

# **Basic Training**

## **Yorkie Paper Training: How Important Is It?**

Paper training is not a temporary procedure to be used as a stopgap until your yorkie gets all his inoculations and can go outside.

It is for dogs that are always intended to relieve themselves on paper in the house. Before embarking on this method, be sure you are going to want your yorkie to consistently urinate and defecate on paper, in your home.

Since squatting is a normal urinating stance for yorkies of both gender that are castrated early in life, you can paper train them without worry as it is a method best suited to smaller dogs.

However, male yorkies can be a bit of a problem in paper training because of their pattern of leg lifting. Castration may inhibit this behaviour, but only if performed before leg lifting begins, at about six months.

A timid yorkie, or one subordinate to a very dominant male, may develop leg lifting later, but it will always happen except in rare cases. Therefore, be sure your yorkie is a good candidate for the paper training method.

You should realize that even with your yorkie going on paper, you are going to have a mess in the house. Additionally, all dogs need to go outside for exercise. You cannot completely cut your yorkie off from the pleasures of the outdoors with its exposure to interesting sights, sounds, smells, experiences, and companions.

However, paper training for the right candidate does leave you free not to have to walk your yorkie, and allows your schedule to remain flexible.

If you are sure it is the procedure you want, select a well-ventilated corner that you want him to use. Your yorkie's permanent toilet area should be well away from his confinement spot and where he is fed, since no animal likes to relieve himself close to where he eats and sleeps.

Place several layers of newspaper on the floor to cover only a very small area, or a box filled with appropriate absorbent material like kitty litter will do.

Forget the old-fashioned method of leaving paper down all over the bathroom with the dog locked in and given unlimited availability. A dog will never really learn this way.

As your yorkie becomes accustomed to relieving himself on the paper, gradually reduce the area of paper covers until there is only the equivalent of a single sheet. Do be sure it is still at least several layers thick for absorbency.

## **Off-the-leash Training For Yorkies**

Off-the-leash training – probably the ultimate dream of most dog owners – is basically a logical extension of all the other commands.

Your yorkie is eligible for this work only when he is perfect in basic obedience. Don't be too anxious to get him working off the leash because if he's not properly prepared, you'll have nothing but problems.

Since your yorkie should behave off the leash as well as he would on one, be absolutely sure he is ready by giving a review of all the basic obedience work. Run him through coming when called, sit-stay, lie down-stay, and walking on a leash.

Be sure he thoroughly understand both voice and hand commands. If he is really good at the basics, you can go on to give him a taste of freedom.

When free, your yorkie should walk close by your side and not wander. Only when you give him permission should he go farther away from you and relax to do as he wants.

If, however, you send him out to perform certain obedience tasks, he should do so immediately and return when asked.

Before trusting your yorkie where there are no restrictions, practice first inside or in an enclosed area. When he sees grass and smells odours, he will be tempted not to do any work. Therefore, acclimatize him to obeying where you have complete control.

Proficiency at walking by your side on an extremely slack leash is the best way to be sure he is ready for this part of training. Simply drop the leash on the ground and let it drag along. This gives your yorkie the illusion of freedom, but still leaves you a means of control.

The moment he gets out of line, grab or step on the dragging leash so that he is snapped backward.

Be very definite. Correct him promptly and bring him back when he is even slightly out of place. To let your yorkie free without a leash outside, you have to establish definite control.

Be especially insistent at this point in the training to ensure that he will always be in the correct position by your side. Later, when he is reliable, you don't have to be quite so emphatic.

To make sure he is perfect before removing the leash, go through the step-by-step sequence you used to teach him to walk on a leash by your side: first walk a few steps backward; stop and start suddenly.

## **Off-the-leash Without Restrictions for Yorkies**

Once your yorkie listens instantly on the leash, remove it and work without one. If he knows the command, follow procedures that allow him to demonstrate his knowledge.

Put your yorkie by your side and place him in a sit position. Give the voice and hand signals for him to lie down. If he doesn't obey, try raising your foot up as if you are going to put pressure on an imaginary leash.

The yorkie may respond to that reminder. If he doesn't, simply lean over and push him down. Repeat this several times until he understands that the command applies with or without a leash.

Be thoroughly insistent, because if your yorkie doesn't obey when you're right on top of him, he isn't going to listen from a distance.

If you're sure the dog understands the command and yet refuses to obey, push him down with more force or even slap him down if need be – don't tolerate stubbornness.

Any attempt your yorkie makes to run off should be stopped immediately. Go get him, give him a slap, and bring him back to repeat the command. If he's really incorrigible, out on his leash but don't hold it.

Let it drag on the ground so that you can easily grab or step on it if he makes any moves in the wrong direction. The moment he starts off, throwing something right at or in front of him may also get him to reassume his position.

After your yorkie is obeying the command without a leash, you have to teach him to obey at a distance. Don't try to do this by immediately crossing to the other side of the room and telling him to lie down. Chances are, he probably won't listen.

Start off by giving the command when you're only a few feet away, and gradually build up the distance. First put the leash back on your yorkie and make him sit by your side. Then hold the leash and walk a couple of feet away from him.

Drop it on the floor but make sure it's within easy reach if he starts to run off. Command your yorkie to lie down. If he starts to run off, quickly pick up the leash or step on it lightly. This will keep him in place and may even be enough of an incentive to get him to obey.

And if he does obey, don't forget to praise him.

## **Applying Negative Reinforcement Training to the Misbehaving Yorkie**

If you already have your dos and don'ts list prepared, decide also where you want and don't want him to be in your home. To start teaching your yorkie what you don't want him to do, go through a watchful session with him.

Giving your yorkie rules during this session will make for a happier, more secure pet. Once he knows what is expected of him and what he can and cannot do, your yorkie will feel more at ease.

This initial training will serve to start him off as a good member of your house. This session shouldn't take more than ten to fifteen minutes. You should have only two during the first day or so, being sure to keep them well separated from any positive lessons like the sit, stay, and so forth.

Take the leash off your yorkie and allow him to wander around but don't take your eyes off him. If he does something wrong, make it clear that you don't want him to continue.

A negative, unpleasant action is the only thing that will discourage your dog. Petting your yorkie and explaining why misbehaviour is unwanted will have no effect.

If your yorkie looks ready to climb on the furniture, tell him to get down and give him a little tap. Stop any mad running around immediately. Since the yorkie will usually sniff and then lick before he starts to chew, try to catch him in the sniffing-and-licking stage.

Sit with a little magazine nearby and if he goes over to nuzzle the plants or furniture, throw the magazine at or near him and say nothing.

When correcting your yorkie for a misdeed, it is best to catch him in the act. Generally, a dog can only associate the activity of the moment with the correction. However, no matter whether your dog is caught in the act or not, you must correct your yorkie every time he makes a mistake – even if you discover it a few hours later.

If you do have to punish your dog after the fact, always be sure he understands WHY the punishment is being given.

Your yorkie must make the association between the unpleasant reprimand and his evil deed. If there is a separation of time between the misbehaviour and the punishment, your yorkie may become confused.

## **Teaching the Yorkie Dog to Fetch**

The fetching trick only works on dogs that are already predisposed to the activity. If your older yorkie does not already fetch, you will only make him feel frustrated if you begin teaching him as a senior.

The last thing you want to do is hurt or stress him in any way. Try another trick instead such as rolling over. This can be easily done by first putting the older yorkie in a down/ stay command. Show him a bit of food and bring his head toward his back.

As he reaches for the treat, his body will roll itself. Each time you give him the command, require more movement. You can gently help him to roll the first couple times. He will soon understand what you want, and will eagerly perform the trick.

Always offer LOTS of praise and affection when he does as you ask him.

For those yorkies that like to fetch, bring a soft toy with you when you do therapy visits. Residents will be delighted as your older yorkie plays retrieving games with them. He will need to learn, however, exactly where to return the toy.

Many residents are unable to bend over and pick things up. The toy needs to be returned to the person's lap or hands. To teach this, require your older yorkie to bring the toy closer and closer to the target area before throwing it for him.

Each time he brings it closer, praise and offer a treat or pet him. It won't take him long to figure out what you want. Being a senior dog has its advantages.

First is his ability to understand you. If your older yorkie has earned obedience or agility titles, there are special classes for senior dogs in which the older yorkie can compete.

Veteran's class is a non-regular class similar to Novice at an obedience trial. The dog must heel on and off leash, perform a figure eight around two people, stay and come off lead, stand still while being examined by the judge, and remain in a sit/ stay for one minute, and a down/ stay for three minutes as the handler stands thirty feet away.

You can be pretty sure that few of these veterans move during their stay exercises. Some kennel club's also offer a veteran's Open Class. This offers the opportunity for older yorkies to jump, retrieve, drop in a recall, and perform long stays with his handler out of sight.

## **The “Whoa” or “Stop” Command**

Learning this command could save your yorkie’s life by allowing you to stop him before he starts out across the street in the face of an oncoming automobile.

Along with ‘come’, this command assures complete control over your yorkie. However, it may tend to slow down a dog in responding to the ‘come’ command. A properly trained yorkie probably won’t slow down too much, but some shyer dogs may not react well to this command.

Therefore, don’t make a practice of stopping your yorkie every time he is called, nor in the same place. If you do, your yorkie may anticipate the order and automatically slow up, waiting for you to tell him to stop.

In order for a dog to learn to stop moving when told, he must know the ‘stay’ command thoroughly. Once you have halted him, you may also want your yorkie to sit and lie down and stay, so he should have learned the sit and lie down commands.

Only when he does can you teach him ‘stop’ or ‘whoa’. Be sure to work inside or in an enclosed area at first so as to have control.

Place your yorkie in a sit-stay position and walk away a short distance. Call him to you. When he comes halfway, step forward quickly and push both hands toward him as if you were a policeman stopping oncoming traffic, and say ‘stop’ or ‘whoa’.

If he stops, quickly tell him to stay.

If your yorkie ignores the command continues to come forward, run toward him and physically stop him. If he shows no response, the next time you call your dog, tell him ‘stop’ or ‘whoa’ and then throw a chain or leash on the ground just in front of him.

Then repeat the command and signal. A loud stamp with the foot or throwing a heavy book or magazine with a thud in front of him might also help. Startling your yorkie this way should make him stop short.

Once your yorkie stops when asked, you have to teach him to respond to the next command you issue from a distance. Immediately after you stop him in his tracks, tell him to sit or lie down. When he obeys this, tell him to stay in that position.

Keep him there for a short while until you release him. Or call him to you as your next command.

## The “Roll Over”

It will be easier for the yorkie to learn to roll over if he already knows how to lie down on command.

You must be careful your yorkie doesn't confuse this roll-over exercise with the lie down. Therefore it's better not to actually tell him to lie down; rather, place him in the down position and start to work from there. This will eliminate any connection in the commands.

Sit on the floor or in a chair to get close to your yorkie, with his head next to you. Take a treat and reach over, bringing it just in front of his nose. Gently bring the treat over his head and around to the other side so that the yorkie must follow the treat.

Your voice command is “roll over”, and your hand signal is making a circle toward the right. Later, a slight circular motion of your hand or finger, or just the words “roll over” will be sufficient.

Hold the treat just out of reach of his nose and tempt him with it, and as his nose moves to follow the smell so must his body.

If it doesn't, gently help him along. When the yorkie finishes a complete roll, give him the treat. Repeat it going the other way. Then go back and forth a couple of times until the yorkie starts to roll.

If, instead of rolling over, the yorkie jumps back up to get the treat, hold him down with your other hand to help him roll over. Just don't let him get up and go the other way. You want him to roll; eventually he will.

When he does it, don't ruin everything by going through the exercise too often or he may well become bored and refuse to do it.

When he is doing this continually while you are seated, it's time to try to see if he'll do it while you're standing. You may have to first put the leash on your yorkie until you're sure he won't take off. If you hold the treat above his head – away from his nose, he may tend to get up.

A long dowel stick can be helpful to keep him down and nudge him over.

Give the treat only when the yorkie completes the command. This way he will understand he will get his treat only when it is done.

## Negative Training on Yorkies Explained



Unfortunately, dogs are not always the perfect creatures we masters might like them to be. A pet-dominated family can be miserable, and any dog can become a household terror.

No one wants a dog that chews up your antique armoire or your favourite shoes. And if you don't want to train your dog, you can make enemies.

If your yorkie misbehaves, you may blame him, but everyone else will blame you.

When a yorkie is taken into your home, he must be taught to respect the rights and feelings of the humans he associates with. He has to learn he can't rip up the house, bully everyone into a corner, or annoy your friends.

Not everyone is crazy about animals, and so he has to be trained not to dig up your neighbours' lawns or chase their cars. Barking is not fair to neighbours, nor are piles of faeces on the floor when visitors arrive, nor are attacks on postal employees or delivery persons.

Guests don't want to be jumped on by a noisy dog; car chasing can be dangerous to everyone, and dogs jumping around in a car are equally dangerous. You have to keep your yorkie on your own property, and when he is left alone there, he should be reliable.

People complain that their dog barks endlessly, chews the rug, or snaps at their mothers-in-law. Before the dog will stop such upsetting, destructive behaviour, he has to associate something unpleasant with that activity.

But when negative training is explained, "I couldn't be cruel to an animal!" is often the response.

These same people, however, do not hesitate to request that you find a new home for their animal or a place where they can leave him – even if the final result is the yorkie being put to sleep.

It is really kinder to train your yorkie with a little bit of preventive medicine.

All dogs have the potential to develop bad habits, and unfortunately, some of the natural tendencies and basic instincts – which can be very undesirable under the restricted conditions of urban life – can also be difficult to inhibit.

Once you let a lot of problems build up, you will really have your work cut out for you. Therefore, starting off on the right foot is important to you, as well as to your yorkie.

## The “Play Dead” Command

Depending on how this trick is executed by both yorkie and owner, it can be an amusing performance – or simply look as though your yorkie is lying asleep on his side or back.

To be effective, your yorkie must assume the correct position promptly and express the appropriate body attitude. A good basis for this – perhaps even a prerequisite – is for your yorkie to know to lie down and stay (when told to do so) until given his special release word.

This trick is simply an extension of that command. Be careful your dog doesn't confuse the signal with the circular one used for rolling over. In fact, your voice command of “bang” or “play dead” is a major source of the amusement in this trick!

To teach your yorkie to lie on his side and play dead, stand over him and make him lie down without commanding it. Issue the voice and hand commands by saying “play dead” and giving a semicircular motion with your hand.

Then physically turn your yorkie onto his side and hold his muzzle flat on the floor in a suitable “dead” fashion. When the dog relaxes and stays for a few moments without struggling, release him with his special release word, then praise and treat him.

Repeat this several times until your yorkie has some concept of what it means. Gradually increase the length of time you hold him in his “dead” position.

For playing dead lying back, start out as if going to make your yorkie roll over. Use the commands for “play dead” and a procedure similar to the tempting one used to teach “roll over”. Here, however, stop the yorkie once he is halfway over and resting on his back.

Sit down on the floor or in a chair and make your yorkie assume a “lie down” position with his head near you. Hold your hand with his its titbit of food just in front of his nose and give the signal for him to play dead.

Then move your hand in back of your yorkie's head so that he follows the titbit with his nose. His body should naturally follow as his head comes around, but if it doesn't, help him.

When he is on his back, hold him in place for a few seconds by holding him physically, using the “stay” command. When he is doing it, give him a treat and then release him with his special word.