



## Getting the Most Out of Puppy Camp

Welcome to our Puppy Camp program! We're so excited to work with you and your puppy.

We want to make sure that you and your puppy are successful, so have included some helpful information about the Camp and about your dog's day in this letter. Please look it over carefully so that you understand how Camp will work. If you have any questions or concerns, the Program Director, Sara, can be reached at [sara@paws4u.com](mailto:sara@paws4u.com).

### Your Puppy's Day

Puppy Camp is packed with activities for your dog! We want to send your dog home tired and contented each evening. Here's what a typical day at Camp will look like for your dog:

#### **7:30-9:00am Drop Off**

- You will drop your dog off and hand in your homework sheet from the week before.

Once your dog has been checked in, they will get set up in their crate with some soothing music and a puzzle toy for some quiet time until everyone is checked in. *Please make sure to arrive by 9:00am*, as late arrivals will hold up the camp experience for all of the dogs (you will see in your Camp contract that there is a charge of \$1.00/minute for late arrivals unless you have notified us of your late arrival in advance and have scheduled an alternate check-in time).

During this time period, your dog's trainer will also review each dog's individual file to check on their progress and will make customized training plans for the day for each dog.

#### **9:00-10:00am Individual Training and Bathroom Breaks**

- Each puppy receives their first one-on-one training session of the day, as well as a quick walk outside to eliminate. Your dog's trainer will follow their customized training plan for the day, with focus on the behaviors that are most important to you or the most difficult for your dog.

#### **10:00-11:00am Playtime and Socialization**

- Puppies will enjoy playtime with their buddies and will be matched up with appropriate play partners. Rather than a free-for-all play environment that can encourage bad behaviors, we foster a cooperative play experience where dogs are frequently asked to behave appropriately (such as sitting on cue or coming away from playtime when called) and are rewarded for doing so. Your dog will learn that coming away from playing with their friends results in good things happening, and they will more often than not get to return to playtime after they're rewarded. Socialization to new surfaces, sounds (such as thunder, fireworks, and city noises), and other important things will also be included in this time.

## **11:00am-12:00pm Individual Training and Bathroom Breaks**

- After a quick potty break for each dog, they will get their second one-on-one training session of the day. This may include brief training field trips to practice leash manners or polite greetings in the neighborhood. As dogs advance in their training, their trainer may also combine sessions and have multiple dogs work on their manners (such as stay on the mat) at the same time to increase your dog's ability to focus with distractions.

## **12:00-1:00pm Nap Time**

- After a busy morning of playing and learning, your dog will be ready for some rest to prepare for their afternoon. Each dog will receive a quick bathroom break before nap time. Your dog will get a special puzzle or chew toy in their crate while we dim the lights and turn on some soothing music.

## **1:00-2:00pm Individual Training and Bathroom Breaks**

- Now that your dog has had a chance to process their morning's lessons, it's time to wake them back up! We'll continue to work on each dog's customized training plan with additional sessions to reinforce the morning's lessons.

## **2:00-3:00pm Playtime and Socialization**

- Time for some more socialization! Your dog will get a chance to play with their buddies and will receive more gentle exposure to new experiences for a well-rounded socialization experience.

## **3:00-4:00pm Individual Training and Bathroom Breaks**

- Most dogs are pretty tired by this point, so your dog's trainer will review the lessons from the day to prepare your dog for pick-up. We'll put together your puppy's customized Report Card so that you can see how their day went, and will take them out for one more quick potty walk.

## **4:00-6:00pm Quiet Time and Pick-Up**

- As your dog prepares to go home, we'll once again encourage quiet time in the crate with soothing music and a special chew toy or puzzle toy.

Pick-up times are scheduled ahead of time, and we ask that you *please arrive promptly* at your scheduled pick-up time so that you have plenty of time with your dog's trainer to review the day. We'll let you know how your puppy did, who s/he played with, what s/he learned, and will discuss Homework for the week. We'll demonstrate your dog's new skills and transfer them over to you so that your dog becomes as reliable for you as they are for the trainer!

## **Evening/Homework**

- You'll go home with a happy, tired dog! Each week, you'll be asked to complete a brief Homework assignment (no more than 5-10 minutes per night) with your dog so that we can make sure that your dog's new skills transfer to you.

**Puppy Camp is only as effective as each team allows it to be**, so the more committed you are to working with your dog, the more reliable your dog will become! We want to make sure that your dog learns to listen to you every bit as well as they listen to your trainer. Your trainer will assign an easy exercise each evening that will reinforce these skills.

## What to Bring

Please bring the following with you to Puppy Camp each day:

- Your hungry dog:** don't feed your dog prior to Camp.
- Any harness, training collar, or head halter you currently use:** if your dog currently wears any special equipment on walks, please bring it with you.
- A 4' or 6' leash:** please bring a regular leash for your dog, no flexi leashes or chain leashes.
- Current identification:** your dog should be wearing an ID tag attached to their collar that includes their name and your current phone number.
- Your puppy's food:** bring your dog's breakfast (and lunch, if you feed your dog more than twice a day) in a clearly marked container. We will be using your dog's food for training each day. If you feed a very small amount of food, you may want to bring 3/4 of your dog's daily food allotment with to Camp and plan to feed a smaller dinner in the evenings. We ask that you do not free-feed your dog (leave food out at all times) during the duration of Camp.
- Your completed homework:** bring back your dog's Report Card sheet each week with your completed Homework assignment. At the end of your dog's program, you will receive a packet of all of his/her Report Cards and progress reports for your records.
- A crate (optional):** some puppies do best in the crate that they're most familiar with. You are encouraged to bring a crate for your dog. Crates can be left at Camp during the duration of your dog's program or can be picked up each evening and brought each day. We also have crates available for use if your dog is comfortable staying in an unfamiliar crate.

We're excited to begin your dog's Camp experience - great things are ahead! Please don't hesitate to reach out to the Program Director, Sara, at any time. We can't wait to work together to train your dog!