

## *Exercise*

All dogs benefit from adequate daily exercise. A lack of exercise, especially in young dogs, is almost certain to lead to behavior problems. Exercise relieves stress in dogs just as it does in humans. It is important that you take a little time out of your day in order to provide your dog with brief and necessary exercise sessions.

### *Training and Exercising*

Incorporating exercise and play into your training will help your dog learn to enjoy training. She will come to see training as one of the most enjoyable activities that you share with each other. Rewarding a Sit with a Frisbee toss instead of a treat can teach your dog that responding to your requests is both rewarding *and* fun. Practice long down stays as you walk across a field and then call your dog to you and reward her with a ball or a game of tug. You want your dog to learn that natural activities like sprinting, chasing, grabbing, searching, and tugging, are all part of training.

It may also be beneficial to exercise your dog before a training session. Teaching a dog to walk on a leash after they have been cooped up in the house for eight hours will almost certainly result in a frustrating lesson for you and the dog. If you own a high-energy dog, you may want to have a fifteen minute vigorous exercise session before you begin the leash walking session. A dog that has the chance to burn off pent up energy will be easier to handle on the leash. Exercise can be a great way to set your dog up for success. If your dog has had a chance to run full speed for a little while, she is less prone to pull on the leash.

### *Poor Excuses not to Exercise Your Dog*

#### If only I had a fenced in yard to let him run.

For many dogs, the exercise they receive is limited to one brief walk per day. This is sufficient for very few dogs. And for dogs such as an 8 month old Labrador puppy, it just won't do. If you live in an apartment or a house without a fenced in yard, this may pose a problem. The problem can be solved by using a long rope and scouting out a location where you have room for your dog to run. If you have a rope of approximately 50 feet in length attached to your dog you can instantly restrain her if necessary. Once you have found a location that will be sufficient, take your dog there with the long line attached and play ball, let the dog chase you, or play whatever other game your dog enjoys. Your dog needs to sprint, jump, and roll on the ground often to burn off energy.

#### If only I had more time in the day

We all fall victim to this excuse from time to time. You have a full-time schedule that may include kids, work, a spouse, hobbies, friends, chores, and more. Without meaning to, you put your dog's needs last. However, if you are reading this, you have made a decision to learn more about your dog and how to meet her needs. With some dogs, exercise can be just as important as food. And just as you would not starve her, you should not fail to exercise her. Do your best to squeeze three ten minute dog exercise sessions into your schedule. And please remember, exercising your dog is not just letting the dog outside by herself. You need to be involved.