MY GERMAN SHEPHERD

What A Dog!

GSD PUPPY TRAINING ESSENTIALS
To be observed by everyone in the family

1. YOUR state of mind: crucial!
   - Always be patient, your puppy needs time to learn what makes you happy
   - Always be aware of your state of mind, because your energy state transmits to your puppy (dogs are energy recipients)
   - So, when you are stressed, go away from your pup
   - Apply your higher energy state only when you praise
   - In all other situations be calm
   - Use a moderate voice and tone of voice
   - If you can't, again, go away from your puppy
   - Never shout at, hit, or punish your pup (more see on the right)

2. Your acceptance as Pack leader: a) - e)!
   - Before you start any advanced puppy training, you must become the accepted Pack leader and be calm!
   - Your behavior must always show that you are the Pack leader:
     a) Feeding Routine
        - Give your pup 3 or 4 meals a day, at fixed meal times
        - Always Gesture-Eat before your pup gets a meal
        - Only put down your pup's bowl when (s)he is calm
        - If not calm, defer the meal and start again 5 to 10 min later
        - If at the 3rd attempt of Gesture-Eating your pup is still not calm, cancel that meal altogether
        - This is okay because your pup is on 3 or 4 meals a day
        - If ever your puppy goes away from any food, immediately take it away and cancel that meal (or treat)!
        - Do not worry about too little food intake
        - Do worry about too little water intake, always provide plenty!
     b) Rewards
        - Never reward your pup for looking cute or when seeking your attention, only reward your puppy for behavior you desire
        - There are 5 Reward Types, and you must know which one is when suitable
        - Use Praise only when you can control your higher energy state and tone of voice
        - Use Affection (no headlocks!) when you cannot
        - Use Toys or Play when you want to raise your pup's energy state, ie to be more active
        - Don't use Real-Life rewards on a puppy ≤ 3 months of age
        - Choose wisely whether you want your pup to get used to getting Food treats (we don't give them)
        - Food treats are not necessary to get the behavior you desire
        - Randomize the Reward Types and the Rewards you give
        - Give Rewards appropriate to the behavioral achievement
     c) Ignoring
        - Hardest for you, nonetheless best for your pup, is that you learn to ignore your pup the right way
        - Ignore attention-seeking - unless your pup might be ill or in pain, thirsty or rightfully hungry, or needs to relieve
        - Gently move away your puppy, ideally with the outside of your arm (alternatively the back of your hand), in a calm movement
        - Do not look at, speak to, or otherwise touch your pup while doing so (the more apathetic the better!)
     d) Behavior Modification
        - Upon serious misconduct (biting, or nipping outside dedicated play) or persistent lighter misconduct, immediately respond with Isolation in a small, safe room (eg tiled bathroom)
        - Isolate your pup for between 5 to 20 min, or until totally calm
        - Do not let your puppy out because (s)he whines or barks
        - If not calm after 20 min, take a bowl of water inside (again no looking, no speaking, no touching!)
        - If needed, every 20 min pretend to only want to fill up water
        - Upon lighter misconduct, the only 'punishment' you'll ever need is the Collar Freeze (mark 'the only', smart training is easy & gentle!)
        - Walk to your pup, and gently and calmly take hold of the collar on the outer underside (not at the neck or throat!)
        - Now you freeze, and soon your puppy will calm down and think!
        - Do not look at your pup, speak, or otherwise touch while doing so
        - Continue the Collar Freeze until you both are totally calm - within a few times your pup will have learned that (s)he did sth wrong
     e) Collar & Leash
        - Leave a leather collar on your pup all the time (if you can afford another collar, get a reflective collar for outside)
        - Introduce your puppy to the short leash straight on day 2!
        - Let your pup walk around with it loosely gliding behind (if your house is large, you can use the long line for this)
        - When needed, gently step on it, but avoid to pull
        - Let your puppy get the feeling for sth hanging loosely off its neck
        - Then do SSCD (Start, Stop, Change Direction) inside the house
        - Only walk your pup into the garden/yard when (s)he is matching your movements and completely calm!
        - When outside in a safe space, attach the long line to give your puppy the freedom to roam around (while you keep control)
        - When needed step on it, or tug the leash gently
        - Always immediately loosen the leash when your pup is coming towards you!
        - Complete Leash Training is in the Leash Training Guide
3. The right Puppy Training approach

- **Basic puppy training**
  - Basic puppy training is training other than tricks
  - Eg not to nip or bite outside dedicated play sessions, to calmly wait until your puppy’s gesture-eating is finished, to relieve in designated places, and overall to behave well in the house
  - All basic puppy training should start on the day you get your pup
  - Conduct all training in a patient and calm way as described above

- **Advanced puppy training**
  - Advanced puppy training is training ‘tricks’
  - Advanced puppy training should not start before age 10 weeks
  - Only start advanced puppy training when you have the right state of mind (calm) and you are the accepted Pack leader!
  - Use short training sessions (1 to 5 min, depending on age)
  - Immediately stop all training:
    - when you notice you get stressed, or
    - when your pup loses attention, or
    - when your pup appears confused
  - Focus on training just before meal times - giving you 3 or 4 training sessions under optimal circumstances
  - Do not hold more than 16 - 24 training sessions/day in total

- **Food treats**
  - Choose wisely if you want your pup to get used to Food treats!
  - If you choose Food treats choose healthy ones, and consider this amount to be taken from the upcoming meal
  - For puppies, each Food treat should be the size of a peanut
  - Food treats should always be more tempting than meals!
  - All written under ‘Rewards’ above applies to Food treats too

- **Training Commands**
  - For all puppy training (basic and advanced), training commands must be clear, concise, and consistent!
  - Ensure that everyone in the family uses the same command to achieve the same behavior from your puppy - write them down
  - Don’t stress out your puppy with excessive Obedience Training!
  - Mix right from the start with at least 50% Behavior Training!

- **Fun**
  - All puppy training should be FUN, both for you and your pup
  - So, always observe the ‘Stop’ rules above!
  - Always ‘leave on a high’, so that your puppy is eager next time
  - If you cannot provide a FUN environment to your puppy each and every time, leave the training to another family member

- **Training repetition**
  - Do not rush your puppy training, despite the temptation!
  - Always only train your pup one command at a time
  - Practice this one command, with the breaks mentioned above, for as long as it takes - the breaks and ‘sleeping over it’ will help!
  - When your puppy shows the desired behavior, continue practicing the same command but now introduce distractions
  - Eg increase the distance, change the situation or environment,...

- **Get the desired behavior 10 times before you move on**
- Every other day, recap prior commands, in every situation
- Ensure that your pup understands that each command has the same meaning regardless of the situation and environment
- Ensure that your pup does not confuse your expected behavior on a new command with that on a prior command

- **Be accepted Pack leader, not Commander**
  - Be canny with commands and speak sparsely and calm
  - In the wild, the Pack leader does not bark much either, but lets the dogs freely experience their environment
  - The less commands you give, the more impact they have!
  - Primarily use dog language, ie body language, not your voice
  - The temper transmitted with the human voice is confusing to a puppy (and even to the adult dog), so bring both in alignment
  - **When you use your voice, never shriek but control your tone**

4. Relationship building

- 1, 2, and 3 above - including all the detailed points within - are the building blocks for the right relationship with your puppy
- If you get these right, you have also laid the foundation for the right relationship with your adult German Shepherd - for life!

**ENJOY your dog!**

Tim Carter - Founder MYGERMANSHEPHERD.ORG

Some links lead to pages on our site. The links to remedies and books for our international members follow in summary:

- Dog Training Toolkit
- Spill-proof dog drinking bowl
- (linked twice for a reason: provide plenty of water, flush the bladder!)
- Soft padded genuine leather collar
- Reflective collar for outdoors
- Multi-purpose teaching leash
- Feather-light but strong long line
- Puppy Development Guide - Puppy 101
- Complete House Training Guide
- 101 Dog Tricks
- Healthy Food Treats
- Canine Body Language Photo Guide
- Leash Training Guide
- See and hear all dog training live while you train your puppy