

A letter from your puppy

To Whom it may concern:

I am your puppy, and I will love you until the end of the earth, but please know a few things about me. I am a puppy; this means that my intelligence and capacity for learning are the same as a 6-month-old child. I am a puppy; I will chew EVERYTHING I can get my teeth on. This is how I explore and learn about the world. Even human children put things in their mouths. It's up to you to gently guide me to what is mine to chew and what is not.

I am a puppy; I cannot hold my bladder for longer than 1-2 hours. I cannot "feel" that I need to poop until it is actually beginning to come out. I cannot vocalize nor tell you that I need to go, and I cannot have 'bladder' and bowel control until 6-9 months of age. Please do not punish me if you have not let me out for 3 hours and I tinkle. It is your fault. As a puppy, it is wise to remember that I NEED to go potty after eating, sleeping, playing, drinking, after a bath, and around every 2-3 hours in addition. I am a puppy, accidents will happen, please be patient with me! In time I will learn because it is my life's goal to make you happy.

I am a puppy. I like to play. I will run around, and chase imaginary monsters, and chase your feet and your toes, 'attack' you, and chase fuzz balls, other pets, and small kids. It is play; it's what I do. Do not be mad at me or expect me to be sedate, mellow and sleep all day. Please enjoy my puppy stage, as it will be over in a flash. My play is beneficial, use your wisdom to guide me in my play with appropriate toys, and activities, like chasing a rolling ball, or gentle tug games, or plenty of chew toys for me. If I nip you too hard, talk to me in "dog talk", by giving a loud YELP, I will usually get the message, as this is how dogs communicate with one another. If I get too rough, simply ignore me for a few moments, or give me an appropriate chew toy. I am a puppy; hopefully you would not yell, hit or strike, kick, or beat a 6 month old human infant, so please do not do the same to me. I am delicate, fragile, and impressionable. If you treat me harshly now, I will grow up learning to fear being hit, spanked, and kicked or beat. Instead, please guide me with encouragement and wisdom. For instance, if I am chewing something wrong, say "no chew!" and hand me a toy I can chew. Better yet, pick up ANYTHING that you don't want me to get into. I can't tell the difference between your old sock and your new sock, or an old sneaker and your \$200.00 Nikes.

I am a puppy; and I am a creature with feelings and drives much like your own, but yet also very different. Although I am not a human in a dog suit, neither am I an unfeeling robot who can instantly obey your every whim. I truly DO want to please you, and be a part of your family, and your life. You got me (I hope) because you want a loving partner and companion, so please do not relegate me to the backyard when I get bigger or leave me in a pen or cage all the time. Please do not judge me harshly but instead mold me with gentleness and guidelines and training into the kind of family member you want me to be.

I am a puppy; and I am not perfect, and I know you are not perfect either. I love you anyway. So please, learn all you can about training, and puppy behaviors and caring for me from my breeder, your veterinarian, books on dog care and even researching on the computer! Learn about my particular breed and it's "characteristics". This will give you understanding and insight into WHY I do all the things I do. Please teach me with love, and patience, the right way to behave and socialize me with training in a puppy class or obedience class, we will BOTH have a lot of fun together.

I am a puppy and I want more than anything to love you, to be with you, and to please you. Won't you please take time to understand how I work? We are the same you and I, in that we both feel hunger, pain, thirst, discomfort, fear, but yet we are also very different and must work to understand one another's language, body signals, wants and needs. Someday I will be a beautiful dog, hopefully one you can be proud of and one that you will love as much as I love you.

Love,
Your Puppy