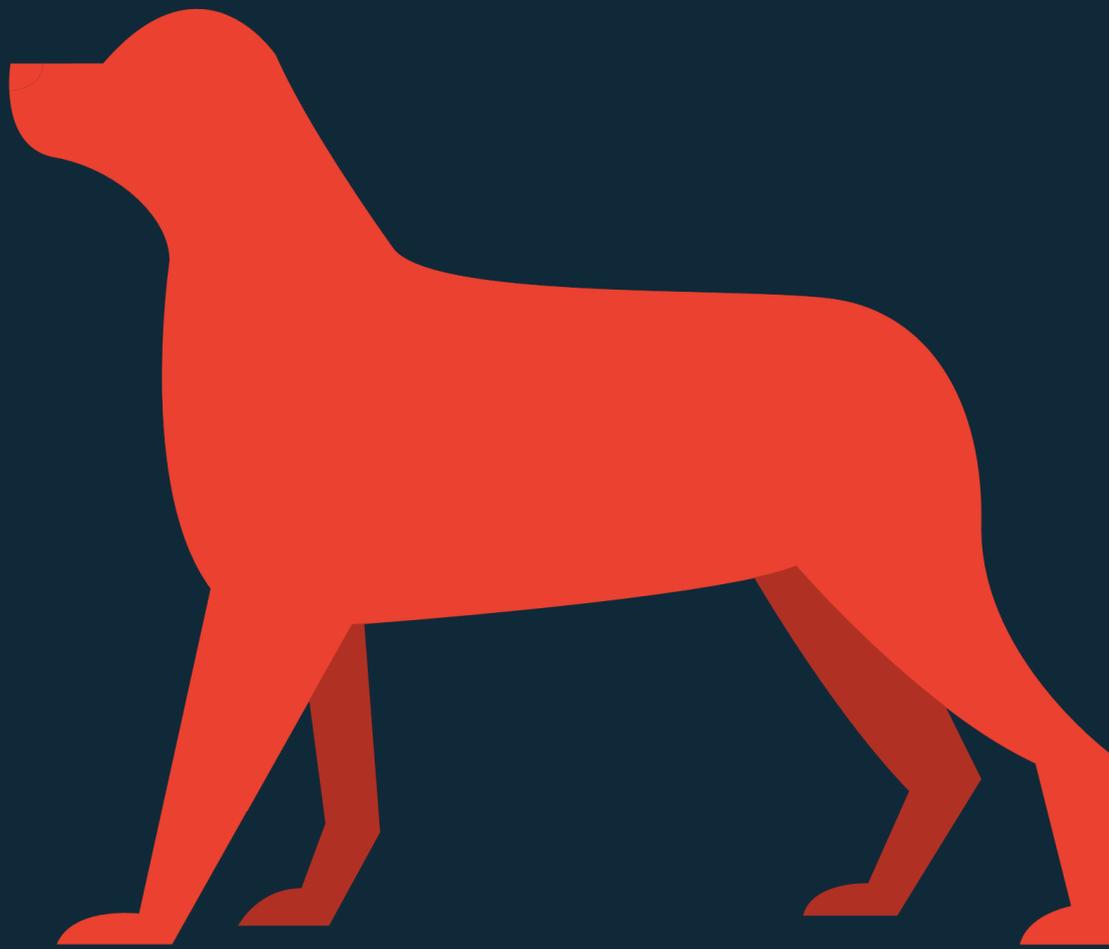


Canine Psychology

The Essential Guide To Dog Training



BY PREMIUM PAWS

*Because we care about your dog as much as
you do*

Chapter 1

General Training Tips

Concentrate on what your dog is doing right.

Professional dog trainers everywhere tell their students to reward their dogs when they do something right. This “positive training” method is in contrast to training that centers on punishment.

Trainers recommend that owners praise and reward their dogs with treats and affection for good behavior instead of just scolding them for bad behavior.

Be proactive and keep your dog from behaving badly in the first place

One of the most important tips that a professional dog trainer will tell his or her students is that good behavior is not just the responsibility of the dog. The owner must make every effort to avoid giving the dog the ability to engage in bad behavior while they are still learning the ropes. For example, if you notice that your dog likes to chew, it's important to make sure that everyone in the home puts their shoes behind closed closet doors to remove temptation.

Stop saying NO!

One of the biggest mistakes that people make when training their dogs is saying NO without giving the dog an explanation of some type. Dogs, much like children, will become confused with a simple command of NO! Here's what you should do instead. If your dog is stealing the cat's food, tell him NO and then gently guide him to his own food dish. Or, if your dog is chewing on a table leg tell him NO and give him rawhide or another toy on which he can chew. Once your dog begins to actually use the new behavior, reward him with treats, toys and praise

Learn the difference between boredom and separation anxiety

It is important to determine whether your dog is misbehaving when you leave home because he is bored, or because he is experiencing a case of separation anxiety. Figuring out why your dog is engaging in bad behaviors is usually the quickest way to combat the problem. If boredom seems to be the issue, you can probably keep your dog from destroying your house during alone time by providing him a toy stuffed with treats or something else that will help exercise his mind a little. If separation anxiety is the problem, you will need to learn ways to desensitize your dog to not only your absence, but also your "preparing to leave" routine.

Consider trying clicker training

Clicker training is a relatively new technique in the dog training world and involves the owner using a specific sound to indicate to their dog that a particular behavior is acceptable or desired. The owner will repeat the “click” and then reward their dog for his or her good behavior. The positive feedback will encourage the dog to repeat the good behavior.

Be patient, persistent and consistent

These three behaviors on the part of an owner will develop similar behaviors in a dog. Patience means that you understand that learning new behaviors may take some time and a lot of practice and repetition. Persistence means that you, as the owner, do not give up when training does not seem to be going well. Consistent means that your dog knows what to expect from you. For example, if you always say NO when your dog is misbehaving, they learn to recognize NO as a sign of disapproval. Conversely, if you only give treats for good behavior, your dog will learn to recognize such positive feedback.

Start early

As soon as you get a dog, you should begin training in some capacity. If you are getting a late start, it may take some time to catch up. The key to remember is that training is often nothing more than reversing bad habits and behaviors. If your dog is young, they haven't had a chance to develop a significant number of these bad behaviors and training will be simple. With an older dog, you really have to unteach everything the dog knows about behavior and start to reteach behaviors that you find acceptable

Be kind and gentle for best results

An owner who constantly punishes his or her dog for bad behaviors is bound to be a lot less successful than an owner who is gentle and kind, rewarding his or her dog for acceptable behaviors. Consider offering your dog plenty of praise, and be gentle when redirecting his attention from a bad behavior to one that is more acceptable to you.

Have reasonable expectations

For example, if your dog misbehaves at home you are wise to expect that he will misbehave at the dog park or in the yard. Therefore, if your dog is having trouble paying attention to your commands you will want to make sure to keep him on a leash when outside. If your dog jumps on people in the house, expect that he will be rough with other dogs. You can reverse these behaviors through positive training, but you need to realize that bad behaviors will most likely continue regardless of the circumstances until they have been unlearned by your dog.

Always enforce your commands

. If you give commands, but do not enforce them, your dog will learn that there is no reason to listen to you. On the other hand, if you back up your commands with reinforcement he will quickly learn that you mean business. For example, if you tell your dog to sit and he ignores you, gently push him into the desired position and praise him. Always praise good behavior as a means of enforcing your commands.

Use the ONE command rule

Only give your dog each command one time. If you want your dog to sit, tell him SIT! If your dog decides to ignore the command the first time, gently place him into the sit position and then praise him. Do this with every command, so that your dog doesn't think that your commands are optional. Stick to the ONE command rule, and your dog will quickly learn to take your commands seriously

Clearly define your commands

If you expect your dog to follow commands, then it is imperative that he understands what it is that you want him to do. For example, if you are trying to teach him to sit you will only confuse him if one time you use the command SIT and the next time SIT DOWN. If he's confused he'll most likely just ignore you. And this can lead to a vicious cycle. So, pay attention to the commands you are teaching and don't confuse your dog by being inconsistent.

Teach your dog to read your tone

Tone is just as important as the actual command that you are giving. Therefore, try to always use a consistent tone when issuing a command. Yelling a command will be less effective than just using a firm and authoritative tone. Pick a tone, and stick with it. Your dog will begin to recognize that tone, and respond to what you are telling him more effectively

Analyze stubbornness

If you find that your dog is stubborn and does not want to listen to your commands, there may be a simple explanation. Look for signs to see whether you are giving commands that your dog understands, whether your dog knows what to do when they hear a certain command and whether the command is creating an uncomfortable feeling in your dog. Most likely, you need to simply repeat training for a specific command and make your dog feel more comfortable through rewards and praise.

Never use your dog's name in anger

You should try to reprimand your dog without using his name so that there is no negative association with the name itself. When you praise your dog, call him by name so that the dog responds happily when he is called by name. You may find that simply using the dog's name will get him to come to you eagerly in just a short period of time.

Earn the respect of your dog

If you hit or scream at your dog, he will quickly lose respect for you. And instead of becoming a loving companion, will become reserved and fearful.

Therefore, be sure to avoid training when you are in a bad mood and avoid negative reinforcement whenever possible. Staying upbeat will make your dog more willing to do whatever it is that you expect from him and help the two of you form a good relationship.

Never use a training technique that is not natural and comfortable for you

If you are using a technique that does not come naturally, your dog will sense your hesitation as quickly as he will sense fear or anxiety. This can lead to your dog ignoring any commands given and cause frustration for both of you. Therefore, work to find techniques that you understand and feel comfortable with before starting to train your dog.

Consider an obedience training class

There is no shame in asking for help with training your dog. Some people are simply not equipped to train their dog on their own, either due to a lack of patience, inexperience or not enough knowledge. Investigate different obedience training classes in your area and sit in on a few to determine whether or not they might work for you.

Consider a training club

Some kennel associations offer training clubs to their members and the general public. These groups will often allow member access to professional trainers, and the knowledge of other members. Some breeds are more difficult to train than others, and having this type of resource available may be an excellent asset to your own training program.

Learn about your dog's breed

Different dog breeds may respond better to different methods of training. Dogs of different sizes may also require different types of training. For example, if you have a small terrier who likes to jump it is less dangerous to all involved than if you have a St. Bernard that weighs in at 150 pounds who likes to jump! You will need to concentrate on different areas with different breeds and sizes of dogs, and knowing what to expect is half of the battle.

See yourself as the team leader during training

You are not the only one responsible for successful training sessions. If you see yourself and your dog as a team in training, you will be much more successful than if you assume the burden of all responsibility. You need to be aware of everything that goes on during training, because you are the leader. However, realize that your dog must be a willing participant for training to succeed.

Remain calm and relaxed

Your dog will sense fear, anger and anxiety. Therefore, in order to be effective you must stay calm. Issue commands in an authoritative voice and be firm and consistent to keep your dog's attention. Any behavior on your part that is out of the ordinary will keep him from staying focused and reduce the effectiveness of your training efforts.

Be consistent

If you aren't serious about wanting your dog to perform or stop a specific action, then do not issue the command. Otherwise, you are going to teach your dog that you only mean what you say some of the time. This will lead to confusion on your dog's part and frustration on yours. It's much easier to only issue commands that you will enforce.

Recognize and respect your dog's needs

Just like people, you will find that when a dog's basic needs are not being met he will misbehave more often. Be sure that you are providing quality food, plenty of water, constructive socialization with people and other pets, adequate shelter and safety and lots of exercise. When these needs are met, teaching your dog the basics will be much easier.

Practice, practice, practice

Practice makes perfect, isn't that what your mom always said? Well, dog training is no exception! If you're going to work on training your dog, make sure that you practice consistently for several 5-10 minute intervals throughout the day. Focus on practicing one skill at a time until your dog has mastered it and then move on to something new. Be sure to revisit already learned tricks and behaviors regularly though so they are not forgotten.

Expose your dog, slowly over time, to different situations

It is critical to emphasize to your dog that you expect him to behave consistently regardless of his surroundings. One of the best ways to do this is to socialize with your dog. Introduce him to new people and other animals (dogs, cats, etc.) so that he learns to be social. Take him into unfamiliar surroundings whenever feasible so that he learns that regardless of where he is you are still there and in charge. This will allow you to have more effective control, and will alleviate anxiety caused by unfamiliar people and surroundings that can lead to misbehavior in the future.

Find out what works

Not every child learns the same way, and not every dog learns the same way. Therefore, you should attempt to use different training techniques until you find one that you are comfortable with, and that works with your particular dog. The general rule to remember is that if a technique isn't working after a week, you should try something else.

Remember that training should not be harsh

Harsh training will make your dog mean – and afraid. You definitely don't want either of these situations, so try to always focus on the positive and to reward good work with treats and praise. If you punish your dog for a bad behavior, he will stop doing that behavior temporarily. But, if you replace a bad behavior with a rewarding behavior there is a higher likelihood that you will end up with a well-behaved dog.

Use a short leash for training purposes

Leashes come in many different lengths, some reach up to 100 feet or more. However, when you are training your dog, you should always use a leash that is around 6 foot long and comes with a loop that you can slip your hand through, wrapping it around your fingers to ensure that the dog doesn't get away from you. When your dog is on your left side, keep the leash in front of you with the loop around your right hand. This will help you to keep the leash short and to maintain control.

Start early and keep at it

The most effective time to train any dog is when they are a young puppy. However, if you are training an older dog, it is best to begin as soon as possible in order to teach your dog to obey you. Also, it is important to keep at your training efforts until your dog masters all of the commands that you may issue. Training is a commitment that must be entered into seriously, otherwise you may find yourself right back where you started.

Familiarize yourself with your dog's parents

If possible, try to spend time with the parents of your dog. Sometimes this is not possible, but when it is an option there is a lot to be learned. By watching the behaviors of the parents, you will be able to spot similarities and potential problems that should be addressed before they become an issue. A good example of what might be a potential problem is aggression. If you notice that your dog comes from two aggressive parents, know that there is probably a genetic predisposition to aggression and consider professional obedience training in this situation.

Hire a professional

Sometimes people have the best of intentions when they get a new dog, however time and other responsibilities may make it impossible to train a new dog adequately in even the basics of good behavior. Consider a professional dog trainer in your area if you don't have the time or experience to train your dog properly.

Do not leave your dog alone for long periods

When your dog is in training, it is important that he never be left alone for long periods of time.

Otherwise, you will be unable to provide necessary reinforcement for good behaviors and to divert the dog's attention for negative behaviors. This can result also in boredom or anxiety, which will definitely lead to destructive behaviors. So, if you are leaving your dog alone, place him in an appropriate sized crate in order to keep momentum with training and to protect your home while you are away.

Teach your dog that nothing in life is free

This interesting training program is best used after basic commands like sit, down and leave it have been learned. The goal is to stop your dog from being disobedient by reinforcing who is in charge. For example, if your dog senses that you have a treat, make him sit before you give it to him. And, if he gets excited when it's walk time make him lie down until you put on his leash. Never give in – if your dog doesn't do what you command, you should not give him the reward he seeks. By using this technique, you will be reinforcing the basic obedience commands and showing who is boss at the same time.

Find out what makes your dog tick

One of the best ways to start training your dog is to figure out what motivates him. Some dogs are more motivated by treats, while others prefer extra lap time. When you know what makes your dog happy, you can use that as motivation for good behavior and also as a reward for a successful training session. This is a commonly used practice by professional dog trainers, and although it may take some time to get a handle on what makes your dog tick, it is definitely the road to successful training

Establish pack structure early on

The sooner your dog realizes that it is you, and not him, that leads your pack – the better off you will be. Establish boundaries for your dog from the beginning by placing him into a crate during initial training and by always using a leash when outside. Let him know that you will give the commands and he will obey them. You need to establish trust between yourself and your dog so that he understands from the beginning that you will not hurt him and that he does not need to fear you.

Use an invisible fence

An invisible fence can be used to mark the border of your yard, or to border the area where your dog is allowed within the yard. An invisible fence is a great way to train your dog to stay on your property when he is outside, because it will deter him every time he gets near the boundary. The problem is that should your dog get out he will also be deterred from getting back in. If you do use an invisible fence, remember that other animals and people will not be able to sense the presence of the invisible fence. So be sure to clearly mark your yard to keep people from crossing the fence until you are sure that your dog will not attack anyone that he views as an invader.

Determine the ground rules before you begin training

One of the common hang ups that people experience with dog training is not deciding in advance which behaviors they will or will not tolerate. For example, some people will let their new puppy nap on the sofa but decide later that they don't want dog hair on the furniture. They then need to re-train their dog that getting onto the sofa is not allowed. Make a list of the behaviors you don't want to see, and you will have a better idea of where to begin. It is always ok to reverse a behavior, but is easier for you and your dog if you set the rules at the beginning and don't change them in the middle of the game.

Train your dog to be less sensitive

Dogs can have many of the same fears as humans, and part of your training efforts should be concentrated on teaching your dog how to handle fear and anxiety. A good example is thunder. Many dogs are afraid of the loud noise for which they cannot locate a source. If you are able, purchase a CD with thunder noises and play it in the background while you are in the home with your dog. When the dog starts to get anxious, tell him NO and redirect his attention. Until you are certain that you have desensitized your dog, be sure to place your dog in a crate so that he is contained whenever there are loud noises.

Stick to small time intervals when training

Dogs do not have long attention spans, and they tire quickly of the same activities. Therefore, for effective training you should break up your sessions into 5-10 minute intervals throughout the day. You can work on one command for a few minutes and then play with your dog for a while. After a break for water and a quick nap, you can start again with a second command or maybe even work on leash-training. Don't expect to train your dog in a weekend – or you will only end up frustrated with a completely confused dog!

Be aware of the importance of timing

Dogs are not like children. If you punish a dog just minutes after a bad behavior – chances are that they will never make a connection between the punishment and that behavior. You need to catch your dog in the act of an unacceptable behavior if you want to correct what he did wrong.

Define training for yourself first

If you are going to be a successful trainer for your dog, you need to know in advance what training means to you. What are your goals? Do you want a perfectly behaved show dog, or would you be satisfied if your dog learned to come when you call him? There is no definitive answer for what training means – it's a matter of preference that only you can define. But, make the decision before you begin so that you know what your own expectations are.

Know the non-verbal commands that you are giving as well as the verbal

When you are training your dog, he will pick up on more than just the commands you issue verbally. Some astute dogs will learn that a hand to the left means – go left. Others may assume that because you are grumpy when you tell them to sit, they will be the object of your wrath should they listen to you. Training is about action and reward. If you give your dog non-verbal clues and commands, it is likely that they will develop a response. Therefore, pay attention to your posture, tone of voice and attitude during training sessions.

Feed your dog only at scheduled times

House breaking is dependent on a schedule. It is imperative that a young dog be given food three times each day at the same time, and that the food is left available for only 10-20 minutes or so. After time is up, remove the food and take your dog outside. In between feedings may lead to accidents, and free-feeding will definitely lead to accidents. Therefore, increase your chances of successful house breaking and keep your dog healthier by feeding only at the times you have scheduled.

Remember that the key to a well-behaved dog is giving him plenty of exercise

If you don't make sure that your dog gets plenty of exercise, you are letting your dog down and possibly setting the stage for aggression and misbehavior due to boredom. When you give your dog a lot of exercise, he will be tired and spend time resting. If

your dog is not tired, he will get bored and have to look for ways to entertain himself. Unfortunately, that could mean chewing, chasing other animals or barking and howling.

Maintain eye contact

Dogs cannot learn properly if they are not focused on your commands. During training sessions, make sure you have your dogs attention at all times and that you're making eye contact. Using hand signals rather than verbal commands is a good way to ensure that your dog will be focused on you.

Chapter 2

Housebreaking Advice

Housebreak your dog

The best way to housebreak a dog is to take him outside after every meal. You should not play with your dog outside until he has relieved himself, so that he learns why he is being taken outside. If after about ten minutes, he has not relieved himself you should take him inside and place him in his crate for 10 minutes or so and then repeat the process. It should not take very long for him to get the idea, especially if you have a very young dog.

Watch for signs when housebreaking a dog

Dogs are fairly consistent in their behaviors, and by simply watching a dog outside before he relieves himself, you can get valuable information that will make housebreaking easier. For example, if your dog always walks in a circle before relieving himself it is important to recognize this behavior and to take the dog outside as soon as you notice it. This will help you to get to know your dog's behaviors, and help make housebreaking easier.

Consistency is key when housebreaking a dog

When you are housebreaking a dog, there are several things that you can do to make the process easier. First, stay outside with your dog as much as you possibly can, so that he becomes comfortable with his surroundings. Second, take your dog outside immediately after he eats or drinks and try to keep him outside until he relieves himself. Reward him for the good behavior and go back inside. If you would prefer that your dog use a specific area in your yard, you need to take him outside on a leash until he begins to use that area without prompting

Crate training will make housebreaking a dog easier

Unless your dog has a medical condition that makes it impossible, most dogs will refuse to soil the area where they sleep. If you place your dog in a crate while you sleep or are away from home, there is little chance that you will return to find the crate soiled. Therefore, when housebreaking your dog, keep him in the crate unless he is out to eat, drink or play. Immediately after the designated activity, take the dog outside to relieve himself. Reward successes, and praise your dog and show affection before returning him to the crate. After a while, you will be able to extend the non-crated time and see less accidents than if you hadn't used the crate.

Chapter 3

The Basic Commands

Train your dog to heel

Getting your dog to walk right by your side is important for your dog's safety. Most people try to use a leash, pulling the dog forward to get him to heel. However, using a treat is a more effective technique. Stand next to your dog, holding a treat in your hand at hip level on the same side as the dog. Take three steps, saying "heel" one time as you do so. If your dog has noticed the treat, he will most likely automatically follow your command. Repeat for 5-10 minutes each day, making sure that your dog is aware of the treat. Give your dog the treat, and offer a huge amount of praise for successful training sessions.

Teaching a dog to come to you

First-time dog owners often become frustrated when they say COME and their new dog stands there looking at them. Unfortunately, dogs do not understand commands instinctively. A good way to start teaching the come command is to say COME any time you see your dog moving in your direction. Then heavily praise him for coming to you, even though he was doing this anyway and not necessarily in response to your command. Teaching your dog to come to you in this manner makes training less intense and is very rewarding for both you and your dog.

Teach your dog to sit

Sit is usually the first command that people want to teach their new dog. However, you might want to consider getting your dog to come to you first, and then teaching them the sit command before issuing the reward. Instead of simply pushing down on the dog's rear end, consider placing one hand on his lower back and one hand under his chest. Then, say "sit" while simultaneously applying downward pressure on the back and upward pressure on the chest. Reward your dog with treats and plenty of praise for sitting on command.

Train your dog to take a walk with you

Many people seem to believe that it is natural for a dog to walk on a leash with its owner. However, walking a dog requires training first! You must teach your dog to heel, or stay by your side. And, you must teach him that it is never ok to pull the leash and try to break away from you. It is important to walk your dog, so that he gets plenty of exercise and socialization. However, unless you take the time to train him properly first you will end up frustrated and will definitely not enjoy your time spent together

Train your dog to lie down

The “down” command is one of the first things that a professional trainer attempts with dogs. The most effective method of coaxing a dog into the down position (where the dog is lying on its belly) is to lure him to the ground with a treat, or piece of food. While guiding the dog into position, issue the command DOWN. After several practice sessions, your dog will be a pro at this simple command.

Teach your dog to stay

Once you have taught your dog to sit, he will be ready to learn to stay. Place your dog in the sit position, and reward him with a treat. Now, place your hand in front of the dog's nose and say "stay". Begin to back away with your hand still out. Say "good" when your dog stays in place, and release the dog to come to you for a reward in a few seconds. Each time you repeat this successfully, make the time interval of staying longer until your dog will stay on command for up to a minute. Always offer treats and plenty of praise as a reward for a job well done. It is best to teach your dog to stay in a quiet place, however you should alternate practicing at home and in a dog park or other public area to reinforce that stay means stay regardless of the surroundings

Teach your dog to settle down

Younger dogs especially tend to get wound up very easily - sometimes with no external stimulation. Therefore, you are wise to teach your dog how to go to “time out”. Do this by issuing the command PLACE or RELAX and your dog’s response should be to go to the designated spot and to lie down until you call him back. To teach this command, catch your dog when he is wound up or pacing around incessantly. Put on his leash and allow him to continue for a few moments. Then, issue the command and gently guide him to the designated place, where you will place your foot over the leash in order to keep him in place while he lies down. At first, you may need to stay in position with your foot on the leash for 5 minutes or more until he has calmed himself. Do not relent – you may need to devote more time.

Train your dog to let you wipe his paws before entering the house.

Dogs are different from people – they are rarely bothered by dirt or mud on their paws. They also do not realize why you would prefer they not leave mud streaks all over your new carpeting. Avoid problems by getting your dog into the habit of sitting near the entrance door on a mat or towel until you have issued a command of INSIDE. But, before you issue that command take the time to wipe each of his paws of all dirt and mud.

Chapter 4

Stopping Undesirable Behaviors

Replace bad habits with good habits through reinforcement.

If it annoys you that every time someone comes to visit, your dog jumps all over them, you need to find some other way for your furry friend to greet guests. Start by determining what you would like your dog to do. Maybe you would prefer that he come and sit by your side when people arrive. Then work on teaching your dog to sit, and reward him heavily with praise and treats when he does. With this technique, you are teaching your dog a new habit to replace the bad behavior that you want to break by replacing the bad behavior with something that brings praise and rewards.

Interrupt bad behavior and show your dog how you want him to behave.

Catching your dog in the act is one of the best opportunities for correcting bad behavior. Interruption is a great technique that involves interrupting a bad action by getting your dog's attention. Yelling "stop!" in a low pitch voice is usually enough to divert attention to you. At that point, gently show him what you would like him to do instead. And, don't' forget to reward the dog for good behavior when he does it!

Make sure that your puppy is not biting during play

Playing is a puppy's favorite activity. But invariably they get too wound up and occasionally someone will be nipped by those pointy puppy teeth.

Obviously, biting is something that you will want to stop as soon as possible. Instead of punishing your dog for biting by yelling or putting him in timeout – just simply stop playing with him and ignore his pleas for more play for 5-10 minutes. Then, resume playing and giving him lots of positive feedback for good play. This will help to end the biting habit before it becomes a problem.

Catch your dog in the act of misbehaving

Correcting a dog well after they have done something bad is completely useless. Unless you are able to stop the dog in the middle of the behavior, chances are that a reprimand will have little meaning to him. Whenever possible, catch the dog in the act and redirect his behavior to one that you prefer. This simple step will help your dog to become well-behaved much faster than a series of reprimands for behaviors they did some time in the past.

Realize that even negative attention can reinforce a negative behavior

Often times dogs misbehave to get your attention. When you overreact with negative attention you may actually be “rewarding” your dog with the attention he seeks. A better strategy is to ignore the negative behavior and to redirect the dog to something more positive. Then, praise heavily to reward him.

Train your dog NOT to chew on furniture

Chewing is one of the problems that is universal for dog owners. It is more common for puppies to chew than older dogs; however the effects on furniture are very much the same. To stop a dog from chewing you will need to catch him in the act, and divert his attention to a dog toy or other item that you don't mind him chewing. When he stops chewing the furniture, reward him with a treat and a lot of praise so that he begins to see chewing the appropriate object as a rewarding experience. Never punish your dog for chewing, as anxiety and fear will almost always make chewing habits worse instead of better.

Train your dog NOT to bark

Barking is completely natural for a dog, and some breeds are more “talkative” than others. However, to save your sanity and the sanity of everyone around you, it’s important to stop your dog from barking excessively. When your dog starts barking tell him “good work” for alerting you. If a problem is not immediately noticeable, tell your dog BE QUIET while putting a treat in front of his nose. When the barking stops, wait a few seconds and allow your dog to have the treat. The next time you repeat this, make the wait time longer. If your dog begins to bark again, repeat the BE QUIET and start over. You will find that your dog will bark only when necessary after repeating this many times.

Train your dog to never beg when people are eating.

One of the most annoying things about visiting people with dogs is having the little critter beg for food the entire time you’re eating. As a dog owner you need to pay special attention to this behavior. There are many methods for keeping a dog from begging at the table, but the most effective is to simply ignore the dog entirely while you are eating. You should also offer the dog a toy filled with treats that come out during play, while you are eating. During the training phase, this will keep your dog distracted and keep him from begging at the table.

If you have children, realize that the responsibility does not lie entirely with your dog

In most cases where an otherwise well behaved dog bites a child, it is because the child somehow harmed the dog, which prompted a defensive move like biting. Therefore, when you have a dog and children together in the same home there needs to be just as much training for the children as there does for the dog. Teach your children from a very young age what is and is not appropriate behavior towards your dog. Do not allow small children to climb on, hit, pull or otherwise threaten your dog in the same way that you teach your dog not to growl or bite.

Train your dog to stop barking unnecessarily

When your dog is outside, does he bark continuously at everything that moves? If you want to stop this behavior, consider a bark-control collar. This handy device issues tones for both approval and disapproval from a special collar that can be controlled from a distance. You will find that the feedback mechanism will quickly help your dog to become independent enough to be left alone outside without constant supervision.

Training a dog not to bite

It is very important to never let your dog put his teeth on you intentionally. This will also protect you from having it happen accidentally. Anytime your dog (especially if he is a puppy) opens his mouth to chew on you, grab his snout and say NO BITE! If this doesn't work, you should also try tapping his nose at the same time. The goal is not to frighten the dog, but to get the message across.

Teach your dog not to run outside every time the door is opened

This is a common problem and can be best alleviated by simply teaching your dog that he is not to go through the door until you tell him OUTSIDE. This will take time, but when you are taking your dog out tell him OUTSIDE as you pass through the door. Then, praise him for the good behavior. If he tried to run through the door and you haven't issued the command, use the LEAVE IT command to distract his attention away from the door

If your dog has a problem with aggression, start from the beginning

If you are experiencing problems with an aggressive dog, it is probably time to reassert your position of authority. A good way to do so is to start with the basics of obedience. Aggression that is not the result of a physical or mental issue can almost always be turned around once the dog realizes that you are in charge.

Train your dog not to chew on your belongings

In the beginning, the responsibility is completely yours. The rule is simple. If you don't want it chewed, put it out of reach of your dog. And, don't confuse your dog by offering him an old shoe to chew on. Dogs do not know the difference between your old shoes and your NEW shoes. They simply recognize your scent and assume that it is ok to chew on items like this that carry your scent. The same does for socks, stuffed animals, eyeglasses and even remote controls.

Train your dog not to dig in the yard

Dogs like to dig holes for a variety of reasons. If you spend time outside watching your dog, you will quickly determine if your dog is a digger and why he might be doing this. One reason that dogs will dig holes is to find a cool spot for a nap. Perhaps you need to create a shady spot for your dog to lie, or perhaps you need to show him where the cooler spots are. The key is to catch your dog in the act of digging, and to issue the STOP command. Then gently guide your dog to a cooler spot for his nap and reward him.

Train your dog not to dig under fences

Some dogs will try to dig their way out of confinement. If you have a fence around your lawn, watch your dog to make sure that he is not going to try to escape. If you see him starting to dig under a fence, you need to interrupt him in the process and divert his attention with a toy or other activity. Then, issue rewards for his good behavior instead of punishing the negative behavior.

Train your dog not to bury things in the yard

Most dogs will hide their possessions by instinct. One of the ways to hide things is to bury them in the lawn. If you would prefer that your dog not dig in the backyard, the best way to stop this behavior is to not allow treats and other items that are chewed or eaten outside of the house. Dogs will rarely try to bury toys, so allow those playthings outside instead.

Train your dog not to steal food

Training your dog not to beg at the dinner table is not enough. It is important for you to be able to place food on a coffee table or counter without having it “stolen” by your dog. Therefore, start early by placing a piece of food on a table in front of you. The second that your dog notices the food, he will make his way over to investigate. Issue the STOP command or DOWN command in order to interrupt him. Then reward him with a toy or praise when he has left the food. Repeat this often, and once you are confident that your dog will not take the food with you watching, leave the room and watch from a doorway. Repeat the same process if your dog moves toward the unguarded food. This technique takes time, but unless you want to find your dinner tossed onto the floor and being eaten by your pet – it is a good practice to start early. During the training, be sure to never give your dog human food, or to leave food unattended unnecessarily.

Chapter 5

Teaching Your Dog Tricks

Teach your dog to shake hands

A neat trick that is easy to teach and easy to learn is shaking hands. To teach your dog this trick, get him into a sitting position and say “shake” as you reach down and take his paw and gently shake it. Repeat this many times, and reward your dog for cooperating with praise. When your dog lifts his paw on command, reward him with a treat and even more praise

Teach your dog to wave

Waving is a simple trick that may require some time for your dog to master. Place your dog in a sitting position, and wave to him by simply lifting one hand. Then, give the command “wave” while doing this and touching one of the dog’s paws with your non-waving hand. Praise your dog for paying attention and reward him with a treat when the trick is done correctly. Another way to get your dog to lift his paw is to place a small sticker on the bottom of one paw before issuing the wave command.

Teach your dog to roll over

Roll over is a fun dog trick that every owner wants to teach. Get on the floor with your dog and coax him onto one side. Then, give the command “roll over” while placing one hand under the dog’s back and one on his tummy. Help him to roll over while giving the command. Then, praise your dog for cooperating. If your dog is large, you may instead get the dog on one side and use food in front of the nose to coax the rollover. Give the dog the food once the rollover is complete and offer praise. After a few days, your dog will be rolling over with less, or no assistance and coaxing from you. Be sure to reward this behavior very positively!

Train your dog not to steal food

Teach your dog to catch. Catch is a fun game that you can play with your dog for years to come. Teaching a dog to catch is actually quite simple when you use food as the toy in the beginning. Stand in front of your dog and say “catch” as you toss a treat to the dog. If the treat is caught, allow your dog to eat it. If not, be fast and grab the treat before your dog does. Repeat until the food is caught successfully and always reward your dog with not only the treat, but a large amount of praise as well. Move on to tossing a toy once your dog is willingly catching the treats. Reward your dog with a treat for catching the toy, and offer treats occasionally along with plenty of praise.

Teach your dog to fetch

Fetch is a game that most dogs really enjoy. You can teach your dog to fetch by throwing a ball for him to catch and return to you. Throw the ball just past your dog and say “fetch” as he goes after the ball. Once the ball has been caught, he will want to play again and return the ball you. After your dog becomes good at fetching the ball, move on to sticks and other objects. Remember to always reward the return of the object with a treat and plenty of praise.

Teach your dog to crawl

To teach your dog to crawl, you will need several treats. Get your dog onto the floor, lying on his or her tummy. Then, place your hand firmly on his or her back and place the food on the floor a bit out of reach for your dog. Slowly move the food away, while telling the dog to “crawl”. Your dog will instinctively try to stand. Keep your hand in place and wiggle the food a bit. Your dog will eventually crawl toward the food. Reward your dog with the treat and an ample amount of praise. This trick can take some time to learn, so be patient and keep working at it until he will crawl on command. Always praise good behavior!

Teach your dog left from right

Believe it or not, it is possible to teach your dog the difference between right and left. This is a cool trick that is quite simple to teach through repetition. To teach this trick, stand behind your dog and say “left” as you toss a treat or ball to your left. Repeat this with left, until you only need to issue the command, without tossing a clue. Reward your dog with heavy praise and treats. Next, move on to “right” in the same way. Teach one, and then the other so that your dog does not become confused.

Teach your dog to follow you

The command, “follow me” can be quite powerful and is very rewarding for your dog. It is best to teach this command without a leash whenever possible. The goal is to get your dog to mimic your actions, so that if you walk left or right your dog will follow you. To get your dog to do this, you simply need to entice him or her with plenty of treats and lots of praise when they follow the command.

Teach your dog to move from one side of you to the other

Keeping your dog on a leash, and taking him or her for a walk is the first part of this trick. With a pocketful of treats, you should be able to teach your dog to switch sides in no time at all. Put your dog on your left and a treat in your right hand. Place your right hand behind your back to where your dog sees the treat and say “switch” as you pull the treat, with the dog following, to your right side. Repeat, and have your dog move to your left.

Train your dog to bark on command

Teaching your dog to bark on command, using “bark” or “speak” can be a great way to teach him when NOT to bark as well. To begin, familiarize your dog with the command that you will use, and issue the command. When your dog barks, give him a treat. Once he has mastered barking on command, you can issue a QUIET command and reward him when he stops barking. It is best to teach one command at a time, in order to avoid confusion and frustration.

Train your dog to tell you when he needs to go outside

Dogs cannot speak to us, so it is impossible to assume that we can read their language without some training on both ends. Try this simple trick and teach your dog how to alert you when it's time to go outside. Hang a bell from the door that you most frequently use to take your dog outside, and every time you take him out have him bump the bell. Then praise him heavily. There will quickly be an association between the bell ringing and the door opening. After a week or so, you will be surprised to hear the bell ringing and to see an anxious pup sitting there ready to go outside.

Teach your dog to dance

No longer is dancing just for people! You can very easily teach your dog to dance, alone or with you. When you catch your dog jumping up, issue the command DANCE, and take his paws. At that point, give your dog lots of praise and even a treat to reward his good behavior. Because you are using this command to redirect the dog's attention from jumping there is little effort. Just be consistent, and issue the DANCE command while taking your dog's paws and redirecting his actions to something positive. This is a great way to keep your dog from jumping on guests at the front door.

Teach your dog to find something you have lost

This is a more advanced trick that is often used with assistance animals. However, it can come in quite handy for anyone. The idea is not to have your dog find something specific, but instead to find anything with a human scent. Take your dog outside and hide something like a shirt with your scent on it. Tell your dog to find, and lead him in the direction of where the shirt is hidden. After a while, you will no longer have to lead the dog and you will find this handy the next time you drop something outside.