



## **The Mannerly Dog**

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### **Training Tip Sheet: Using Treats for Training Your New Puppy**

#### ***Why use treats?***

All puppies must eat to live. They don't know much when they're young, but they know about eating, and they like it!

Training requires repetition; a pup can eat a treat quickly and be ready to go again.

#### ***Shouldn't my puppy do what I want just to please me?***

As much as we love puppies and believe that they love us, it's very difficult for us to let them know what we want them to do since they don't use language to communicate like we do. Giving a pup a treat when he's doing a behavior we like has been scientifically shown to cause that behavior to be repeated. The more you reward it, the more you see it, so you are clearly letting him know what you want him to do.

#### ***Will my puppy get fat?***

Puppies are growing fast and using up calories. As long as you give them healthy treats, some of which can be a portion of their regular puppy food, they will grow up physically and behaviorally healthy at the same time.

#### ***What if I don't have treats with me? Will I always have to carry treats?***

During the early stages of training, make sure you have treats with you at all times. Get a belt pack or keep them in a plastic bag in your pocket, and keep sealed containers of non-perishable treats around the house for easy access. As training progresses, you will be asking for more behavior per treat, but even as an elderly adult, your dog deserves to be paid for his efforts with a small treat! Owners of highly-trained performance dogs almost always have treats with them. Think of a treat as your puppy's paycheck for a job well-done.

#### ***Will my puppy really be trained if I train with treats?***

You can train well or train poorly, with treats or without. By giving your pup a treat when you like what he's doing, you ensure he'll do that behavior again. By doing many repetitions of this every day, he will be volunteering to do that behavior regularly. When you add a cue word or hand signal to the behavior, you can reward only when you ask for the behavior and control when the puppy does it. At that point, you've trained him to do the behavior on cue or "command."

#### ***What is a "Training Treat?"***

Because we want to do many repetitions of a behavior during training, training treats must be small, easily swallowed, and tasty. The size of a piece of dry dog food is best – ¼ to ½ inch, depending on the size of the puppy. You can use the pup's regular food, bits of cheese or meat, pieces of fruits or vegetables, purchased small training treats, or even make your own training treats, as long as your pup likes them. It's your puppy's reward, so he has to like it enough to work for it.