Tips for New Beagle Puppy Parents

Adapted from: http://www.beagles-on-the-web.com/archive/tips/

- **Socialize your beagle**

  As soon as your vet gives the "all clear" to socialize, take your puppy with you whenever possible, to develop familiarity with a variety of people and other breeds of dogs.

- **Train your beagle**

  Take your puppy to obedience training class to socialize, to cultivate a bond and a common language with you, and to begin the basics of obedience training. Look for a trainer that uses POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT methods. There is no need for use of force or harsh correction.

- **Set limits now**

  Start with strict limits. While restrictions can be relaxed as time passes, it is nearly impossible to impose them once your puppy has experienced freedom. For example, if you do not want your puppy on the furniture, start from day one. The behaviors you ask for from the start will be easily accepted as "the way things are".

- **Be consistent**

  All members of your family should be on the same page about what your puppy is and is not allowed to do. Multiple sets of rules lead to confusion.

- **Establish a routine**

  Dogs (especially Beagles) crave routine. Within reason, get up at a consistent time, feed your puppy at a consistent time, and go out for potty breaks on a regular schedule. Your puppy will learn to trust that all basic needs will be met, which aids in developing a strong sense of security.

- **Make your Beagle part of the family**

  Whenever possible, include your puppy in family activities. Dogs (especially Beagles) enjoy being a part of a "pack".

- **Nip phobias and problem behaviors in the bud**

  Some are easier to address (example: counter surfing), but others can be difficult to change if left unchecked (examples: separation anxiety or nuisance barking). Many of

these behaviors will not disappear on their own if you ignore them. Also, the longer a behavior is allowed to persist, the more entrenched it becomes and the harder it is to "un-train". If you see a problem behavior starting, address it immediately. Referrals to reputable trainers are often available from your veterinarian and other local organizations (rescues, shelters, etc.)

- **Keep your Beagle safely contained in your yard**

  Either leash walk him or keep your puppy contained in a SECURELY fenced area. It is not unusual for Beagles to be climbers, jumpers, and diggers. Make sure your fence is at least 6-foot-high. Bury chicken wire into the ground along the perimeter. It is risky to rely solely on an invisible fence for a hound breed. Your Beagle might willingly endure a shock to follow a good scent. Once outside the perimeter, no incentive exists to endure the same shock to re-enter the yard. Also, an invisible fence does not keep other animals out of your yard.

- **Keep your Beagle safe while traveling**

  For maximum safety, keep your puppy in a seat belt or crate on the back seat. Dogs left to roam freely in your car jeopardize their safety and yours.

- **Be sure your Beagle has proper ID**

  If your puppy is ever separated from you, the odds are much greater that he will be identified and returned if microchipped (and your contact information is current with the registry). Affix registry information, contact information, and rabies tags to your puppy's collar. If the jingling annoys you, purchase a pet tag silencer or "wallet" that attach to the collar. When traveling, take along current photos and copies of shot records.

- **Maintain your Beagle's health**

  Feed your puppy the best diet that you can afford. Maintaining a healthy weight will help ward off future illness. Schedule an annual checkup. (Schedule semi-annual check-ups as your Beagle ages.)

- **Engage in quality play time**

  Identify what your puppy enjoys doing and participate in some fun daily play sessions. Keep mentally stimulating toys available.

- **Offer Unconditional Love**

  You are your puppy's whole world and source of guidance, training, socialization, health care and safety. This is a wonderful privilege and responsibility!