

Dog Training

**A comprehensive guide to training
your Dog.**

Edited by Thomas Goldman

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Dog Training classes

Introduction

This guide presents comprehensive information on a wide variety of dog training topics, relevant to almost all dog and puppy owners.

Firstly let me assure you that it IS possible to train your dog. With the information presented in this guide, you will learn everything you need to know in order to instill good behavior and obedience in your dog.

If you've already tried to train your dog, and failed to some degree, don't be disheartened. It's not your fault that until now you hadn't found the correct dog training information you needed. Don't worry: everything you need to know is right here!

Millions of others have started with disobedient and problematic dogs, or just normal unruly puppies, and learned how to solve all these problems, so you can too with the information here.

Training your dog is a long and rewarding process for both the dog and the owner. By teaching your dog to obey you, you are significantly increasing the quality of life for both dog and master. As with every healthy relationship, both parties need to develop an understanding of who is the boss, what their expectations are, etc.

Imagine being able to take your dog out for a walk without being jerked around on a leash and telling your dog to 'stay' and knowing that you won't have to keep your leash handy. Imagine letting your dog play with the kids and knowing that no one will need a band aid or

disinfectant later.

When it comes to dog training, psychology is simple. Good behavior needs to be rewarded, and bad behavior needs to be corrected. By rewarding good behavior, your dog will learn to enjoy obeying you, and to associate good feelings with good behavior. Similarly, your dog will learn to avoid bad behavior, and all the headaches that could cause you, and, indirectly, your dog.

Rewards are pretty easy - either by giving praise and attention to your dog, giving a thorough petting, giving a treat, or similar. Care should be taken not to overdo it. Rewards are rewards, not bribes, and if you resort to using rewards as bribes, your dog may learn to never do your bidding unless you have tasty treats on hand.

If you find that you don't like the idea of over-feeding your dog, you can use a technique called 'clicker training'. You'll need a child's toy that produces a loud clicking sound. The idea behind clicker training is that you should feed your dog some treats and every time he gets a treat give a loud 'click'. Your dog should eventually start associating the sound of the click with getting a treat, and from there, associate a click with good feelings.

All these ideas and techniques will be explored in great detail later in this guide.

Dog Training Basics

Dog training is the process of teaching a dog to exhibit certain desired behaviors in specific circumstances.

The specific behaviors taught in each case are different, but the underlying principles are similar.

In the wild as pack animals, canines have natural instincts that favor training. When the dog lives with humans these instincts are manifested as a desire to please a handler, as a dog would please senior members in a pack in the wild. The handler is simply whoever is working with a dog at the time.

Basic Training

Most dogs, no matter their eventual advanced training or intended purpose, live with people and therefore must behave in a way that makes them pleasant to have around and for their own safety and that of the people and pets they come into contact with. Dogs do not figure out basic obedience on their own; it must be trained.

Most of the process of "training a dog" is not actually about training the dogs, but actually about training the owners how to train their own dogs. Dogs naturally have certain responses to certain conditions, and the owner needs to learn how to use these natural instincts to train the dog effectively. This can be as simple as the fact that dogs will tend to repeat behavior for which they get rewarded, yet you'll find

that in many cases of "problem dogs" the owner is in some way actually rewarding the dog for the problem behavior

While it is also possible to send a dog away to a training school, the owner still must at some point learn what the dog has learned and how to use it and reinforce it. The owner can usually learn from this guide, what is needed to effectively train their dog, and also how to decide if additional classes might be helpful or even necessary.

Keep Your Dog Mentally Stimulated

Remember: bored dogs cause problems. If you don't keep your dog's mind stimulated, chances are that he'll find activities to stimulate his mind, himself and you might not like those activities.

A dog that is mentally stimulated on a daily basis is a happy dog. And happy dogs don't cause problems.

Here's a quick list of how to keep your dog mentally stimulated:

1. Exercise. Dogs need lots of exercise. If you can incorporate exercise with another activity such as playing, "find the ball," or doing some agility exercises, then that's even better.
2. Brain teaser toys. There are a number of cool toys that actually challenge your dog's mind. For example, one of the more popular ones is the "Buster Cube," a plastic cube that releases a pellet of food,

every third or fourth time the Cube is rolled over.

3. Small rituals done at the same time of day, every day. For example; feeding time, grooming, walks, "cookie" time, car trips around town, etc... Dogs like routine.

4. Dogs like to work. Teach your dog to bring in the newspaper, carry mail back from the mailbox or to walk out with you when you take the trash out.

5. Obedience training. Obedience training requires your dog to use his brain and think. Knowing that he will be praised for making the right decision and corrected for making the wrong decision (and allowed the opportunity to make the right decision again) instills a sense of responsibility in your dog and demands that he use his noggin. Remember: Dogs are bred to work. They've been blessed with super-human instincts and drives and they need an outlet for those drives.

Starting Your Dog Training From An Early Age

By the time you first get your dog its behavior will have already been greatly influenced by his mother and his siblings.

Here's an example: if his mother barked to attract some attention, her puppies will probably behave in the exact same way. The experiences that occur between three and twelve weeks of age are crucial in the development of a dog's personality.

The best time to get a puppy is when it is about eight weeks old. By making sure that it has as much varied experience as possible during the month that follows, you will lay the groundwork for easier, more productive, and rewarding training later on.

Meeting New People

You need to make sure that your new puppy meets as many different people as possible while it is still young. If you can, take him to work, take him out in the car, and take him to your friend's homes whenever possible. Let the puppy play with dogs that you know are healthy, and introduce it to children and other adults.

Personal Investigation

Playing with toys will provide the puppy with mental and physical stimulation. Find out which toys the puppy likes (they often have favorites), but you need to make sure that the toys are unlike other domestic items, such as shoes. You can use his favorite toy as a reward during training.

Play Constructively

You can play active games with your puppy, but you need to make sure that it is you who is in control and 'dominant' in the puppies eyes.

While you play, watch the puppy's behavior, and if it is about to sit, issue the "Sit" command. This gives the puppy some early association with basic commands and what they mean.

Give Immediate Rewards

When the puppy obeys a command, you should offer an immediate reward, such as stroking or praise. Remember: You're the dominant member of the pack, which means you should always be in control.

Early Habits Can Last a Life-Time

If you carry a puppy constantly when it is very young, it will expect similar treatment when it feels insecure as an adult. Bear this in mind. As you will read later on in this guide, this can often be the root of later so-called "behavior problem" such as jumping up, while in fact this problem will usually have been caused by the owner praising such behavior at an early age.

Give Active Stimulation

Puppies that are actively stimulated between the age of three and twelve weeks grow into adults that are good at both learning and problem solving. A puppy learns best by observing its mother's behavior.

Understanding Fear

You must try to keep an eye on all of your puppy's activities to ensure that any frightening situations he may encounter are kept to a minimum. Fears learned at an early age can become lifelong phobias unless they are overcome with training.

Gatherings

All dogs must learn to behave properly, both with their own species and with others, especially people. This isn't always an easy task, so the best time for them to learn is when they are still very young – less than four months old is best.

When it's possible, make sure that the puppy meets other species such as cats and horses when it is still very young. Here's why: early socialization with other species reduces the likelihood of future problems. With the advice of your vet or local dog training club, it's a good idea to participate in supervised weekly puppy evenings if possible. At these gatherings, puppies learn how to respond to other dogs and to strangers in a controlled way.

Social Deprivation

Dogs that lack early social experiences can sometimes become more difficult to train. Restricted contact with people when the puppy is

young can cause limitations in the dog's ability to obey commands.

Before getting a dog, find out as much as possible about its early experience. The more a puppy has been handled while young, the more likely it is to respond well to obedience training.

Puppies raised with hardly any contact with people can be very difficult to train for the average person without the help of a professional dog trainer, so remember to ask questions about the puppies experience with being handled when getting a new puppy.

The Puppy's Early Experiences :-

Dog training begins virtually at birth. Dogs that are handled and petted by humans regularly during the first eight weeks of life are generally much more amenable to being trained and living in human households. Ideally, puppies should be placed in their permanent homes between about 8 and 10 weeks of age.

In some places it is against the law to take puppies away from their mothers before the age of 8 weeks. Before this age, puppies are still learning tremendous amounts of socialization skills from their mother. Puppies are innately more fearful of new things during the period from 10 to 12 weeks, which makes it harder for them to adapt to a new home.

Puppies can begin learning tricks and commands as early as 8 to 12 weeks of age; the only limitations are the pup's stamina, concentration

and physical coordination. It is much easier to live with young dogs that have already learned basic commands such as "sit". Waiting until the puppy is much older and larger and has already learned bad habits makes the training much more difficult.

Who Is The Boss?

One of the things that you can do right from the start is to show the dog that you are the boss.

Showing your dog that you are the boss or "alpha male" will work because your dog always thinks that you are a pack member. That is how dogs view their relationships with owners. In the world of a pack, there is always an alpha male.

That alpha male is always the leader that dogs will respect and follow. The alpha dog is the most powerful among the pack and this makes him respected.

You need to show the dog that you are the boss while it is still a puppy, if possible. If you are not able to show that you are the alpha male, the dog may become aggressive.

Dogs will be happier when they know that you are the boss. They will gain a sense of security and confidence from having a leader to follow.

The owner can establish him or herself as a good leader by projecting

strength through the use of a steady and deep voice, giving rewards when good behavior is present and reacting nonchalantly toward situations that makes a dog nervous.

If your dog is fully grown, it is still possible to establish that you are the "alpha male" just by following the same approaches as above, although it can be more challenging if the dog is not young.

Positive Motivation

Reward training is often seen as the most modern method of training a dog, but reward training is probably much older than other methods of dog training. It is possible that reward training for dogs has been around as long as there have been dogs to train.

Many principles of modern reward training date back many decades. However, what is called reward training today has only enjoyed its remarkable popularity for the past ten or fifteen years.

Many reward training enthusiasts are less enthusiastic about other methods of dog training, such as the traditional leash and collar method. However, the best approach for training any individual dog is often a combination of leash/collar training and reward training.

In addition, a training method that works perfectly for one dog may be totally inappropriate for another, and vice versa. Some dogs respond wonderfully to reward training and not at all to leash and collar training, while others respond to leash/collar training and are not at all

motivated by reward training. Most dogs fall somewhere in the middle of these two extremes so respond best to a combination of both methods.

What Is Clicker Training?

Clicker training is one of the most popular forms of reward training these days. While clicker training is not the answer for every dog, it can be a remarkably effective method of training many dogs. In clicker training, the dog is taught to associate a clicking sound with a reward, like a treat. The trainer clicks the clicker when the dog does something good, followed immediately by a treat. Eventually, the dog learns to respond to the clicker alone.

Most reward training uses some sort of food reward, or a reward that is associated with getting food, although praise is also a very effective type of reward. In most cases, complex behaviors can only be taught using this kind of positive reinforcement, and you will find that the people who train dogs for movies and television use reward training almost exclusively.

Reward training sometimes incorporates the use of a lure in order to get the dog into the position desired by the trainer. The lure is used to get the dog to perform the desired behavior on his or her own and of his or her own free will.

It makes a great deal of sense to get the dog to perform the desired behavior without any physical intervention on the part of the handler.

Getting the dog to perform a behavior without being touched is important.

After the dog has performed the desired behavior, it is given a reward, also called a "positive reinforcement". Treats are often used as reinforcers, but praise, such as "good dog" (in a positive tone of voice) or a pat on the head, can also be effective rewards.

Many dog trainers make the mistake of only training the dog inside the house or back yard, and only when the handler is there. In order to become a reliably trained companion, the dog must be taken outside the confines of its safety zone and introduced to novel situations.

It is also important to teach the dog to pay attention to the handler at all times . . . having the attention of the dog means having control of the dog. Reward training is very effective at getting the respect and the attention of the dog when used properly.

Positive And Negative Motivations For Your Dog

There are a lot of things people have to remember when they start dog training. There are a lot of different dog training techniques to try. With so many different aspects of dog training, it is sometimes hard to know what techniques work the best.

One of the biggest things that often confuse people with regards to dog training is when to reward your dog and when to reprimand your dog.

Most dog training course instructors will tell you that positive dog training is the best technique to utilize. Unfortunately, there are some instances when you do have to reprimand your dog.

Reprimanding your dog should not happen often as dogs respond better to positive reinforcement used in dog training. Before you learn when to reprimand your dog, you should first learn when to reward your dog.

You should reward your dog any time your dog does something it is supposed to during dog training. This can be when it sits, stays, eliminates where it should, fetches, etc. and the reward you use during your dog training can be many things: praise, kind words, tummy rub, pat on the head, or a treat.

Dogs learn very quickly from positive dog training. Dogs tend to want to make you happy and this is why they do so well with this type of dog training. However, be sure you never reward bad behavior. For a young dog, bear in mind that it will not always be so young and light in weight, so don't reward behaviors that will be unwanted when it's a big dog later on, such as jumping up on people.

Reprimanding is a type of dog training that should not be done unless necessary. This can be when your dog jumps, eliminates in the wrong place, barks, growls, pulls on a leash, destroys something, etc. You must only reprimand your dog if you catch it in the act of doing something wrong otherwise, your dog will not realize what it did. The reprimand used for this dog training should be a quick, sharp "no" or

"bad dog."

Your tone should be angry, but remember to be short and quick. If you constantly do this, your words will end up being ignored by the dog. Never spank, hit, or constantly scold your dog as this will only lead to more problems in the future.

These are all of the important things you need to focus on when determining when to reprimand or reward your dog during dog training. Remember to be patient because your dog is learning and trying its best.

With some love and consideration, your dog should do quite well with its dog training which will be a rewarding experience for you both!

How Dog Training Works.

Most training revolves around giving the dog consequences for his behavior, in the hope of influencing the behavior the dog will exhibit in the future. Operant conditioning defines four types of consequences:

Positive reinforcement adds something to the situation to increase the chance of the behavior being exhibited again (for example, giving a dog a treat when he sits.)

Negative reinforcement removes something from the situation to increase the chance of the behavior being exhibited again (for example, releasing the tension on an uncomfortable training collar

when the dog stops pulling on the leash).

Positive punishment adds something to the situation to decrease the chance of the behavior being exhibited again (for example, growling at a misbehaving dog).

Negative punishment removes something from the situation to decrease the chance of the behavior being exhibited again (for example, walking away from a dog who jumps up).

Most modern trainers say that they use "positive training methods", which is a different meaning of the word "positive" from that in operant conditioning. "Positive training methods" generally means preferring the use of reward-based training to increase good behavior over that of physical punishment to decrease bad behavior. However, a good trainer understands all four methods, whether or not she can put operant-conditioning terminology to them, and applies them as appropriate for the dog, the breed, the handler, and the situation.

Rewards For Dogs

Positive reinforcers can be anything that the dog finds rewarding - special food treats, the chance to play with a tug toy, social interaction with other dogs, or the owners attention. The more rewarding a dog finds a particular reinforcer, the more work he will be prepared to do in order to obtain the reinforcer.

Some trainers go through a process of teaching a puppy to strongly

desire a particular toy, in order to make the toy a more powerful positive reinforcer for good behavior. This process is called "building prey drive", and is commonly used in the training of Narcotics Detection and Police Service dogs. The goal is to produce a dog who will work independently for long periods of time.

Some trainers believe that the toy acts as a positive reinforcer for the desired behavior, when in all likelihood the prey drive works on an entirely different level from standard training and conditioning techniques. This is seen most clearly in the fact that, according to the laws of operant conditioning, positive reinforcers lose their effectiveness if they're given every single time a dog does what is desired of him; the more predictable the reinforcer, the less reliable the behavior. Yet detection dogs only work well when they are always rewarded with a toy, every single time they find drugs or explosives, etc. The reason for this disparity is that when a dog is trained through the prey drive, the training activates an instinctive, automatic sequence that has to be completed in order for the dog to feel satisfied. That sequence is: search, eye-stalk, chase, grab-bite, and kill bite. So when a dog searches and finds drugs or explosives, he feels he hasn't finished his job unless he can bite something. This is the primary reason he's always given the toy. It's not really a positive reinforcer. If it were it would reduce the reliability of the behavior overall. It's a means of completing the predatory sequence for the dog.

Sometimes, giving food rewards for a dog can lead to an overweight dog. The solution to this is simple:- for rewards, take food out of the dog's daily food allowance.

Punishments

"Positive punishment" is probably the consequence that is least used by modern dog trainers, as it must be used very carefully. A dog is generally only given this type of punishment if it is willfully disobeying the owner. Punishing a dog who does not understand what is being asked of him is not only unfair to the dog, but can make the dog a fearful or unwilling worker.

Punishments are administered only as appropriate for the dog's personality, age, and experience. A sharp "No" works for many dogs, but some dogs even show signs of fear or anxiety with harsh verbal corrections. On the other hand, certain dogs with 'harder' temperaments may ignore a verbal reprimand, and may work best if the reprimand is coupled with a physical punishment such as a quick tug on a training collar. Trainers generally advise keeping hand contact with the dog to positive interactions; if hands are used to threaten or hurt, some dogs may begin to behave defensively when stroked or handled.

Avoiding Punishment

Keeping a puppy on a leash in challenging situations or in his crate or pen when not closely supervised prevents the puppy from getting into situations that might otherwise invite an owner's harsh reaction (such as chewing up a favorite pair of shoes).

Training At Meal Times

Eating is one of the most primal activities for dogs. They love it, and they have respect for whoever gives them food (the leader in the pack). You can use your "power" of being pack leader to enhance your dog training efforts -- every day.

The following suggestions will help you establish your role as pack leader and reinforce dog obedience, deferment to your leadership, dog training techniques, and overall attitude and disposition (yours and your dogs).

1. Consistency

A good habit to have in feeding your dog is consistency. Dogs love routine and food is a very important subject to them.

For example, feed your dog at approximately the same time(s) each day (some modification is fine for weekly schedule changes.) If feeding two times a day, pick two windows of time that you can be consistent with, for example, between 7:00 and 8:00 am and then again between 5:00 and 6:00 pm.

Having a window of time helps prevent anxiety in a dog expecting to be fed at a specific time each day (5:15 pm -- yes, dogs can zero in on a specific time of day like 5:15).

This is a very real concern for dogs and some dogs can fall apart

emotionally and physically if they are expecting food at that time and don't get it. Ever hear of a dog that is panting and throwing up or having diarrhea? This dog is anxious. Setting a window of time and sticking to it will help your dog remain calm. Practice the same routine every day.

2. No running buffet

A big mistake is to offer up the running buffet, where food is available around the clock. This is actually a pretty common feeding program in many homes because it's simple for the humans -- add food as needed.

So why not do this? Because it leads to an obese, lazy dog who doesn't listen to your commands, respect your leadership position or adhere to rules you've set forth in your dog training.

3. Mealtime is dog training time

Wonderful things happen at mealtime -- for you and your dog. You get the opportunity to have your dog perform (reinforcing all that dog training you've done) for his meal. This could be sit, down, come, place.

This is the easiest way you have of getting your dog's affirmation of you being the leader and reinforcing dog training. If you aren't the leader, guess who is. It will be the demanding, obnoxious dog bossing

you around for a meal.

For example, hold the food bowl in your hand. Your dog may be jumping, yipping, and pawing at you for the food. This is another dog training opportunity for you -- teaching him to be calmer at mealtimes. State your command once and wait (good to start with a sit, which is usually the easiest). Your dog sits and the bowl of food goes to the floor with praise for a good sit and a release "ok" that they can move to get the food.

When your dog complies with your command, he has just deferred to your leadership in the pack (when beginning this program, you may need to help your dog with completing his command and praise warmly and then give food.)

Once your dog has the program down, you can introduce other feeders such as spouse, responsible children, etc to gently let your four-footed family member know her position in the pack.

By using your dog's feeding routine as training, you can gain a lot. You get to reinforce all the dog training and dog obedience you've worked so hard on -- and it feels effortless. You get increased respect from your dog for providing the important commodity of food and for being a consistent provider. The more you establish yourself as leader of the pack, the more your dog will want to please you and dog training will be a far easier and more effective.

The Command Voice

When giving commands to a dog, a calm, firm, authoritative voice is most effective. Dogs do not respond well to hesitant, pleading voices, nor to yelling, which might sound to the dog like threatening barking or scolding. It is also important that the word used for the command and the pitch of the voice be consistent each time the command is delivered so that the dog can more easily learn what the owner means ("siiiiiiiiiit" does not sound the same as "sit", for example).

Using the dog's name before a command ensures that the dog knows that a command is coming, that it is for him (rather than for other dogs, children, or people), and that he should pay attention. This is important because dogs hear a lot of human speech that has no relevance for them at all, and it is easy for them to disregard commands amongst the babble.

To reinforce the command, the dog always gets some kind of reward or reinforcement (praise and usually a treat or toy) when it performs the action correctly. This helps the dog to understand that he has done a good thing.

Note that not all dogs are trained to voice command. Many working breeds of dog are not trained to a voice command at all; they are taught to obey a combination of whistles and hand signals. Deaf dogs are perfectly capable of learning to obey visual signals alone. Many obedience classes teach hand signals for common commands in addition to voice signals; these signals can be useful in quiet situations, at a distance, and in advanced obedience competitions.

The specific command words are not important, although common words in English include sit, down, come, and stay. Short, clear words that are easily understood by other humans are generally recommended; that way, people will understand what a handler is telling his dog to do and other handlers have a good chance of controlling someone else's dog if necessary. In fact, dogs can learn commands in any language or other communications medium, including whistles, mouth sounds, hand gestures, and so forth.

Invisible Commands

Dogs can sometimes respond to subtle variations in the body language of the owner.

Here's two examples:

1.) Many owners tend to start bending over before telling their dog the, "Down" command. Because of this, the dog starts to cue off the owner's body language and lays down anytime the owner bends over... but not if the owner stands up straight and issues the command!

Solution: Always give the command FIRST, before bending over and making the dog do it. This way, the dog will link the behavior with the command, rather than with your body language.

2.) Amateur handlers tend to tell their dog "Heel," and then walk with

their shoulders angled back towards their dog, so that they can look at their dog while they're walking.

The problem with this is that the dog reads your body language and attempts to align himself with your shoulders, thus lagging behind the owner, rather than walking in the heel position (aligned with your left heel.)

Solution: Keep both shoulders straight forward as you walk. If you need to look at your dog (you should)... cock your head, without angling your shoulders. This will keep your dog lined up right alongside you.

In general it is helpful if you can be aware of how your body language affects your dog.

House training

House Training Basic Concepts :-

One of the most confusing and anxiety-ridden areas of dog training is house training yet it is one of the most important, especially for the humans involved. The best way to understand and find success with house training is to use the dog's own nature to help you.

Dogs are, by instinct, very clean animals. They would rather not soil any areas where they normally sleep or eat. Dogs are also creatures

of habit --- they like to know where they're supposed to go urinate and defecate. If the dog is taught to eliminate on gravel or concrete, they will tend to look for either of those surfaces to do so. If they're taught to eliminate on grass or dirt, that's where they will choose. Use these habits to your advantage.

Setting Up The Training Area

This is the first step. Make sure the area you choose is small and confined. A bathroom works for this, or a place in a kitchen or garage also work well. Remember that crate training works well for puppies or small dogs, but for the larger animals, a crate can be too confining.

You need to spend some time with this aspect of the training. You need to play with your dog in this area, and this is also where the dog will be taught to sleep and eat. Put together a special bed. This can be something you make up with items around the house, or you can go to the store and purchase a bed. Don't worry if your dog eliminates in this area at first. Once they figure out that this is where the sleep and eat, they'll stop eliminating there.

Once your dog realizes that the bed is for sleeping, you can begin to move it around the house, but only when you're there. When you're not, put the bed back in the training area.

Setting Up The Toilet Area

Now you need to determine where the toilet area is going to be located. Presumably, this will be outside the house. Wherever it is, it has to be a place that the dog can go to whenever it needs to go. You need to go there with your dog so you can give the appropriate rewards for good behavior.

Establish a set feeding schedule for your dog. If the dog is in the habit of being fed at certain times, the natural process of elimination will also begin to occur at certain times. Once you learn when those times relate to the eating times, it will become much easier for you to guide the dog to the established toilet area.

Don't forget to make sure your dog has ready access to the toilet area. That way mistakes aren't as likely to occur.

Continuing The House Training Process.

Once your dog is in the habit of eliminating in the toilet area and not in the sleeping/eating area, you can begin to extend the training area to the rest of the house. Do this slowly. Start by expanding to one additional room, and then gradually expand into other areas. Don't expand into new areas until you're sure your dog has control of its bladder and bowels. At first, do this only when you're around. If you're away, then put your dog back in the original training area.

Speeding Up The Process.

If you have to move this process along more quickly, you can do so. Remember to proceed with caution, though. It's better to go slowly than to have to try to retrain a dog later. If you're going to try to speed things up, you will have to be there in order to reward your dog for successful eliminations. It is also important not to punish for mistakes. That will only confuse the dog and slow the process even further.

House Training : The Paper Training Method :-

House training is the first thing your new puppy must learn. The toileting process a puppy learns in the first few months as a member of your household will last a lifetime so it's important to do it right the first time. House training issues are the number one reason why dogs are taken to animal shelters so let's make sure we get it right.

It's important to understand that your puppy probably won't be completely trained until he's about six months old. That's because young puppies lack the bladder and bowel control that they need to be reliably left alone for long periods of time.

Paper training was formerly the typical method of house training any dog, but currently some dog trainers have made the point that if the dog is to be trained to eliminate outside, then it might be more effective to train it that way from the start. Thus paper-training is less popular than before, but still a valid method, used by many. It is up to

you to consider both methods and choose for yourself.

It is important for you to be available to supervise your new puppy whenever possible but we all know that "life happens". If you can't be available for a period of time, confine your puppy to a small puppy-proof room. The entire floor should be covered with newspaper or some absorbent, disposable material. At first, your puppy will go everywhere in the room. As he gets older he will favor one area. Slowly reduce the area covered in papers until the puppy eventually goes only on the toilet papers. The floor in the puppy-proof room should not resemble other floor areas in the house like carpet or hardwood. Once your puppy is used to eliminating on a particular surface, he will want to eliminate on that type of surface.

If you want to train your puppy to use only paper, your task is complete. Most owners prefer for their dogs to eliminate outside so the puppy-proof room should only be used when you aren't home to supervise. If your puppy spends time in a crate, which he should at first, you can place papers in one area in the crate for your puppy to use. Dogs are naturally very clean animals and they will do their best not to soil their bed area. This really helps your puppy develop self control.

For puppies that are to be trained to eliminate outdoors, take the puppy to his designated toilet area every 45 minutes and when your puppy does his business in his designated area, lavish praise on him. Don't be afraid to look like a fool when providing this praise. He is learning the most important lesson in living in your household so go overboard with praise.

Put your puppy on a consistent feeding schedule so you can anticipate his needs. While he does need free access to clean, fresh drinking water, don't give him unrestricted access to food.

Likewise, until he is fully trained, do not give him the run of the house. One thing that will greatly aid in this process is putting a collar and long lead on your puppy and tying the other end of the lead around your waist. Your puppy will like being close to you and he won't have the opportunity to make many mistakes.

That doesn't mean that mistakes won't happen. When they do, don't punish or reprimand him. He won't understand the reason for the punishment and he might become nervous or agitated. He might even think he is being punished for eliminating at all. This could set your training back rather than moving it forward.

The main thing you need for house training your puppy is patience and a good sense of humor. Be calm and relaxed while being consistent in your schedule and your puppy will be relaxed and calm while learning what he needs to learn to become a well adjusted member of the family.

While you and your puppy are bonding during this training time, you can start to introduce other commands like sit, come, stay, down.

House Training Tips From Animal Behaviorists :-

Generally, dogs are very clean animals - they won't soil close to where they eat, or where they sleep. But living in a house is unnatural for an animal whose instincts would be to roam wherever she wants to go, so you will have to help her learn where and when she can relieve herself.

It is essential that you form good toilet habits for your dog as early on as possible. Trying to break the habit of a dog is quite difficult and it can be very frustrating. You need to use guidance and encouragement to help the pet. Animal behaviorists have some helpful tips that you can use to help with the housebreaking of your pet.

Believe it or not, dogs are sanitary creatures. If a dog does soil accidentally in the wrong place, it is likely that it will be far from his dog dish, at least six to ten feet. This is true for the place where the dog sleeps as well. But, unless you find a good place for her to go and train her in that manner, the rest of your house is okay to them.

The process for housebreaking a dog is the same if he is a puppy or an adult dog new to your home. You'll need to take him outside every few hours and also 30 minutes after he eats. Take your pet to the designated bathroom spot. Stay with the pet until she goes, and then praise her when she does. If she does not go, bring her back inside and try again in fifteen minutes. Watch her though. If the dog starts sniffing and circling take them out right away as this is a sign that she is about to go. Pay attention to her signs and take her out. Soon, she will relate to going outside to going to the bathroom.

Some dogs are housebroken much faster than others. A dog's personality can cause her to learn faster or slower. But, if you take her outside at the right time, it will go smoother. A puppy of less than four months old will need to go out during the night. Older puppies can hold it that long. A dog that cries to be let out has an urgent need. Get up and take her out, she needs every chance to succeed that she can get. Positive reinforcement is necessary for success.

How you treat accidents will affect your dog's overall learning curve. If you catch your dog going in the act, distract her with a clap or call her name. Take her outside calmly at that time and praise her for finishing outside. Clean up any accident that you find on the floor, using disinfectant or specially designed chemicals for removing the specific smell. If the dog approaches during this time, ignore her. Don't talk to or punish her at this point. The worst thing that you can do is to yell at her or physically punish her. This will cause her to fear you and to not bond as well to you. She won't connect it to the accident at all. Ignoring her is the best course of action here.

Crate Training

A crate is a valuable and useful training tool. Its main purpose is to provide security, safety and protection for short term confinement while training a puppy or new dog about its own and house boundaries.

A crate may look like a jail cell, but when used properly is your dog's

natural den – a personal space where he'll feel secure and comfortable. The best place to place a crate would be where your dog can see the environment and family members, hear and smell your house - the kitchen is usually a good spot.

An ideal crate should be large enough to allow your dog to stretch out, stand without hitting his head and be able to turn around. The crate should not be so large that your dog can relieve himself in one corner and move away to play and sleep in another. If your puppy is still young and not yet fully grown, you could buy a crate which will be the correct size when the dog is grown, and for now, block off certain sections of the crate with cardboard or wood boards.

To encourage your dog to "like" his new den, you should preferably furnish it with soft bedding, a bowl of water and a toy that he likes. (You might want to remove the water at night when you are potty training your dog)

You must introduce the crate slowly to your dog. Crate him for a short time, about 10 minutes, then gradually increase over time. Your dog needs time to get used to being in the crate. Never crate him for more than 30 minutes or longer initially.

It is not advisable to crate a young puppy for long period of time – about 2 hours and pup should always be exercised before being crated.

It's quite normal for dogs to kick up a fuss, bark and moan while in the crate. If these things happen, do not give your dog any attention! Do

not even look in his direction. The reason should be obvious from the details we gave on "positive reinforcement" earlier in this guide.

Dogs are intelligent animals – don't let him know that he'll get your attention when he kicks up a fuss. Simply ignore him! Let your dog out only when he settles down. If it's a young puppy whom you've just introduce the crate to, maybe you can offer him a treat in the crate to calm him down.

One exception is if you think your dog has to relieve himself. Even so, bring it out only after he stops making a fuss.

Lastly, dog should not be left in the crate for too long day after day. He'll develop destructive behaviors and anxiety problems. If you notice that your dog displays hyper-active behavior compare to previously, you might be crating him for too long!

Most important of all never ever punish your dog in the crate, or he'll dread going back to the crate. It is meant to be a comfortable and safe space, not where he'll get punished.

Types of Dog Collars :-

Dog training is an art, and like any artist you must pick your tools carefully in order to properly train your dog. Each dog is different, and thus you must be able to decide which collar is most appropriate for your dog based on its temperament, personality, and strength. Below, you will find a description of all the major varieties of dog training

collars that you might come across when deciding to purchase one for you pooch.

The metal choke collar is perhaps the most popular and widely used collar in the dog training world. It should be used in training larger, stronger dogs that tend to take YOU for a walk.

The metal toggle choke collar is basically the same as your regular choke collar with the major difference being that you can correct your dog easily by using the toggle while your dog is off-leash.

The pinch collar (also know as the Prong Collar) should be used RARELY and only in situations where the choke collar is ineffective in controlling your dog (i.e. in situations where your dog is very strong, where it is highly aggressive, and when it repeatedly lunges at other dogs and people).

The fur saver choke collar is designed to control the dog without leaving chain marks around the dogs' neck or getting fur caught in the chain which sometimes occurs when using an ordinary metal choke collar. It is mainly used when showing dogs and NOT in training them because the dogs don't tend to respond to them in training and they don't give the quick jerk needed for proper correction.

The nylon choke collar is best used in small dogs and puppies up to 3 months, because they tend to be gentler and they tend to get young puppies used to wearing a collar.

The gentle head leader is best used on dogs that are shy and easily

corrected (i.e. dogs that respond quickly to your commands and dogs that tend to cringe upon your correction).

The electronic collar is mainly used for two reasons: first it is used on field dogs (i.e. in bird hunting) and second it is used as a means of training the "out" command to a protection dog in its bite training phase.

The tracking harness is used for exactly what its name suggests: for tracking game, suspects, lost individuals, or competition articles.

And finally, the seeing eye dog harness is designed so that the dog's owner can hang on to the lead while the dog guides her to her destination. Unlike other leads, this lead is designed so that the dog can pull its owner forward as it walks instead of gently walking beside her on loose lead.

Using Dog Training Collars

Training collars are an effective way of developing your dog's behavior and obedience. There are three main types of dog training collar and each one should be used properly to get the results you want without harming your dog.

Slip Collars (Choke Chains)

Perhaps the most common dog training collar, a slip collar is designed to allow the trainer to quickly close and release the collar around a dog's neck. Dogs learn to not repeat a behavior when they feel the

chain close.

A slip collar must be put on a dog properly, with the end coming from the lead around the back of the dog's neck. This allows the chain to quickly slacken when released. When training, quickly tug then add slack to the lead whenever you need to correct behavior.

The consequences of not using a slip collar properly can be disastrous. Do not pull too hard on the lead, just enough for your dog to take notice. Also, you should not keep pulling on the lead for an extended period.

Pinch Collar.

Similar to a slip collar in design, prong collars have prongs on the inside of the collar. When the lead is tugged, the prongs pinch the dog's neck. Unlike a slip collar, a prong collar has a limit to how much it will close around a dog's neck.

Many owners are concerned about prong collars because of the impression that the prongs stab into the dog's neck. In fact, a prong collar, with a limited circumference and by evenly spreading pressure all around a dog's neck, is at least as safe as a slip collar.

E-collar (electronic collar)

An e-collar looks similar to a regular dog collar, but it is equipped with an electrical system that can deliver a sensation to the dog. Using a

remote control device, a trainer can deliver a small charge through the e-collar whenever behavior needs to be corrected.

An e-collar is an ideal way to train your dog off-leash. Incorrect behavior is addressed immediately, so your dog quickly and easily learns the correct action, without needing a lead on which to tug.

In all cases, it is important to only use dog training collars when training and while you are paying close attention to your dog. Leaving a training collar on when you are not working with your dog could lead to serious accidents. Each time you finish training, remove the training collar from your dog and replace it with the regular collar.

Dog Training with a Head Collar

The head collar has become an increasingly popular dog training tool in the past couple of years. Two of the most well known brands of head collar on the market are the Gentle Leader and the Halti, but there are many other brands that incorporate the basic head collar concept.

Many people find the Gentle Leader easier to fit than the Halti, and in addition the Gentle Leader is designed to fasten around the dog's neck. The advantage of this design is that even if the dog is somehow able to wriggle out of the muzzle, it is still wearing a collar. This safety feature is very important, especially during training outside or in novel situations. On the other hand, the Halti offers better control of

the dog, and for this reason it is often favored when working with very aggressive dogs.

Training a dog with a head collar has a number of advantages over training with a traditional or training collar. For one thing, head collars are often easier to use for beginning dog trainers than are training collars. Head collars are also quite effective at preventing dogs from pulling, or controlling and retraining dogs that tend to pull.

Head collars can also be quite effective at controlling dogs in difficult situations, such as controlling a dog that wants to be with other dogs. Most owners know of some situations in which their dogs are difficult to control, and head collars can be quite effective at controlling these volatile situations.

Head collars can be excellent for controlling dogs that are very strong, or for working with a dog in an area that contains a great many distractions. For instance, head collars are great for when your dog is on an outing, or in an area where there will be other dogs and other distractions.

Even though a head collar can be a great tool, it should not be used as a replacement for effective dog training. A head collar is most effective when it is used in combination with strong and sensible dog training methods, such as reward training and other forms of positive reinforcement.

The Disadvantages of head collars

Even though head collars have many advantages, they have some distinct disadvantages as well. For one thing, head collars tend to make many dogs dependent on the equipment, and they quickly learn the difference between their regular collar and the head collar, and adjust their behavior accordingly.

In addition, some dogs, particularly those not accustomed to wearing a head collar, dislike wearing it and paw at it, try to rub it off or pull excessively. If your dog exhibits this behavior, the best strategy is to keep it moving until it learns to accept the collar. A good alternative is to have the dog sit by pulling up on the dog's head.

Another disadvantage of the head collar is the reaction that many people have to it. Many people think that a head collar is a muzzle, and react to the dog as if it may bite. While this is not necessarily a defect of the head collar, many people do find it troublesome.

In conclusion, training with a head collar is much like training with a training collar or any other equipment. While the head collar can be an important and useful tool, it is important to use it appropriately, follow all package instructions, and to combine its use with solid training methods. The eventual goal of dog training with a head collar should be to have the dog behave as well with a regular collar as it does with the specialized head collar.

Training A Dog To Walk On The Leash

Learning to walk on a collar and leash is the basis of all further training for every puppy. Until the puppy has learned to accept the collar and leash, it will be impossible to perform any additional training.

The first step toward getting the puppy to accept the collar and leash is to find a collar that fits the dog properly. It is important that the collar be neither too light nor too heavy, neither too thin nor too thick. A collar that is too light for the dog can be easily broken, while a collar that is too heavy may be uncomfortable for the puppy to wear. It is also important that the width of the collar be appropriate for the size of the dog.

Determining the proper length of the collar is relatively easy. Simply wrap a tape measure or a string lightly around the dog's neck to get an accurate measurement. It is important that the tape measure not be tight, just slightly snug.

Most collars are sized in two inch increments, so you may have to round up to get a properly sized collar. For instance, if the dog has a 13" neck, you would buy a 14" collar, and so on.

After you have purchased the perfect collar, the next step is to put it on the dog and allow him to wear it around the house. Do not be dismayed if the dog whines, paws at the collar or otherwise tries to remove it. This is normal, and the dog should not be punished for it. It is best to simply ignore the dog and allow him to work out his own issues with the collar.

The dog should be allowed to wear the collar 24 hours a day for a number of days to get used to the feel of the collar on his neck. After the dog is accepting the collar well, it is time to start introducing the leash. A lightweight leash works best for this process. Simply attach the leash to the dog's collar and allow him to walk around the house with it. The dog should of course be supervised during this process in order to make sure he does not get the leash caught on anything. Getting the leash caught or snagged could frighten the dog and create a leash phobia that will be hard to overcome.

In the beginning, the leash should only be attached for a few minutes at a time. It is important to attach the leash at happy times, such as playtime, meal time, etc. It is important for the dog to associate the leash with happy things. When the leash is not attached to the dog, it is a good idea to keep it near the dog's food and water bowls. The dog should be encouraged to investigate the leash, and to discover that it is not something to fear.

After the dog is used to walking around with the leash attached, take the end of the leash in your hand and just hold it. Allow the dog to walk around. If the dog bumps into the end of the leash, just allow the dog to react and move as he desires. The goal of this exercise is to simply allow the dog to get used to the feel of the collar and the leash.

It is important to allow the puppy plenty of time to get used to wearing the collar and leash before ever attempting to lead the puppy. It is best to perform this exercise in the home or other environment

where the puppy feels safe and secure. After the puppy is comfortable and content walking on the leash in the home, it can slowly be taken outside. It is best to make these outside trips very short at the beginning, and to lengthen them slowly over time. Some puppies take to the collar and leash immediately, while others may require some additional time.

Problems Of Letting A Dog Off The Leash Too Soon.

You cannot EVER let the dog be in a situation where you might give a command and she MIGHT NOT respond, until she has already proven to you that she is 100% responsive.

In other words, if she's not 100% responsive, then you're letting her off the leash too soon.

Furthermore, if she's an adolescent dog, I probably wouldn't take the long line off in a park setting until she is BOTH 100% and at least a year old.

Basic Commands

There are of course many reasons for owners to want a calm, obedient and faithful dog. For one thing, obedient and trained dogs are happier dogs, less likely to get into tussles with people or with other dogs.

Another reason is that many communities require that the dogs living in their neighborhoods be well trained. This is especially true for many breeds thought to have aggression and behavior problems – such as pit bulls and Rottweilers for instance.

And of course, training your dog well will also make it a much better family companion, especially in households where there are young children. Many studies have shown that proper dog training makes a big impact when it comes to cutting down the number of dog bites and other behavior problems encountered by dog owning households. See later in this guide for more information on this topic.

There are certain basic commands that must be mastered in order for a dog to be considered truly trained.

These basic commands include:

Heel – it is important that any dog learn to walk beside its owner on a loose lead, neither pulling ahead nor lagging behind

Respond to the word No – the word no is one word that all dogs must learn. Training your dog to respond to this important word can save you a ton of trouble.

Sit – Training your dog to sit on command is a vital part of any dog training program.

Stay – A well trained dog should remain where his or her owner commands, so stay is a very important command in dog training.

Down – Lying down on command is more than just a cute trick; it is a key component of any successful dog training program.

Dog training does much more than just create an obedient, willing companion. Training your dog properly actually strengthens the bond that already exists between dog and handler. Dogs are pack animals, and they look to their pack leader to tell them what to do. The key to successful dog training is to set yourself up as the pack leader.

Establishing yourself as pack leader is a very important concept for any potential dog trainer to understand. There is only one leader in every pack of dogs, and the owner must establish him or herself as the dominant animal. Failure to do so leads to all manner of behavior problems.

A properly trained dog will respond properly to all the owner's commands, and will not display anxiety, displeasure or confusion. A good dog training program will focus on allowing the dog to learn just what is expected of it, and will use positive reinforcement to reward desired behaviors.

In addition to making the dog a good member of the community, obedience training is a great way to fulfill some of the dog's own needs, including the need for exercise, the security that comes with knowing what is expected of it, a feeling of accomplishment and a good working relationship with its handler. Dog training gives the dog an important job to do, and an important goal to reach.

Giving the dog a job is more important than you may think. Dogs were originally bred by humans to do important work, such as herding sheep, guarding property and protecting people. Many dogs today have no important job to do, and this can often lead to boredom and neurotic behavior.

Basic obedience training, and ongoing training sessions, provide the dog with an important job to do. This is especially important for high energy breeds like German shepherds and border collies. Training sessions are a great way for these high energy dogs to use up their extra energy and simply to enjoy themselves.

Incorporating playtime into your dog training sessions is a great way to prevent both yourself and your dog from becoming bored. Playing with your dog helps to strengthen the all-important bond between you, the pack leader, and your dog.

The Sit Command

Teaching your dog the "sit" command could be one of the most useful commands you ever teach him. A poorly trained dog is a direct reflection on you the pet owner and how much care about your dog. In fact an untrained dog becomes a nuisance to its owner therefore the dog and owner become unhappy. Whether it's a puppy or a fully grown dog you can teach them to sit with a little effort on your part.

Use some of these tips to teach your dog to sit:

You are going to need some treats; unfortunately this is always the best way to get a dog to do something you want! You can use anything you know your dog enjoys: biscuits, chewy treats etc.

The main goal is to get your dog to sit when you use the word "sit". One way you can gradually get your dog used to the word is by saying the word when the dog is sitting anyway. Dog sits down - you say "sit" and praise them.

You will also need to practice this every day by doing the following:

- Call your dog and offer them the treat. Let them sniff the treat and get excited first!
- Slowly move the treat until it's over the dogs head. The dog will naturally move into the sitting position.
- It's important that the dog associates the activity of sitting with the

treat, and the praise. Try to get your timing right.

- Keep bribing the dog and gradually decrease the size of the treat. Keep enthusiastically praising the dog.
- Repeat this exercise a few times a day. Don't overdo it - you want your pet to think of it as fun.
- Try to practice around mealtimes when your dog is hungry; this will make him keener for the treats.
- Have the treats easily accessible, don't fumble around - the treat needs to happen as the dog is sitting.
- Don't push your dog's bottom down; this won't work because your pet will associate the action of sitting with having you push his bottom to the ground. If this really isn't working you might want to consider obedience classes with other dogs.
- End each training session on a positive note.

Teaching your dog to sit using these positive reinforcement techniques will strengthen the bond between you. Consider it time well spent.

Once you have mastered the basic command 'sit' it should be quite easy to train your dog the other basic commands. "Sit-stay", "down" "heel" and "come", are some of the most useful commands. Use the treats in a similar way. Training your dog is an ongoing process. You

want to keep praising your dog regularly and never associate anger with the dog's reaction to your command.

Make use of every new situation to train or put your training into practice. The most important part about learning how to sit - is that the dog sits under a variety of conditions. Train your dog to sit in new environments, around other dogs, around new people, when the doorbell rings etc.

Come When Called.

Training your dog to come back to you reliable can be boiled down to one simple piece of advice: "MAKE the dog come back to you, every time you call him... until he becomes conditioned to do it on his own."

If you call the dog and cannot make him come... (for example because he is not wearing the long line) ... THEN WHAT HAVE YOU JUST TAUGHT HIM??? You've taught him that he DOES NOT HAVE TO COME!

Whatever you end up teaching your dog (to come or not to come) ... YOU will have done an excellent job of training the dog to do it.

If he ignores you when you tug on your leash, then this tells me that you are not tugging firmly enough to get his attention. Make sure that you're getting slack in your line when you tug, and make sure that you've got the pinch collar fitted firmly enough.

Solving Dog Problems

Causes Of Aggression

Aggression behavior in a dog is a normal form of canine communication similar to human frustration or anger. Like in humans, aggressive behavior occurs in every dog. The differences lie in the level of aggression shown in them, and this is where dog breeds come into the picture.

While some breeds are born with a greater tendency to become aggressive, problems usually occur in homes that knowingly or unknowingly encourage the development of a dog's aggressive behavior.

It's important to know what is going on when your dog show aggression. Biting unwelcome strangers in your house is justifiable aggression, but biting the postman or you when you push him off the couch is certainly inappropriate behavior.

There are basically three main types of aggression behavior shown in dogs namely, dominance aggression, possessive aggression and territorial aggression.

Dominance and possessive aggression are one of the most common reasons why dogs growl at or bite their owners. This type of behavior does not develop on its own and is always a result of the dogs' interaction with its environment and owners. The dog has decided to

challenge you for the alpha leader position in the pack.

If your dog is showing aggressive behavior towards you or any family members, he has to be brought down to earth again. You must let him know that he is the lowest ranking member in the family:

1. Avoid physical punishment if possible, it is too provocative and may make matter worse.

2. Review your relationship with your dog to determine why your dog is challenging you. Do remedial steps to assume the role of the alpha leader again:

- You must eat first before your dog does.

- You must go through doorways first.

- Do not let your dog win over you in games of strength such as tug-of-war, wrestling etc.

- Do not let your dog assume a superior position compared to you. For example, you lying on the floor while your dog's two paws pressing against your chest.

- Set & enforce your house rules consistently, and let him know that he has rules to follow.

Territorial aggression is display by dogs that are fiercely

overprotective. Prevent this problem by introducing and socializing your dog when he's young to break down his suspicion of strangers. Try to expose your dog to new things and different people, which means taking him out more often! Show your dog that these people are harmless and his territorial aggressiveness will die down naturally.

If you are unsure of your dog's behavior when you bring him out in public, be sure to put him on a leash and muzzle if necessary. This is not only for the safety of the general public but also for your dog, as more often than not, dogs are put to death should they bite and injure someone.

Lastly, remember that aggression is not a minor problem and that it needs to be dealt with seriously. If you are losing control over your dog or feel that he outsmarts you, seek professional help and advice immediately.

Ways To Handle A Dog's Aggressive Behavior.

A dog's behavior of being aggressive or non-aggressive greatly depends on the owner's responsibility and training of the dog. Here are several steps that the owners can take to make their dog safe around other people.

- Make your puppy have social interaction with other dogs and people

after it gets vaccinated. This will help the puppy feel that other dogs and humans are not threatening. The puppy will then learn to be friendlier. Bring the puppy to the park, pet store or even puppy classes.

- Spaying or neutering the dog will greatly help reduce the risk. When the dog is neutered some of its territorial instincts like territorial aggression are reduced. Most fatal dog bites (80%) are caused by non-neutered male dogs. So trying to neuter your aggressive male dog will help keep it safe around other people.

- Always remember to restrain your dog when interacting with strangers or in a public place. You can't predict your dog's behavior even though you may think that it's normally friendly. Try to restrain him with a leash when in a public place. Also prevent strangers from interacting with the dog because the stranger might startle the dog. When leaving the dog alone in your yard, remember to enclose the dog in a fence suitable for its size.

- It is the dog's nature to bite anything, so training it to not bite anything will greatly help. Distraction will work on a dog when it is biting anyone. Try to make a sudden sound such as a clap then give the dog a chew toy. It will greatly help in training if the dog is rewarded when biting the right things such as chew toys.

- Always watch your dog's behavior. When the dog is really aggressive and can't be trained, get help from a professional.

Solving The Problem Of Dogs Becoming Aggressive To Other Dogs Who Come Near.

If your dog becomes aggressive when another dog enters her space, this is really more of a handler problem than a dog problem. It's your responsibility to NOT LET other dogs invade her space. You can correct her for the aggression but at the same time, you must show her that she can trust you, and that you will not let strange dogs from another pack wonder up and get in her face. This is the job of the pack leader - to protect the pack. You're not doing your job by letting strangers off the street walk up and get too close. I would recommend taking a walking stick with you when you walk your dog, so you can keep other dogs at a distance.

Barking

Thousands of years ago, humans began the process of domesticating the dog and shaping what "being a dog" really means. Through careful selection and breeding, an astonishing variety of dog breeds have been created. Desirable traits have been selected for in various breeds that are of a benefit to humans. There are some traits, however, that quickly become undesirable when expressed too frequently. Barking is an example of a natural behavior that is encouraged in terms of guarding behavior, but becomes a problem when the behavior is excessive or inappropriate. A recent health insurance investigation revealed that the sound of a continually barking dog was cited as the most disruptive and stress inducing noise for humans.

Dogs bark because we humans want our dogs to bark. For years our domestication process and selective breeding has allowed our dogs to develop their barking abilities. Wolves don't bark, so through genetic engineering and the selective breeding process, dogs these days have the ability to retain juvenile characteristics.

Humans have chosen to retain the infantile traits of wolves like large heads, flat faces, large eyes etc. Barking was further developed in dogs in order to scare intruders or to help the master out (i.e. on farms to assist in gathering the sheep).

Most dogs simply bark to communicate, to get attention, or simply to show their excitement. Training and lifestyle are important factors in teaching the dog how to communicate with its master.

Dogs are extremely social animals. Wolves themselves usually travel in packs & are seldom alone. Bringing a dog into your family is basically like bringing a wolf into a pack. It becomes a part of the family. Try not to leave it alone otherwise it will feel as if it was abandoned by the pack. Dogs are like having a baby in the house. They need love, attention, and someone to be there to take care of them. Like people they need a companion to blossom. Meeting your dog's emotional need for companionship and play will allow the two of you to form a strong bond together.

Sometimes having a second dog in the house can minimize the barking and minimize the loneliness. Although this may be rewarding at some times, it can also be a pain. Your best bet would be to train your dog

not to bark.

Everything boils down to how the owner trains their dog. If you reward the dog for barking, then the dog will understand that it's a good thing to bark. If you don't reward the dog for barking, the dog will understand that it's a bad thing to bark. If you are training your dog to become a watchdog, sometimes their barking can be very selective and discriminating with certain people. Sometimes they may just bark at anything they see. It is important to train these dogs by developing their intelligence level and how they interpret various events.

Why Do Dogs Bark?

Barking, in addition to whining, howling and growling, is a dog's natural means of communication. A dog's bark can signify territorial protection, exertion of dominance, or expression of some need. Typically, barking is a means of communication triggered by a state of excitement. Being a natural trait, barking is not considered a behavioral problem, unless it is produced in excess.

Causes of Problem Barking

Problem barking has a variety of origins. Genetics does influence a dog's tendency to bark. Certain breeds such as some terriers are prone to more frequent barking than breeds such as Greyhounds or Basenjis. However, excess barking can exist in any breed of dog. The

key to solving the problem of inappropriate barking is to determine what external stimulus is triggering the behavior. Improper confinement can be a major cause of problem barkers.

Improper confinement can include leaving a dog alone in a locked room or crate. Other improper confinements can include restricted tethering outdoors, or even an enclosed yard without proper shelter from the elements. Such confinement can cause frustration in a dog and cause it to bark excessively. Closely associated with improper confinement is lack of exercise as a cause of excess barking. When a dog is not provided with adequate exercise, pent-up energy is released through barking.

Environmental sounds can also trigger barking. These sounds include such things as the barking of other dogs, the sound of passing cars, strange voices, thunder, and mechanical noises such as the ringing of the phone. Noises can initiate barking at different times of the day. A dog may not bark at accustomed sounds during the day, but at night may be incited to a volley of barking by the slightest of noises. Other causes of problem barking can include separation anxiety, or the temperament of the dog: an over-aggressive animal may bark at the smallest provocation. A strongly territorial dog may bark at any stranger, invited or uninvited, entering your property.

Solutions to Excess Barking

Excess barking can be a serious behavioral problem and can mean the termination of the relationship with your dog or the dog itself if left

untreated.

The first step in solving problem barking is to determine if your dog is barking in response to inadequate shelter or improper confinement. If this is the case, the dog must be provided with a comfortable amount of space or supplied with a doghouse if outdoor shelter is inadequate. Increasing the amount of exercise given to your dog may also help.

In the event your dog is barking in response to environmental noises, or the barking is simply due to its temperament, behavioral modification methods should be used. These methods can include reconditioning using a verbal reprimand such as "No!", and leash correction. It should be noted however, that you should never yell at your dog, as loud noises may encourage your pet to bark more. Keep in mind the punishment should be applied while the barking is occurring, in order for your dog to associate the unwanted behavior with the punishment. Also remember to reward your dog when it stops barking.

Indirect intervention methods can also be applied. These techniques can range from spraying your dog with water while it is barking to using noise producing devices such as "Dog Stop" or "Barker Breaker," which emit loud or high frequency sounds that interrupt and deter barking. These devices can be controlled by the owner, or triggered by the dog's barking. In the event your dog is resistant to these behavioral modifications, more drastic action can be taken in the form of bark activated shock collars. This device is particularly effective when barking occurs in the owner's absence. Shock collars, however, are recommended only after other control measures have failed. A

final resort, when all other behavioral modification methods have been tried, and particularly when the dog's life is in question, is a vocal-cordectomy (debarking). This surgical procedure involves removal of all or part of the vocal cords.

The key to solving the problem of excess barking in your dog begins with an understanding of what is causing this behavior. Once you have determined a cause, you have a greater chance of choosing the most effective solution (e.g., more exercise) or behavioral modification. Modifying such an instinctive and natural behavior as barking can be difficult, and may require considerable patience, time, and hard work. Solutions, however, are possible, and worth the effort.

Training A Dog Not To Bark

The easiest way to stop a problematic barker is to control his barking while you are at home:

1. Set up a situation where your dog will always bark. For example, you can ask someone to ring your doorbell or knock on your door.
2. When your dog charges to the door and start to bark loudly, approach your dog, grab his collar and give the command "quiet" – no shouting please, it doesn't help.
3. If he stops barking, praise and reward the dog.
4. When he continues barking, close his mouth with your hand, wrap

your fingers around his muzzle – use both hands if needed, and give the command for him to keep quiet. Praise if he stops.

Most dogs would be able to learn the “quiet” command with repeated training like this. Set up similar situations to “lure” your dog to bark and repeat training whenever possible.

If you happen to own a hard-core persistent barker, use this method:

1. Vinegar-Water solution – mix a proportion of 7/8 water & 1/8 vinegar together. Pour the mixture into a water pistol or what kids call “super soaker” for longer distance shooting.
2. Aim and shoot at his chest whenever he can’t stop barking even on your command. Dogs hate the smell of vinegar and would usually back off and stop barking. He’ll even sneeze a few times. It’s harmless so you need not worry.
3. As always, praise him when he stops barking.

For your information, your dog might still be barking noisily and disrupting your neighborhood when you are not at home. In this case, you’ll need a training equipment known as “bark collars” to help train him.

There are several types of bark collars on the market. Some of these collars send an electric shock to your dog when he barks, some make a high pitch sound or emits a squirt of citronella which is annoying but safe for your dog (although are not very reliable). Usually, these

collars can help you solve a problematic barker.

Jumping Up On People

One of the most frequently cited problems with dogs is that of jumping up on people.

Unfortunately, this is one of those behaviors that is often inadvertently encouraged by well meaning owners. After all, it is cute and adorable when that little 10 pound puppy jumps up on you, your family members and your friends. Many people reward this behavior on the part of a small puppy with kisses and treats. This is a huge mistake, however, since that cute little puppy may soon become a full grown dog who could weigh well in excess of 100 pounds. Suddenly that cute jumping behavior is no longer quite so cute.

In addition to being annoying, jumping up on people can be dangerous as well. A large, heavy dog, jumping enthusiastically, can easily knock over a child or an older or handicapped adult. In today's litigious society, such an incident could easily make you, as the dog's owner, the subject of an unwanted lawsuit.

The time to teach a dog that jumping up on people is unacceptable is when he is still young and easy to handle. Retraining a dog that has been allowed to jump up on people can be difficult for the owner, and confusing for the dog.

When the puppy tries to jump on you or another member of your

family, gently but firmly place the puppy's feet back on the floor. After the puppy is standing firmly on the floor, be sure to reward and praise him. It is important for every member of the family, as well as frequently visiting friends, to understand this rule and follow it religiously.

If one member of the family reprimands the dog for jumping and another praises him, the dog will be understandably confused. As with other dog training issues, consistency is the key to teaching the dog that jumping is always inappropriate.

When praising and rewarding the dog for staying down, it is important for the trainer to get down on the dog's level. Giving affection and praise at eye level with the puppy is a great way to reinforce the lesson.

Pulling And Tugging At The Leash

Pulling on the leash is another problem trait that many puppies pick up. Unfortunately, this behavior is also one that is sometimes encouraged by well meaning owners. Playing games like tug of war with the leash, or even with a rope (that can look like the leash to the dog) can unwittingly encourage a problem behavior.

The use of a quality body harness can be a big help when training a puppy not to pull, or retraining a dog that has picked up the habit of pulling on the leash. Try training the puppy to accept the body harness the same way it accepts the regular buckle collar.

When walking with your dog, try using a lure or toy to encourage the dog to remain at your side. A training collar, when properly used, can also be a good training tool for a problem dog. When using a training collar or choke chain, however, it is very important to fit it correctly, and to use a size that is neither too big nor too small for your dog.

When walking with your puppy, it is important to keep the leash loose at all times. If the puppy begins to pull ahead, the handler should quickly change directions so that the puppy fast finds itself falling behind. It is important to reverse directions before the puppy has reached the end of the leash. The leash should stay loose except for the split second it takes the handler to reverse direction. It is important to use a quick tug, followed by an immediate slackening of the leash.

When training a puppy, it is important to never let the puppy pull you around. Training the puppy to walk properly while he or she is still small enough to handle is absolutely vital, especially when dealing with a large breed of dog. If your 150 pound Great Dane hasn't learned to walk properly while he or she is still a 20 pound puppy, chances are it never will.

It is important not to yank or pull on the puppy's neck when correcting him. A gentle, steady pressure will work much better than a hard

yank. The best strategy is to use the least amount of pressure possible to achieve the desired result.

Biting

Biting is one of those things that every puppy seems to do, and every puppy must be taught not to do. Like many behaviors, such as jumping up on people, biting and nipping can seem cute when the puppy is small, but much less so as he gets older, larger and stronger.

Left to their own devices, most puppies learn to control their biting reflex from their mothers and from their littermates. When the puppy becomes overenthusiastic, whether when nursing or playing, the mother dog, or the other puppies, will quickly issue a correction.

Unfortunately, this type of natural correction often does not occur, since many puppies are removed from their mothers when they are too young. It is therefore up to you to take over this important process.

Socializing the puppy with other dogs and puppies is one of the best and most effective ways to teach the puppy the appropriate, and non appropriate way to bite, and to curb the biting response.

Many communities and pet stores sponsor puppy playtime and puppy kindergarten classes, and these classes can be great places for puppies to socialize with each other, and with other humans and

animals as well. As the puppies play with each other, they will naturally bite and nip each other. When one puppy becomes too rough or bites too hard, the other puppies will quickly respond by correcting it.

The best time for this socialization of the puppy to occur is when it is still young. It is vital that every dog be properly socialized, since a poorly socialized dog, or worse, one that is not socialized at all, can become dangerous and even neurotic. Most experts recommend that puppies be socialized before they have reached the age of 12 weeks, or three months.

Another reason for socializing the puppy early is that mothers of young children may be understandably reluctant to allow their young children to play with older or larger dogs. Since socializing the dog with other people is just as important as socializing it with other dogs, it is best to do it when the puppy is still young enough to be non-threatening to everyone.

It is important for the puppy to be exposed to a wide variety of different stimuli during the socialization process. The socialization process should include exposing the puppy to a wide variety of other animals, including other puppies, adult dogs, cats and other domestic animals. In addition, the puppy should be introduced to as wide a cross section of people as possible, including young children, older people, men, women and people from a variety of ethnic backgrounds.

While socialization is very important to providing the puppy with life lessons and preventing him from biting, it is not the only method of

preventing unwanted biting and mouthing. Giving the puppy appropriate things to play with and bite is another good way to control inappropriate biting. Providing a variety of chew toys, ropes and other things the puppy can chew is important to preventing boredom, keeping his teeth polished and keeping him from chewing things he should not.

As with any training, it is important to be consistent when teaching the puppy not to bite. Every member of the family, as well as close friends who may visit, should all be told that the puppy is to be discouraged from biting. If one person allows the puppy to chew on them while everyone else does not, the puppy will quickly become confused, and that can make the training process much more difficult than it has to be.

Dogs and Children

It's terrifying how common tales are of dogs savaging young children. You might think that it's just Pit Bulls or certain breeds that do this kind of thing but it's common across all breeds.

Children have the uncanny ability to make dogs angry without intending to.

Most families will luckily never have to deal with anything remotely as traumatic but if you own a dog and have children; or have children visiting often - then you too must take some responsibility for their actions and behavior.

You want to prepare your children by teaching them a few simple rules about playing with the dog.

The first step to understand dog aggression. What causes dogs to become aggressive? There are a few different kinds of aggression that dogs experience. If they are scared they become aggressive, if something threatens their territory or family and as an act of dominance assertion.

An aggressive dog's ears will pin back; their tail might stand up and they will growl. The growl is a warning.

What's the best way to deal with an aggressive dog?

If you have the luxury of realizing before something happens that the dog is upset and about to hurt your child or you there are some things you can do:

- It's most important to try to keep as calm as possible; the dog will sense your fear
- Speak in a soft voice - remove the disturbance if possible.

What can you do to change an aggressive dog?

- Teach your children that the dogs have feeling too and are to be

treated with care. This means no rough playing with the dog. Some breeds of dog become agitated and roughhousing can greatly upset them enough to bite your child.

- If your children are very small you will need to take care to supervise them at all times. You cannot leave a toddler with a dog without risking something going wrong. Very young children do not understand how to treat animals yet.

- The importance of having a well trained dog cannot be stated enough. When you get a puppy you need to begin training it straight away. Even if you don't have children it's important to have a well trained dog. You don't want your beloved pooch to harm someone else's children.

If you have children and are considering buying a dog; there are some considerations that can make it far less likely for an aggressive dog. Choose carefully - some breeds are known to have a low tolerance and others are known to be child friendly.

Dogs have a long standing relationship with humans - dogs love people and visa versa. By following these pointers you should be assured of a happy calm dog that won't harm anyone. A carefully trained dog will give you peace of mind and most importantly - become an important part of your family life.

Separation Anxiety

Separation anxiety, also known in the dog training world as "owner absent misbehavior", is one of the most frequently encountered problems in the world of dog training. Separation anxiety can manifest itself in many different ways, including chewing, destroying the owner's property, excessive barking, self destructive behavior and inappropriate urination and defecation.

Dogs suffering from separation anxiety often whine, bark, cry, howl, dig, chew and scratch at the door the entire time their family members are away. Well meaning owners often unwittingly encourage this misbehavior by rushing home to reassure the dog, but it is important for the well being of both dog and owner that the dog should learn to deal with extended periods of separation.

How the owner leaves the house can often contribute to separation anxiety issues. A long and drawn out period of farewell can make matters worse by making the dog feel even more isolated when the owner finally leaves. These long types of farewells can get the dog excited, and then leave him with lots of excess energy and no way to work it off. These excited, isolated dogs often work off their excess energy in the most destructive of ways, such as chewing up a favorite rug or piece of furniture.

Excess energy is often mistaken for separation anxiety, since results are often the same. If you think that excess amounts of energy may be the problem, try giving your dog more exercise to see if that eliminates the problem.

If separation anxiety is truly the problem, it is important to address the root causes of that anxiety. In order to prevent separation anxiety from occurring, it is important for the dog to feel happy, safe, secure and comfortable while the owner is away for the day. It is important, for instance, to give the dog plenty of things to keep it busy while you are away. This means providing it with lots of toys, such as balls or chew toys.

A pet companion is often effective at relieving separation anxiety as well. Giving the dog a playmate, such as another dog or a cat, is a great way for busy pet parents and pets alike to cope with the stress of being left alone.

Setting aside scheduled play times, during which the pet is given your undivided attention, is another great way to alleviate boredom and separation anxiety. Playing with the dog, and providing it with sufficient attention and exercise is a proven way to avoid a stressed and anxious dog. A happy dog that has been well exercised and well conditioned will generally sleep the day away happily and patiently wait for the return of its owner.

It is important to schedule one of these daily play sessions before you leave the house each day. It is also important to give the dog a few minutes to settle down after playtime before you leave.

For dogs that are already experiencing separation anxiety and associated misbehaviors, it is important to get him accustomed to your leaving gradually. Be sure to practice leaving and returning at

irregular intervals, several times during the day and doing so will get your dog accustomed to your departures and help him realize that you are not leaving him forever.

Dogs that have been previously lost, or those that have been surrendered to shelters and readopted, often have the worst problems with separation anxiety. Part of treating this problem is teaching the dog that your leaving is only temporary.

Chewing

This type of dog training can be for dogs young and old. Many people find this part of dog training to be more common in puppies. But older dogs have been known to need this type of dog training because they love to chew things up while their owners are away!

To begin this type of dog training, you must first realize that all dogs chew. Dogs need to chew. So when you begin, make sure you have several things that are ok for your dog to chew on, then begin your dog training by keeping all of your dogs chewing toys in one location.

This way, your dog will learn to associate this spot with his or her chew toys. You must do this in order for this type of dog training to work. Try to have the dog toys in a "toy box" for your dog.

During this dog training, never spank or hit your dog if you catch it chewing on something it is not allowed to. Instead, for effective dog

training, praise your dog and pet it when it chews on what it is supposed to chew on.

It has been shown that dogs respond much better to positive praise and positive dog training. If the dog continues to chew on things that it shouldn't, verbally reprimand it. Your tone of voice will be enough punishment and is the only punishment necessary for this kind of dog training.

Another method of dog training you can try is to put a taste deterrent on the items your dog shouldn't chew. An example of a dog training chew deterrent is "bitter apple" and it is available at most pet stores.

These are the most effective means of dog training that will teach your dog not to chew on inappropriate things. If you follow all of these aspects, your dog training should go more smoothly.

Dog training can be a fun and rewarding experience...as long as all of your favorite things aren't chewed up in the process! Keep calm and be patient to achieve good results.

Licking

Does your dog seem to spend an infinite amount of time licking himself? Why is he doing it? And how do you, as a dog owner, correct that annoying licking habit? Here are five of the most common reasons

why your dog might be incessantly licking himself and the solutions to correcting the habit.

1. Your dog might have developed an unrelenting licking habit because he needs a bath.

If your dog spends a lot of time outside, romping through the woods, tramping in the mud, rolling in the grass or wading in the nearest stream or pond, he is probably dirty. So, your dog may be constantly licking himself because the dirt is irritating him! Plus, all that outdoor activity may have gotten him infested with ticks, fleas, mites, or lice. Your dog's incessant licking may be an attempt to rid himself of those nasty varmints!

Give him a bath with a veterinarian-approved flea and tick shampoo. Before bathing him, make sure you brush out all the mats and tangles from his coat or the bathing will make them worse.

2. Your dog might have developed a chronic licking habit because he has a skin disorder.

Some common skin disorders that a dog may develop are mange or dermatitis. Mange is a skin disease in dogs that is caused by various types of mites. The dermatitis could be caused by an allergic reaction to fleas, dust mites, mold or a certain brand of dog food. If you suspect that your dog has a case of mange or dermatitis, your veterinarian will be able to diagnose what the disorder is and prescribe

a course of treatment.

3. Your dog might have developed a persistent licking habit because he is under stress.

The stress may be a result of a new adoption, physical abuse, separation anxiety, or even a reaction to a new food.

If you think separation anxiety might be the cause of his stress, there are several methods for solving the problem. Try exposing your dog to being alone for very short periods of time. When your dog has adjusted to being alone for that duration of time, gradually increase your departure period. If you must be away from your dog for a long period of time, while you are away at work, try to find a friend or neighbor who could come over and take him for a walk a couple of times during the day.

Perhaps a new dog in the family is causing the stress? It is very common to experience a period of stress and adjustment when a new dog is brought into a household that has an established pet. One way to help make the transition a little easier is to give your older dog a lot of attention and love. It will let him know that he's still a vital part of the family. Just remember that it will take time for your dogs to adjust to one another and be one happy dog family!

Changing your dog's diet can also cause stress. If you're thinking of feeding your dog a new brand of dry dog food, do it gradually and over a period of four days or longer. On the first day that you change the

food, feed your dog one quarter of the new food with three quarters of the old food. Add in another quarter of the new food after a couple of days or so. After another two days, add in another quarter of the new dog food. Finally, after another couple of days or so, you will be able to leave out the old dog food entirely!

If you cannot determine the cause of your dog's stress, talk to your veterinarian. He'll be able to refer you to a dog behaviorist who will be able to determine the cause of your dogs stress. If your dog has severe separation anxiety, an anti-anxiety medication might be considered to alleviate the anxiety. Drugs are not a complete solution, however, and should be used along with a treatment program.

4. Your dog might have developed an incessant licking habit because he has an injury that has resulted in an open wound.

A dog that has developed an injury that has resulted in an open wound will lick himself incessantly in an attempt to clean the wound and keep it free from bacteria. Dog saliva has been proven to kill some germs and when your dog licks an open wound, it will aid in keeping the wound infection free.

Veterinarian treatment may be required if your dog appears to be in pain, the wound contains a foreign material and is deep enough to require stitches, is bleeding excessively or becomes infected.

5. Your dog might be relentless licking himself because he has

developed the bad habit of doing so.

Some dogs develop the habit of licking their paws incessantly despite them being clean, uninjured and parasite-free!

Your dog may develop the habit of constantly licking himself because he has a lot of nervous energy and no way to alleviate the stress. He also may have learned this behavior because he is bored and this is a way to entertain himself!

Give your dog lots of time to play and run and work off any excess energy. If your dog is well-exercised and happy, he won't feel the need to relentlessly lick himself to relieve stress or boredom!

The information detailed above will help you discover and correct your dog's habit of chronic licking. With careful observation and a little attention to proper grooming, training, along with regular veterinarian visits, you can 'lick' your dog's incessant licking habit!

Whining

Here's what you'll need to do to cure a dog from whining:-

1. Recognize that it's an anxiety-based behavior. The anxiety is usually the result of your dog not being able to contain her excitement for getting involved with the situation around her. For example, if the dog is made to hold a down-stay, but she sees another dog playing

with a ball in the distance then this is when your dog will start whining.

2. PAY ATTENTION: Most owners will release their dog from the down-stay at this point, thus rewarding their dog for whining. Instead, wait until the dog is quiet for at least FIVE seconds before releasing the dog. Remember that your dog will do more of whatever behavior is rewarded.

3. It is your job to convince the dog that: The longer she stays silent, the more likely it is that she will be rewarded with the ball/food/play/praise or whatever you're using as a motivator.

4. Be sure to NEVER reward the whining even though it may be a hassle in the beginning.

5. Recognize that you may never completely eliminate whining, but you should be able to minimize it to the point where it is no longer an annoyance.

Chasing Things

Dogs are carnivores and have a tendency to chase things which move away from them. This includes people, cars, and other animals. While this may be normal, it can be dangerous, especially when they are chasing people or cars. Training your dog not to chase things is very important, and you want to start this training as soon as possible.

If your puppy is a breed which will get big, you will want to get started on this training while they're puppies.

Some dogs can be trained easily, while others are more challenging. Breeds which have traditionally been used for hunting are the most difficult to deal with.

Until your dog is trained, you should never allow him off the leash as this can put the dog and others in danger. Before taking your dog to a place where he will be likely to chase someone, begin by training him in a secure place like a yard which is surrounded by a fence. The dog should be focused on you, and anything which will distract him should be removed. You will need to repeat the steps so that the dog understands what you want. You will want to start by putting the dog on a leash.

You will now want to stand with the dog at the end of a hallway or room. Take a ball and hold it in front of the dog without allowing him to make contact with it. After this, take the ball and roll it towards the opposite end of the room or hallway. Use the word "off" to tell the dog not to chase the ball. If the dog gets up and tries to chase the ball, gently pull him back with the leash and say "off" again. Repeat this step until the dog doesn't chase the ball when you roll it. When he does this correctly, reward him with a treat.

Repeat this technique in different rooms of the house. As your dog continues to improve, take him off the leash, but keep him indoors. Once he has shown that he can do this indoors, take him outside and start the whole process over again. Then once he has successfully

reached that stage, start gradually introducing distractions while training him.

Distractions

In general, you must remember that:

AS THE DISTRACTION BECOMES MORE MOTIVATIONAL, YOUR CORRECTIONS MUST BECOME MORE MOTIVATIONAL, TOO.

But before you can do this, you must make 100% sure that your dog understands your command-in a variety of different locations, and WITHOUT any distractions.

It's only after you've achieved this level of understanding that it's really fair to correct a dog for disobedience.

Digging

It's downright infuriating to look out the window and see your dog digging another hole in the yard. You yell out the window; he may or may not even acknowledge he's heard anything; then back to the digging. This dog behavior has got to stop.

Why does a dog dig?

Did you ever stop to think why your dog digs? This is the real trick – to figure out why he's digging in the first place, the motivation behind the dog behavior. Then you can take dog training steps to discourage it, redirect that energy and probably stop it completely.

1. I'm bored

Location: digging along the fence lines and at the gate.

Why? He is bored and wants to get out for some action.

Solution: provide more exercise for your dog, both physical and mental. The more exercise the better, according to your dog. A tired, happy dog will rest nicely between great outings.

2. I'm hot!!

Location: digging along the edge of the house or shallow "pits," especially in the heat of the summer.

Why? Your dog is most likely creating a cool spot in the cool under the surface of the earth. If under the porch, he's creating a den.

Solution: check to make sure you are providing fresh cool water throughout the day and night. Is there adequate shade to protect your

dog from the hot sun? Is good air circulation available or possibly a nice breeze or is the space filled with stagnant air?

Provide plant life (trees, bushes) for shelter from the hot sun. Cool grass keeps the ground heat down.

3. It's just my nature!

Sometimes it's the breed of dog, not so much the environment. Some breeds tend to be burrowers -- hounds, huskies, malamutes are a few examples.

Solution: if this is the case, work with your dog to agree on a place he can do his thing and camouflage it with something like plants or fencing.

4. I like it!!

Some dogs just like to dig, and dig they will, no matter what you do.

Solution: create and help them with the ideal digging place -- a sandy blend with hidden treasures that reward digging at that spot. Having a prepared area encourages the digger to focus the digging to the area you set up in an out-of-the-way place. Remember to keep the area stocked with assorted treats and toys.

To fill or not to fill existing holes?

The second part of the story is . . . what to do with the holes that keep reappearing, no matter what you do? Have you back-filled holes dug by your dog only to find them dug again, over and over?

When this happens, the next stage of hole-filling is called for.

Techniques for "filling" holes

There are two better techniques to encourage your dog to rethink digging that hole.

The easier of the two is to fill the hole until almost full. Mix the last portion of dirt with dog poo, pinecones, moth balls, or other repelling non-harmful substance. The next time your dog arrives for the big dig, he quickly finds the game has changed. Most dogs quickly change their behavior.

The second method is more time consuming but effective. Cut a section of chicken wire or similar to cover the hole plus 8 inches or more. Dig a hole a few inches deep that surrounds the hole and will fit the wire shape.

Fill the hole and then press wire in place and cover with dirt. Pack the area well, particularly around the wire edges. When your dog returns, the wire will stop his digging progress.

If along a fence line, secure the wire to the fence along the inside of the fence, just a short distance from the ground. When the wire gets to the ground, keep going vertically a short distance underground. Then bend the wire so the bottom is perpendicular to the top (forms an I). Bury the horizontal part underground inside the fence, pointing away from the fence. When your dog digs he is stopped by the wire and his weight on the earth helps keep the wire in place. The result is the dog gives up on that area.

We humans see digging as bad dog behavior. Dogs don't, and they dig for different reasons. If you can figure out why they're digging, you can put dog training steps in place to stop it. Some dogs dig, that's what they do. Set them up a space to dig and you both win!

Try these dog training techniques to change unwanted dog behavior. They seriously work.

Possessiveness With Food

Though sometimes we would like to believe otherwise, food is a dog's first priority, so the first step to successful training is to establish yourself as the leader of the pack. This can be achieved by showing him that he can only have his food at your discretion and command.

Give him his dinner, allow him to eat for a few seconds, then take his bowl away from him. Use an appropriate sound each time you do so, such as "leave" or "stop", and keep the bowl for a few seconds.

Provided he didn't show any aggression as you removed the bowl, tell him how 'good boy', give it back and allow him to continue eating. Repeat this two or three times during each meal for a few days, then once or twice a week for a few weeks.

Some dogs are never possessive with their food, but you may find if your dog came from a large litter, the only way he could obtain his share of the food was to threaten his brothers and sisters. Finding this action achieved the desired result (getting more food), he may well try it with you. If you don't sort this out very early on, this possessiveness will transfer to other things, such as bones, toys, furniture and so on, perhaps even to other members of the family.

To stop him being aggressive with his food, don't give him possession of it! By this I mean feed him by hand for a couple of weeks. Prepare his food in the bowl as usual, but don't put the bowl on the floor for him. Simply feed him a handful at a time. The bowl of food on the floor almost instinctively makes him want to guard it, so if he is not put in this position of needing to guard, he will not bite!

Feeding by hand also helps if your dog is dominant in other areas. It makes him completely reliant on you for the most important thing in his life, his food, and this will reinforce your position of pack leader, as he is only receiving the food from you and not from the bowl. You can also use this period of hand feeding to your benefit by making him obey some minor command from you for some of the food. Get him to sit first before one handful, or to lie down for the next, and so on. Don't make him run around for the food as this could cause digestive upsets.

You will find that after a couple weeks of this regime, his general attitude over possessions will change. You can then try giving him his food in a bowl again, and, provided there is no sign of aggression, continue to feed him normally.

For dogs that are food possessive, do not give them bones or toys, as they will attempt to guard these in the same way. Once the food possession has been sorted out, you can try introducing a toy, but make sure the dog understands that it is your toy, and he is only allowed to play with it with you, and when you decide the game is to end, you must end up with the toy.

Dog Training classes

As we've covered so far in this guide, there is usually a lot of training you can do yourself with your dog. However, if you have obvious behavioral problems, a dog obedience school is an excellent solution, but you should start thinking about it before serious obedience problems develop.

Obedience problems with your dog are not always apparent. You might sometimes overlook minor indiscretions such as chewing, jumping up, or excessive barking that can be signs of a more serious problem.

By themselves, these may not be serious obedience problems for you or your dog, but it is the inability to control them that should be of concern. Allowing certain bad behavior can lead to frustration when trying to correct it later on, or when obedience training for other habits. That frustration can lead to other obedience problems for your dog and a strained relationship between you and your pet.

Again, if you clearly have major dog obedience problems which are not being effectively handled by your own training, it would be in the best interests of both you and your pet to enroll in an obedience training class.

Formal dog obedience classes will also teach you how to train your dog, and form a basis for future learning between you and your dog. Your pet will be more confident in everything they do. They will be happier and more eager to please than ever. Most important,

obedience training lessons will lead to a better relationship between you and your dog.

However, you need to make sure you choose the right dog obedience school. If you and your dog receive the improper obedience training, problems could become worse.

Okay the time has come. The puppy (or dog) you have cherished for the past few months is ready to go to school. Where do you send him/her? Which establishment can be trusted? You want a school sensitive to your puppy's needs as he/she begins the long and arduous task of learning to interpret your English commands and hand signals. However you also want a school that will respect your needs as the owner. Does such a place exist? What dog training school is right for you?

How do you make the decision? What research do you do? Well to start of the internet is of course always a great resource. The American Kennel Club is very well respected and has a list of good dog training schools in most states. Of course I am sure you also have friends with dogs that can give recommendations, but of course you wonder, will what was right for them be right for you and your precious little bundle of fur?

Of course there are also other things to take into account. What do you want the school to teach? Do you just want a basic obedience school or do you want more? What is most important to you?

From the many dog training school to pick from I am sure there is one

that will fit your needs, as there is probably one for just about everything you could imagine out there. It will just take some long deliberation to decide what is best for both you and your puppy.

Trying to determine which dog trainer is the best qualified to train your dog can be a difficult task.

We recommend the following criteria for choosing a dog trainer for your dog:

Reputation: Recommendations from your vet, other reputable trainers, friends that have had their dogs trained, etc. can help a lot in deciding which trainer to go with.

Experience: You should look into each potential trainer's background before deciding on your dog's trainer. Years of experience and areas of expertise are just a couple of things to look for. A good, professional dog trainer won't hesitate to answer your questions, so be prepared to ask a lot of them. After all, your dog is part of your family.

Training methodology: Reputable dog trainers care about every dog's welfare. They will know that harsh or abusive handling methods are counter-productive and not good for the dog in general. Do they use mostly positive training methods?

Love for dogs: The best dog trainers have a general love for dogs, or they wouldn't and shouldn't be involved in that line of work. You'll know a great trainer by his or her obvious joy in living and working with dogs.

Extensive behavioral knowledge: Dedicated trainers keep up-to-date on all of the latest training methods by attending dog training and animal behavioral courses, conferences, seminars, workshops, etc. whenever possible. Make sure you inquire about any recent educational courses that the trainer has attended.

Teaching and communication skills: Dog trainers that have good teaching and communication skills make the learning process easier, quicker and more enjoyable for the dogs.

Affiliation with reputable organizations: You can always tell a good dog trainer by the organizations, associations and clubs that he or she is affiliated with.

Ethics or profit?: You should find out what motivates a potential dog trainer. Is he or she in it strictly for the money, or for their love of dogs?

Unless a dog trainer comes recommended by one or more reputable

source, it really is a case of "buyer beware". Anyone can call themselves a dog trainer. Do your homework when choosing a dog trainer for your dog. Your dog is part of your family, so you should put as much effort into choosing a trainer as you would in choosing your dentist. The wrong kind of training could damage your dog for life.

However, even the best dog training school is unlikely to be able to train your dog in every way. A typical example of this is chewing.

It is hard to go over a chewing problem in dog training classes because dogs often have nothing to chew on or destroy while in the class! If you are one of those people who are in dog training classes, but you still need help with chewing, please read the section earlier in this guide. Once you and your dog have successfully completed other training areas at the school, you should be able to effectively train your dog out of its chewing habit by following our advised methods.
