



HANDLING & CO-OPERATIVE CARE

Building Positive Handling Experiences for Your Puppy

THE GOAL

Our goal is for puppies to perceive handling by a vet or groomer as a positive—or at least neutral—experience.

Introducing cooperative care during the socialisation period helps lay this foundation.



WHAT IS HANDLING?

Handling involves touching your dog's body (ears, mouth, tail, feet, etc.) with hands or tools like brushes. Puppies should associate touch with treats to make handling a positive experience. Clicker or marker training helps desensitise dogs to handling.

TEACHING YOUR PUPPY TO ENJOY HANDLING

Start when puppy is calm.
Use small, tasty treats.
Keep sessions short (1–5 minutes).
Go slow—make it fun.
Avoid negative experiences.

Follow these steps:
Gently touch a body part for 1 second.
Click or say a marker word.
Remove your hand and give a treat.

Body parts to touch:
Tail | Chest | Belly |
Flank | Elbows | Legs |
Feet Head | Ears | Nose
| Mouth | Neck |
Shoulders | Back

**Gradually increase touch duration and pressure.
Always mark and reward to build a positive association.**