



AMERICAN KENNEL CLUB OFFERS PUPPY TRAINING TIPS FOR BOTH THE WHITE HOUSE AND YOUR HOUSE

All of America has been anxiously awaiting the pitter-patter of President Obama's Portuguese Water Dog in the White House. But now that the Obama's new dog has arrived, how will they prepare him for his high-profile life in Washington? And, as the Obama's are not only a First Family but also first-time dog owners with the eyes of the world upon them, what can the public learn from their experience?

American Kennel Club (AKC®) Canine Good Citizen and S.T.A.R. Puppy Director Dr. Mary Burch offers the following tips on how to raise a new dog, in either the White House or your house.

- **Make sure your dog plays well with others (both Republicans and Democrats).** Socializing your dog by exposing him to everything you can will allow him to grow up to be a well-adjusted adult dog that is comfortable meeting strangers, children and other dogs. Obama can socialize his Portuguese Water Dog by taking him on play dates with Champ, Joe Biden's German Shepherd. But, if your doggy play date invitations get lost in the mail then you might consider exposing him to more experiences outside the home such as walks to various settings – including parking lots and busy places such as the post office – taking him on visits to see family and friends and meeting children.
- **Teach your dog not to be the speaker of your house.** Depending on the situation, barking can be just natural or a learned behavior for dogs. Ideally, if you have chosen a breed that is known to be a barker (Herding dogs and many Terriers and Hounds are known for being vocal) you live in a home the size of the White House or your neighbors live a good distance away. However, in the densely populated urban and suburban areas where most people live, it's simply unacceptable to permit a dog to bark endlessly. One of the best solutions to keep boredom and barking at bay is to give your dog plenty of exercise. If he is tired he will sleep while you are away. You can also turn on the TV or radio when you leave your dog at home alone to drown out strange noises that might trigger barking.
- **Put your dog on an exercise program fit for the president.** Exercise can improve your dog's physical and mental health and is key in preventing behavior problems. The amount of physical activity your dog will need depends on age, health, breed, and temperament. Dogs in the Sporting, Hound, Working, and Herding groups may require more exercise than other breeds. Obama should consider taking his Portuguese Water Dog along with him on morning jogs, swimming, or even have Sasha and Malia play catch with him on the White House lawn. As with the Obamas, once you find the best activity for you and your dog make sure you maintain a regular exercise schedule to keep him fit, healthy and out of trouble.
- **Train your puppy to be a candidate for leadership.** Just like the President needs a plan to keep our country on the road to economic recovery, every dog owner has got to be

prepared for the ups and downs of dog ownership. A good start includes enrolling in AKC's S.T.A.R. Puppy Program (www.akc.org/starpuppy). These basic training classes teach puppies and their owners practical skills – such as how to make sure the puppy comes when called, how to diminish biting and nipping, and the basics of housetraining – good enough for the White House or any house. Visit http://www.akc.org/events/cgc/cgc_bystate.cfm to find a puppy training class in your area.

Additional tips on responsible dog ownership can be found online at the American Kennel Club website at www.akc.org.

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