

You've got a cuilean beag (little puppy)! Enjoy your life with them!! Here's what I have found helps make your life with the new addition go as smoothly as possible!

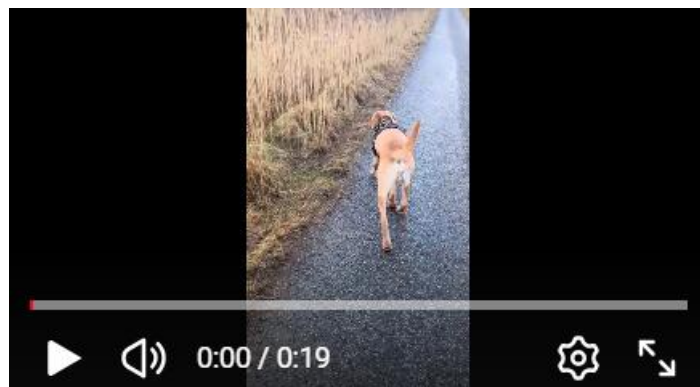
I have seen lots of people struggle with this so wanted to share some advice as a dog trainer, but I decided to wait until now, when I could reference my own 18 month old dog – Freddie, who I went through this process with and applied the principles outlined below, so I could share my results.

I have documented the whole process on Instagram (@spogan_dogtrainer_furmaw) it is currently available in the 'highlight' section.

FREDDIE AT 8 WEEKS



FREDDIE AT 18 MONTHS



First and foremost, I am a positive dog trainer, so do not advocate the use of e collars, choke collars or leads, prong collars, headcollars, snout straps/leads or tightening

harnesses. Also please never scream at, strike, bully, or purposely hurt or scare your dog.

I do recommend and use normal flat collars, harnesses (ones with a front ring are best) long lines, double ended leads, tethers, crates, a firm voice when needed, a clear YES and NO cue, a clicker and a whistle.

I grew up with collies, but over the last 15 years I have adopted really challenging dogs, some deemed untrainable, reactive ones, biters, ones due to be euthanized due to behavioural problems. I did different dog training courses; followed different advice, tried using tools, but settled on positive training as by far the best as well as the most ethically comfortable for me.

The Spogan dog training approach prioritises:

The dog – owner bond

Understanding then improving the dog's state of mind, as when you distil it down, it is the dog's state of mind which causes behaviours.

Think of the Spogan approach to training like this – suppose your collar buckle breaks, (this did happen to a customer of mine...) – or your dog escapes out of the garden onto the road..

You want to be able to control your dog for safety with just your voice, and them listen, because you have worked to make them have great association with you and taught them to focus on you, not rely on a tool that's out of reach.

*When you are considering your dog's state of mind, always remember, dogs can't feel human emotions like spite, stubbornness or guilt, that's just us projecting our human feelings onto them..

They just tend to be motivated by wanting something or wanting to avoid something, and that makes them, happy, sad, frustrated, excited or fearful to different degrees. It's as simple as that.*

<p>The most important areas to build up are; THEM FOCUSING ON YOU – so your dog listens and pays attention. OUR VOICE – CLEAR COMMANDS – so your dog knows exactly what you're asking. YOUR BOND WITH YOUR DOG – so your dog actually wants to please you.</p>
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Essential rules to go by to be a fantastic dog owner:

- **ALWAYS BE KIND TO YOUR DOG, OTHER DOG OWNERS & YOURSELF (NO ONE'S A ROBOT AND WE ALL MAKE MISTAKES SOMETIMES.)**
 - **CONSIDER THE REASON CAUSING THE BEHAVIOUR.**
- **DON'T MOLICODDLE OR MICROMANAGE YOUR DOG, THEY ARE MORE RESILLIANT THAN YOU THINK. BUT REMEMER YOU ARE LIKE THEIR PARENT LOOKING OUT AND ADVOCATING FOR THEM.**
- **DON'T TAKE ADVICE OR BE SHAMED BY JOE BLOGGS IN THE STREET, THEY ARE ONLY REFERENCING THEIR EXPERIENCE, THEY DO NOT KNOW YOUR DOG OR LIFE.**
- **USE A LEAD UNTIL THEY CAN RECALL, SHOUTING 'FIDO COME' WHILE THEY JUST IGNORE YOU WEAKENS THE RECALL CUE AND REINFORSES RUNNING FREE. (I BELIEVE A LONG LINE SHOULD BE ON THEM UNTIL 12 MONTHS & REEL THEM IN IF THEY IGNORE YOU.)**
- **DON'T LET YOUR DOG RUN UP TO PEOPLE OR OTHER DOGS – THEY MAY HAVE INJURIES, BE TRAINING, OR JUST NEED SPACE.**
- **WHAT GETS ALLOWED, GETS REINFORCED, THEN REPEATED BY THE DOG – IF YOU DON'T LIKE SOMETHING, STOP UNINTENTIONALLY REINFORCING IT.**
 - **WHAT SOCIALISATION ACTUALLY IS: LETTING YOUR DOG SAFELY EXPERIENCE NEW AND NOVEL PEOPLE, ANIMALS AND ENVIRONMENTS - INCLUDING SEEING OTHER DOGS WHO THEY DO NOT ACTULLY NEED TO MEET. SOCIALISATION IS NOT JUST LETTING YOUR DOG MEET LOADS & PLAY LOADS WITH OTHER DOGS, THAT JUST CREATES A DOG PRONE TO OVER EXCITEMENT AND CAN THEN LEAD TO FRUSTRATION REACTIVITY. YOUR PUPPY ACTUALLY JUST NEEDS TO MEET A FEW NICE CALM DOG FRIENDS AND EXPERIENCE A BIG WORLD FULL OF NEW THINGS.**

FREDDIE WITH MY TWO COLLIES AND TWO OF OUR BOARDERS



REMEMBER THE GOAL FOR YOUR DOG IS – CALM, NEUTRAL AND UNPHAZED, NOT OVER EXCITED & FIZZY WHEN THEY SEE OTHER DOGS & NERVY WHEN THEY SEE NEW THINGS AND PEOPLE.

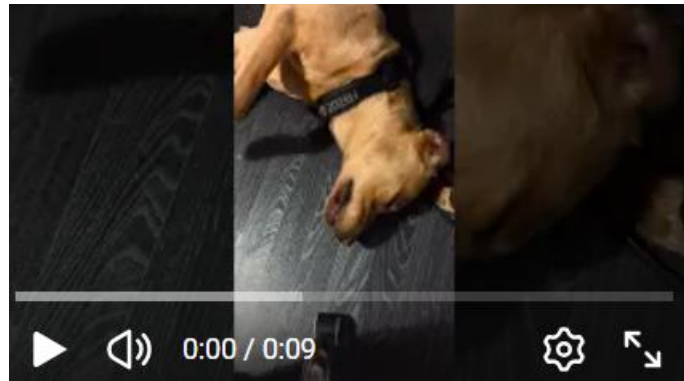
- **REMEMBER DOGS CHARACTERS ARE AS DIFFFERENT - AS OURS ARE. JUST BECAUSE SOMETHING WORKED FOR THE DOG DOWN THE ROAD, IT DOES NOT MEAN IT WILL WORK FOR YOUR DOG.**
- **DOGS GENERALLY TAKE 6-8 WEEKS OF CONSISTENT PRACTISE OF A NEW HABBIT TO EMBED IT. SOMETIMES IT IS FASTER, SOMETIMES SLOWER. BUT YOU HAVE TO BE COMPLETELY CONSISTANT EVERY SINGLE TIME.**

So now you know that important foundation, here's the age specific things to note: The first important point is to get your home environment right for your puppy, (remember if you want a calm pup in the house – make sure their home is calm and low arousal.) So make it very clear to them when it's chill out time and when it is play time to avoid confusion for them and manic annoyance for you.

Do not fill your house with toys – that just excites them. They do need some calm enrichment in the house though, so I suggest only licks and chews in the house – as licking and chewing is actually very calming for puppies/dogs. As you will no doubt be

aware, puppies teethe until about 6 months old, I gave Freddie a rubber puppy teething bone when he was small, then long raw bones once he had his adult teeth at about 6 months - however, not everyone likes to give their dog bones, so alternatives are Kong type chews, rubber bones, frozen carrots or natural beef rolls. It is essential they have something to chew on, or your puppy may direct their teething onto your shoes! And don't worry, giving them chews does not encourage them to chew more, it just gives them an appropriate outlet for a natural behaviour.

MY DOGS DECOMPRESSING WITH CHEWS IN THE HOUSE



It is also essential to get your puppy in a predictable routine – dogs love routine; it brings them predictability and assurance, and it is good for building confidence and feelings of safety – they know what is coming and aren't so 'on edge'. *One note to add is; don't make their lives too rigid, as deviation from a rigid routine can actually lead to some dogs feeling unsafe/suspicious and reactive towards things out of the norm. Make sure to bring a bit of variety to their lives through socialisation. Routine in a big, varied world is the goal! More on the correct way to socialise below!

With regard to toilet training, I prefer not to use puppy pads, instead, putting the puppy in a toileting routine. When Freddie was a puppy, this is what I did - from ages 2 – 4 months, he was taken outside and given the opportunity to toilet, while on the lead, at 7am, 10am, 1pm, 4pm, 7pm, 10pm, 1am, 4am – yes, this is a pain, but it works, as they get older, gradually extend the time between toileting until they can go 10pm until 7am at around 6/8 months.

Calm in the home

Every dog needs to be able to calm down, switch off and get enough rest. Puppies actually need around 18 hours sleep! You can make some changes to their environment and their daily routine to ensure this is sorted.

Chews, not toys in the home. Toys should absolutely be provided but in the outside area.

Crate

As I write this, I have a dog in a crate at my feet. We have a communal crate with the door left open and multiple dog beds in the home, all my dogs take turns going in and out of the crate as they please as they enjoy it in there. PLEASE MAKE SURE the crate is a cosy sanctuary that invites rest and peace for them, NEVER just a holding place for you to put your dog into for long periods to confine them for your convenience.

Dogs love dens. If you provide a quiet, peaceful, dark, covered, crate in a quiet area, with a cosy bed inside, you will probably see they choose to go in it themselves. When introducing the crate, go slow, make progressions like leaving the room, very incrementally and gradually over time. After a few weeks you will find you can close the door and leave the room/home for a while (progress the length of time the door's closed incrementally too).

I'd suggest crating with a chew after their exercise, as a low stimulation den environment that allows them to decompress and process what they have just learnt. Aim to build it up to an hour.

Play

Play thoughtfully and daily. Play is not to be viewed as a treat, IT IS ESSENTIAL – during it, dogs learn and express their natural urges.. Insufficient play = a frustrated dog, too much of the wrong type of play = an over excited dog.

Think of 3 types of play, all are essential, but one type you are really going focus on providing as it will strengthen your bond, make them focus on you and train them.

- Object play – e.g. dog takes himself off to play with a toy/activity. Great for encouraging independence and provides an outlet for genetic urges.
- Other dog play – e.g. rough and tumble play with litter mates and dog friends. A good activity for setting social boundaries and provides an outlet for genetic urges.
- Play involving you. Essential! Focus on this! Do this daily!

The most fun for your dog has should happen with you, this way they will prioritise you over other exciting things like other dogs, focus on you and you can teach your dog impulse control.

e.g tuggy, hide and seek, scenting retrieval (never just repeatedly launching a ball for them..) Be sure to include impulse control games with your puppy! Build it up so your puppy waits for your cue to go through doors and gates.

Clean communication

Sometimes dogs don't do as we say, simply because they don't understand what you are asking because you keep changing the word you use. Pick just a few cues and stick to them using a calm and even tone.

Reactivity

Reactivity usually tends to be rooted in 2 areas. Frustration due to socialisation done wrong, or from fear.

Then they keep reacting because the outburst from reacting gives them a burst of feel good chemicals – so they keep on doing it!

So do yourself a favour and follow these 2 principles to avoid reactivity developing in your puppy:

- **Socialising**

One of the most common misconceptions is about how to socialise your dog. Socialising is actually about giving them a variety of new experiences, seeing lots of things, basically making their world big and diverse, and letting them know they will be ok whatever new things they experience. And giving them a few well behaved pals.

It is NOT hyping them up by letting them run around like crazy with other hyped up dogs. That is just rough and tumble play, if you do that instead of proper socialisation, you will likely end up with a dog who values other dogs more than they value you, expects they can play with all other dogs they see, then ends up frustrated and reactive when you stop them running over to dogs out on a walk.

- **Confidence building**

Just like us, dogs get confidence from doing the hard/scary thing and being ok. Then getting a reward.

So the next time they come across something new, they are more 'I can do this' Remember – no fuss or drama, just confident leadership from you. Always keeping them safe but remembering they are more resilient than you think.

e.g. When Freddie was a puppy, I made him an obstacle course in the garden with cardboard boxes to run through, tunnels, little platforms and a ball pit, filled with noisy empty plastic bottles with treats to sniff out in it. You are basically counter conditioning your dog by doing this...

Be mindful of your puppy's developmental timeline here, at around 8-12 weeks they can develop phobias from bad experiences, so keep everything very controlled and positive then. Their optimal socialisation window is usually open until about 16 weeks, so show them the world before then! (I would carry Freddie around with me when he was little to ensure he was still seeing the world before he was fully vaccinated). Also, with regard to confidence, when puppies

hit adolescence at around 6-9 months, they may seem more independent, push boundaries, and seem to regress with their training.

Do not reinforce behaviour you don't want by letting it happen, keep them on their long line until they are about 12 months.

FOLLOW THESE PRINCIPES & BY THEN YOUR PUPPY SHOULD BE ON THEIR WAY TO BECOMING A GREAT DOG!!

This £29 guide contains more advice than other dog training products at this price point and it contains information that will guide you with adult dogs as much as puppies.

If you have further queries regarding raising your dog, do join my [mailing list](#), follow the Spogan socials and subscribe to the [Spogandogs YouTube channel](#) for more tips.

Let me know how you are getting on by sending me a message on here, along with info about your puppy. I will reply with a 5 min video message.

[Click here to message.](#)

You can find out about other Spogan online training products [HERE](#)