

Aussie Puppy Tips 101

Trail Creek Aussies

Aussies pups are a handful at first but with patience and consistent training make fantastic dogs, they are quite the characters and love their people and everything that belongs to them. Below are a few training tips you might consider implementing to help you and your pup have a successful and joyful adjustment as he grows into a well mannered, super behaved pup/adult. Dogs must get enough attention and exercise *physically (though be careful about too much/long activity that could damage growing bones/joints)* and *mentally (thinking games find it, nose work, trick training etc)* or they get bored, just like people, and start getting into stuff, being naughty, barking, digging etc. It takes a lot of consistent work at first so he knows the boundaries and what's expected of him- but it will pay off and you will have a fantastic dog in the end.

Ideas/Tips

1. I highly recommend gating off a small area preferably with easy access to outdoors, and put his bed and toys in this area. He will view this as his room/ play pen/den an area where he can be when unattended, or when you just need a break. Open the gate give the command "kennel" or "room" while tossing in a yummy treat...he will learn this is a good place where he is to be quiet and just chill. At first don't shut the gate, just practice in and out. Do this repeatedly till he gets the hang of it...if he refuses to go in say the command again and put him in...repeat several times.... then shut the gate, leave him in for a few minutes or until he's quiet (don't take him out till he's quiet.) Always put him in kennel/room area when you leave, or at bed at night. He must learn that your house belongs to YOU first and he must obey the rules. Be consistent he'll learn and be a happier well adjusted pup.
2. If you don't have an area you can gate off, use a kennel that will be one size bigger than him when full grown. This will also help with potty training because dogs do not like to wet their beds. Give the command "kennel" toss a treat in and put him in and close the door. Practice repeatedly and he'll learn to go in on his own. Same as above
3. Try to establish regular play, sleep/nap, and eating times. Puppies always have to go to the bathroom after each of these times...take him out say "go potty" and wait till he does his business, then praise him with good boy, good dog. Try to always go outside the same way, he will start to naturally run to that door when he has to go or wants out. ***Some people have trained their dogs to ring a bell tied to the door to alert them when he has to go out.***
4. As far as play, if you can't make it outside, roll ping pong balls- they love to bat them around and fetch them. Empty water bottles make great crunchy batting toys too. Tie a small rag/ toy to a rope and drag it around he'll chase it. You can hide it and say "find it" this will work his little brain and he'll love it.! Always hide it easy at first where he can watch you and see it. make it more difficult as he gets the hang of it. You can also hide too and make him find you. Teach him tricks like shake, roll over, give me five, sit up, down, come, play dead, "touch" (taps your leg, hand etc. with her nose) , shut the door/drawer (closes it with her nose or paw) be creative and have fun! ***Our girl Hailey loves to chase a laser light or flashlight shadow it is hilarious and really tires her out!*** All our dogs LOVE hide and seek., and "find it" games.
5. *****Teach him to "wait" for his food. Make him sit, say "wait" put the food down while keeping him in a sit with one hand, say "ok" let him go. Do this every time you feed, increase the wait time the better he gets. You can also do this with treats, make a game of it say "wait" toss a treat on the floor, then release him to get it. ***** Also, "wait" is a must when you're going outside or when someone comes to the door. Make him wait and you go out first then him.

6. You can buy an inexpensive agility set online that comes with jumps, weave poles, a tunnel, and a hoop, all made out of pvc thats easy to set up and take down and stores in a bag. Great exercise physically and mentally. *****Very important too much jumping or repeated long runs/hikes/bikes with a dog under 1 year is detrimental to their bones and soft tissue while they are growing! So please refrain from and/or seriously limit any Frisbee play or agility jumping, as well as being on slippery wood floors constantly, until the dog is over a year old. *****
7. Enroll in a puppy socialization/obedience class as soon as possible. Petco, Petsmart, local pet stores should have them. You can also join a local Aussie or dog club. **If your children are interested have them enroll in your local 4H classes its great for both the dog and them. They learn more than just obedience by participating in projects, learning dog body parts, basic first aid tips, and filing out reports on dog care and expenses etc. then actually show the dog at county and state fair.
8. Do as much socializing as possible with other dogs, people and places. Take him on errands so he gets used to the car and such. Literally take him everywhere you go. Make it fun and always reward with positive praise and tasty high value treats.
9. Teach him the "leave it" command. Anything you don't want him to have or touch.
10. Nip "nipping" in the bud. Herding breeds do just that. He will try to nip your heels, pant legs, and hands in an attempt to herd you, or make you do what he wants. When he does this Stop. Turn away. Ignore him. When he stops, sits or does any positive behavior *praise him!* and then continue walking, playing or whatever you were doing. IF he actually nips/bites hard - Yelp loud or give a low growl-like NO or AH AH. (Try to reserve the word NO for really important attention getting things. Otherwise like a child who hears no constantly they soon ignore that word because its just nagging)
11. Jumping up on you. Turn away. Ignore him. Once all four feet are on the floor or he sits. Then praise and reward like crazy. Aussies love attention from their people but don't give it while he's jumping on you or in his mind you are rewarding that jumping behavior.

12. Give him lots of hard things like kongs and knuckle bones to chew on while teething. **One thing we use which works great for training kennel time is scooping cottage cheese or peanut butter into the inside of the kong and tossing that in the kennel or play area it keeps them busy and they don't realize they're closed in. Give this each time you have to leave and it becomes really special. they love it and then associate kennel time with good things! If he chews on things you don't want him to, a simple AH AH, take the item, and give him a chew stick, bone or whatever else you want him to have instead. he'll get the picture.

Hope these tips help. Please call text or email anytime if you have any questions or just need to talk puppy talk. Aussies really do make fantastic family dogs, just stick with the training, be creative but kind, firm and consistent. And you will be rewarded with the best behaved most loyal fun loving faithful friend around.

Blessings,

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