



MASTIFF/GAIL PAINTER



CHESAPEAKE BAY RETRIEVER/BETH HANSON

PUPPY

Bringing home a new puppy is certainly fun, but it also brings new challenges. Here are a few tips to help you successfully master the most common situations.

The Biggie: Houstraining

Until he's about 3 months old, your puppy has to relieve himself quite frequently. If you're not quite sure how to go about houstraining him, this might not bode well for your carpet.

Understanding a few important factors can make for a much speedier and easier houstraining process.

- **Timing is everything.** Your young puppy will probably need to "go" right after eating or playing, right after waking up, and approximately every two hours during the day. Be prepared to walk him promptly at these times, before he has the chance to make a "mistake" in the house.

Remember, keeping your puppy on a regular schedule of meals and walks will make houstraining easier for both of you.

Here's a tip: Don't end the walk abruptly as soon as he relieves himself. This teaches him that relieving himself ends the fun outing—and he may figure out that "holding

it" will result in more time spent outside!

- **Always let your pup know when he's been good.** On your walks, praise him lavishly (for example, say "Good puppy! Good puppy!" in a happy voice) as soon as he eliminates. The basis of speedy, easy puppy training is clear and immediate communication on your part.

Use the same simple words and phrases to mean certain things. Don't expect your puppy to understand long, rambling sentences. Tone of voice is important, too. Your puppy will learn more quickly that "good boy" means you're pleased with what he's done if the words are said cheerfully.

- **A watchful eye is key.** Watch your puppy every minute that he's loose inside your home. If you notice him acting like he's about to eliminate, say "no" right away in a stern but calm voice, quickly take him out, then praise him when he relieves himself outside.

Think of it this way: Every mistake your puppy makes