

**Ashley's Progress**  
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Recently we told you about Ashley, our new eight-month-old puppy and the changes she has made in our lives. She has blessed us with love, joy and almost every behavior problem a puppy can have. She jumps up on people, nips and paws them for attention, chews things, digs holes in the garden, barks at anything that moves, chases the cat and isn't housetrained.

It's probably poetic justice (or a curse from a dissatisfied client) that we should have a puppy with so many of the problems that we try to help our clients to resolve. So how are we trying to handle these problems?

We're trying to take our own advice (yes it is hard!) by not losing our tempers and not taking the destruction and disruptions as personal affronts. Ashley isn't doing these things to purposefully make our lives difficult (although the curse could explain a lot), she's just being a normal puppy.

Not giving her the opportunities to be destructive or to housesoil is important. Using baby gates, we make sure she stays in the room with us so we can see what she's doing. Or we use her leash and collar to keep her with us, and if that's not possible she's in her crate for short time periods and overnight.

A moment without supervision can be disastrous. The latest loss was her new red chili pepper collar and tag pocket. We try to keep Ashley busy with chew toys, playing fetch or with our other dog Mocha and with plenty of walks. Once her medical problems were under control, housetraining has progressed nicely. She now asks to go outside by going to the door and whining.

We're interrupting the jumping up, nipping and pawing with squirt guns (we both have quick-draw holsters for them) and then having Ashley sit or lie down for attention. Rewarding appropriate behavior with lavish praise or a tasty treat is making the learning go much faster. We've discovered that keeping calm and rewarding her for doing something right works much better than "losing it" and trying to punish misbehavior.

Ashley's behavior is not yet perfect and won't be for awhile, but we are seeing progress every week. Patience and consistency in dealing with problems almost always pays off. And of course we, and Mocha too, are becoming more attached to her everyday.