Dog Training Hints and Tips

- Training your puppy or dog should begin from the moment you bring it home.

- Dogs will go on learning regardless whether we teach them or not. Obviously if we put in some effort we can teach them what we want them to learn, rather than habits they pick up if left to their own devices.

- Puppies start learning from birth. 8 weeks of age is the ideal age to obtain a puppy (It is not recommended that you purchase a pup younger than 7 weeks of age as it needs time to learn from its mother).

- Socialisation is extremely important between 8 & 12 weeks, discuss socialisation classes with the veterinary hospital staff. If the classes are run properly, the risk to the puppy is low and the benefits are enormous.

- Puppies have short attention spans so training should be brief and interesting. Training should be practiced once or twice daily.

- All training should rely on positive reinforcement and gentle methods.

- Food lure training can be useful. When teaching a new command the food is used consistently, when the command has been learnt, food should be given intermittently.

- It is very important that verbal praise is always given, even with the food, as this becomes a secondary reinforcer. Because it has been associated with an extra special food reward in the past, it takes on more meaning.

- Try to keep all training sessions brief, regular and fun.

- Start training in an area with minimal distractions, then progress to more distracting areas such as the front yard or park.

- Undesirable behaviour is best prevented or corrected in the act. Allowing behaviour sometimes, but not at other times (eg rough play or jumping up) will confuse the dog and make correction more difficult.

- Do not use harsh correction methods.

- Be aware of taking 'helpful' advice from friends or acquaintances; always double check with your Instructor or Behaviourist.

- Training classes are an excellent way to guide your dog in the right direction, they give you better control and are a great way to socialise your dog.