

# Dos and Don'ts for the Puppy Handler

We have learned many Dos and Don'ts for the puppies. There are also some important ones for the puppy raisers and handlers. This is a partial list of those that came to mind, and we will add to this list as new ones are identified.

## Dos

***Preface all commands with pup's name.***

This gets their attention and makes them more receptive of the command.

***Speak slowly and firmly to your pup.***

Just like people, they respond better to non-conversational tones.

***Strive to keep your pup near your Child.***

When practical, have your pup near them when they are doing homework, eating, watching TV, reading, etc. This creates a good lifetime habit of staying near their master.

***Take advantage of every opportunity to expose your pup to other kids.***

These dogs will spend much of their lives around kids and must learn to accept their, sometimes less than gentle, attentions. Plan presentations, demonstrations, visits to schools, Sunday schools, scout meetings, etc.

***Allow petting only from family and close friends.*** Avoid petting from strangers. Just say "Sorry, he is working"

***Put vest on whenever out of home or yard.***

Except when playing, they need to learn that away from home means "I'm working".

## Don'ts

***Try not to continuously repeat commands.***

The pup will learn to wait until the last repetition before responding. If necessary to repeat, wait a moment, and then repeat name and command more firmly.

***No playing "Tug".***

Dogs love to play it, but it is totally at odds with the command "Give".

***We don't use the "Shake" command.***

It is cute, but serves no practical purpose. Dogs tend to use it to attract attention, especially with strangers.

***No treats on the floor.***

Treats should always be given hand to mouth (with the "Gently" command, if necessary). They must learn not to eat anything off the floor.

***No playing with the vest on.***

Our pups must learn that vest time is serious work time.

***Don't give a command unless you can reasonably plan for success.***

Before giving commands (especially new ones), plan how you will insure that the dog will understand your intent, and succeed, even with your help.

***Have the child handle the Dog.***

Whenever possible, when you are out with the dog, your child should be the handler. They need to become accustomed to this for the future.

***Reserve a special treat for Alerts***

Select one treat that is only used to reward for correct alerts. Your child, or you, should always have these with them, or readily available

***Keep your dog on the floor of your car.***

For safety reasons, your dog should always be on the floor, and behind a seat or partition so that they will not fly forward if there should be a panic stop.

***Recognize that your dog “sees” the world differently than you.***

Understand that their priorities are first smell, then see, then hear, whereas ours are see, then hear then smell.

***Don’t use the E-collar for routine training***

The e-collar should be used only for special problems, and then only after consultation with the project coordinator.

***Don’t exhibit anger with your dog***

Dogs consider anger to be a weakness, which weakens bonding. Note: being assertive (without anger) is viewed as a strength.

***Don’t let your dog play roughly with strange dogs.***

They can develop bad habits, and could be injured.

***Don’t feed your dog people food.***

It develops begging habits, and it is not healthy for them.