



can you DIG IT?

PUPPY CLASSES

Fun and friendly atmosphere!

At DIG IT we want everyone attending classes to learn easily in a comfortable, encouraging atmosphere. Both humans and puppies will have different abilities and everyone will progress at different rates. Your tutor will help you to achieve success.

If your puppy goes to toilet in the Obedience hall, barks in class or does anything else you would prefer it didn't do, remember that puppies are only just beginning to learn what we would like from them, mistakes will happen and your tutor is there to help you overcome problems and turn them into learning experiences. Please enjoy the your time with us.

What can be achieved in classes

During classes, exercises will be explained and clearly demonstrated by the instructor, which you will then practice with your puppy and gain further instruction.

Since there is a lot to cover in each class, you will only get a short time to practice each of the exercises. For this reason, it is necessary to practice all exercises at home in frequent, short sessions. Exercises will be easy and fun and something that can be done by any member of the family during times such as when you put the kettle on or during TV adverts.

Preparing your puppy

If you have to travel to classes by car, it is best to get your puppy used to car travel beforehand. Travelling in cars can be an unsettling experience for young puppies, so prepare as follows:

- Place your puppy on non-slip, absorbent bedding for the journey
- Play with your puppy and feed small meals in the car when it is stationary to give pleasant associations with being inside
- Take your puppy on short journeys, ending with a walk or a play session
- Close doors carefully and drive considerately. Remember that your puppy cannot see where the car is going, is not sitting in a seat, and cannot predict when the next corner will be coming up
- Arrive in plenty of time to allow your puppy to recover from the journey before class begins

Your puppy needs to be interested in working for the treats you are offering during training. For this reason, it is not a good idea to feed your puppy just before the class. It is important that your puppy is not too hungry either, as this it will affect their ability to concentrate. Feeding a small meal a few hours in advance of the class can help to sooth the appetite, but still leave your puppy wanting more.

If you own a boisterous puppy that has lots of energy, try to arrange a vigorous play and free running session in a safe place before coming to class. This will help to ensure that your puppy is in a calm, ready-to-learn mood.

Most puppies are a little overwhelmed by the experience of coming to class at first. They soon learn to enjoy it and it is a good learning experience for them but expect a drop in your puppy's confidence when coming to class for the first time.

Try to arrive at least 15 minutes early at the venue. This will allow your puppy to recover from the journey, take a small walk and go to toilet before coming into class.



Puppies Health

It is important that your puppy is vaccinated and cleared by your veterinarian prior to attending classes. Different vets have differing views on what is the best way to protect against contagious diseases so it may be a good idea to ask the opinion of several before making a decision on what is best for your puppy. Please bring your puppy's vaccination certificate with you when attending the first class.

Please ensure your puppy has been wormed with a prescription wormer before attending classes.

To reduce the risk of cross-infection, there will be no communal water bowl in class. Puppies get thirsty after travelling, playing and eating treats, so please provide your own water bowl and offer drinks frequently.

What to bring

i. Your puppy (except for week 1 which is a talk/demo), wearing a plain buckle/clip collar, with cloth or leather lead (no chain collars or Flexi leads please). Harnesses are acceptable. Please ensure your puppy is used to wearing the collar or harness before attending class.

ii. Children are welcome to attend puppy training but please do read our guidelines first - [CLICK HERE](#) for guidelines.

iii. Small, tasty titbits. These should be small so your puppy does not become full too quickly. Pieces about the size of a small pea are best. There are plenty of tasty treats on the market that can be cut up into small pieces. Alternatively, cooked meat that has been cut into small cubes and dried in the oven, or cheese are usually very acceptable to puppies. Soft, smelly food is usually more acceptable than dry, hard food, but some puppies will work well for the dry kibble they are usually fed. If you are introducing new foods, be careful not to feed too much and upset their digestion. Feed gradually increasing amounts in the days leading up to the first class so they get used to it.

Use whatever titbits work best for your puppy. You may find that, after a few weeks, your puppy begins to lose interest in working for familiar treats. For this reason, it is best to vary the treats from week to week.

iv. Toys. Some puppies work harder for a game with a toy than for food. Bring your puppy's favourite toy so that you can use it to attract his attention if you need to. Soft toys that can be bitten and tugged are best. Please avoid squeaky toys and toys that roll as these can cause a distraction for other puppies.

v. A small piece of bedding for your puppy to relax on during demonstrations and handling exercises.

vi. Many exercises require you to sit on the floor, so please wear comfortable clothes.

vii. Please bring a supply of poo bags (nappy sacks are suitable) and clean up after your puppy if it toilets in the area around the hall or out on a walk. There is a poo bin located in the Obedience Hall.

Words and signals

It is important to be consistent with the words and hand signals you will use to ask your puppy to do particular behaviours. We will cover this with you in class and then you can decide as a family what words and actions are best suited to you and your puppy.



Useful hints

- Please park sensibly on the car park.
- Enter the OBEDIENCE ARENA at the top door marked ENTRANCE which opens outwards.
- Please arrive early enough to make sure your dog has time to relieve themselves before entering the arena.
- Allow your dog a short walk before arriving at the class to let off some steam and release some excess energy.

Socialisation

One of the most common topics we get asked about in obedience classes is socialisation, and at Dig It we think it is one of the most important parts of raising a happy, balanced dog.

While correct socialisation can be a life saver, a lack of or incorrect socialisation can cause dogs to display behavioural issues in future life.

[CLICK HERE](#) to download our guide to Socialisation

And finally..... this is a working farm and therefore dogs must be kept on a lead at ALL times and ALL dog mess must be removed immediately and put in the pooh bins