



Training Checklist

Every puppy matures and develops at different rates. It is important to keep them mentally, physically, and even emotionally stimulated in positive ways so that they don't stimulate themselves in negative ways. Poodles are brilliant and a blast to train. They can be too smart for their own good if their strengths are not "focused" in the right direction for their family.

Here are some great ways to challenge your pup or dog. The earlier you start the better to build the foundation to help your pup meet his or her full potential and become an awesome companion. Because each pup has such unique personalities do not get frustrated if each command or trick does not come easily for them right away. If the pup is losing focus, uninterested, or over exuberant do not be afraid to let them run and get some energy out, take a nap or do an activity that is fun for them and makes them feel confident. You can always revisit the training session when the puppy is in a better frame of mind to focus.

Poodles are particularly attuned to their people. If you are frustrated they will be frustrated. Read your puppy's body language to see if the training session is helping them to feel more confident. If you are challenging them at their level they will be engaged, playful and ready for more. If they are feeling overwhelmed do not continue to challenge them this will only lower their confidence and they will most likely avoid training sessions in the future. When you make it fun for you & for your pup you will be amazed at what poodles are capable of learning! Give your pup lots of calm and confident reassurance & have fun!

Fear Stages

Any traumatic experience may have a lasting impression on a puppy. New experiences must be non-threatening. Take extra care to make puppy feel safe. It is critical that all social interactions be fun and positive. Fearful adult behaviors can result from experiences puppy perceives as threatening. Puppies and young dogs typically go through 2 fear stages—at 2-3 months and again at 6-14 months.

During the 2nd fear stage, between 6-14 months, fear of change or new experiences is common. Dependent on growth spurts so a dog may go through more than one during this period. Puppy may be uncomfortable with "unfamiliar" situations and people. Do not force dog into situations. Be sure to have playgroups with properly matched playmates. Work to build confidence and do not force into new or uncomfortable situations. Use patience and understanding; allow dog to come around on their own.

These commands/tricks are not necessarily in any particular order and one pup will pick up certain tricks faster than others. When they are not catching on to one trick it's okay to try another one & go back to the trick they are confident with to be sure to end training sessions on a good note.

Dog's Name:

□ **“Yes”**

We teach the marker word, "yes," before anything else. "Yes" is used in place of a clicker. Say, "yes," with enthusiasm & give a treat repeatedly until your puppy associates the word yes will be directly followed by a treat. As you teach a command say, "yes," as soon as the puppy fulfills the command. For instance, when you say, "sit," & hold the treat just over & slightly behind the puppy's head say, "yes," the second the puppy's butt hits the floor. Then the pup will know what he/she did just right & will learn to repeat the behavior that you like much more quickly.

Basics

- **Look** – “Look” encourages the dog to focus their eyes on your eyes. Hold the treat in front of the dog’s nose, then keep their attention while you pull the treat directly to your eye line. Say, “Look,” as the treat arrives right in front of your eyes. As soon as the dog looks at your eyes say, “Yes,” & give a treat. Repeat this over and over again.
- **Sit** -- Hold treat over and slightly behind dog’s head and say, “Sit.” As soon as the dog’s butt hits the floor, say, “Yes” and give a treat.
- **Down** -- Do not teach or practice “Down” in a play group. It will put them in an inferior and vulnerable position to the other dogs. One-on-one, from a “sit” position say, “Down,” and pull treat from their nose to the floor at a pace that the dog will follow closely. Hold the treat at the floor [and adjust slightly backward if it will help the dog into the command position.] As soon as the dog’s front legs lay down say, “Yes,” and give a treat.
- **Stay** - When in a sit or down say, “Stay,” & give dog a flat palm signal toward their face. Take a step away and repeat, “Stay.” After just a couple of seconds release dog by saying, “ok,” say “yes,” & give treat. Build skills by taking a couple more steps away, moving to side, stopping feet, &/or turning back to dog.
- **Heal** – In efforts to keeps dogs from pulling on leashes teach the command, “Heal.” When on lead to your left say, “Heal,” then pull gently on lead and give treat when the dog’s front leg is in step with your leg. You may need to hold another treat right in preferred “Heal” position while walking to destination. Treating when needed along the way.
- **Come** – Call dog by name and be interesting. As soon as dog reaches you say, “Yes” and treat. Teaching a dependable recall will be well rewarded when you rarely have to chase a dog down....
- **Kennel Up** - Cheerfully say, “Kennel Up” as you throw treats into dog’s crate/kennel and guide dog into crate. If you are planning to use the crate for bedtime, naptime, home alone time or anything else, the crate should NEVER be used as a punishment. If it becomes the naughty spot then it will be negative for anything and everything else....and you will get resistance. It’s like putting a kid in the corner with a dunce cap on & then trying to reuse the dunce cap for his party favor.

Manners (that require impulse control)/Behavioral Modification

- **Wait** -- When walking through doorways dogs have a tendency to get excited about what is on the other side. When opening a door say, "Wait," and if the dog does not wait, body block them until you are ready to say, "Ok," and allow them through the door. You may want to start from a standing position and work up to a "Sit" and "Wait" at each door. If the dog pushes ahead before they were allowed, bring the dog back and start again.
- **"OK"** – This is the release word that we use to let a dog know when he no longer has to "Wait" or "Stay."
- **Go to Mat** - This is a valuable command when visitors come &/or when a dog has a tendency to get over-stimulated. Say, "Go to mat," and take treat from dog's nose to over the mat. When the dog goes to mat say, "yes" & treat. Follow up with down & stay for time outs.
- **Outside** - If you have a doggie door & fenced-in yard this command works beautifully to encourage outside play & limit inside rowdiness. Any time dog(s) is starting to play rough say, "outside," & happily walk dog to doggie door. As dog is exiting through doggie door say, "yes!" (This works best when you have 2 or more dogs that will play outside together).
- **Off** - When a dog or puppy jumps up on you sternly say, "off" & turn away/body block & ignore dog until he shows an acceptable/desirable behavior. The "off" command can also be very effective for counter tops or other inappropriate spots.
- **Leave It** (a squirt of white vinegar can be helpful for precocious pups) Practice by holding a treat in one hand & saying, "Leave it." As soon as the dog looks away from the treat say, "Yes," & give treat from other hand. Practice "leave it" with treats on the floor, on coffee table, socks, etc.
- **Quiet** (a squirt of white vinegar can be helpful for precocious pups)
- **No Bite** -- NEVER allow your puppy to chew on your fingers, hands, clothing, or any other part of your body. Puppies have a hard time differentiating playtime between their littermates (who chew on each other for fun) and their human family members. Be sure your puppy has access to toys with a variety of textures to satisfy their powerful teething urges. When your puppy gets mouthy with you, say firmly, "no bite," and put a chew toy by their mouth. If they seem more interested in chewing on your fingers than their toys, then make their toys more fun for them. Do not play tug of war with your pup. This can encourage aggressive play.
- Use a **Hoola Hoop** to body block and encourage dogs to allow their people to have personal space. Body block them any time they are in your Hoola Hoop area.
- **"BINGO"** – Use the word "BINGO" for a barker, instead of "quiet" or "NO." The dog will not be expecting the peppy word "BINGO." When he is quiet for a quick second, give him a treat. Practice often.

Commands/Tricks for Mental/Physical Stimulation (from easy to more advanced)

- Shake
- High Five
- Kisses
- Sit Pretty
- Fetch / Drop It
- Stand
- Spin
- Crawl
- Touch
- Push Ball
- Back
- Weave/Figure 8s
- Bow
- Push ups --Sit/Down/Sit/Down/Sit/Down
- Squats -- Sit/Stand/Sit/Stand/Sit/Stand
- Hide and Seek (you/kids/toys/treats)
- Roll Over
- Jump Through Hoola Hoop
- Play dead
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My Dog's Favorites

- _____
- _____
- _____
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"101 Dog Tricks, Step-by-Step Activities to Engage, Challenge, and Bond with Your Dog" (& other titles) by Kyra Sundance -- great resource.

Training Assessment

Help your pup to be a balanced and secure dog:

What personality type did your pup have a tendency toward within his/her litter?
Each personality within the litter naturally has more potential for success in certain areas. But, poodles are very adaptable and can thrive in many environments with positive and consistent training.

Calm/Reserved Playful/Confident Calm/Confident Lazy Attuned
Overconfident/Dominant Goofy/Clown Sweet/Sensitive
Nurturer Responsive/Engaging Focused Other _____

Your pup's biggest strengths:

How can you encourage strengths?

~Just as each person, every dog's personality consists of strengths and weaknesses.~

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Your pup's biggest weaknesses:

What can help to overcome weaknesses?

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Notes:
