

TETHERING

Tethering can be a really useful tool to train great puppy manners and also to help reset good behaviours in the older dog. Tethering is not something I do for a puppy at a fixed place i.e. I do not tether her to the table leg, but instead I tether her to me so she is 100% supervised and she has to go everywhere with me for about 20m min, multiple times a day.

You need

- a leash (not too long) tied to a belt / belt loop / attached to your waist someway.
- treats / meat meal (need to be high value - kibble usually won't cut it. Try some of these
 - Ziwi Peak (can be a meal substitute)
 - Mince
 - Cheese
 - Prime 100 log cut in cubes
 - Frankfurts chopped into small pieces
 - Chunkers broken into smaller pieces for puppies - adults can cope with a whole one, available from the supermarket (note they are not great nutrition but convenient for training).
- a treat bag is handy as you'll be on the move (or zip lock bag in your pocket)
- "mat" (can be just a folded towel)
- a word you want to use for "chill" and a word that releases her from "chillin'" such as free, off you go - whatever suits you but make it a dedicated dog word and not one you use for family

How to tether train your puppy - "the umbilical cord"

1. Attach her to the leash and the leash to you so you can be hands free - load up the training treat pouch and off you go. Aim to start with a 20 min session.
2. The leash length needs to be long enough so she can lie down but not so long that it trips you both up.
3. The aim is to be aware of your pup at all times but she should not impede your working day.
4. Teach her to stay out from under your feet by rewarding her low and at your side, by your ankles (left or right but stick to one at the beginning for consistency - its ok to lure her into position initially.)
5. Make the exercise basic, low key and to all intents and purposes, boring.... but reward her for being boring (at rest, quiet, calm).
6. Don't use words like sit, come etc – you want her to read and respond to your movements and body language.

Hands free is important as you don't want to build her reactions to the leash - you would be surprised what you as the handler communicate through the leash - frustration, anxiety, fear, and you can also communicate calm and respect. She communicates things back to you as well. Aim for loose leash walking and if you need help in that department, I recommend an in-home trainer or structured obedience training.

Tether while working in the garden, sweeping, mopping, dusting, preparing food, doing office work, making phone calls, watching TV, reading a book...If stationary, you can use a mat at your side - see more about "On the Mat" below. Once mastered at the TV, do it on the back deck, at the park watching the kids play (you'll need someone for the dog and someone for the kids if it's your kids playing), in the front yard, somewhere where there is a bit of traffic / any other distraction. Always have her tethered though and allow her to decide her own position whether that be lying, standing, sitting – the aim is to achieve calm when you are otherwise occupied.

You can add Watch me training to this - your aim is to have your dog look to you for all sorts of instruction - therefore, **ALL** of your eye contact needs to be constructive (not the same as positive) - you can correct your dog, but do so constructively. Distraction and re-direction are useful tools.

“On the Mat” training

When training on the mat the mat then becomes her “place” and you can instigate that calm at rest and don’t move behaviour anywhere with the mat being her cue. You can name the exercise “Place” (or whatever works for you, and start to give that command which means - Chill on your mat and don’t move till I release you.

- Any time she is on the mat (even just a paw in the beginning) drop a treat nearby so she doesn’t have to move to retrieve it
- If she lies down with any part of her body on the mat, a few more treats
- lying on the mat calmly - bingo, sprinkle some treats
- build the time up to a full hour of calm behaviour
- At the conclusion, give your release command and reward again

We forwarded links to these training sheets to you when your puppy first came home in our “Welcome Home to your Amalie puppy” email. Let me know if you need them again.



How to Teach ‘Watch Me’

Teaching our dogs a ‘Watch me’ cue is very important. Put simply, ‘Watch me’ means look at my face, pay attention and be ready for further instructions. This can help us in all kinds of situations.

Practical Uses

‘Watch Me’ is one of the attention behaviours that form the **foundation of all training** and can be applied in many ways:

- The cue ‘Watch Me’ is used to get your dog’s attention before you give him another cue.
- You must have your dog’s attention before you can teach him anything.
- There will also be times when you want to distract your dog’s attention from something that is inappropriate, such as another dog, a postman, a dead something that might be fun to roll in or other temptations.

Method

- Hold a treat in your fingers, put it near the dog’s nose and move the treat toward your nose.
- As soon as the looks at your face mark and reward him with the treat and with praise.
- You need to be quick to mark before he jumps up or looks away again. If he jumps up after you click, wait until all four feet are on the floor to reward him.
- The marker signal (‘Yes!’ word) signals the end of the behavior that you want him to perform, so it’s OK if he looks away after you mark him.
- Wait until your dog consistently follows the lure to your face before adding the cue words ‘Watch Me’.

Troubleshooting

- Your dog **get nervous from the eye contact**. Try not to bend over your dog. Rather, stand erect to increase the distance between his eyes and your face. Mark and reward very quick looks before staring into his eyes. Remember that eye contact is a type of dominance behavior. Less confident dogs may look away as a gesture of submission to you. Overly confident, pushy dogs may initially interpret direct eye contact as a threat and respond with threatening behavior. Smile at your dog, talk to him in a jolly, high-pitched voice and relax your eyes rather than stare at him. If necessary, look at the top of his head or his ear rather than directly into his eyes. As your relationship with your dog grows, he should become more comfortable with sustained eye contact with you.

Remember that you are building your dog’s attention span, so be patient!

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Teaching your dog to settle on a mat

Having a dog that can settle quietly on a mat is probably one of the most useful lessons an owner can share with his dog or puppy. Going to the mat becomes a cue for the puppy to settle and be calm. The mat is never to be used as a punishment, so please never send your dog to the mat in anger. Rather, calmly send your dog to his mat to calm down and have some quiet time.

Practical Uses

- It is not possible for your dog to be sitting calmly and jumping all over you and your visitors at the same time
- Great for teaching your dog self-control
- Learning to “stay” within a boundary is relatively easy for most dogs. The idea of mat training is not that the dog does not move at all but that he is free to move within a boundary
- Having your dog sit and wait on his mat while you prepare his dinner and place it on the floor eliminates many annoying behaviours at meal times
- When you need your dog out from under your feet, for example when you bring the shopping home, you can cue him to settle on the mat.



Method

- Using a food treat, lure your dog to the mat. Slightly raise the lure as he gets onto the mat and this will cause him to sit. Mark the behaviour and reward¹. Do not tell your dog to sit - from the beginning we need to get the point across that the mat is always a place where he should settle in a sit or drop position.
- Repeat step one until your dog is happy going to the mat and automatically sitting or dropping. Now you can begin to fade the lure by this we mean take away the food reward and just provide the hand signal once your dog is on the mat. Mark and reward.
- As your dog becomes better at this you can begin to take a step away from the mat and send your dog to the mat, gradually stepping further away each time. Mark and reward when he settles on the mat.
- To increase the time that your dog settles on the mat begin to delay your marker signal “yes” so that he is staying on the mat for longer and longer.
- Once your dog is trained to settle quietly on the mat, then the mat can be used in a variety of locations when you want him to settle quietly e.g. visiting friends or having a family picnic

Tips and tricks

If your dog is highly excitable and has trouble staying focused when inside it can be useful to put him on a lead and practice this exercise. You can tie the lead to the leg of a chair if you are seated on so he rests calmly on the mat beside you – good for watching TV. Remember to “trickle treat” him occasionally for being settled while in training.

¹ Marking is done with either the word “Yes” or a clicker – a treat immediately follows as the reward.

A couple of links if you need more info...

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g86FRG8gc5M>

<https://youtu.be/oPmiQ9XA3qs?si=i2Bbo6VUpSTajy-D>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WWgzj9JFCSI>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m9KQegi4r8k>

Keen Dog (teaching place and down stay)

Jaime the Dog Trainer (leash manners)

Zac George (dealing with jumping)

Zac George (dealing with biting)