



EAST FREMANTLE
Veterinary Clinic

Owners Handout – Week 1

EAST FREMANTLE VET CLINIC

PUPPY PRESCHOOL

Teaching your puppy to go to a mat and settle down

Your puppy should be taught right from the very beginning that it needs to have some quiet moments.

Getting your puppy to go to the mat

- 1 Place a treat on the mat so the puppy goes there to investigate or lure the puppy to the mat with a treat
- 2 When the puppy is on the mat ask the puppy to sit and reward him with a treat and quiet praise
- 3 Repeat until the puppy is happily going to the mat and sitting
- 4 Then teach the puppy to lie down on the mat and reward the puppy with a treat and quiet praise
- 5 If the puppy goes to the mat of his own accord reward and quietly praise immediately
- 6 As the puppy becomes more at ease on the mat you can start to slowly move further away and praise the puppy for staying on his mat
- 7 Over time you can use visual and verbal cues to indicate to the puppy to “go to the mat”.

Please note that you will need to start fading out the treat (by rewarding intermittently) and using your hand as the signal to go to the mat. If she goes to the mat of her own accord, give praise and/or a reward immediately, every time.

TIPS

- Use a leash with excitable puppies when teaching this exercise
- Keep the mat in the same position until the puppy understands the exercise and goes to his mat consistently
- The next step is to teach your puppy to be calm and settled on her mat.



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Getting your puppy to settle on the mat

- 1** While your puppy is lying quietly whisper “good dog/boy/girl”
- 2** Do not offer food or praise profusely as that will increase the puppy’s arousal level
- 3** You can help your puppy be calm by sitting, taking slow deep breaths and gently stroking your puppy
- 4** Teach your puppy to lie on his mat and reward him with quiet praise or a tasty treat when he does.

TIPS

- Use long, slow strokes while patting your puppy
- Place the mat near you as your puppy will feel more secure settling down next to you than if she is in another room
- Slowly increase the time your puppy is settled on the mat
- Allow your puppy to curl up, stretch out and move on his mat – he will need to move around on his mat to stay relaxed and settled.

