



# Familiarising your puppy

Lez Graham explains the importance of introducing your young pup to household sights and sounds, as well as beginning to instil some good manners and self-control

**W**e did it! We made it to the end of the first month... and what a month it's been.

The last four weeks have passed in a haze of early mornings, late nights, feeding, toileting, playing and a bit of training – as well as marking work, studying and trying to figure out what settles this puppy down.

At 12 weeks, Emrys is exhaustingly adorable and very much a part of the family. The focus this month has been on making the unfamiliar familiar, getting puppy used to different household sights and sounds (the Hoover, washing machine, dishwasher and tumble drier) as well as

instilling good manners and some self-control.

Once the toilet training was well underway, I started waiting for Emrys to sit before opening the doors to let him out to teach him not to barge past me and through the door, not only to teach him respect and develop self-control but to keep him safe too.

The self-control theme has been continued at mealtimes too, keeping everything calm and low-key, not just when I'm preparing our food but when I've been putting his food bowl down; it was all very quick at first whereas now, after practising at every meal for the last four weeks, I can put his bowl of food on the floor without him moving.

Although Emrys is on four meals a day, I've been giving him stuffed Kongs in his crate during

the day to help him settle down and sleep. As well as putting a little bit of something in his stomach, which always makes a puppy feel better, the chewing of the Kong will release endorphins, which will have a calming effect on the brain and a comforting feeling in the body. Although he's in his crate more than he's out of it at the minute, I've invested in a couple of really good chew toys for when he's with me, ones that he can hold between his front paws like a bone, so that he learns not only to settle *in* his crate but *out* of it too.

Although I've started teaching him to walk by my left leg, the lead hasn't been introduced just yet as I want him to be really confident and comfortable walking with me before I clip a bit of nylon to him. I've also started recall training this month, albeit very informally initially, just calling him to me and luring him into a sit in front before

## TOP TIP

If your puppy is jumping up, then insist that he is sitting before you stroke him. If he insists on trying to jump up, slide the palm of your hand down his chest and as you do so hook your thumb into his collar so that he can't ping up towards you, then calmly and quietly give him a stroke.

Informal recall training, using a little treat as a reward



PICTURES: LEZ GRAHAM

Lez uses the Kong to help Emrys settle in his crate



## ABOUT LEZ GRAHAM

Lez Graham is author of The Pet Gundog series and a canine behaviourist and gundog trainer. Focused on training the next generation, she runs the Accredited Pet Gundog Instructor programme which is now in its 5th year.

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giving him a treat – another little hook for the future when I start to introduce ‘the present’.

He really is such a bold little chap. He discovered my slipper boots unoccupied one day and that was it – he picked it up and strutted his stuff around the kitchen before bringing it over to me; the boot was almost as big as he was! I think it’s safe to say (at the minute) that we’ve got all the indications of a fabulous working dog in the making.

### Psychological growth

One of my friends opened the new premises to her candle shop and it was just too good an opportunity to miss with all the smells and sights, so I bundled young Emrys up in the car and we went out for the afternoon. He was such a good boy taking it all in – the smell was pretty intense it’s got to be said, but he took it all in his stride.

It was really interesting to watch him being unconcerned about the couple of people in the shop; at that point he’d only really seen my family and none of us had worn face coverings. Without pre-empting fate, I think it may be safe to say that young Emrys, at 12 weeks, has just come out of his first fear period unscathed. ■



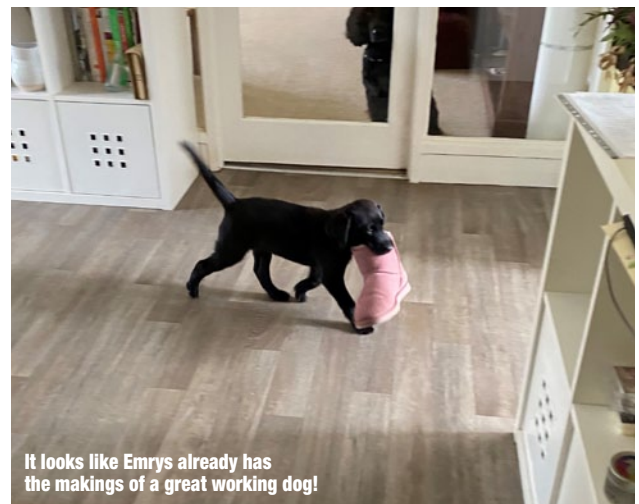
A trip to the opening of a local shop helped with the pup’s psychological growth



You can use the collar to help train your pup not to jump up



Teaching Emrys to walk on the left... but no lead just yet



It looks like Emrys already has the makings of a great working dog!