday and should be walked at least twice every day. If you are unable or unwilling to arrange for someone to let the puppy out during the day, you will need a crate that is large enough to provide your puppy with separate sleeping and potty areas, and the potty area must be cleaned frequently. Remember that allowing the pup to eliminate in its crate will significantly increase housetraining time.

It is fine to put your puppy in the crate if you need a few minutes of "puppy-free" time, but remember that going in the crate should always be a positive experience. Use a happy tone of voice and a treat!

If you cannot crate train your puppy, then confine the puppy in a safe, puppy-proof area such as a kitchen or a spare room when you cannot actively supervise. Baby gates or dog exercise pens (available from pet supply catalogs) can be useful. The area must be puppy-proofed, with no access to harmful substances that the puppy can chew or ingest such as household chemicals, electrical cords, plants, laundry, shoes, and other items. Your puppy still will need to be taken outside regularly or will need a potty area.

## **Paper Training**

If you want your dog to potty outdoors at some point, we strongly encourage you to avoid paper training because it teaches your pup that indoors is an appropriate place to eliminate, and your pup will become used to eliminating on newspaper and may always prefer that surface to grass. Unless you are comfortable with the possibility that the dog will eliminate indoors for the rest of its life, you should use a crate for housetraining.

If you choose to paper train or use a doggie litter box, keep the paper or box in one area. When the puppy needs to eliminate, take the puppy to the paper and say "Go potty" or a similar phrase. Praise the puppy as soon as it squats and immediately after it finishes. Clean the paper or litter box regularly. The puppy may avoid the area if it becomes very dirty. However, leaving a small amount of "scent" on the paper or box will help your pup remember where to go.

If you plan to wean the puppy from paper training at a later time, either keep the paper near the door or, if this is not possible, gradually move the paper from its original area towards the door (only a few inches per day). Once the paper has been near the door for several days, and your puppy is reliably using the paper, watch your puppy closely when he or she goes to the paper, and then take the pup outside as soon as it begins to squat. Place some soiled paper on the outdoor spot where you'd like the puppy to eliminate (you can secure it in place with rocks or bricks), and follow the procedures outlined above for outdoor housetraining.

### **Conclusion**

Remember, most puppies are not completely housetrained until they are around six months old. In addition, the hormonal and other changes that are part of normal canine development can cause puppies to "forget" their housetraining for a short period when they are 8-10 months old. We recommend you use a crate until the pup is at least 12 months, when the pup is mature enough to avoid accidents and to understand the distinction between chew toys and your slippers!

If your dog is having difficulty with housetraining, let us know – we may need to fine-tune your housetraining plan, or your pup may need to see your veterinarian to rule out any health-related issues. Be patient, consistent and kind, and both you and your dog will be pleased with the results!



## Mouthing

Mouthing is a part of normal puppy development, but this behavior can be quite uncomfortable for puppy owners. Here are some suggestions to get you and your puppy through the mouthing stage.

Teach your puppy a hand targeting exercise like touch, where your puppy is rewarded for placing her nose on the palm of your hand (see our Attention Exercises handout for more details). The touch exercise teaches an appropriate way to interact with hands. Touch also is extremely useful as a greeting behavior, because most people will stick out their hand to say hi to your dog, so your pup will place her nose on the person's hand instead of jumping up on the person.

Occasionally hand feed a portion of your dog's meal so he gets additional practice being gentle with hands even when excited.

It is fine to give your pup a toy as an appropriate outlet for mouthing/chewing, but always ask for a polite behavior first, like sit or touch. It's easy for young dogs to mistakenly learn that chewing on our hands, clothing or furniture is how you ask for a toy. Instead, interrupt the inappropriate behavior ("no!" or "ah ah!"), then ask for an appropriate behavior and reward with the toy.

Practice impulse control. Hold a toy or treat in your closed hand and wait until your dog sits, then praise, open your hand, and give him the item. This helps teach pups that grabbing is not the way to get things; instead, sitting politely is the answer.

Keep in mind that puppies must use their mouths in order to learn to adjust their mouth pressure (known as bite inhibition), and bite inhibition is best learned before your pup is four and a half months old, before the adult teeth come in. Socialization and play time with other puppies (or gentle adult dogs with known vaccination histories) is an excellent way for your puppy to learn bite inhibition. If your puppy presses down too firmly with his needle-sharp teeth, the other pup likely will shriek and walk away, ending the play session. This is an important lesson for your pup; be gentle with your mouth and keep playing, or be rough and lose your playmate.

Play time with people is also an important element in learning bite inhibition. Since humans do not have fur, our skin is more sensitive than your puppy's canine playmates, so your pup needs to learn that he must be very gentle when playing with people. For this reason, it is important that you permit some mouthing, but let your pup know when it hurts by saying "ow!" and walking away. Avoid grabbing his muzzle or pressing his lip into his teeth, because it is important for your pup to know that hands near his face are always safe; otherwise, your puppy can become hand-shy and nippy when people reach to pet him.

Mouthing can be a symptom of an over-tired puppy. If your puppy does not respond to the techniques above within a moment or two, then use a treat to get your puppy into the crate or puppy-proof area, provide a chew toy, and give your puppy a break.

For more information, we encourage you to read this excellent article from Dog Star Daily:  
[www.dogstardaily.com/training/teaching-bite-inhibition](http://www.dogstardaily.com/training/teaching-bite-inhibition)

### **Attention Exercises: Name Game, Watch Me and Targeting (Touch)**

Teaching your dog to pay attention to you will make a huge impact on your dog's behavior. Dogs who are busy watching you are less likely to get into mischief and more likely to respond to cues for polite behaviors like sit and down.

#### **Name Game**

This is a fun game to play when feeding your dog.

- Get 10 pieces of kibble or treats.
- Say your dog's name.
- When your dog looks at you, praise ("Good!") then give your dog one piece of kibble. Repeat nine times. Notice how your dog begins to respond more and more quickly to his name!
- Start off close to your dog, and gradually increase distance and distractions.
- If your dog does not respond on the first try, instead of repeating her name try clapping your hands, patting your leg, or making a sound to get her attention, then praise and treat.

#### **Watch Me**

Paying attention to you makes wonderful things happen!

- Start with your dog on leash or close to you in a low-distraction area.
- Hold a small treat in your hand close to your dog's nose.
- Move your hand from your dog's nose to your nose. Your dog's eyes will follow the treat.
- When your dog makes eye contact with you, praise ("Good!") then give the treat. Repeat four times.
- Next, do the same thing but without a treat in your hand (have a treat hidden in your other hand or in your pocket). When your dog makes eye contact, praise then give the treat.
- After several more repetitions, when your dog makes eye contact, say "watch me" (or "watch" or "look"), and praise then give the treat.
- If your dog will not look at you, try clapping your hands, patting your leg, or making a sound to get her attention, then praise and treat.

#### **Targeting (Touch)**

This interactive behavior helps keep your dog focused despite distractions, teaches your dog to be gentle with hands and comfortable with people reaching towards them, and enhances precision for leash walking, recall, and many other basic to advanced obedience skills.

- Start with your dog in a sit or stand position.
- Hide several small pieces of treat in one hand.
- Hold out your other hand close to your dog's nose. When your dog touches your hand with her nose (no teeth allowed!) say "Good!" and give one piece of treat. If your dog is unsure what to do, you can "prime the pump" by rubbing your touch hand with a treat to leave some scent. Repeat several times.
- Now, at the same time as your dog touches your hand with her nose, say "touch" and give a treat. Repeat several times.
- When your dog is intentionally bumping your hand with her nose, hold out your hand and say "touch" then reward with "good!" followed by a treat. Try moving your hand into different positions.

Targeting has many practical uses:

- On a walk, hold your hand by your side, ask your dog to touch periodically, and reward with treats and praise. This will help keep your dog in position and paying attention to you.
- When recalling your dog, hold your hand down in front of you and ask your dog to touch upon arrival, to help keep your dog with you and avoid a "fly by." Reward with treats and praise.
- To clean muddy paws, hold your hand level with your dog's nose and slightly in front of your dog, and ask for a touch. When your dog steps forward and stands, reward.



## Sit, Down, Stand

As you practice the basic skills of sit, down and stand, remember to start by getting your dog into position and rewarding several times before using a cue word. Once your dog can reliably get into position, name it by adding your cue. If your dog does not respond to the cue word, leave the word out and use a hand signal, body language, and a treat if needed to help get your dog into position, then praise and reward. Finally, when you praise, wait a second and then reward with a treat, toy, attention, or something else fun. This will help create a strong association between your praise and the tangible reward.

### Sit

- Start with your dog in a stand (all four paws on the floor). Hold a treat close to your dog's nose.
- Slowly move your hand over your dog's head towards the tail, keeping your hand close to your dog's nose.
- When your dog's hind end is on the floor, praise ("good!") then reward with the treat. Repeat four times.
- Next, start with your dog in a stand and make the same hand signal (hand close to your dog's nose, then slowly over the head) but without the treat in your hand. When your dog's hind end is on the floor, praise then reward with the treat. Repeat four times.
- Now, do the same hand movement and this time, when your dog's hind end touches the floor, say the cue word "sit," and praise then reward with the treat. Repeat four times.
- As you practice, gradually modify your hand signal. Most people use one of the following signals: (1) start with your arm at your side (hand by your leg), then bend your elbow and bring your hand up to your shoulder; or (2) start with your elbow bent, hand by your shoulder, then point at your dog's hind end.
- Finally, say the cue word "sit" and wait to see what happens! Be patient. Your dog may need a moment to think it through. If your dog is unsure, use your hand signal to help your dog get into the sit position. Praise then treat!
- Practice alternating between a verbal cue and a hand signal until your dog is proficient with both. The verbal cue is handy when your hands are full (you are carrying groceries or making dinner), and the hand signal is helpful when you cannot talk to your dog (you are on the phone or your dog is at a distance).

### Down

- Start with your dog in a sit. Hold a treat in your hand close to your dog's nose.
- Very slowly, lower your hand towards the floor, staying close to your dog's chest, and allowing your dog to lick the treat. As your hand reaches the floor, between your dog's front paws, slowly move your hand forward.
- When your dog's belly touches the ground, praise ("good!") then reward with the treat. Repeat four times. (To move your dog from a down position into a sit position, hold a treat in one hand close to your dog's nose and slowly move it up until your dog is in a sit.)

If your dog is hesitant, progress slowly and reward when your dog (i) lowers his head, (ii) stretches out his leg or paws at the treat, (iii) stretches out both legs, and finally (iv) touches his belly to the floor. Repeat each step a few times before moving on to the next. If your dog "pops up," simply return to a sit position and start again, moving very slowly.

Avoid using your hands or the leash to physically pressure your dog into lying down, as this can make your dog uncomfortable with the down position and possibly afraid of your hands.

- Next, start with your dog in a sit and make the same hand movement (hand close to your dog's nose, then slowly down towards the floor, between the front paws) but without the treat in your hand. When your dog's belly is on the floor, praise then reward with the treat. Repeat four times.
- Now, do the same hand signal and this time, when your dog's belly is on the floor, say the cue word "down," and praise then reward with the treat. Repeat four times.
- As you practice, gradually stand in a more upright position, and modify your hand signal so your hand starts close to your dog's nose and makes a pushing motion (palm down) towards the floor.
- Finally, start with your dog in a sit position, say the cue word "down," and wait to see what happens! If needed, use your hand signal to help your dog get into the down position. Praise then treat!
- Practice alternating between a verbal cue and a hand signal until your dog is proficient with both. At home, you can help your dog learn the verbal cue by saying "down" whenever your dog lays down on his or her own.

### **Stand**

- Start with your dog in a sit.
- Hold your open palm in front of your dog's nose and move your hand slowly forward, away from your dog and level with your dog's nose (you may need to give your dog some verbal encouragement). You can hold a treat in your hand, or use the "touch" cue if your dog is familiar with hand targeting.
- When your dog steps forward to sniff your hand, praise then reward. Repeat four times. If you are holding a treat in your hand, after a few repetitions take the treat out of your hand and try again without the treat, then praise and reward.
- Next, when your dog steps forward to sniff your hand, say the cue word "stand," and praise then treat. Repeat four times.
- Finally, start with your dog in a sit position, say the cue word "stand," and wait to see what happens! Praise then treat!

### **Puppy Pushups**

This is a fun way to practice your sit and down cues!

- Give the hand signal for sit and say "sit." Praise then treat.
- Immediately give the hand signal for down and say "down." Praise then treat.
- Next, hold your hand close to your dog's nose, give the hand signal for sit, and say "sit." Some encouragement is helpful here; you may also want to hold a treat in your hand the first few times.
- When your dog moves up into a sit, praise then treat.
- Repeat! Change it up so sometimes you give praise then treat for the sit but praise alone on the down, and other times you give praise alone for the sit but praise then treat for the down.
- Try using hand signals only or verbal cues only.

### **Jump Stops Here**

Here are some training and management tips to help address jumping.

- Teach your dog that sitting is the way to get everything your dog wants. Ask your dog to sit (or wait for your dog to offer a sit) before getting attention, petting, clipping on the leash, opening the door to the back yard, etc. Sit is the dog version of saying "please."
- Ignore jumping up: walk away and don't look at, talk to or touch your dog. If your dog keeps jumping to get your attention, put your dog in their crate or another room for a two minute time out.
- Practice touch as a polite greeting behavior (see Attention Exercises handout).
- On walks, set your dog up for success. Start by asking the approaching person to wait while you get your dog situated. You can say you are training for pet therapy so your dog needs practice on sit for petting.
- Use a body block if needed to create space between your dog and the approaching person.
- Use your sit cue so your dog knows exactly what to do. Avoid asking for a down because this puts your dog in a very vulnerable position and can create stress.
- Step on your dog's leash to prevent any accidental jumping
- Ask the approaching person to stop a few steps away if your dog is too excited to be petted. Then you can reward your dog for being calm in proximity to the new person.
- Ask the person to allow your dog to sniff their hand (similar to the Touch exercise). Praise and reward your dog for being calm.
- If you are comfortable with the person petting your dog, explain where your dog likes to be petted – under the chin, behind the ears, on the back, etc.
- Keep the greeting short – count to five, praise your dog, then say thank you and walk away. That way your dog does not have a chance to get too bouncy.
- Once your dog understands the Stay cue (Stay handout), you can use a sit/stay during greetings.
- Everyone does not need to pet your dog! If someone is making you or your dog uncomfortable, respect that and walk away. If asked you could say that your dog has ringworm and it is very contagious.
- At home, when you have guests over, keep your dog secured in a crate or another room until everyone has arrived and is settled, then bring your dog out on leash. Wait for your dog to calm down before practicing greetings. Remind visitors to ignore your dog unless all four paws are on floor. You can give out the rewards.
- Practice stay at the door with your dog on leash, first by yourself and then with practice visitors. You can use Go to Place (Focus Exercises handout) to teach your dog to stay at a specific spot near the door.