

The experts guide to

# **Training Your Dog**



Richard Cussons

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## About This Book

This book is called "The Expert's Guide To Training Your Dog" because, well, it was written by experts.

"The Experts Guide To Training Your Dog" is a collection of advice, tips and hints from expert dog trainers and behaviorists, from the US, Canada and United Kingdom, who have revealed how they teach their clients and their dogs basic and advanced obedience with such ease.

Training a puppy is quite a simple matter when you know what you are doing. If you don't, it can be the most exasperating and stressful experience of your life.

How is it that you can spend hours trying to teach your dog to "sit and stay" without any success and then, in frustration, take your dog to a trainer who has him or her behaving perfectly within a few minutes? Well now with this book you have the answer.

Each article is as given by the trainers and dog behaviorist with just a little editing as required. This ensures that you get the advice straight from the expert's mouth without any details being lost by editing or précising. Also, as there is more than one way to teach you dog to sit or obey other commands you will sometimes find more than one article on a topic. This is done deliberately so you can see for your self the different approaches trainers take with their dogs but still achieve results.

If you put the advice here into practice training your dog will be simple and fun. Yes, it takes a bit of work on your part to read through the articles and get up to speed but, the rewards of a well trained dog are more than worth the effort.

Please do enjoy the book but, most of all, enjoy your dog!

Richard Cussons

## 3 Important Training Tips For Every Dog Owner

**1. Be fair with corrections.** Make sure your dog understands what you want before you correct him for not doing it. And let the punishment fit the crime. A correction should not be a release of anger, a clearing out of pent-up feelings by unloading them on the apparent cause of the problem, your dog. Instead, a correction is another way to communicate with your dog, to foster in him a clear understanding of his place in your human pack. As such, a proper correction is another way to strengthen the bond between you and your pet. At its mildest level, a correction is the absence of praise. Remember to always ask yourself if you're being fair before you give in to the knee-jerk reaction to leash-jerk.

**2. Be positive.** This tip refers to having the right attitude, of course, but it's more than that. Praise that's well timed and appropriate is essential to your dog's learning process. If all you ever do is tell your dog "no," your relationship isn't going to be a very good one. How would you like to work with a boss like that?

Praise is cheap and free - so use it, lots! Use praise when your dog tries to get it right. Use it more when your dog succeeds. Use it when your dog just pays attention to you, because that's the first step in the training. You don't have to be some gushing goof, but you do need to let your dog know when you're proud of her.

**3. When training your dog, be on the same team.** Don't think of training your dog as a you versus your dog endeavor. Think instead about the two of you being on the same team, albeit in different positions. Consider yourself the quarterback, if you like: You call the plays. Winning is a team effort. Of course, your dog has to learn the plays first, and you're the one to teach him. And this relationship is still not an adversarial one. You show your dog the things he needs to learn, and you do so with love and respect, which your dog will return in kind.

To bring your dog onto your team and show him the plays you'll be calling, you need to spend time with him. Bring him into your life. Let him sleep in a crate in your bedroom, practice his "sits" in the kitchen. The more opportunities for interaction and practice you have, the faster and more reliably your dog performs.

## Training Tips Before You Bring Home Your New Puppy

Many dog owners make the mistake of giving commands in long sentences that only another human being would understand. You get certain inflections in the dog's bark or whine, but only another dog understands "dog talk." Why should you expect your dog to understand all the words you use? True, your pet will love to hear you talk. Still, it is your tone that reaches and pleases him.

In his lifetime a dog comes to recognize many words, but he can be a well-trained, obedient pet by knowing just a few. He must know: "Come!," "Out!," "Stop it!," "No!," and "Down!" To them, add "Walk?," or "Want to go for a walk?," "Get in your chair!," "Go to bed!," or some such command to direct action, usually taught with a gesture or by actually lifting the dog to the indicated spot. Of course, he soon knows "Good dog!" or "Bad boy." If you think though that he "understands every word," try bawling him out some time in a honey-sweet tone. That little tail will wag madly; it sounds mighty nice to him!

The most important word is his name. You may decide what you will call your puppy before you get him, or his name may come out of the blue, but do not delay choosing it. Use it every time you speak to him, over and over again, until he knows it as well as you do. Once he knows it, he will rush to respond because of your affectionate tone, or hang his head, ashamed, because your voice carries reproach.

He will soon learn your name, too, and those of other members of the family. To these, he will add the names of friends, neighboring children, and their dogs - names which will be useful in his daily life as your friendly, well-mannered pet.

The capacity to learn is born in every puppy, to a greater or lesser degree. Your puppy starts learning the moment he enters your house. (He starts learning about you and soon knows whether you or he will be the boss.) His capacity to learn grows as he does and is fully developed at the age of about a year. Although he eventually stops growing, he never stops learning.

One way to train the puppy, and prepare him for more formal training when

he is an adult, is to play with him. This may sound simple, but in our busy lives we often fail to play with a new puppy as much as we should. At first he is a novelty, but it becomes "too much trouble" to give the time to him, and we tell the eager, bouncing little fellow to "be a good dog and lie down." He'd much rather be a good playfellow and later lie gladly at your feet for a snooze.

The game of fetch-and-carry, for instance. . .running after a ball or a stick, catching it and then bringing it back. . .is a chance for obedience training. The command "Go fetch!" may later be useful. Vary the game by substituting other items for the ball or stick. At first all these toys should be hidden in some place that is easy to find; then make it harder. Identify objects by word until he associates the word with the object - your slippers, the newspaper, etc. Fetch soon becomes a known word, and so does find, when you use them often for the same purpose.

## **Bringing Home Your New Puppy**

The fun of bringing a new puppy home and introducing him to his new family is a very special experience. He will, of course, become a well-mannered dog, staying quietly at our side, eager to follow our every command. Well, it is a long road from the cuddly puppy to the mature dog, but with some effort and understanding it can be traveled successfully. It all begins with day one in the new home.

The first few days a puppy is in his new home can be trying for both the puppy and the new owner because both are trying to adjust to a new situation. After all, the puppy finds he has been suddenly taken from his den and litter mates and is expected to immediately accept a new, foreign way of life. However, with patience and a sense of humor on the part of the new owner, the first few days can be accomplished with good feelings on both sides.

Breeders and behaviorists generally agree that seven weeks of age (forty-nine days) is the ideal age for a puppy to go to his new home, with six to eight weeks being the most desirable age range. The six- to eight-week old puppy still needs a lot of rest and will take morning and afternoon naps. For the first day or two, however, he might be very excited and spend much of the day in motion, checking out his new home. As long as he is not hurting himself or anything else in the environment, let him investigate wherever and whatever takes his fancy.

If the puppy is eight weeks old when he first comes home, be very patient with him. This is the fear period and sharp noises or harsh treatment will leave him with fear which may take months to overcome. Let him take his time getting acquainted with everything and do not take him to places where he will be subjected to loud and frightening sounds or activities. If possible, trips to the veterinarian should be arranged either before or after the eighth week.

If the puppy is ten to twelve weeks old when you first bring him home, he will be more rambunctious, especially if he is one of the larger breeds, and he will sleep considerably less during the day. However, he is at an age where you can get his attention quite easily and where he will want to please you and stay close to you.

## **A New Puppy In The House: Welcome Home!**

On your puppy's first day home, give him a complete tour around the house on a loose leash. This is the pup's first introduction to whatever limitations you want to put on his future access to your possessions - your furniture, golf clubs, books, the kids' toy shelves, etc.

This is not the right time for "no." (The puppy might begin to think that "no" is his name!) Instead, use a guttural "Yack!" combined with a very slight tug-and-release of the leash as he sniffs to warn him away from untouchables. He's new at this, but just saying, "Puppy!" in a happy voice may be enough to get him to look at you - "Good dog." Back to happy chatter as you move on.

All you are doing is letting him know by means of prevention (a growl sound he understands) what things he will have to avoid in the future. Let him sniff first because he'll remember the objects more by scent than by sight. He looks up at you and he is praised. Think of it this way: "No!" means "Don't do that!" whereas "Yack!" means "Don't even think of doing it!" Chit-chat is natural and pleasurable to both of you; but in the beginning the puppy will only pick up on his name because everyone uses it in connection with things he finds pleasurable - play, food or praise. If you use the word "din-din" many times while fixing his meals, that word will stand out in the midst of a five minute speech on nutrition as a clue to the observant pup that he is

about to eat. The human-canine teaching language is based on short, simple words that are consistently applied to specific actions.

This first guided tour teaches your puppy the layout of his new home, what it looks like, smells like, even feels like (rugs, carpets, tile, wood) and that some things are off limits even to adorable puppies. There is one more important lesson he is learning from this adventure: that you are his new Leader, the He or She-Who-Must-Be-Obeyed. If you do not take on this role, the puppy will. Somebody's got to do it, and he'll fill the vacancy immediately! You may be familiar with the saying, "Lead, follow or get out of my way." Every dog is born knowing it and continues to live by it!

Once the house tour is over, now it's down to specifics. Show Sparky where his water bowl will always be. Let him investigate his crate. Then take him outside (still on leash) to the exact area where you want him to eliminate. Stand there until he does. (Patience. He's new at this.) Praise quietly as he goes, after which you can make the same kind of tour outside, with warnings about flower or vegetable beds, bushes or plants. Or you may live in a city and by law (and responsible dog ownership) must curb Sparky. Go to the quietest no-parking spot you can find. If you remain on the sidewalk, he will naturally want to join you, so stand down in the street with him. It will take time, plus your casual, confident attitude, to get him used to the noise, the confusion and the speed and size of trucks and taxis. No outside walking tour at this time. Wait until his immunizations are complete, by which time he will also be more accepting of city life.

Note: If the original trip home from where you picked up Sparky took more than an hour, reverse the two "tours" to let the pup eliminate first.

## **5 Ways To Make Your New Puppy Comfortable**

The first nights in a new home for a puppy are much like a baby's first few nights at home. The best way to get your new puppy to sleep through the night quietly is to:

1. Make sure his last play period is a good, hearty one that ends about one hour before you feed him his last meal, which should be about an hour before your bedtime.

2. Take him out to potty as soon as he is done eating and about fifteen minutes before you go to bed.
3. Leave a very small quantity of water with him when you put him to bed.
4. Try to make your bedtime and his getting-up time no more than six hours apart until he is four to five months old. With this schedule and proper containment, a healthy puppy should both sleep and housebreak easily.
5. Make him a proper bed. The puppy's "bed" can be a rug at the end of your bed (tie him to the bedpost), a box or crate or pen, or any other small area that restricts his movement. You want him sleeping while you are sleeping!

## Settle Down Little Pup!

A dog is not like a television or a video game - you can't just pull the plug or temporarily remove the batteries from a rambunctious puppy. Instead, you must teach him to settle down and shush. Right from the outset, make frequent quiet moments part of the puppy's daily routine. Following a proper confinement schedule will help your puppy train himself to settle down. Additionally, encourage your puppy to settle down beside you for longer and longer periods. For example, when you're watching television have your pup lie down on-leash or in his crate, but release him for short play-training breaks during the commercials.

When playing with your pup, have him settle down for frequent short interludes every fifteen seconds. Initially have the pup lie still for a few seconds before letting him play again. After fifteen seconds, interrupt the play session once more with a three-second settle-down. Then try for four seconds, then five, eight, ten, and so on. Although it's difficult at first, being sent back and forth between "Settle Down" and "Let's Play", the puppy soon learns to settle down quickly and happily. Your puppy will learn that being asked to settle down is not the end of the world, nor is it necessarily the end of the play session, but instead that Settle Down signals a short time out and reward break before he is allowed to resume playing.

If you teach your puppy to be calm and controlled when told, you will have years of fun and excitement ahead. Once your puppy has learned to settle down and shush on cue, there is so much more your dog can enjoy with you. Your well-trained dog is likely to be invited for many walks, trips in the car, picnics, visits to the pub, or to Grandma's, and even on incredible journeys

to stay in ritzy dog-friendly hotels. On the other hand, if you let your dog play indiscriminately as a puppy, he will no doubt "want to play indiscriminately as an adult. Your dog will be hyperactive and uncontrollable because you have unintentionally taught him to act that way. If your pup has not been taught to settle down by the time he reaches adolescence, he will be unfit to be taken places. Your pup will begin a lifetime of confinement and isolation at home while the rest of the family go out to have a good time. That folks, is not fair!

Until you have trained your puppy to enjoy spending much of his day at home alone, you might recruit a puppy sitter. Just a few houses down the street, there may live an elderly person, for example, who would just love to live with a dog. He or she might be willing to come over during the daytime and sit and enjoy your TV or the contents of your fridge, maintain your puppy's confinement schedule, regularly reward him for using his doggy toilet periodically play with the pup, and teach him household rules.

## **Getting Your Puppy Used To Being Left Alone**

Dogs are sociable animals and it is not natural for them to be isolated from others. All domestic dogs will have to be left alone at some time in their lives, so it is important that they learn to cope with solitude while they are still young.

If puppies are not taught to be left alone, problems can be experienced when they are eventually left by themselves, even if the separation is for only a few minutes. Dogs that become anxious when left will chew, scratch at doors, dig at carpets, race around frantically, knock things off, bark, howl, and perhaps lose bladder control. To prevent this, you need to get your puppy used to being left alone from an early age, especially if you normally spend a large proportion of the day with him.

Puppies fear abandonment by their parent figure until they mature and become more self-reliant. Since you have become a substitute for their mother, you will need to teach your puppy gradually to be independent in a way similar to how it would happen naturally.

Begin this process as soon as you get your puppy. Choose a time when he is tiring and is likely to settle down for a sleep. Play with him a little beforehand

and take him outside in case he needs to go to the toilet. Then put him in his bed and shut him in the room alone. Puppies will often feel safer if they have a den-like area to sleep in. Putting his bed under a table or in an indoor kennel with a blanket draped over it may help a puppy to settle more quickly.

Ignore any whining, barking or scratching at the door. Sooner or later, he will accept being on his own and will settle down to sleep. While he is very young, open the door after he is asleep. He can then come to you when he wakes up and needs to go outside.

Repeat this exercise many times, gradually building up the time that your puppy spends on his own until he can cope easily with a few hours of separation. Teaching him to cope without you when you are somewhere in the house will help him to remain calm when he is left alone.

Never go into a puppy that is making a fuss. If you do, you will be rewarding this behavior and he will do it more next time. Wait until your puppy is quiet before you enter, then go in and praise this behavior instead. Go in as soon as there is a quiet moment; leaving your puppy to cry for hours on end will only make him fearful of being left alone. Build up to longer absences gradually, but never faster than your puppy can cope with.

Never punish a dog when you return after an absence, no matter what has happened while you have been away. Your dog will not be able to link the punishment with what he did a long time ago, and it will not prevent him from doing it next time. He will think that you are angry simply because you have returned. This will cause him to be anxious next time you leave him, since he will now be worried about your coming back, and this may cause separation problems later.

## **How To Train Your Puppy To Accept "Being Alone"**

A common problem that occurs between dogs and owners comes from how the pet reacts to being left alone. In this type of situation, we have to keep in mind that our puppy is a pack animal. He was not built to be on his own. The whole point of living in pack is to be able to live as a group and work together, play together, hunt together, and raise puppies together. Every puppy was made from this same mold. Being alone does not come naturally

to him.

With proper care and training, we can help him adjust and accept staying alone. You need to be sympathetic and determined when training your dog to accept your necessary absences. You must show him over and over again that you will come back and give him love, take care of him, and fulfill his needs.

You will need to set up a crate or den area for your puppy and establish a permanent location for his water bowl and food dish. He will also need a blanket or towel to sleep on and papers or potty pads to relieve himself. Give him safe toys to chew. Chewing will help him relieve his anxiety. Keep this in mind if he chews on your shoe one day in an attempt to make himself feel better. It is anxiety, not spite that makes him do bad things when you are out. However, you must still correct him. But you also have to understand that while your pet can adjust to being left alone, it is not a natural state for him and he is never going to like it.

Your comings and goings during the first few days of acquiring your puppy will help to communicate to him that you will come and go. Some puppies adjust easily while some will find this area very difficult. Naturally, if you have a breed that was originally developed to herd and protect a flock, he will tend to get upset when his flock disappears. Understanding the qualities bred into your dog for generations will help you predict his behavior and how he will react to certain situations such as training, how he responds to children, and being left alone.

Giving your puppy something to do to keep him busy will help when he is left alone. He should have safe things to chew. Another pet, such as another dog or a cat, will also help ward off lonely feeling. In addition, you can help him feel better by giving him a good exercise right before you leave. This will tire him and relax him. Furthermore, you can train him before you leave for the day. This reminds him that you are the leader of the pack and also reminds him of his security as well as his limitations. He will therefore feel less anxious knowing that he has a loving, firm, and fair master. You can even leave the radio on while you are gone. Music and voices are a great comfort to a puppy who has to spend the day alone.

## Tips For The Aspiring Dog Handler

Handling dogs for competition, as well as a living, is an art that can be acquired only through experience. It is not anything you will pick up in several months. It is the culmination of all the knowledge that you have attained through different sources such as reading, studying the different breeds of dogs, digesting the Obedience Regulations, conducting frequent practice sessions, observing top handlers in competition, and developing your own style for Obedience competition. Of course the first requisite is a genuine love for dogs, and if you have that it should follow that you will have the patience and understanding to cope with them. The second requisite is perseverance, for without it you will not get very far. And last but not least you must have a sense of humor, for in obedience trial competition anything can happen.

If you want to learn something you should go to the person who is most qualified to teach it. By qualified I mean he is at the top of his profession because of what he has accomplished personally. The teacher who has made a fine record himself in Obedience is the one who can help you. There are hundreds of Obedience trainers in the country, but most are passing on bits of training advice they have picked up here and there. With coaching like this you can expect very little consistency and much confusion.

The first thing you will notice when you watch a top handler is the relaxed, easy manner in which he controls his dog and the rapport that is evident between the two. The dog will be attentive and responsive to the handler's firm but soft-spoken commands, the signals will be given with just one hand and arm, and the exercises will be performed very smoothly and skillfully. The first time you witness this type of handling you will be more impressed with how easy it looks than by anything else. If you haven't started training you will be quite certain that you could do it yourself - it looked so easy.

The first step to becoming a good handler is to train your dog correctly. Good handling is synonymous with expert training. Your voice is important - give the commands in a firm, well-modulated tone and praise your dog in a very pleased tone that rings with sincerity. When the dog is close to you teach him to respond to commands that are given to him softly. When working away from you, teach him to execute the commands that are given crisply but just loud enough for him to hear. Don't keep repeating commands, rather correct him for not paying attention.

## Establishing A Healthy Relationship With Your New Puppy

When you bring your new puppy home, you'll want to make him feel good while he's lying down or on his back. Give him a little stroke or an encouraging word. But don't overdo it. If you make the pup stay in that posture and he stays there, it teaches him a lesson both in submission and in dominance. That may seem okay. But the problem is that the dog also learns confrontation, not just with other dogs but also with people.

Dogs can be taught to be compliant without using force and confrontation. Do not shake him by the scruff of the neck and pin him to the ground, even though that's what wolves occasionally do to establish dominance. No matter how many times you've been told that you are the alpha animal, the fact is that people-dog relationships are not like wolf-wolf relationships. Dogs' teeth can inflict more damage than people's hands, so the wise thing to do here is not to start the confrontation.

Instead, start out with a companion-animal relationship where there's mutual respect for each other's roles (yours is to communicate direction, his' is to respond appropriately). Your dog will try to please you and be compliant, and you will praise him for doing so.

This is the kind of relationship you want to start as soon as you bring the puppy home, even before you take him to puppy kindergarten or hire a trainer to get him under control. Don't physically force your new pet to do things that he's not ready to do. Let him get used to one room at a time. Make sure that you keep track of when he is getting overly excited. This is your cue to say to him, "Settle!" or "Outside!" The word or phrase you use is up to you.

Try to go out the same door each time for the same activity. You will need to take him outside and stand there while he sniffs around and pees or poops, and you say, "Good Boy" then go indoors and play with him in a different location, so that he gets the idea that when we go to this one spot it's time to pee or poop, and when we go out a different door to another spot, that's where we play.

As you start to teach your dog good house-training techniques, you will also want to put him on a regular pattern of eating, usually three times a day at first. Occasionally, a pup will not seem too interested in eating. Besides finding out what he was eating when you acquired him, and offering him

tidbits of chicken and beef from your fingers to whet his appetite, puppies like some company when they go to the food bowl. So if there is a litter-mate or a neighborhood puppy about the same age as yours who would like a dinner date, let them eat side by side a few times in the location you've chosen for daily feeding.

The idea is to make him comfortable and get him into a routine of regular eating, sleeping, elimination, and walking. Make sure that you don't do unpleasant things with your hands. Don't let your puppy start to chew or nibble on your fingers or hands. Even if the nibbling doesn't hurt now, it will hurt when he gets older and can lead to a bad habit that's difficult to break. Very soon, you'll be getting to know your new pet very well.

## Learn How To Bond With Your Puppy

Bonding is the key to a great relationship with your dog. Bonding means gaining your puppy's love and trust. It's usually easy and is a lot of fun. The formula is simple:

1. Be your pup's buddy.
2. Take him for short romps in the woods or park.
3. Pet him and play with him.

Most puppies are very insecure when they first come home from the breeder. Their entire world has been turned upside down. They are suddenly separated from their mother and their litter mates. You can help overcome some of this insecurity by setting up the puppy's crate in your bedroom. There he will not feel exiled from his pack during the night. In fact, it will help him feel accepted into his new pack.

Do not undermine your puppy's growing trust with overly harsh or badly timed corrections. Trust is essential to bonding and to successful obedience training. Strive toward convincing your dog that you would never harm him or put him in a harmful situation. Owners who have their dog's trust and have formed a close bond with their dog have the highest potential of training success.

## 3 Ways To Connect With Your Dog

All praise is good, but praise specially tailored to connect with the dog's way of reacting is ten times as effective. Here are some tips to follow :

1. Use the right tone of voice. Dogs communicate with one another through sounds easily duplicated by humans. If you're angry with your dog, for example, dropping your voice to a low rumble closely approximates the growling of a dog. For praise, use a sweet, high-pitched crooning voice: "Gooooooood, doooogggg!"

2. Tailor your petting style to your dog. Some dogs go crazy when petted; others hardly notice. Use a little chest pat or scratch for those who tend to be overly enthusiastic, and be a little more boisterous for the ones who really warm to being jollied. Don't let the dog use petting as an excuse to go crazy - lighten up on the pats, but don't correct him - and let your voice do most of the praising.

3. Smile. Dogs understand many of our facial expressions because they use similar ones to communicate with each other. A smiling face is understood in both species, but if you really want to get through, make the smile as wide open as you can. You're trying to approximate that big panting grin a happy dog has.

## When It Comes To Dog Training, There Is No Such Thing As A Perfect Dog

As any reputable trainer or dog training book will tell you, canine learning is based largely on repetition. When a behavior is repeated enough times, dogs develop habits, or conditioned responses. Assuming that those habits are positive ones such as eliminating outside, coming when called, lying down and staying when told, and others - you will have what you want: a trained dog. That's because dogs are creatures of habit. Once you set up a routine of various signals and conditioned responses (sit, down, stay), the dog will do exactly what you tell him every time. Right? No exactly...

No conditioned response is infallible. Creatures with advanced brains can think. They can defy conditioning. They also can make mistakes. Think about two of your own conditioned responses. You have a habit of answering the

telephone when it rings, but one day you decide not to take any calls. The telephone rings but you keep reading your book. You know what you usually do, but today you decide not to do it. You also have a habit of stopping your car at a red light. But one day you are tired or distracted and you roll through an intersection. Even the most experienced drivers sometimes make mistakes.

Similarity, there will be times when even the best-trained dog will either defy conditioning or make a mistake. Therefore you must avoid becoming complacent or overconfident about learned behavior. Do not rely on conditioned responses in potentially dangerous situations. For example, you should never unleash even the best-trained dog near a busy road. One mistake could result in injury or death to my dog.

Owners need to reinforce their dog's conditioned responses. Certainly the more practice and proofing you do with a dog, the more reliable his response will be. Skilled human beings, from tennis pros to typists, need practice to stay in top form. This is because all learned skills need reinforcement.

When you feel you have achieved a well-trained dog, continue to practice obedience exercises once in a while. It can be fun for both you and the dog. Plus it reinforces the good behaviors you worked so hard to achieve. When you need to call on those skills in real situations, such as doing a stand-stay at the veterinarian's office, you will be more confident that your dog will comply. Your dog will be more confident by doing something that is familiar - and for which he can earn your praise.

## Understanding How Dogs Learn

All dogs learn through experience. However, the number of times a particular action must be repeated for a dog to learn and to commit it to memory varies. If the dog perceives the action as being particularly advantageous to him, he may learn it on the basis of one experience.

Similarly, the dog learns to avoid particularly disadvantageous situations on the basis of one experience. Like the child who touches the hot stove, the dog will shy from activities that have previously produced discomfort or fear.

The actions and exercises that we teach our dogs in training are not, in themselves, viewed by the dog as either advantageous or disadvantageous. For training to succeed, we must clearly distinguish in terms understandable

to the dog what is to his advantage and what is not. Once the dog perceives that it is to his benefit both to refrain from conduct we consider objectionable and to adopt those actions we consider desirable, he learns very quickly.

## **Abusive Dog Training: It Is Not Necessary!**

The myth that puppies need to experience pain, physical discomfort or fear in order to learn persists widely today despite convincing evidence to the contrary. This often leads to ego crushing physical punishment and the trauma of social isolation. The result may be a guilt ridden owner applying such punishments during the pup's most impressionable age, between 5 and 16 weeks.

Clients should be made aware there are so-called "professionals" operating in many communities who still practice archaic correctional techniques. The following case was reported in the July, 1998 issue of Animal Behavior Consultant Newsletter:

"An obedience instructor in a training class was demonstrating a correction with a client's nippy puppy. She stuck her fingers down the pup's throat when it nipped, causing a gag reflex. She then took the puppy between her hands and shook it. The puppy collapsed. The instructor and owner took the pup to a veterinary hospital, where it died."

Regrettably, this kind of abusive treatment abounds in popular books. Physical punishment can rarely be administered quickly enough to be associated by pups with misbehavior, or with proper consistency. Consequently the owner, who should appear to the pup as a model of consistency, is perceived by the pet as unpredictable. The owner's homecoming times produce ambivalent behavior as the pup vacillates between joy and hyper submissive "shamed" actions. Most clients are quick to appreciate that their puppy is responding to them, rather than to the fact that a pair of shoes has been chewed up in the bedroom. Interestingly, physical punishment often accompanies the onset of client complaints that their puppy will not come to them when called; understandable, when one considers that the pup has received punishment inconsistently from hands that also try to express tenderness through petting.

Puppies who learn that human hands and actions may be dependably

associated with pleasure rather than pain seldom exhibit hand-shyness, submissive urination or defensive aggression. Training systems that use social rewards produce more healthy and stable behavior than those employing punishment. This is especially true in pups with highly excitable or inhibitable nervous systems. Accentuating the positive and eliminating the negative in puppy training requires patience and self-control, but the benefits outweigh the heartbreak of vexing behavior problems.

The puppy owners will be better equipped to influence their pet's behavior if they understand the behavioral effects of health, nervous typology and consistency in handling. Therefore, the veterinarian who spends a few extra minutes to explain these factors will help to prevent early fear imprints and resultant behavior problems that often prompt owners to get rid of their pets.

## What Is "Humane" Dog Training?

Any procedure or training tool that causes a dog to yelp in pain, causes injury, or that mentally terrorizes a dog is unacceptable. "Humane" techniques are those that help a dog to learn something in a constructive, nonviolent way. Well-timed praise teaches the dog that a behavior should be repeated. Well-timed corrections for unwanted behavior teach the dog to avoid that behavior the next time.

Poorly timed corrections, no matter how mild, could be considered inhumane, or at least unfair. Scolding the dog hours after you find a chewed bed pillow is nothing more than random anger from the dog's point of view. He's getting yelled at for what? Sleeping there by the fireplace? Why is that bad? Should he stop sleeping?

Humane training does not destroy the trust that exists between the handler and the dog. On the other hand, an extremely harsh or brutal correction, no matter how well timed, can frighten or intimidate a dog. Although you may be successful in getting him to avoid unwanted behaviors, you will have lost his trust and confidence.

Don't be afraid to use corrections. Just be sure that when you make them they are appropriate to the dog. They should be strong enough to get the dog to stop a behavior but not to cause him to cower in fear.

## **Do Dogs Learn By Wanting To Please Their Owners?**

The fundamental aspect of most approaches in dog training is to appeal to this faculty: the desire to please, which is supposedly at the core of the domestic dog's character. All an owner needs to do is to gain his dog's respect and then his dog instinctively will want to please him.

There is no intellectual point to the dog's attraction to his owner that he should want to do something to please him. It is beyond the dog's comprehension. A dog can never aspire to please anyone because he can never have the faintest idea what anyone else might possibly require to be happy.

The simple truth is that a dog is attracted to his owner through his instincts. If the owner is highly positive to the dog's prey instinct, the dog will appear to be highly motivated to please, but it is really the drive to be in harmony through the prey instinct. By the same token, if the owner is abrasive, the dog seemingly won't want to please and will appear to be stubborn.

## **Appreciating The Experience Of Training Your Dog**

Most people think of basic obedience training for dogs as a series of commands that the dog, reluctantly, learns to execute. On one level, this is accurate. However, before we begin the mechanics of teaching specific commands, let us look for a moment beyond training as the dog learning a series of orders. Underneath it all, the very important lesson your dog is learning is that he must do what you tell him to, where you tell him to do it, when you tell him to do it, and as long as you say he should do it.

Many dogs are trained in the sense that they will respond mechanically to certain words but they have not gotten this all-important message. Without the message, training can resemble a series of tricks that the dog performs. With the message, the dog works. He knows more than just what position to assume with his physical form when he hears a command. He understands your position as alpha dog. He enjoys his role as educated dog. His appearance is intelligent and alert.

We train our dogs to that deeper level where they work with grace, where one command can flow into the next with ease and understanding. If you think education is expensive, you're right. It will cost you time. But the results will be worth it because you will have much more than an obedient dog.

## **Confidence: The Key To Successful Puppy Training**

Most of what a puppy learns about people, he absorbs from his owner. If the two are aligned along a harmonic pathway, the dog will learn confident and calm responses to his world that is critical to his character development.

What you need to overcome in raising and training your puppy isn't his natural instincts; it is the nervousness caused when these instincts can't find a harmonic expression. The reason owners run into so much trouble isn't that dog training is hard; it's that we spend so much time doing things that don't work. Dog training is easy, but fixing problems born from nervousness is very hard.

Training a dog is like building a fire. You must ignite the flame of confidence and nurture it with the dry kindling of little successes. Until the fire is blazing, too big a log can't be added, and neither can the flame be exposed to outside elements. Once the critical point is reached, any size chunk of wood can be handled and any gust of wind will serve to heighten its roar.

Encourage and gratify your puppy's instincts to help him develop confidence. To maintain the fire of self-confidence and calm learning, you must add a log to the fire. Training is an ongoing process, and intermittent reinforcements are needed over the course of your dog's life.

## **Do You Constantly Shout At Your Dog?**

You probably think that you could control your dog by shouting "No!" Then, you might find out that the day you really needed your dog to listen was the day he stopped listening.

The only time you should shout at your dog is when it is the only way to get his attention or stop him in his tracks when there is danger. If you constantly shout at your dog day in and day out, he has already learned not to listen to you.

For several weeks, stop talking to your dog altogether. Work him silently as much as possible. When you simply must speak, then whisper. Get your dog's attention back. Make him look at you to see what you want. This will make your dog attentive and ecstatic.

Always speak softly to your dog. If one day you should see him heading for danger, you can shout to save him. If he is about to run through an ongoing traffic, shout "No," "Wait," "Come!" In this case, do anything you can to save him and get him back.

## Showing Your Dog Who's The Boss

Before you begin training your dog, settle who is in charge of your "pack." Address that issue with leadership exercises so that the actual training can truly be as much fun as it is supposed to be. You may do a simple four-week leadership program that consists of the thirty-minute "Down" and the ten-minute "Sit," each done three times a week, on alternate days. Both can be practiced at any time of the day, so long as you keep an eye on your pet.

On the first week, sit your dog at your left side. Kneel next to him, both of you facing in the same direction. Drape your left arm across his shoulder and hold your hand, palm up, behind his left foreleg, just below the elbow. Place your right hand behind the right foreleg. Supporting your dog's forelegs on your palms, lift him into the begging position and lower him onto the ground with a "Down" command.

When you lift him into the begging position, keep your thumbs either up or folded in your palms so that you cannot accidentally apply pressure on his forelegs. Take your hands off him and keep still. Every time your dog gets up, put him back. After thirty minutes, give the release word "Ok," even if he has fallen asleep, to let him know the exercise is over. Practice this exercise three times during the training week, on alternate days.

Most dogs, after several attempts at getting up, resign themselves to remaining in position for the thirty minutes. Some, on the other hand, literally kick and scream almost the entire time. It is the latter who need this

exercise the most, and you will have to remain patient and calm. Increase the frequency of this exercise, and do it every day. If your dog is really bouncy, you may want to teach this exercise on a leash. Sit in a chair next to the dog and then sit on the leash so your hands are free to put him in position.

The purpose of this exercise is to teach your dog who is in charge and for your dog to accept you as pack leader. Your ability to physically place and keep your dog in the "Down" position is an absolutely necessary component of that purpose. Once your dog accepts you as leader, all further training will go smoothly.

On the second week, sit in a chair next to your dog as you practice the thirty-minute "Down". For the ten-minute "Sit," place him into a "Sit" as follows: With him standing at your left side, both of you facing in the same direction, place your right hand against his chest and your left hand on his shoulders. With your left hand, stroke down the entire length of the dog's back, over the tail all the way to the dog's knees. With equal pressure of the right hand and the left, fold him into a sit with the command "Sit." Take your hands off the dog and keep still.

Every time he moves, put him back. After ten minutes, use the release word "Ok" to let him know the exercise is over. Practice the thirty-minute "Down" and the ten-minute "Sit" three times each, on alternate days during the training week.

On week three, when you practice the thirty-minute "Down" and the ten-minute "Sit", sit across the room from him. Make sure you put him back if he should move.

On week four, move about the room while he remains in position, but do not leave the room.

After you have successfully completed this four-week exercise, your dog will understand that you are in charge.

## **Avoiding Stress In Training Your Puppy**

The main purpose in puppy training is to build a communication system between the two of you. You are teaching your dog how to learn. In contrast to the positive approach of puppy training, many obedience classes use a lot of leash jerking and a certain amount of punishment if the dog is not performing well. There is a fine line between the two attitudes and it is a vitally important difference.

With a young puppy, if you are forcing him to perform perfectly and punishing him even mildly if he does not, you may be asking for trouble later on. After a puppy is six to eight months old, he can usually begin to handle corrections and accept much more firmness in his training but not at three, four and five months of age.

Stress should not be a specific part of puppy training. That comes later when the pup is six to eight months old and ready for a more formal training. Of course, it is not possible or necessary to completely avoid stress because there is often a small amount in any of a puppy's activities. However, stress should be eliminated as a planned part of the actual training.

## **Understanding Your Puppy's Limitations (Part 1)**

To get your dog training on the right track, go slow with your puppy; allow him his puppy hood without rushing him through his training. Develop his prey instinct instead of repressing it so that you maximize its flexibility. With the flow of drive cooled by the prey instinct, limits that normally make dogs nervous can instead be converted into positive stimuli to work. On the other hand, if the prey instinct is violated, the puppy is filled with dread and a sense of alienation, giving a host of undesirable behaviors in his temperament.

The limit is inside the dog. You just need to let the prey instinct tiptoe up to the danger line, and then get in tune with whatever is in the dog's heart so that you can smoothly redirect his attention your way. It could be something

as gentle as a warm touch, or as active as a good game of ball.

You need to let your puppy be a puppy, but that doesn't mean that you are going to let him explore his limits on his own. If you take an overbearing approach to a puppy, you can violate his emotional limits. You have to decisively define the limits according to your standards, or the temperament will assign them according to instinctive standards.

A dog raised in a permissive household feels that danger is everywhere. You must be active in this regard so that learning isn't left to chance. The puppy must be carefully managed or indiscriminate emotional bruising will be the result. By encouraging the prey instinct under controlled circumstances, a limit can be assigned to your liking. Then, once the bounds are carefully secured, the pup is free not only to make prey within them but to be in harmony with his family as well.

The most obvious limitation in puppies is their short attention span. When confronted with resistance, he is unable to blend two different emotional values (strengths of attraction) together to come up with one focused response.

The simple prey instinct follows a simple rhythm in a natural way. Anything that is more complex, which is pretty much all of our training and domestic requirements will cause the dog to divert his attention so that he doesn't have a negative experience. Not until he sexually matures and can process stress into social behaviors will he be able to handle such a complex undertaking.

Therefore, it is important to recognize this limitation and not become upset with a puppy if he gives out when faced with a simple objective. The next time, make the problem easier. Problems in this regard reflect errors by the trainer, not learning deficiencies in the puppy.

Attention spans lengthen as instincts are strengthened through the flow of drive. Getting a puppy to perform a task is not as important as "hardening" his focus on a positive stimulation so that he learns to persevere. Success for the dog must be focused on gaining instinctive gratification rather than on avoiding a correction.

## Understanding Your Puppy's Limitations (Part 2)

An obvious limitation in puppies is that they tire easily, both emotionally and physically. Being young, the prey instinct isn't synchronized with the outside world; the puppy can't pace himself. He'll go at full tilt toward whatever is interesting him until he's exhausted. Conversely, he'll easily panic if something is upsetting him. When tired, a puppy will only learn to be nervous rather than how to do an exercise.

In addition, a puppy can't be expected to inhibit a natural impulse. Puppies just want to have fun through the drive to bite; that is what millions of years of instinctual development are telling them to do.

Another limitation in the puppy is that outside the scope of the simple prey instinct, he can't change direction or moods quickly. He gets into following the prey instinct along its natural path and can't get out of it until it reaches a natural conclusion or until he's exhausted. It would be like discovering an intriguing path in the forest and wanting to walk it to see where it leads. Puppies, like children, need time to explore, and we have to guide them gently through transitions of mood with an alternative attraction such as a piece of food, a happy tone of voice, or a ball. A puppy needs a good reason to change a mood.

Knowing and recognizing these limits is the sensitive aspect of being a dog owner. It should now be easier to see how a puppy could be overloaded and given a bad experience in a very subtle way. For example, you could be asking him to return the ball to you when he's tiring and you've thrown it once too often. This may seem a minor point, but to a puppy, bad experiences have a cumulative weight and their load never goes away. Recognize when your puppy has reached his limit so that an unreasonable demand isn't placed on his behavior.

Many believe that most of what a dog does is a random charting of the world through the experience of positive and negative reinforcements. Nothing could be further from the truth. The negative is most broadly defined when drive loses its focus or none is to be found; then the security of the order is itself shattered. All of a sudden, the dog is in the midst of chaos as surely as if a predator swooped into the den and was ravaging the litter. It is a shocking experience that he is not able to cope with and for which a flurry of subsequent positives can never compensate. Therefore, a correction is something that needs to be carefully administered at the appropriate time. It

should guide and enhance focus rather than be used as a means of inhibiting the individual.

## **The Relationship Between Stress And Training Your Dog**

When you train your dog, you cannot prevent him from experiencing some stress, but you can keep it in a level where he can still learn. All learning is stressful. You must recognize the signs of stress and when you should end the training. When your pet reaches the point where he is no longer able to learn, all of his actions will be the result of random, redirected, or displacement behaviors and will not be committed to memory. Even though he may respond to a command, his feeling of anxiety will be such that he will not retain what you are trying to teach him.

Of course there will be moments when your dog just does not get the message. It can happen at any time, especially when you are working with distractions. It seems like nothing you do works and you feel that you are not making any progress.

What do you do in this situation? You may think that if you stop, then your dog will think that he has won and will never work with you. This kind of thinking assumes that you and your dog are adversaries in some kind of a contest. If you approach dog training with this kind of attitude, you are doomed to failure; at best, you will have an unrewarding relationship with your pet.

Training is about teaching, not winning. You can walk away from a training session at any time, whether or not you think you have been successful. When you see that no further learning is taking place, end the session. If you do not and insist on forcing the issue, you will undermine your pet's trust in you and the relationship you are trying to build.

Let your dog rest for at least four hours and then try again. You will find that all of a sudden the light bulb seems to have gone on and your dog is more willing to learn. By having taken a break at that point, you are giving your dog the opportunity to get the point through time.

You must stop the training as soon as you find yourself becoming irritable or when your dog starts to show signs of severe stress. Any dog owner can

dominate his dog by means of physical and mental pressure, but only through building confidence by means of positive reinforcement can reliability and enjoyment of performance be achieved. Dogs must be able to trust and rely on their owners or they will begin to demonstrate unstable behaviors.

## **The Advantage Of Using Food In Dog Training**

For a puppy, feeding is like breathing. Filling a belly does more than merely nourish; it displaces the nervousness caused by the pangs of hunger. The warm glow that comes from a full tummy assures the puppy that he is securely connected to his group. Therefore, we shouldn't hesitate to use food in training.

Since eating is so basic with a puppy, it is easy to excite him with a treat. If in his rush to grab the food, he snaps at your hand very hard, do not correct the dog or get mad at him. Just take the time to calm him by giving him a steady flow of food so that he is reassured that he is going to get all the food he wants. As he becomes satiated, his drive to grab the food will start to subside and he'll be ready to learn how to take the food gently from your hand.

Food is very effective with adult dogs as well. It clearly indicates to the dog that he has an instinctive advantage in doing what his trainer wants. Also, food can be used to relax an adult dog's nervous system by washing away social resistance. Remember that although our pet seems domesticated, his instincts are still wild and need to be calmed.

To learn if your dog's drive is flowing in your direction, take him out for a walk on his lead. After he pulls and snorts around for a few moments, whistle to him to attract his attention. Give him some food when he comes. There aren't any commands involved; the dog is just learning how to be attracted to you while you are developing a group instinct.

Food serves to mobilize a dog's drive. It gets drive to the surface and relaxes a dog so he can act and learn more freely. It relaxes his sense of vulnerability and it gives him a simple focus as the first step in mastering a difficult exercise.

Once a dog starts to feed, his drive begins to flow and his enthusiasm starts to build. Little by little, as his self-confidence about being in drive and working with his owner is built up, the role of food becomes a minor aspect to his work. As the dog gains confidence about being in drive, the owner can use attractive body language and verbal praise to heighten the dog's sense of participation with his group. Ultimately, the drive flow becomes a reward unto itself, and many dogs lose interest in food in preference to the more exciting reward of being high in spirit and working with the group.

Every dog, as part of his wild nature, maintains a protective bubble around himself. It's that force that creates social and flight distances. Even very friendly dogs are sensitive to this field of resistance, which, when violated, makes them "vibrate" intensely, expressed in tail and rump wagging, nervous head motions, and grinning.

## **Using Rewards And Punishments In Puppy Training**

Puppies and dogs learn new things or change their behavior only if the undesirable behavior is punished or the desirable behavior rewarded. We can reward a dog for performing certain tasks on command, such as sitting, lying down, or coming, with simple petting, affection, and praise. You can also use rewards for coming when called, for sitting when strangers arrive at the door rather than jumping up on them, or for going to rest on his bed when people are visiting.

For rewards you can use reinforcement such as petting or verbal reassurance like saying "good dog." Another reward is food treats, if given judiciously, especially foods the puppy really enjoys such as a piece of meat. It is not our position that using food treats to train puppies "spoils" them, because the treat may simply be phased out by giving it less and less frequently, while retaining the praise and affection.

Most puppies learn rapidly and quite willingly if there are rewards, and in most cases punishment is not necessary. Praise and affection, along with food treats, can be used to house-train puppies, especially when they are taken outdoors and can eliminate in a desirable area.

Punishment can be thought of as being either interactive or remote. In interactive punishment, the owner hits an animal with his hand or with a

rolled-up newspaper, shouts at it, or in other ways makes it obvious that an aversive stimulus is coming from the person. The animal clearly associates the unpleasant stimulus with the person giving it.

Unfortunately, dog owners are frequently misguided about how to use interactive punishment.

Interactive punishment is indicated when owners must assert their dominance over dogs to maintain an acceptable dominant-subordinate relationship, especially when threatened. A dog's growling or snapping at you when it is not a reflection of fear is best met with force. Dogs are social animals that respond naturally to factors in a dominance hierarchy, and their growling or snapping at you is an indication that they have not completely accepted your dominant position. In fact, insufficient dominance, one of the most common behavioral problems of a dog-owner relationship, often stems from a lack of assertiveness on the owner's part.

Breeds differ in the degree to which they display a tendency to be dominant over their owners. The tendency to be dominant also varies with whether we are dealing with male or female dogs. A breed such as a Shetland Sheepdog, which is very low on tendency to be dominant, may never need to be confronted with interactive punishment, whereas a Doberman Pinscher or Akita may need periodic reinforcement of the dominance position with a sharp voice.

## Training With A Clicker

Clickers are a fun and fast way to speed up your puppy's learning process. Clicker training relies on behavior shaping principles that mark desired behavior.

To begin, get ten treats. Click and treat; before you are finished, your puppy will be happily alert to the sound. Now use the clicker for training and to encourage good habits.

1. House-training: When your puppy eliminates in the right area, say "get busy." Click the instant he finishes; then treat and praise warmly.

2. Jumping: When your puppy jumps, look away, Click, treat, and pet him after all four paws are on the ground.

3. Chewing: Anytime your dog is chewing an appropriate object, click, treat,

and praise.

You can iron out everyday frustrations with the clicker. Use it to encourage silence, to train him to ask to be let out, to create a positive association to kids, and more. Also use a clicker to teach basic commands such as the following:

1. "Sit" command: "Sit," luring your dog into position with a toy or treat if necessary. Click, reward, and praise.
2. "Down" command: "Down," luring your dog into position with a toy or treat. Click, reward, and praise.
3. "Come" command: Throughout the day, command "Come" when your dog's near you.

## 9 Common Terms Used In Dog Training

1. **Bait:** A treat used to get your dog to give you his attention.
2. **Collars:** A "puppy" collar is a buckle collar made from a wide piece of cotton or nylon fabric. A slip or chain "choke" collar is made from cotton, nylon or chain. The best chain collars are brass with very tight, small links.
3. **Cord or Long line:** A piece of cotton or nylon cord, very lightweight and small in diameter (in relation to the size of your puppy or dog) with a snap at one end and a handle at the other.
4. **Correction:** A physical or verbal restraint to the dog.
5. **Free:** Without restraint.
6. **Leash or Lead:** A leash is a six-foot leather line with a handle at one end and a snap at the other. It should be small enough in width to comfortably fit in your hand.
7. **Praise:** Positive physical or verbal reassurance to reward your dog.
8. **Reward:** An edible treat or tossable toy.
9. **Show leash or Show lead:** A lightweight lead. This type of leash comes

in different materials, fabrics and lengths. Some show leashes have built-in collars while some are to be attached to separate collars.

## Using Vocabulary That Your Puppy Can Understand

A dog or a puppy absolutely thrives on consistency. This is true all the way from finding and sticking to the right kibble to deciding what is and what isn't acceptable behavior. Consistency makes a pup very, very much happier and more secure than the bouncy kind of life many of us humans prefer.

Maybe you'll have to have periodic family councils to hammer out just what kinds of canine behavior are and are not acceptable to various members of the clan. By all means get it straight among the human members of the family; otherwise, if you are unpredictable and all pulling in different directions, the puppy will end up a confused mess, and it will be your fault. Once you have agreed on what goes, enforce the rules. "Oh, let her do it just this once," is a sure way to wreck the training program and confuse the pup.

Your puppy probably comes to you having either no vocabulary or a very limited one. Decide your words of command and make the whole family use only those words. It's not productive when people go chattering away, nagging and nagging their puppies with the vocabulary of human adults, then wondering why the poor, silly puppies don't seem to get the message. My husband Charles and I had a discussion some years back about the terms we used to encourage a puppy to eliminate outside. He was, I think understandably, somewhat put off at standing around telling a huge our Dane puppy to "Go potty." I find that term comfortable and easily understood by a pup. However, as I agreed with him then and still do, use any term that's easy to understand - which means short - and comfortable, as long as that's the terminology you always use for that particular behavior. With Tiger, whom we were house-breaking at the time, Charles got outstanding results by telling her first to "make a puddle," then telling her to "go poop." After all, those were the words she understood.

There is another all-purpose word that is used over the years with puppies: GENTLE. Drawn out and said slowly, the word sounds like the behavior we are encouraging. When a puppy is playing too roughly, for instance, a calming hand accompanied by the repetition of the "Gentle" command will serve to quiet the situation. The puppy isn't doing something essentially

wrong when you want the "Gentle" command - it's just doing too much or too vigorously. So, the curious puppy that is nosing a resident cat will be warned to be GENTLE. I want the puppy and the cat to get along - insist on it, in fact - so this is not a time for NO.

Obviously the older dog that knows "Gentle" will understand what it's doing wrong if it gets too rough with a puppy. The puppy who greets someone too rambunctiously is throttled down, as it were, with the "Gentle!" warning. If you think of the "NO" as a red light, "Gentle" is the amber, or warning, light. A very useful command, I've found.

## 10 Voice Commands That Are Commonly Used In Dog Obedience Training

The following is a list of 10 commonly used voice commands for dog obedience training:

1. **"Come"**: This command is used to bring the dog to the owner.
2. **"Down"**: This command is used to make the dog go to the ground lying face down.
3. **"Heel"**: This command is used to make the dog walk to the owner's left side. It is also used to make the dog go to heel position from the come-fore position.
4. **"No"**: This is used to let the dog know that he has done something wrong.
5. **"Sit"**: This command is used to make the dog sit down.
6. **"Stand"**: This is used to bring the dog up on all four feet.
7. **"Stay"**: This command is used to keep the dog in either the sitting or the standing position.
8. **"Fetch" or "Take it"**: This command is used to make the dog take an object from either off the ground or the hand.
9. **"Find it" or "Look for it"**: This is used to make the dog seek for an object that he recognizes only by smell such as tracking or seeking a lost

article.

10. **"Hup"**: This command is used to make the dog jump.

## For Better Dog Training Results: Understand Your Dog's Hearing Ability

A dog's keen sensitivity to low-volume sound is often troublesome. They can hear a faint sound at 75 feet, while most humans could only detect it at 17 feet. This indicates that a dog must learn to ignore myriad sounds that do not affect him, and accommodate to a veritable avalanche of sounds in a family household, such as television, radio, stereos, etc.

However, when this sensitivity is translated to phobic behavior relative to, say, thunderstorms, it indicates that dogs may hear the thunder of an approaching storm over 50 miles away, while the sky is still clear. If a dog has a history of becoming upset by thunder or other explosive sounds, he may become increasingly anxious as the storm nears, salivating, pacing, hiding, seeking comfort if the owner is home, or escaping.

This sensitivity may also explain why "desensitizing" techniques, such as playing recordings of thunder at low levels, rarely succeed. Audio speakers are not designed to produce volumes softer than humans can perceive. Also, storm activity is generally preceded by elements to which dogs and some other mammals appear to be sensitive. Merely producing low-volume thunder claps may not fulfill the total stimulus complex required to achieve desensitization.

But such programs are usually more successful with dogs than fear gunshots or other loud noises. However, even with storm phobias, if we can change their emotional interpretation of such stimuli by providing a behavioral example, rehabilitation is generally quite successful.

An important auditory/learning tendency in dogs is to quickly develop a motor movement response to a sound stimulus when the sound is accompanied by a visual signal. In other words, dogs tend to move their head, ears, eyes or other body part in response to sound accompanied by movement. This leads to some problems if owners are not aware of this mechanism, but it facilitates training for those who use it properly.

Two examples typify common problems. The first is the owner's tendency to

raise his hands while telling a jumping dog, "Down!" Raising the hands not only causes reflex movement upward, but also encourages the dog to continue jumping. The usual outcome of this sort of mis-teaching is an owner who resorts to punishment, such as kneeling the dog in the chest or pushing him down, and a fully confused dog.

Effective use of this learning tendency involves moving the hands abruptly down and/or toward the dog while saying "Down." Even more effective is to apply the movements without speaking, and to praise the dog's downward response. In this way the situation itself becomes the conditioned stimulus to stop or not start jumping.

The second problem occurs when owners try to teach their pet to "Come" as they lean or move toward the pet. Both movements visually instruct the pet to stay or retreat. Most owners end up approaching the pet and often punishing him, or giving up. A better method is to abruptly lean or move away or crouch down with one side of the body toward the dog and praise the first signs of approach by the dog.

This method facilitates initial learning, even in adult dogs that are resistant due to improper training. This type of initial training, in which the dog actively performs the proper motor responses, is much faster than those that force passive movements through physical manipulation by the hands or leashes.

## 6 Commonly Used Hand Signals In Dog Obedience Training

The following is a list of 6 hand signals that are commonly used in dog obedience training.

1. **"Come"**: A movement across the body from the side toward the opposite shoulder.
2. **"Down"**: Can be done in two ways. The first way is with the arm raised to shoulder height in a striking motion if the owner is facing the dog. The second way to carry out the "Down" signal is to with the left arm down with elbow straight, wrist bent, and palm and fingers parallel to the floor if the dog is at heel position.

3. **"Heel"**: A forward motion of the left hand parallel to the floor to make the dog start walking at heel. It is also a swinging motion of the left hand from in front of the owner to his side to make the dog go to heel.
4. **"Sit"**: While facing the dog with either hand extended and palm faced upward, flip up the fingers with a quick wrist motion.
5. **"Stay"**: Can be done by having the arm extended downward, palm back, and held momentarily in front of the dog's muzzle.
6. **"Stand – Stay"**: This is done by using the signal similar to "Stay."

## Let Your Dog Recognize His Boundaries

Unless you have a fenced yard, never leave your dog outdoors alone when you're not at home. But if you are home, it's reasonable to expect your trained dog to stay near the house no matter how temptingly a distraction may appeal to him from the outside. Begin by letting him know what his boundaries are. Take a mason's twine made from cotton so that over a period of time it will rot away and he will have that duration to generalize the lesson to the area defined. Allow a zone around the house of about 100 to 200 feet. Lay the twine out around the house at nose height, about six inches off the ground.

It is very important for the dog to not associate his owner with the shock he's going to receive when he violates the boundary. Also, only shock the dog when he is high in drive toward a powerful distraction, such as another dog going by, a jogger, or cars.

Take your dog out on a short lead and walk him around the boundaries. Let him go up to the line and smell it. If necessary, smear parts of it with bacon grease to attract his attention to it. When he investigates, get close to him and praise and touch him so that he gets excited, and then run with him toward the house. Once there, give him a treat or a ball game, depending on what he likes to do the most. Repeat this in a number of places around the entire perimeter so he is aware of the boundary and his association of the boundary with his owner is a pleasant one. There are absolutely no shocks to be made in this phase.

Next, put the dog on a long lead and pinch collar and prearrange for a helper to hold a sociable dog on the outer side of the boundary. Let your dog go full bore to make contact; right before he gets to the white string, give the dog a strong jolt, then run away. When your dog catches up give him a play session. Meanwhile, your helper has run up to you with the distracting dog. Now within the boundary, the dog gets to make contact and play with this dog. On following days repeat this exercise at other points around the boundary so that he generalizes the lesson to the overall perimeter.

After several weeks, let the dog outdoors while you stay indoors watching him. Once again your helper jogs by, preferably with another dog if possible, and if your dog tries to leave, storm outside and say "Down." But if the dog shows restraint, step outside, praise, and then have the helper come into the boundary so the dogs can play. As they're playing, pick up your dog's long lead and have the helper start to lead his dog back outside the boundary. If your dog bumps into or goes over the string, shock him and run back toward the house. Again praise and let him play. Repeat the exercise until he shows restraint on his own.

The final step is to watch the dog carefully when a jogger or another dog goes by when your dog is outside on his long lead. If he starts to show an interest to chasing the distraction, step outside and yell "Down." However, by now the dog should display a calm focus without any drive activity, in which case, step outside and play with him. Then when the dog is outside, and eventually when he's progressed to being off lead, step out and play with him every five minutes. Gradually lengthen this to ten minutes, twenty minutes, and so on to expand his threshold. Review the first phases every two months on the long lead.

## Words That Your Dog Should Know

Many dog owners are at a loss for words when they wish to communicate with their dogs. Of course, your choice of words is not the issue. What is important is that you pace your vocabulary lessons in such a way that your dog absorbs the first few definitions before you go on to the text. And, since dogs are learning English as his second language, you must be very consistent in your teaching. In fact, in time, your dog, once started on the road to a better, richer vocabulary, will understand long sentences and life-saving orders.

Listed below is a sample of words to use on your dog. With these words, any

dog can live in harmony with his human family, more or less.

**No** (Permission denied). This is probably the first word a puppy hears, or at least that registers as a word. It is important for every dog to know a word that stops him from urinating on the carpet, hogging the bed, running out into traffic, nabbing that piece of chicken, and chewing on the sofa or your shoe. "No" is that magic word.

**Ok** (Permission granted). In order to have a balanced, happy, obedient pet, approval is just as important as disapproval. You can give your pet permission to do something he'd do anyway, just to show him it's ok with you. This reinforces your position as the leader. It also increases the amount of positive reinforcement in your dog's life. You can use this release word to let him out of work, out of the house, into the car, at his dinner, and onto your bed. Dogs learn "Ok" instantly.

**Good Dog** (Approval from the top). By saying "Good Dog" in the proper tone, you dog will give you everything. Saying "Good Dog" is the most important tool any owner has in training his pet.

**Bad Dog** (Disapproval from the top). "Bad Dog," from the right lips, can be more powerful and more effective than any leash correction, any shaking, any cold shoulder, any confining, any anything you would think of doing to your disobedient dog. He must have your approval. When you deny him that, you have already made a serious correction. No puppy grows to adulthood without hearing his share of "Bad Dogs."

**Sit** (Plant your rump). Even an untrained dog should know "Sit" and "Stay." How else can you have any order or control? Your dog must sit while you wait at the vet, while getting his collar put on, while waiting for his bowl to be filled or the traffic light to change, and while being groomed.

**Come** (Join me). The "Come" command is a crucial word in every dog's vocabulary. You need to be able to teach your dog to come quickly, cheerfully and willingly when he is off leash, out of doors, and playing with his friends.

**Off** (Get off). The command "Off" is the proper word to say when you find your pet eating a greasy bone on your brand new white couch or shedding in your bed. It's also good for correcting jumping or any other situation in which the dog's big, hairy paws are on something they should be "Off."

**Stay** (Freeze). Actually, the "Sit, Stay" is the way to teach vocabulary to a dog. It is through this initial discipline, which can be done very gently and

without a choke collar on a very young puppy, that the dog learns how to listen and then how to learn.

What you request in the "Sit, Stay" is clear and comprehensible to the dog. Therefore, in the initial teaching of the command, he can absorb the concepts of both words. He will, for example, try to move from the spot. When you return him to it, he gets the "Stay" part. Now he'll lie down, figuring if he's going to be stuck in the spot, he might as well get comfortable. When he is returned to the "Sit" position by you (gently and with patience), he learns the exact definition of the word "Sit."

Your dog therefore learns two vocabulary words that stand for two separate concepts. In addition, he learns how to learn. You will readily see the difference in the intelligent look on his face. Furthermore, the "Stay" command, once added to your dog's vocabulary, not only covers a multitude of situations, but it is the beginning of teaching your dog long sentences and important concepts. It is a great aid in keeping the dog from harm.

**Heel** (Walk at my side). "Heel" is a great command for a dog to know for two reasons. First, sometime he must leave home to see the vet, go visiting, or go to the boarding kennel. Second, he needs to be out. He should see the world beyond your yard, for his pleasure and to keep him from getting scared of new things, of strangers, of other dogs. He needs variety in order to be well socialized.

Many dogs who are raised in an ideal country setting, who are fed well, who are groomed and loved and cared for, get weird when they are outside their house. A well-balanced dog must be able to leave his own turf and be able to feel comfortable wherever he goes. Therefore, he should learn to "Heel" so that you can take him places neatly, easily, and frequently.

**Down** (Lie down). This command, if enforced rapidly, can be a life saver. It can calm a dog. It can cover hours of waiting anywhere with your dog. It can also give you peace and quiet while you read a book, make dinner, or talking on the phone.

**Stand** (Stand). Whether it's in the tub, in conformation or obedience competition, under the grooming brush, or to negate the automatic sit on a rainy day, "Stand" is a neat word to have in your dog's vocabulary.

**Go** (Move away or move away in the direction in which I am pointing or accompany me somewhere). The command "Go" is a good word to teach dogs. Often, you can point and look forbidding and say "Go" and your dog will have learned it, just like that.

**Enough** (Whatever you are doing was Ok, but I've just changed my mind and now I want you to stop it, as opposed to "No," which means whatever you are doing is unacceptable and should never be done). The command "Enough" is taught mainly, believe it or not, by tone of voice. It is usually learned rapidly and can stop excessive barking, a game of roughhousing that has gotten out of hand, or any activity that is usually ok but cannot, for whatever reason, continue at this point. It can calm a dog instantly. It can give you the full attention of a dog who was, up until a moment ago, acting up or acting out.

**Out.** This word can mean as in "Do you want to go out?" It is also used for getting the dog to give up what he has retrieved. In addition, "Go Out" by itself means leave this room and go to any other place in the house.

**Biscuit or Cookie** (Dog biscuit). The two words offer the fun of anticipating a treat. Therefore, when you say "Do you want a cookie?" he gets more than a dog biscuit. He gets to salivate a little imagining a dog biscuit.

**Speak** (Bark). This word should be taught verbally and then as a hand signal.

**Take It** (Take this in your mouth). As long as you are going to play with your dog, to toss a ball for him to bring back or to encourage him to carry small packages or help pick up his toys, you might as well add the phrase for that skill to his vocabulary. "Take It" is commonly used as a fetch or pick up command. Young puppies love to chase a toy or a ball and sometimes bring it back. If you keep retrieving fun for the dog, and if you name this activity, you have a nice game plus the option of tightening play retrieving into reliable retrieving on command later on.

**Wait.** Some dog owners do not like to use the command "Stay" except in the formal sense, the freeze on command. When letting the dog know he is not going on an excursion or not getting out of the car just then, they say "Wait" instead of "Stay." This can also communicate something important to the dog who is off-leash trained. It would make more sense to say "Wait" as your dog bounds toward the comer or toward the exit of the park than to say "Stay" which would be asking him to freeze in mid-leap. "Wait" tells him not to cross the street, leave the park, rush out the door, until you tell him to. But it allows him to be at ease while waiting. It's worth teaching.

## Why Is My Dog's Personality Important To Consider When Dog Training?

When training a dog, it is imperative to determine which combination of personality traits the dog possesses. This is important for a number of reasons. First, it will give you an indication of how your dog will respond to training. Second, it will let you develop and employ the proper attitude and demeanor while carrying out exercises. Third, this knowledge will help you determine what training equipment will enhance your success.

For example, when teaching the dog to lie down and stay (called the "down-stay"), you will get different reactions from dogs with different personalities. A dominant dog will resist this exercise because lying down is a dog's most submissive body posture. A submissive dog will do this exercise much more readily. (This creature spends much of his time on his back in the submissive down position anyway.) The extrovert will want to break the down-stay to greet every person who enters the room. The shy dog may also want to break the down-stay when someone enters the room - to go hide under the end table.

When the dog does break the down-stay, you may be able to correct the pain-sensitive dog physically with only one shake on the scruff of the neck. This will convince him not to break the stay. You may have to repeat this correction several times to convince the pain-insensitive dog that he must not move. If this dog doesn't deem a shake on the scruff of the neck disagreeable, you may have to employ a correction that is perhaps a bite on the muzzle or a jerk-and-release on the training collar.

During obedience training, your dog's personality should also dictate your demeanor and body posture. A firm, even-toned "NHAA" may convince your submissive dog to abort movement and remain in the down-stay. You may be able to deliver this "NHAA" while sitting in your easy chair and still get a good response from the dog. On the other hand, you may have to remain standing, hovering over your dominant dog while growling a harsh, threatening "NHAA" to convince this animal of what you want. Your voice alone may not do the trick and you may have to accompany your "NHAA" with the noise of a shake can.

And lastly, the personality of the dog you are training should determine the training equipment you choose. For example, when teaching controlled walking you may find that an extremely pain sensitive and submissive dog will respond to the exercise in order to avoid jerks on a buckle collar. A dog

who is moderately pain sensitive but has tendencies toward being dominant may require the jerk and release of a metal training collar to achieve the same results. A highly pain-insensitive dog may require a pinch collar before he will respond to the controlled walking exercise.

## **The Importance Of Having Faith In Your Dog**

We do not need to develop the virtue of patience for its own sake. There is nothing to be gained by being patient with a dog who is obviously headed in the wrong direction.

On the other hand, when the dog owner is guided by knowledge and understanding, it is so easy to be patient that he can't even call it a virtue. The dog owner only has to see that his dog's drive is flowing; with such evidence plainly before him, he is confident of his inevitable success in training his pet.

Therefore, the real virtue in dog training is not patience, but faith. It is faith in your dog, a perfect animal that is genetically programmed to be in harmony with you. No matter how botched up his training may have been until now, you are confident that you can fix it. That is the message that dogs bring to us.

## **Do Dogs Learn By Trial And Error?**

The belief that dogs learn by trial and error presumes they have a mental ability to link elements together through their experiences that gives logic to their behavior. Dogs are presumed to explore one way to approach a situation and then record the consequence as to whether they were successful or not.

Then it is assumed that in a similar situation they can recall their experience and opt for a different approach if they're looking for a higher dividend. This theory presupposes that dogs, like humans, have the ability to deduce and make choices and that they can project into the future to predict a possible outcome based on a previous experience.

Dogs perceive through their prey instinct. A dog can only respond to stimuli that are of relevance to this instinct. Therefore, problem solving for him has to do with ascertaining whether something is pertinent to this means of perceiving and experiencing. This basic information is what dogs are after when they smell.

There is so much in man's world that dogs have to deal with that is not at all straightforward in terms of the prey instinct. Trying to come to terms emotionally with these and tie them together into a unified order is the main scope of the dog's learning process in our world. The stronger the attraction, the more direct the dog's response is going to be, and the more relevant his response to the problem in question.

When we see a dog trying several different approaches before taking a successful one or giving up altogether, it isn't that he's practicing. In his first impressions of a situation, he perceives several variables that aren't connected, and this dilutes his ability to solve the problem. If the drive gets high enough, the variables merge into one coherent entity, an order, and a reflex relevant to the prey instinct will become available to him so that he can persist.

By contrast, a dog that fails is exhibiting low drive in that moment, not being able to perceive an avenue of access. Instead of having one problem to solve, he has many problems to deal with; the variables never get tied together into one order. He tries, and then he stops, and then starts over again without making any real progress because he's faced with a new problem on each attempt. Each time his emotional reserves are drained lower.

The dog is being informed through his nervous system whether he's on the right track or not. He reacts based on that immediate sensation and his actions are very often effective simply because he's responding to the way nature is organized, his instinctive reflexes mirroring this same organization. On the other hand, if the situation is completely foreign and irrelevant to the prey instinct, no amount of practice will allow the dog to benefit from his experiences.

## **Dogs Do Not Learn By Observation And Imitation**

Your dog's emotions are primarily activated by his senses, particularly vision, as that sense best serves the active reflexes of the prey instinct, such as chasing, striking, biting, and fighting. When dog A is watching dog B, dog B influences what dog A is going to learn only through the effect of energizing him. By moving animatedly, dog B is exuding his "preylike" essence, thereby arousing the observing dog into a similar mood of drive.

The more frenzied the first dog acts, the more excited the second one will grow. Emotional energy is being directly transmitted from one to the other; nothing of a mental nature is being communicated. Since all dogs carry the primal prey instinct as the basic software for their behavior, both dogs once put into the same emotional state of drive are likely to end up acting with roughly the same reflexes.

It may appear that the observing dog noted the first dog's behavior and then imitated him, but that is not what happened. If high drive is being transmitted, high drive will be received, and the two dogs will act in unison within the prey instinct. The same goes for medium and low drive as well. Therefore, the two dogs inevitably will operate on parallel wavelengths even though neither of them is aware of the other's point of view.

This is not in any way a cognitive capability; it is simply a "mirror effect" of the prey instinct that causes synchronization within the group. There will, however, remain variations between the two dogs' behavior based on temperamental differences, which allows for specialization if they have to work as a group.

Another example frequently cited to demonstrate learning by observation or imitation are those occasions when a young dog seemingly learns to bark at strangers by watching an older dog. In such cases, the knock on the door unnerves the older dog, and his actions of barking or growling similarly unnerve the younger dog so that they are now both in the same mood.

Defensive responses to stress are again part of the universal software of the prey instinct and so here, too, the younger dog appears to be learning by observation and imitation, when in fact, he is merely conforming to the master code operating within his temperament. He has not learned from the older dog's experience; he has simply learned from his own experience.

## How To Earn Your Dog's Trust

Let's say your dog chases another dog across the road. When he finally returns, you are angry and soundly scold him for chasing the other dog and giving you such a scare. But here is how your dog looks at this situation. First, he chased the dog, which was a lot of fun. Then he came back to you and was reprimanded, which was no fun at all.

What you wanted to teach your dog was not to chase. What you actually taught was that coming to you can be unpleasant.

The lesson here is that whether you are pleased or angry, your dog associates these feelings only with what he did last.

One of the commands you will need to teach your dog is to come when called. To be successful, remember this principle: Whenever your dog comes to you, be nice. Reward the dog for coming to you. No matter what, be pleasant and greet him with a kind word, a pat on the head and a smile. Teach him to trust you by making him feel safe with you.

### **Does A Dog Learn Through Many Repetitions Of A Training Activity?**

At a quick glance, it seems that a dog takes many repetitions to grasp a lesson. According to "dogma", a dog has to practice a behavior many times until the lesson seeps into his limited mind. Then, once a lesson is mastered, it becomes so ingrained in the dog's brain that it becomes a habit. That dogs require repetition to learn from an experience is particularly noticeable when we are trying to train the dog to do something that isn't natural for him, such as walking nicely on a lead in an area full of interesting sights, sounds, and smells. It would seem that this exercise is difficult for a dog to learn and would require many practice sessions for it to become a reliable habit.

Therefore, traditional thinking holds that it's best to start practicing the lesson with puppies before they might have the opportunity to practice the undesirable habit of pulling hard on the lead and also while they're small and easy to out-muscle.

A clue that repetition, while part of learning, isn't fundamental to learning is revealed by other observations that people commonly make that contradict this traditional premise. For example, we don't think of ball playing as something mastered through repetition. It looks like the dog is having fun, and that seems a sufficient explanation. The first time the owner attracted his dog's attention to the ball and rolled it away, the dog immediately chased it, grabbed it, and then carried it around proudly. The lesson took one

repetition and had a permanent effect for the rest of the dog's life.

This pure example of learning shows us the formula at the core of the process. If an activity is natural, the dog gets it immediately without the need for repetition. And, since the most natural activities involve the prey instinct, we find the best examples of quick learning in this regard. In ball playing, what determines each individual dog's enthusiasm and rate of progress is how much prey value he invests in the ball. That some dogs may take longer to build an attraction to the ball is not due to a need for repetition, but because the prey instinct isn't yet turned on. Through repetition, as the dog grabs the ball, his sensitivity to its novelty or his owner's influence starts to relax until drive starts to flow into prey making. Once uninhibited, the ball no longer has a being to which the dog needs to appeal for access, which initially thwarted his drive to chase and bite it.

A habit is like a riverbed: The stronger the flow that courses through it, the deeper the bed is carved, and the more water it will be able to channel. When the full current rushes through the organism, a completely mature behavior emerges as if learned. In truth, the lesson was gained in the first instant of making contact through the prey instinct, no matter how feeble the first trickle. It just took time for the pathway to be scoured deeply enough in the dog's brain and body to handle the full load of drive.

## Essential Puppy Training

"Stay" needs considerable practice when training your puppy. You can teach him to stay either seated or lying down. By repeated practice, say "Stay," walking away, and acting shocked if he rises and follows. Take him back and go through it again. Always, of course, return to praise him mightily when he has "stayed" for even a few brief seconds. Gradually lengthen the time. You can perfect this obedience command while moving about at housework or in a cellar workshop; it needn't take too much time after the idea has been implanted.

Your dog should also learn to walk on a leash without pulling; the command "Heel" is often used here. As with "Stay," practice makes perfect. He should also be taught some signal to use when he wants to go out. The appropriate bark for speak means he will let you know, if you do not see him at the door, that he needs to go out. He should learn not to jump on people, and having him "Sit" as a new friend approaches will control his enthusiasm. He also should not bark and dash forward at anyone, even a suspected interloper,

until given a command. He should not be allowed on furniture, unless you permit him on one special chair; he also should not beg for food at the table, although here it is often the family that must be trained, not the dog!

You should see that he is not allowed to wander the neighborhood, making a nuisance of himself, and that he never runs loose in the street. The dog should not go off your premises without being on a leash. Everything you teach him to do or not to do will help at some time, If the leash breaks or he gets outdoors without a collar, obeying your call may save his life. An owner of obedience-trained spaniels once failed to close her house door when she went to cross the street to her car.

Looking back, she saw to her horror two eager little fellows loping down the front steps - and an automobile coming down the street. She called "Down!" raising her arm in the obedience-taught gesture. Instantly, the little things dropped flat, and the car whizzed past between them and their mistress. Not till she called "Come!" did they rise and trot happily to her. Obedience training won't "make a robot" of your dog. It certainly will make a better citizen of him - and who knows? - of you. That's all we could ask, isn't it?

## **The Most Important Command Every Dog Should Know**

"Come" is a command every puppy needs respect. Here again, control is essential. When you say "Come," the puppy must have no alternative. Consistency in your conditioning is imperative, for once the puppy realizes he does not have to come, your troubles begin! The come is taught using a puppy collar and a twenty-five-foot line.

1. When you first put your puppy out in the yard on his line, the very first time, allow him to explore until he seems to be getting tired.

2. At that point, kneel and say "Come" and give the line a small, sharp tug. The tug will turn the puppy toward you. He may then:

a) Come - If he does this, really love, cuddle and praise him. Pick him up and carry him into the house and give him a tiny tidbit.

B) Turn and sit - If he does this, continue to give gentle little tugs, along with lots of verbal encouragement, until he gets to you. Then praise as if he had come on his own.

b) Buck and holler at the end of the line - If he does this, sit quietly until he quits (sometimes it takes a while). Then give another "Come" and tug the line again. Repeat - even if it takes fifty waits, fifty "comes," and fifty tugs. When he reaches you, love him and praise him as if he had come on the first call, on his own.

c) Sulk, roll over on his back, wrap his feet around the line and say, "No way, Jose!" - If he does this, stay calm, wait until he freezes in some position, then repeat "come," and give a tug on the line. If he repeats his previous actions, repeat yours. When he finally comes to you, reward him and praise him as if he had come the first time. As you pick your puppy up and carry him into the house, you may tell him anything as long as your voice is happy - you have won - no matter how long it has taken you!

Always remember, the only way you can lose a come battle is to lose your temper. Once you do that the puppy has won because you have given him something to react to. He will know he has upset you and that little piece of information will get stored in his memory bank. So, stay cool!

3. Take the puppy on a twenty-minute walk. Let him go to the end of the line and sniff and snuffle to his heart's content.

4. Four times during that walk - when he is on the end of the line - say "Come" and snap the line toward you and run away from the puppy. When he "catches" up with you, get down to his level and love him, praise him and reward him!

6. Try to take another walk, later on in the day, in a different area and repeat the four calls.

If you use these exercises on the come daily, both at home and on walks, the puppy will grow up knowing that "come" means a problem for him when he remains where he is and does not come, and that safety and praise are his when he does come. Later on, when he is truly free to choose, if you have been consistent, he will choose you.

## **Basic Puppy Etiquette: Continuing Mother's Training**

The term "etiquette" refers to an acceptable mode of social behavior. Unlike commands, which are executed only on order, manners color behavior at all times. Unless you and your dog still live in a cave, he will need some manners. Naturally, your pup's mother began this phase of his education, teaching him to play gently, to wait his turn, to hold still for his bath, to greet her with deference, to stay close to home, etc.

Now you will continue her good work, housebreaking your pup, helping him to accept your absences, teaching him to walk on a leash, respect your privacy, behave like a gentleman - not a wild animal. Two aspects of your dog's nature make it possible for you to teach him manners and train him to obey commands. First, he is a pack animal. His pack instincts allow him to respect and revere a strong, clear leader. In fact, his mother gave him a wonderful model for how an alpha dog should conduct herself - with supreme confidence, with courage, with fairness, with intelligence, with final authority, with affection.

The second aspect of your dog's nature that makes him a near perfect pet is that he is a den animal with an instinct to keep his sleeping quarters clean. It is this instinct that will allow you to rapidly housebreak your pup. And housebreaking is the natural place to begin his lessons in etiquette.

## **What You Need To Know In Training Your Puppy (Part 1)**

Whatever your pup's pedigree and whatever your goals for him, any puppy is still an emotionally immature animal. At the same time, no two pups are exactly alike and what works for one puppy is not necessarily best for another. You must constantly be aware of your pup's personality and of how you can get him to pay attention to you. However, there are some general characteristics of puppy training that are important to working with all puppies. These are basic principles which should be adapted by you as the basis of working with your puppy.

**Do not get tough:** Emotionally and psychologically, the puppy is still extremely sensitive. This means that learning takes place quickly, but also that fears can easily occur and inhibit learning. Pups cannot take pressure or harsh treatment. Repetition is the key to puppy training. Never punish him if he does not do what you want him to do. This will defeat the purpose of the training and cause him to dislike the entire procedure. Bad behavior during training sessions is more often than not a sign of the pup's lack of confidence or understanding of what you want him to do. Therefore, many repetitions will be needed.

**Keep it simple:** A puppy learns to do things in a step-by-step manner. For example, in teaching him to stay, do not expect him to stay put for several minutes at a time while you are off someplace away from him. You must first teach him to stay while you stand toe-to-toe in front of him, then to stay when you are standing a couple of feet out in front of him, then to stay while you walk around him, then to stay while you are standing several feet away and not holding on to the leash. Many pups will take several weeks to progress through these steps, but they are necessary if you want to teach "Stay" effectively. If you tell him to do something before you have properly trained him to do it and then scold him for not doing it, you are asking for trouble. The pup will lose his confidence and will learn not to try.

**Be brief:** Puppies have a very short attention span. A pup learns only while he is paying attention to you, so it does not accomplish anything to keep on training when he is mentally tired even though physically he is still very lively. Five minutes at a time is long enough. With many puppies, two minutes is long enough to begin with, gradually moving up to five minutes.

**Build confidence:** Your puppy needs confidence-building as well as discipline and he will constantly be telling you by his body language which one he needs more at any particular time. Relax while you are with him; smile; speak in a pleasant voice; play running games with him. In puppy training, building confidence means knowing what you expect from your pup.

## What You Need To Know In Training Your Puppy (Part 2)

It is important for your puppy to feel he is a valuable individual. Try to have your training sessions in a relatively quiet place. Because he is so playful, he can be easily distracted by other people and activities. If he is constantly

being bombarded by other sights and sounds, it will be difficult for him to get the message from you that you enjoy being with him.

**Use words:** The only way he will learn to associate the command with the action is if you use the word every time you guide him into doing what you want. A puppy can learn a very large vocabulary with such words as "Outdoors," "Bedtime," "Go for a walk," as well as the basic commands.

**Reward your pup:** To teach him anything, you must first have his attention and then you must reward him as soon as he has done what you ask. The reward can take three forms; a tidbit, a pat, or your voice. Consider the use of tidbits a highly successful means of puppy training. By guiding his behavior with it, you can avoid pushing and pulling with your hands and all of the jerking and pulling on the leash.

A puppy learns much more quickly when he performs the activity himself rather than being pushed or pulled into doing it. Then, as he begins to understand what you mean by "Sit" or "Come" or whatever, you can use your hand or leash to perfect the performance, thereby keeping handling at a minimum. Timing is of the utmost importance when using tidbits in puppy training. Obviously, your puppy is not going to know what you mean by the different commands when you first begin to train him, and the only way he will learn that he is doing the right thing is when he receives the reward at the moment he does it.

An example in using tidbits is to teach the command "Sit." If you have a puppy who prefers bouncing around and absolutely hates sitting, you may have to begin by rewarding a bending of the hind legs. If you were to wait until he sits all the way down with his bottom on the floor, you would never get the job done. After a few rewards for partial sitting, the puppy will suddenly sit all the way, at which time you will not only reward him but tell him how marvelous he is.

Another example of rewarding with tidbits is with the heeling exercise. This is the most difficult thing for most puppies to learn. Too often, it involves excessive jerking on the leash. The more a puppy is being pulled, the more he resists and pulls in the opposite direction. Their natural tendency is to run off and sniff around. Cheese tidbits is very effective in overcoming the problems of teaching a puppy to walk beside us. It works even better off-leash (but only for a minute at a time).

As you begin walking, the instant the puppy begins to look away from you, get his attention with your voice and give him a tidbit. This will keep him at

your side for another few steps. Repeat this a few times during each session, reversing your direction and taking some turns. Then stop while you are both still performing well and give him lots of praise with your voice along with some pats.

## What You Need To Know In Training Your Puppy (Part 3)

After the pup has a good idea of what you want him to do, begin to ease off using tidbits every time. Do not let yourself use tidbits as a bribe. It is very easy to fall into the trap of thinking that if you give a puppy a treat he will be good. But from the dog's viewpoint, it looks like you are treating him as top dog and whatever he wants to do is okay with you. So only use tidbits when you are teaching a specific thing and only long enough to be sure he has learned it and associates the act with the word for it. Then ease off to the point of stopping the use.

**Do not expect overnight results:** Puppies learn in spurts and starts. One day he may know absolutely everything and perform to perfection. The next day it is as though he never had a moment's training. Too many owners make the mistake of thinking that if their puppy does it right once or twice he knows it forever, but it really takes hundreds of repetitions for a puppy to learn something.

A puppy or a dog needs at least one month of consistent daily repetition before any action becomes a part of his routine. Train the pup consistently for one month, then continue for one month longer than you think is necessary. Then you can expect him to know what you are talking about, but you must continue daily use of the commands, using an occasional reminder when the pup is having an "off" day.

**Be consistent:** There is a wide range of individual approaches to working with a puppy. Each person will be guiding his own puppy to live in harmony with the lifestyle of that particular home. Similar to raising children, there are many different learning environments that can, each one, be successful. The key to success is to be consistent in your demands and your discipline.

**Puppies need feedback:** A puppy learns by getting feedback from his owner. Praise him so he will know when he has done something right. Otherwise he will never learn what it is you want him to do. Then he will get

confused because you keep nagging him and hollering at him and he does not know why. He will turn into a hyperactive nervous wreck. So let him know when he has done a good job.

**Hands off:** Keep your hands off the puppy as much as possible except to pat in praise. It may be necessary once in a while to manipulate him with your hands, but this should be the exception. It is easy to get into the habit of constantly grabbing, pushing and pulling. A puppy is not learning unless he is actually doing the action himself. This is why it is so important to guide him into doing what you want. The actions (sit, heel, come) that he repeats under his own power quickly become a part of his conditioning and he will begin to repeat them willingly.

If you take all the previous points into consideration, you are automatically teaching your puppy to pay attention. By adhering to his physical and psychological needs, you will find that he will respond to you and you will be well on your way to building a good puppy-person relationship.

## Puppy Training Tips Every Dog Owner Must Know

There are six standard commands: Heel, Come, Sit, Stand, Stay, and Down. With a new puppy, it does not matter too much where you begin. The important thing is to practice any old time everyday and never to be in any hurry to go to the next lesson. You do not set the pace for learning, you puppy does.

Training sessions should last only two to five minutes, which is approximately the length of your pup's attention span. If you push him longer than that, he will stop paying attention to you. This is FUN stuff! (You may also need to repeat that ten times to remind yourself occasionally.) End every session with a near-perfect performance. That could be one two-second sit, or three little "heeling" steps next to you. Tell him how "perfect" it was. Lay it on him! Really let him know how pleased you are he got it right.

Do not start a training session immediately after the pup has eaten because he'll be sleepy and those treat rewards won't be as enticing. However, you can practice at any odd time throughout the day, even if it is a three-second "stay." Your pup will love the attention.

Motivation for a puppy to do anything at all lies first in his desire to please you. Realistically, treats run a close second. Dog biscuits do not make good training treats because they take too long to chew. Tiny bits of plain cheese are the perfect taste-treat. A thin slice of hot dog will perk up the interest of almost any dog that's not concentrating.

Rewards come in three forms: treats, pats and verbal praise. To grade your "student's" qualification for a reward, consider a treat the equivalent of an "A," a pat a "B," and verbal praise a "C." Any two together equal an A+, so be very careful not to go overboard or you'll run out of appropriate compensation and the pup will quit.

Verbal praise has a range from ecstatic (for the first few correct responses from a very young pup) to a calm "good dog" as Sparky grows up and becomes more expert. Don't overuse cheese or hot dog treats when practicing. As each word command is fully learned, gradually cut back on the treats and substitute "good dog" or just a big smile.

What you say to a puppy and how you say it can determine how quickly he learns. All conversation is perceived by the dog as meaningless sound. Try this: In the midst of some long-winded chit-chat, say his name emphatically and watch him take notice. When using the one-word training commands, remember that lesson. His name gives you his attention; one word tells him what to do. It is "Sparky, SIT" - loud and clear. Never, "Sparky, Sit. Sit. Sit. "Sparky, you're not listening - I said Sit. SIT, Sparky! "That is called nagging, and Sparky will tune you out. The puppy is not being disobedient or stubborn. He's just confused - totally! And avoid sounding like a drill sergeant! Smile, speak clearly and let the dog do the barking!

## **Dog Training: Timing Is Essential**

Good timing is critical to success. When we wait and then react to a dog's behavior, we are always going to be behind the eight ball. On the other hand, influencing a dog's emotional process before he acts is an incredibly efficient manner in which to train him. When timing is correct nervousness is inhibited and drive is reinforced.

Also, since we're affecting the internal emotional process, the dog in effect "chooses" to be calm rather than being forced to be under control. A dog so

trained will be mannerly or mindful of domestic restraints even when his handler isn't near.

The key to proper timing is not quickness, although that is a valuable asset. Rather, the key is anticipation. The handler should always be thinking ahead and anticipating what the dog might do next. It is a skill easily acquired if one becomes disciplined enough to pay constant attention to the dog. Without good timing, training degenerates into a question of strength.

By being relentlessly focused on the dog, the handler will start to sense the dog's rhythm of actions and be able to anticipate what the dog is about to do. Then, before the dog acts, the handler can already be in gear taking steps to predetermine what the dog will do next. The dog will be choosing to obey; however, since we're controlling his instinctive emotional process, there won't really be any choice involved.

For example, if you are training a dog to heel you should watch his head very closely. When you sense he is about to shift his attention away from you then make a shock on the collar and begin to praise the dog at the same time. Additionally, pick up your pace, and to complete the process, throw a ball for him to chase or give him a food treat.

In this sequence of events, I'm not correcting the dog for being disobedient, I'm shocking the nervousness that I feel is about to influence the dog's behavior and disrupt his focus on me. The praise, food, and the ball then serve to convert the shock to a stimulation. Since I'm the source of the excitement, the dog's calm focus on me from which he was about to stray is renewed and reinforced.

I like to emphasize the point about timing with the following analogy. Suppose you were a therapist assigned to help a heavy drinker recover from alcoholism. When would be the best time to influence this person's pattern of behavior - before, or after he decided to gulp down a drink? The very same question is before the dog trainer: Is it best to react to a dog's behavior or is it better to take the initiative and ensure that the dog always performs appropriately? Why wait for a negative behavior to express itself?

## Understanding Proper Discipline When It Comes To Dog Training

The dictionary defines discipline in several ways. I favor the following: "Discipline is a branch of knowledge or of teaching." I interpret this to mean that when an individual is motivated, he becomes self-disciplined by virtue of what he learns. It is an internal phenomenon. A musician isn't controlled by the conductor; his passion for music is channeled and orchestrated. The musician controls himself, as does an artist or a football player or anyone dedicated to his field.

In martial arts training, if the student doesn't display the correct attitude in his training the sensei ignores him. When the student shows spirit and dedication the sensei will seek to shape him in the discipline of the art. Whatever the art form, discipline is more the responsibility of the teacher to know his subject, and to be able to teach, than it is something to be imposed on the student.

This subtle aspect of discipline is even more true in dog training because, unlike with a human student, the motivation behind the dog's desire to learn is wholly dependent on the trainer. To motivate a dog, we need to know how he perceives, how he feels, and how he learns; it is the dog owner who requires discipline so as to inhibit the impulse to lash out in anger or to be discouraged by failure or immobilized by guilt. A problem must always be approached from the dog's point of view. When we ask, "How much discipline does my dog or puppy need?" remember that the question is moot. Discipline isn't like a vitamin that needs to be dosed out periodically.

Dogs are disciplined by their instincts and they don't need more. There is, however, a lesser definition of discipline that has some value in dog training. To quote the dictionary, "Discipline is a systematic method to obtain obedience. A state of order based upon submission to rules and authority. Punishment intended to correct or train." While we are about to explain that there are times where this more limited view is necessary, we wish to reaffirm that the higher definition should be foremost in our minds and at the foundation of your training program.

Being an avid dog owner and trainer, there are those times when I will correct an extremely nervous dog - ideally with the lead and collar and in a training context - in such a way that he associates the correction with me. By

acting confrontational, I can calm such a dog. My specific purpose is to have the dog attribute the shock to me so that his nervous system is dampened. It is quite analogous to grasping a tuning fork to quell its vibrations. Once dampened, and depending on the dog's temperament, I will immediately try to put the dog back on the path of pure drive and happy motivation.

But what must be reemphasized is that most dogs considered hyper are only that way because they have been trained through confrontation and denial. Or their prey instinct has been allowed to find gratification at its own level, away from the owner. Whenever domination is required, we should immediately redirect the dog into a positive, instinctive pathway for success.

## Quick Dog Discipline

When you catch your dog behaving badly, you have to discipline him immediately. Below are tips on how to properly do it.

1. Don't react to the evidence. Control yourself. Don't say anything. If the dog is in the room and you enter, avert your glance from the evidence as soon as you notice it. Even if the dog is already running away, don't say anything.
2. Go and get the dog. He may shiver, shake or freak out as you approach. Sometimes sidestepping toward the dog helps. Approach quietly. Don't say anything. Grab him by the collar and bring him to the evidence, quietly but firmly. Sit him in front of the accident. Don't say anything.
3. Keep some upward tension on the collar to keep the dog in the "Sit" position. Focus his eyes on the accident. Do not put his nose in front of it, but do firmly orient the dog's head down toward the elimination. Don't yell or whine. Keep your voice flat and deep. Focus the dog for just two to three seconds on the mess.
4. After letting the dog raise his head, give a strong tap under the chin or a firm shake under the neck, continue scolding and taking the dog's collar, march the dog to the appropriate place for elimination. Do not pick the dog up to take him to this area.
5. If you have to put him in the back yard, take him out and then leave. If you have to take the dog down an elevator and onto the street, do it as fast as possible and give him a slight scolding without nagging as you exit. If you

are taking him to a paper, say, "This is where you go!" in a low, firm voice, and leave him there. You will find that you only have to stay two or three minutes in the area you have escorted him to. The dog will be so shook up that he will probably not eliminate (he just went in the wrong place) but you have to make the connection for him as to where he is supposed to go.

6. Make the transition from inappropriate area to appropriate area as swift and smooth as possible. Obviously, it is helpful if the distance to be covered is short.

7. When you return, isolate the dog for at least fifteen minutes and clean up after him. Don't let the dog see you clean up. He shouldn't be able to because he will be isolated. The only exception is if you are paper training and the dog misses the paper by a wide margin. You then have to discipline, take him to the paper, and then turn and clean up. Even in this instance, try to turn your back to him and make the clean-up swift.

8. After thirty minutes, let the dog have some freedom and be friendly to him, but not overbearing. Don't try to make up your guilt over disciplining your dog by coddling him at this point. You did what was proper and what his own mother would have done if confronted with such a situation. The correction has been made and the episode is over. This should be your attitude. Any extremes of overbearing or continued nagging will just confuse your dog.

## **How A Simple Set Of Keys Can Be The Best Tool In Dog Training**

A simple set of keys can help you deepen your relationship with your dog and alleviate many forms of problem behavior. Dogs with recall problems, a tendency for chewing, digging, or other destructive antics, or appetite problems can be successfully "keyed in" by a simple form of sound conditioning. You will need four or five keys on a key chain. Every second key should be brass, while the others should be made of another metal, preferably not aluminum. Brass and steel make higher-pitched sounds, and four or five keys sound better to dogs than ten or twenty.

The basic idea behind this sound conditioning is to precede desired behavior with a distinctive sound. Keys are used here since they provide a strong, high-pitched sound that is irresistible to the dog once it is properly

conditioned. Hand clapping, whistling, and cooing are in another realm, obviously proceeding from a person. To these specifically human sounds, a dog may or may not respond, depending on the current state of the relationship between the dog and the person making the sound. Keys or whistles are neutral, and therefore more effective. However, most trainers find the most effective sound device to be the keys on a chain.

### **How does it work?**

Let's take an example. Your dog doesn't come when called. If you have a puppy or a dog under two years old, your chances for effective sound conditioning to correct the "come problem" are better than with an older dog who is used to going the other way when called. Yet, it is never too late to try this training technique. For the utmost success, you must have regular feeding times for your dog twice daily, and he must finish eating in about fifteen to twenty minutes. If you have your dog on the "nibbler plan" you will have to switch to regular feeding times and remove the food if it is not finished promptly.

Before placing the dish within his reach and allowing him to eat, get your dog's attention and jingle the keys for two or three seconds. Then go about your business as he eats. Do not make a show out of this, and preferably do not allow your dog to see you jingle the keys. You may attach the keys to your belt loop with a snap belt. Repeat this procedure at the second meal, continuing it for two or three weeks. Do not use the keys around your dog for any other purpose until you have spent some time in this conditioning procedure whenever your dog eats. Another positive booster and "reinforcing effect" can be gained by using the keys whenever you return from work, from an errand, or in your car - stop the motor, open the door (both distinctive sounds in themselves), jingle the keys, and call out the dog's name in a happy voice that carries.

After two or three weeks, begin a daily session in which you call your dog, jingle the keys, and praise him lavishly when the recall is good. Make sure you are crouching down, have a smile on your face, have your arms open to "funnel" the dog in to you, and are not over-jingling your keys. The whole point, obviously, is to let the dog hear the sound of the keys - the conditioning sound - so that he reacts positively, on his own. Let the dog win. Then reverse the procedure by jingling first and then calling your dog's name. Finally, try it with the keys alone and you will be amazed at how quickly he will eagerly come to you.

## 3 Types Of Leads

For proper training with leads, you will need three kinds. One is six foot long and is for training the dog in close on his obedience work. Many prefer a light but high quality leather lead for its comfort and also because it won't get twisted. Nevertheless, the features of the lead are irrelevant to the dog and his ability to learn. Also, you will need a variety of long leads for when you work the dog at a distance. You may like to use a fifty-foot nylon lead as it isn't going to rot when exposed to harsh elements. Finally, a tab lead is, as it suggests, a short length of rope or leather just long enough to dangle over the collar and be easy to grab. The dog can run freely with this lead without being able to trip himself.

## Leash - A Great Training Tool

The leash is a great tool for distance training. It allows freedom to explore while still leaving you in complete control. As a training tool, you can use it informally during walks to reinforce the following commands:

**Name:** Call out your puppy's name enthusiastically: If he looks at you, praise him. If he ignores you, gently snap the leash, say "No," and then praise him once you have his attention.

**Wait:** Begin to command your puppy to stop 3 feet in front of you with this command. If your dog continues forward, gently snap the leash and say "No, Wait." Increase your distance to 6 feet, 8 feet, 12 feet, 16 feet, and 26 feet in front of you.

**Sit-Stay:** Use the Flexi-Lead to increase your distance control. Increase your distance incrementally.

**Heel:** Use this command to call your puppy back to your side. Call out his name and then command "Heel" as you slap your leg. Praise your puppy as he responds; then walk a short distance before you stop to release him.

**No:** Whenever he is focusing on something he should not be, gently snap the leash and say "No!" Immediately refocus his attention with a toy, stick, or command.

## What To Do During Your Puppy's First Month Home

In order to properly train your puppy, you need to know what to do and the right time to do it. Below is a list of curriculum to guide you during the first month of acquiring your pet.

**Week One:** During your puppy's first week home (he should be around 8 weeks old), it is important to take him for a vet check up. Sample of his stool is checked for worms and preventive inoculations are given. Begin teaching your puppy his name from day one. Set up his eating area as well as his crate or sleeping quarters. Begin the process of housebreaking as well as collar and leash training. Watch him while he plays by himself and observe his style and personality. Play gently and enthusiastically but avoid roughhousing. Say "Ok" whenever you feed him, hand him a toy or a treat, and as you walk out the door with him.

**Week Two:** As you play with your puppy, gradually add simple phrases and words into the games. If he is retrieving, say "Take it" as you throw the object. Praise him when he brings the object back to you. Say "Out" as he drops it and praise him again. Continue with "Ok" during meal, for going out, with playing, housebreaking, leash training, and observing.

**Week Three:** During your puppy's third week home, begin to correct him gently for nipping and for chewing on shoes, cords, and furniture. Provide a toy for him to chew instead. Even if he stays inside the house, be sure to walk him around on his leash everyday. Always use eye contact. Say "Watch me" to draw his attention to your eyes. Praise him for looking at you. This method teaches him to look to you for direction. Begin to tie his leash to your belt and have him trail around wherever you go; starting for a few minutes at a time, working up to an hour as it becomes easier. This will help him bond to you and will also help with his training.

Start teaching table manners, beginning with "No" and "Ok" for food. Initiate the "Sit" and "Stay", working for no more than five minutes at a time this week. If you are at home most of the time, make sure that you leave him alone for short periods of time during the day to get him used to being alone. Begin to correct the stealing of food and found objects - keeping in mind that prevention is your best correction. Correct excessive barking, noise, and whining.

**Week Four:** Carry on with all of the above training, adding more time that

he walks properly on leash. Continue practicing "No" and "Ok" with food no more than twice per week. Continue to let him explore the house under supervision, both on and off the leash. Initiate the "Come" and "Down stay" to the training program. Work with your puppy no more than fifteen minutes at a time. If he is going out, you may start teaching him to "Heel" but do it very gently. Get him used to grooming procedures such as brushing, nail clipping, and occasional baths.

### **Teach Your Dog To Overcome Shyness**

Shyness is becoming a common problem among dogs. Much of this comes from poor breeding practices and from lack of proper socialization. Many dogs are bred despite problems of shyness and many puppies of shy or sound breeding are not properly exposed to other people and experiences when they are young. Some dogs are also kept in the kennel for too long. If a puppy never gets the chance to overcome fear of change when he is young, he will grow up shy and fearful.

You can help your dog overcome shyness by gradually exposing him to new people and places. Praise him for holding his ground in new situations. Training is also very important. By making your shy dog heel, you prevent him from hiding behind you or trying to run away every time someone comes running down your street.

Eventually, you should have unfamiliar people handle him. The easiest way to do this is to have him on a "Sit-Stay" position. Avoid petting and soothing words when he is shaking, tucking his tail, and trying to escape. To your pet, petting and soothing will be understood as praise for his shyness and you will actually be training him to be more shy. Instead, praise him for acting bold, for staying when you make noise, and for getting into new situations.

## **How Much And How Often Should You Train Your Dog?**

Positive dog training can happen any time, all the time. You don't need to get your dog ready in special training equipment. Your pet is usually ready whenever you are. It is recommended that you train in several 5 to 15-minute sessions, for a total of 30 to 45 minutes per day.

This is easier than it sounds. Every time you interact with your dog, you have a great opportunity to train him. By incorporating your practice

sessions into your dog's daily routine, he learns that responding to your behavior cues earns him rewards, it's not just something he does when you have a leash in your hand.

Practice the "Wait" exercise a few times whenever he goes outside or comes back in. Do some "Stay" practice during walks. Reinforce "No Jumping" when you come home from work. Before you know it, you will have easily exceeded your three to six sessions per day.

In any single training session, pick one or two exercises to concentrate on. Start with something that he is good at to get him tuned in to you. There's nothing like success and rewards to get him excited about training. Then introduce something new or more challenging. At first, do enough repetitions so that he has an opportunity to figure out what you are asking him to do.

If he doesn't seem to be getting it, you may need to do more shaping, by breaking the behavior down into smaller pieces and rewarding him more often for small bits of the desired goal behavior. For instance, if he won't lie down, you may need to click and reward him at first just for looking toward the floor as you move your lure toward the ground.

Keep marking and rewarding as he goes lower and lower, until he is all the way down. If he quits playing the game with you, go back to the point where he was doing well and proceed more slowly, giving more clicks and rewards for smaller pieces of the goal behavior. If you sense that either or both of you are getting frustrated, it's time for a break. End the training session on a positive note by giving him a treat or playing his favorite game.

Once he gets the hang of it, you can make the future practice sessions for that particular behavior shorter to prevent him from getting bored. How long you train a particular behavior will depend on your dog's personality and level of training. Some dogs will quit after three or four repetitions while other dogs have longer endurance.

Get to know your dog. If he gets bored after five reps, stop at three, while he is still fresh and enthusiastic. As long as you keep the training interesting for him, you will be able to gradually build up his stamina and attention span. Some dogs will happily repeat a behavior dozens of times because they are looking forward to earning the reward that goes with it. If you encourage this attitude, just performing the behavior itself can become the reward, because it has been so consistently associated with fun and play and other good stuff. When your dog understands and performs the behavior on cue reliably in different environments, then you no longer have to practice that behavior as often.

## Developing Your Leadership Through Eye Contact

Every wolf pack has a leader, also referred to as the alpha figure. This wolf, sometimes a male, sometimes a female, controls many aspects of pack life, including, to a degree, defecation and urination rights and spots. Dogs, of course, are directly descended from wolves and now live in human packs. Problems arise when an individual dog, either through his genetic makeup or improper training by his owner, comes to think of himself as the leader of the pack.

If your dog thinks that he is the leader, you are in trouble. How can you know? Usually if you have behavior problems with your dog, you are not considered the leader no matter how you think you are viewed by your pet.

One way to establish your leadership or "Alphahood" is to simply get your dog's eye. You might think that your dog looks at you quite frequently, but take a moment to think about the terms. They are usually the dog's. Does your dog look at you but only when he feels like it? That's not eye contact. That is the dog looking at you because he wants something. You can establish eye contact on your terms by formalizing the look-at-me process.

Take your dog, on leash, and have him "Sit." Hold a little upward tension on the lead and bend down and touch your dog's muzzle and immediately bring your hand up to your eyes. At the same time, make a clicking sound and say something like, "Laddy, look up here at me right now."

Don't just say the dog's name or "Laddy, look." It won't be enough to get the dog to lock eyes with you. What you're aiming for is about three to four seconds of solid eye contact when the dog looks up at you with an attitude of "your wish is my command." Make sure that after you touch his muzzle and then your eyes that you straighten up right away so that the dog truly looks up at you and not you down at the dog.

Once you have the lock, end the moment with some light verbal (not physical) praise such as, "Good boy. Laddy!" Then turn and go about your business. Do not worry about leaving the dog sitting there wondering, "What was that all about?"

Your dog will soon realize that what it is about is "look at me when I ask you to look, watch me, get out of your own world and into mine." This is a wonderful foundation for any puppy or older dog (especially if house-soiling is a problem) because the eye contact starts to overflow into his regular, daily life so that he looks at you from across a room. Then you can catch your dog's eye more readily to direct him to not do something.

## **3 Basic Tips For Better Handling Of Your Dog**

Dog Training has been taught by many different schools of thought. Teaching your dog new tricks and handling obedience training takes both dedication and patience. It also takes a sense of skill and personal awareness of not only your dog's actions, but your own body language and training practices as well. Below are two tips that any dog trainer can utilize when handling their pets:

1. Signals should be given to your dogs with one hand and arm only. In the earliest stages you may exaggerate the signals to gain the dog's attention, but in the final analysis all signals must be given smoothly and swiftly without any excess body motion. The size of your dog is not a factor here, for you can train any dog to pay attention, and if he is paying attention to you he will see your signals.

The people who would disagree with this theory are those who have yet to learn how to make their dogs pay attention to them. You will have to watch yourself very carefully to avoid giving unintentional body signals to your dog. It is natural for a beginner to nod his head, lean forward, or move his hands when he calls his dog. He is so intent in watching his dog that he is unaware of his own actions. Have someone watch you so he can tell you when he notices you doing this.

2. Be consistent - never scold a dog for a misdemeanor one day and praise him the next for the same act. You cannot expect your dog to understand an exercise if you keep changing your training methods each time you try it. Dogs learn the basic work by repetition, and the entire training program should proceed smoothly and consistently. For instance, the techniques that you will use in puppy training will be repeated in advanced exercises when your dog gets older, and your handling will be just the same.

3. You should study your dog so you can foresee his reaction to any situation. You should become attuned to your dog's sensitivities. If you have a gentle, quiet dog, do not antagonize him by rough treatment. He will become very alert and responsive if you train him in a calm and gentle manner with consideration for his feelings. Aggressive or overly playful dogs need a more forceful approach.

## How Confident Is Your Puppy?

There is a simple way to find out how confident your puppy is. Keep in mind, however, to not perform this test if the puppy is from eight to eleven weeks of age, as this is the "fear imprint stage." During this period, sudden noises or unexpected, scary events can have a profound, lasting effect on him.

Wait until the puppy is not paying attention to you. Then, without him seeing you, drop an object down on the floor. It should be something that will make a fairly loud, sudden noise, perhaps a steel pan or container of some sort. Do not throw it down too close to him. Observe his reaction:

A favorable response would have the puppy showing some caution at first, but quickly recovering and then showing some curiosity toward the object. This puppy is confident, well-adjusted, and does not show irrational fear.

An unfavorable reaction would have the puppy howling and bolting in fear, heading for the farthest corner of the room, perhaps even urinating or defecating. This puppy lacks confidence, and could end up being fearful of unexpected situations or persons. A puppy that reacts in this way could become fear-aggressive.

## How Sociable Is Your Puppy?

Do you want to find out how sociable and outgoing your puppy is? Then try this little experiment:

Put a few toys down in the room. Quickly walk away from your puppy and then observe his reaction:

\*A favorable response would be the puppy running happily after you,

regardless of what else might be occurring. This shows that the puppy highly desires the company of people, a trait that is advantageous. This puppy should be easy to train and should learn to focus well on you instead of distractions.

\*An unfavorable response would have the puppy ignoring you and investigating something else, perhaps a toy on the floor or a sound coming from another room. This puppy may not value interaction with humans over his own desire to investigate his surroundings.

He may not be as easy to train as the puppy that values human interaction above all else. A puppy that ignores you in this way may have an unfocused or independent mindset that could be a prelude to dominant behavior.

## **Do Not Rush Your Puppy's Socialization Process**

The big buzz word these days is "socialization". Many owners are in a hurry to socialize their puppy. Nowadays, owners go through great lengths trying to socialize their puppies by placing them in every possible situation, such as walking them down every busy street, taking them to street fairs, meeting lots of different people, and meeting different dogs. Yes, a puppy becomes more confident when properly socialized in the city, but it must be done slowly and in small increments. Some situations are just too stimulating and challenging for a puppy.

There is no need to walk your puppy down the busiest downtown streets if you can't control her from jumping and pulling toward people on side streets. By working on side streets first, you can more easily move to the challenges of busier streets. It's also not wise to go rushing young puppies - under four months of age - to the park to meet other dogs. A young puppy will merely be in the way as big and more assertive dogs try to play together. There may be a more suitable area in the park where other puppy owners gather together.

The best place to start the socialization process is in your home and on your own block. Your puppy will have adequate opportunities to meet strangers when guests visit you or when meeting the neighbors on your block. As you may have heard before, the best place to socialize your puppy is by enrolling her in a puppy kindergarten class.

## Socializing Your New Dog

Below are some helpful tips on how to socialize your new dog with existing pets in the household, with your friends, and with other people's animals.

**Socializing with Existing Pets:** Make an initial contact with other dogs outside the home. If you can, take your existing pet (or pets) for a walk and have a friend meet you somewhere with your new dog. Take a long walk so the dogs can get used to each other. Switch dogs on your walk.

Take all the dogs back to the house. Switch dogs and have a tour of your home, with all dogs still leashed. Let your existing house dogs loose, but keep the new dog tied to you. If the new dog tries to mark the house anywhere, correct him with a sharp jerk and a stern "No!" If any of the existing dogs try to mark, correct them in the same manner. Explain to all, in no uncertain terms, that marking will not be tolerated. In addition, when you feed the dogs be sure to feed the established pets first and stay near the new dog while he eats.

Most established pets, if already well socialized, will enjoy a newcomer as long as the newcomer is friendly and is introduced in the manner described above. If you find you have brought in a troublemaker, you must remain the Alpha dog. If you are not willing to assume that responsibility, take the dog back.

**Socializing with Your Friends:** While puppies always generate warm feelings, adult dogs do not. It is especially important that they make a good impression on your friends and neighbors from the start, especially if you already have other pets. Set rules for your new dog immediately.

No jumping on friends; keep your dog leashed the entire time friends are at home gatherings for the first few weeks to make sure your dog does not try to jump on them. No barking when the doorbell rings; no running out the door when you open it for guests; make him sit at your side and ask the guests to ignore him until everyone is in and he has a chance to evaluate the new people. Let him approach them for petting if he is calm; if not, wait until you have established the control you need so as not to make a spectacle of yourself and the dog.

When he can accept guests, make sure he does so with all four feet on the

ground. It is easy for a dog to try to explore with his paw as well as his nose. If you are firm and consistent from the first guest on, you not only will eliminate obnoxious behavior but will instill acceptable behavior. The end result: Your friends will welcome his addition to your family.

**Socializing with Other People's Animals:** The same logic applies here as with your other animals, so use the same type of rules. Take long walks on which you know you will meet friends doing the same with their animals. Contain and restrain your dog from barking at other animals as they approach. If necessary make him sit at your side.

Always allow thorough sniffing from both animals, as this is their way of saying hi. If at all possible, invite friends and their animals back to your home and allow the dogs to play by themselves. This solves many problems the everyday pet owner may not think about and he will find the dog much more relaxed and easier to handle.

## Learn Your Puppy's Temperament When It Comes To Walking On The Street

Walking your dog on the street may seem like a nice stroll for you, but if your puppy is not used to it – life can be very stressful for the little guy. Knowing your puppy's temperament will help you prepare for his reaction to different noises and situations on the street. Here's how some of the different temperaments react on the street:

1. A hyper puppy is going to focus quickly on different distractions but not for long periods of time. Use a strong motivator to your advantage to keep him at your side.
2. An aggressive or bold puppy is very focused and usually moves straight ahead when walking. You want to be careful with a strong-headed and confident puppy - such pups can get territorial and possessive. You need to be aware of this type of possessive behavior developing. You can curb this behavior by placing him in a sit or down position at safety zones on the street when another puppy or dog approaches.
3. A happy-go-lucky puppy is happy to be at your side, and he will tend to pull from side to side. You need to anticipate his quick move of wanting to pull or jump up on people as a greeting.

4. A shy puppy may feel less sure of himself and will hold back if something frightens him. Be sensitive if he seems frightened. Place him in a safety zone to reassure him. This will give you distance between you and the distraction.

You don't want your puppy to have a negative experience from any new environment. By working in a positive manner with his temperament, he will respond more calmly and with self confidence to new environments.

Also be aware of your puppy's body language. It can get him in trouble with other dogs without you or your puppy knowing why. For example, if your puppy walks with a puffed-out chest, he may convey a cockiness that will receive a growl or a snap by another dog who sees your puppy as a threat to his territory. Or if your puppy is stalking low to the ground, you may think, "Gee, isn't this cute," but if your puppy approaches a territorial dog in this manner, the dog may read your stalking puppy as a challenge to his territory and snap at him. If this is your pup's nature, then it is even more important to move him aside to a safety zone, place him in the Sit position, and wait for the other dog to pass.

## **Respect Other Pedestrians When Walking Your Dog In The Street For The First Time**

Your puppy will be curious with every new person that comes across his path. The natural instinct of most puppies is to pull you toward a person to say "hello." Don't make the mistake as a puppy owner by assuming every person on the street will be just as excited about your puppy as you are. Not every person is a dog lover. Many people don't like dogs and some people have serious allergies to dogs. Other people may think your puppy is adorable, but may be in a hurry and not have time to greet your puppy.

Respect the space of others. Why let your puppy get away with something that most parents wouldn't allow their toddlers to do? Make it a rule never to let your puppy pull toward strangers. By letting your puppy pull towards people, you are setting a pattern for your puppy to pull you along to greet any person. You're teaching your puppy that he can control you.

If someone is interested in saying "hello" to your pup, then place your pup in a sit to keep him from jumping up. Move out of the traffic flow so

pedestrians don't have to maneuver around you. It's also a good idea to watch for senior citizens on the street. Many don't appreciate a puppy taking a sudden jump on them. If you see a person approaching with a cane or a walker, particularly on a narrow street, be considerate and move to a safety zone area and let the person pass. If you are passing from behind, slow your puppy and give direction to the person ahead on which side you intend to pass. Use a calm voice to warn them if you are passing on their left or on their right, and tell your puppy "On by" as you pass.

Pedestrian traffic will be coming towards you on your left side, so always give your puppy less of a lead when people are approaching. I have often seen pedestrians get their legs tied up in a puppy's long lead. When approaching a group of people on the street, don't try to negotiate your way through them. You are better off moving to a far side of the sidewalk, or into an alcove of a storefront and waiting for the group to pass. Eventually, after many walks with your dog – he will become accustomed to your routine and avoid confusion when out in the public.

## Stress Of Meeting New Dogs

Most owners think it's cute when their dog pulls them along to reach another dog. An owner will often say, "My dog just wants to say hello." But they don't realize they are creating a stressful situation for the other dog. From my own personal experience, my dog Indy does not like other dogs pulling on their leash or racing up to her to get in close to sniff her. In the dog world, this is viewed as aggressive behavior - not respecting one's space. When this happens, simply give a polite "Good day" greeting to the owner and quickly move on.

Some puppies cower or pull away when a strange dog approaches. If your dog begins to cower, use leash control to your advantage. A cowering puppy is showing submission. Move her away from the strange dog by stating the "Back" command. As you walk backwards, you open up more space between you and the other dog. This will make your puppy feel more safe and give her a chance to regain her confidence.

Never hold a puppy in your arms when a dog moves in an aggressive manner toward her. By holding her in your arms, your puppy becomes an accessible stationary target. Tell the owner how you feel about this aggressive dog. It may be the dog's nature to be aggressive, but it isn't right for a city environment. I believe owners need to be told when their dogs are

too aggressive. If they hear it enough times, maybe they'll right the situation by taking their dog in for training and spare other pups from being frightened.

## **6 Steps To Introducing A New Puppy To Your Other Pets**

Introducing a puppy to the existing pets in a household is accomplished positively if the established house-pet is acknowledged before the puppy is acknowledged.

1. Before bringing puppy home, feed your established pet a partial meal.
2. When you bring the puppy home, bring your pet outside to greet the puppy. If you have a particularly dominant-type pet, arrange this meeting a block or so from your home.
3. Walk the pet with the puppy (however well you can get the puppy to walk!) and let the existing pet sniff the puppy all he wants. Stay outside for forty-five minutes to an hour.
4. Take the pet and puppy into the house and just walk around the house for ten to fifteen minutes, letting everyone get adjusted to a new body in the house.
5. Feed the established pet another partial meal and let puppy watch.
6. Feed the established pet again, and this time put a bowl down for puppy. If the other pet comes to the puppy's bowl, tell him "No." Whenever you feed your animals, feed the older ones first, but make them respect the puppy's bowl.

## **Canine Behavior Testing: Staying Calm During Everyday Distractions**

Reaction to distraction testing requires a demonstration of the dog's confidence when faced with distracting situations, which can be any two of the following, usually one auditory and one visual:

1. A person using crutches, a wheelchair or a walker.
2. Sudden closing or opening of a door.
3. Dropping a large book, no closer than ten feet, behind the dog.
4. A jogger running in front of the dog.
5. Good-natured pushing and shoving or animated excited talk and backslapping by persons, with the dog and handler passing within ten feet.
6. A person pushing a cart approaching from the front or rear, passing within ten feet.
7. A person on a bicycle approaching from the front or rear, passing about six feet to the side of the dog.
8. Knocking over a chair, no closer than six feet from the dog.

## **The Canine Good Citizen: 5 Dog-Distraction Tests**

One of the main goals of the Canine Good Citizen test is to demonstrate that the handler is in control of the dog under conditions likely to be encountered on an almost daily basis, such as people and dogs engaged in a variety of activities. You will have to demonstrate that your pet responds to the basic commands of Sit and Heel in real-life settings. These conditions are distractions, and five of the ten tests for the Canine Good Citizen involve the dog's reaction to a distraction.

**1. Accepting a friendly stranger** - requires the dog to allow a stranger to approach the dog's owner. The evaluator walks up to the dog and owner and greets the owner in a friendly manner, ignoring the dog. They shake hands and exchange pleasantries, during which the dog must show no sign of resentment or shyness, and must not break position to try to go to the evaluator.

**2. Sitting politely/or petting** - demonstrates that the dog will allow the approach of a stranger and permit petting. With the dog sitting at the owner's left side throughout the test, the evaluator approaches and pets the dog on the head and body only. The dog must not show shyness or resentment, and the evaluator then circles the dog and owner.

**3. Appearance and grooming** - requires that the dog can be groomed and examined by a stranger, such as a veterinarian. The evaluator does an examination to determine if the dog is clean and groomed. The dog must appear to be in healthy condition, including the proper weight.

This particular test demonstrates the owner's care, concern and responsibility for the dog. The evaluator then easily combs or brushes the dog to illustrate the dog's willingness to be groomed and permit someone other than the owner to do so. In a natural and light manner, the evaluator also examines the ears and gently picks up each front foot. For some reason, many dogs have difficulty with this exercise, and you may have to spend a little extra time getting him used to having his feet handled.

**4. Walking through a crowd** - requires the dog and owner to walk around and close to several persons-at least three, one of whom may have a dog demonstrating that the dog is conditioned to behave at all times and is under control in public places. The dog may show some interest in the strangers but should continue to walk with the owner without evidence of exuberance, shyness or resentment. The dog should not be straining at the leash.

**5. Reaction to another dog** - requires a demonstration of proper behavior in the presence of other dogs. Two handlers and their dogs approach each other from a distance of about ten yards, stop, shake hands and exchange pleasantries, and continue on about five yards. This is another potentially difficult exercise - many dogs want to say "hello" to the other dog, which is not permitted. Short of practicing with other dogs, a solid Sit-Stay should see you through this exercise successfully.

## Housebreaking

1. Keep the dog tied to you for the first two weeks when he is in the house. Let him loose in your yard to potty or take him on lead to where you want him to potty. Always tell him "Potty" and praise when he does so.
2. Keep a close eye on him during the third week and let him off the leash in the house for short periods of time. Let him out frequently.
3. If you have a Toy breed or Toy mix, or a dog raised and previously kept in a kennel, your time frames should be a month each for Steps 1 and 2.
4. Do not leave the dog alone to roam the house. If you leave, put him in a secured yard or pen, or in a crate in the house.
5. As time goes on, you will be able to tell if he has good intentions of seeking the outdoors to relieve himself. Depending on the dog and his former circumstances, he may be reliable from the first day you bring him home; alternatively, it may take three or four months.

### **Sleeping Quarters**

1. Select the place you wish the dog to sleep.
2. If it is in the house, let him out shortly before you go to bed or take him for a walk.
3. Tie him on a fairly short lead to keep him where you want him to sleep. Give him his own rug and a small bowl of water, or provide a bed or crate for him.
4. If you want him to sleep outside, provide him with a doghouse or a dry, warm corner underneath a porch or a wind-sheltered corner with some type of protected covering. Make sure your yard is secure.

## Housebreaking Your Puppy

Most animals that are born in a nest have an instinctive desire to move away from the nest to relieve themselves. They will do so without being taught as soon as they are able. Dogs are no exception, and at the age of about three weeks, they will begin to leave the sleeping area to urinate. We just have to teach them that houses are our nests, and that they have to move outside when they want to relieve themselves. Take your puppy outside to the same spot in your yard or garden at the following times:

1. Shortly after each feeding, playing, exercise, and any excitement.
2. Immediately upon waking
3. First thing in the morning
4. Last thing at night
5. Once every hour

It is important to stay outside with him. Be patient and wait. As soon as he begins, say a chosen phrase to him such as "Be clean!". When he has finished, praise enthusiastically and play a game with him. Keep the area clean by picking up any mess and flushing it down the toilet.

Puppies are easily distracted when outside, so having the patience to stay with him until he has settled down is essential. If you leave him to it, he will probably run to the back door and spend the rest of the time trying to get back in with you. Once you let him in, the stress of the separation, together with the increased excitement and exercise, will make him want to go, and you will be left with a mess inside and an uneducated puppy.

However, there is no need to stay outdoors for hours, waiting for him to go. Wait for a few minutes only, and if nothing happens, take him inside and try again a little later. If at any time of the day you notice him sniffing the floor and circling or getting ready to squat, immediately interrupt him and take him outside. Let him walk. Do not pick him up, or he will not learn the vital link in the process, which is: "When I need to go, I need to get to the back door and into the garden."

If, at any time, you catch him in the act of going in the house, shout! What you shout is immaterial, but it needs to be loud enough to capture his undivided attention and to stop him mid-flow, but not so loud that he runs for cover. Do not punish or get angry; the distress this causes your puppy

will inhibit the learning process. He will also begin to avoid going to the toilet in front of you because he knows it makes you angry and will sneak away to do it, making it harder for you to teach him the correct behavior.

As soon as you have shouted, run away from him, toward the back door, calling him happily and enthusiastically to encourage him to follow. Go outside to your chosen spot and wait until he has relaxed and finished what he started earlier. Say your chosen phrase as he goes, praise him, and play with him as usual. Take him back into the house and put him in another room while you clean up any mess.

## **Potty Training Your Puppy On Command**

Toilet training should not end with housebreaking. If you want to avoid the unpleasant but necessary task of picking up after your pet in the street, it makes sense to train him to go before you leave home. This is not as difficult as it may seem but requires a fair amount of patience in the early stages.

If you have been successfully working at the housebreaking process, you will, by the time you are able to take your puppy out, have a particular phrase that your puppy will associate with going to the toilet.

You should also have a fairly regular routine and will have some idea of when your puppy needs to go. Try to arrange your first walk to coincide with this time. Go out to the yard as usual, repeating your chosen phrase until your puppy does what is required. Praise enthusiastically and then take him out for a walk. If he does not go to the toilet, take him back inside for a while and try again later.

If you take your dog out for a walk only after he has been to the toilet, he will eventually begin to realize that producing the required deposit results in a walk.

## House-Training: Catching Your Dog In The Act

The following are suggestions to correct house-training mistakes and what to do if you catch your dog in the act.

1. If you come upon an accident or catch your pet in the act, don't scream! Don't call the puppy to you to discipline him, go toward him and don't say anything, unless he is in the middle of eliminating, in which case you may begin gently scolding him as you approach.
2. Reach for his collar and sit him in front of the accident, quickly. Keep some upward tension on the collar to keep the pup in the "Sit" position. Don't begin disciplining until he is sitting. It is no sense disciplining a dog that is squirming to get out of your control. If he is wearing a training collar, insert your index finger in one ring and pull him up on a sit, if not, push his rump down while simultaneously pulling the ring of the collar up.
3. Tilt the dog's head up toward yours for just a second to let him see the displeasure in your eyes. After two seconds of eye contact, tilt his head back down toward the accident. Do not put his nose in the mess, but do have him look at the accident. Taking a finger and tracing a line back and forth between the dog's eyes and the mess will help make the connection.
4. Quietly scold the puppy, but do not whine, scream, shout, use an implement or otherwise get hysterical. Make your scolding just two to three seconds long. Trot your pet by his collar to where he is supposed to relieve himself. Do this immediately. If you have a backyard, take him there by stooping down and taking the collar and leading him out. Do not pick him up to take him to the desired area. If you do, the dog could interpret that he only has to use that area if you pick him up and put him in there.

If you must take your dog down to the street after an accident, remind him of your displeasure on the way without again disciplining him on the same level as you did at the scene of the accident. Give a smart leash tug (diagonally, upward toward yourself) and emit a low growling phrase ("It better not happen again") as you go down the stairs or through the lobby. Otherwise, the dog might be happy by the time he gets through the lobby and forgets what the correction was all about.

5. Leave your dog out in the yard or out on the street for only two to three minutes. You don't want him playing around right after the discipline, you have to make the connection. While the dog is in the desired area, return and clean up the mess.

6. Isolate him for at least thirty minutes, either behind a gate or in a crate, or remain passive for one-half hour. Go about your business and ignore him. The dog needs some time to pull himself together. There is a natural reaction of submission after effective discipline and you should take advantage of it, not thwart it. The dog needs some time to adjust. Let him have it. On the other hand, if your dog is jumping up on you, or barking wildly after a house-training reprimand, chances are your correction did not get through and wasn't strong enough.

7. After one-half hour, do something nice with him, but not overly nice. You want to make up after the discipline but the message you want to leave with your dog is that something very bad has happened and it better not happen again.

## **Housebreaking Your Puppy If You Live In An Apartment**

Housebreaking a puppy in an apartment with no yard is more difficult, but it is not impossible. An area that your puppy can use as a toilet area will need to be found close to the apartment. Since this may be a considerable distance for your puppy to walk, it becomes even more important that you take him out every hour. You will also need to be extra watchful to your puppy's signs of wanting to relieve himself well in advance.

Different puppies learn at different rates. Some pick up what is required almost instantly, others may take much longer. Some take as long as six months or more. A puppy that came from a dirty or cramped kennel is likely to take longer than one that had a better start.

The biggest influence on how quickly a puppy becomes housebroken is how much time and effort you put in. More input from you will speed up the time taken to become completely clean; while less input will prolong the process.

## More On Housebreaking Your Dog: 4 Rules To Help

By most estimates, housebreaking problems are the number-one reason that people give their dogs up for adoption. That's very sad, because - contrary to popular belief - housebreaking really doesn't have to be all that difficult. And you can make the job even easier on yourself if, as you venture into the exciting world of potty-training, to let these four simple commandments guide you:

**Rule #1:** The key to housebreaking is scheduling. You're going to have to establish a firm routine and stick to it until your dog gets the hang of housebreaking. If she knows when to expect to be taken outside, she soon won't mind waiting until her next scheduled outing. But if she never knows when or whether she's going to get to go out, she may decide it's not worth her while to control herself.

**Rule #2:** What goes in must come out. In other words, if your dog is nibbling and sipping all day long, she's going to need to go to the bathroom all day long. So it's important that you schedule her food intake and keep snacks to a minimum, and you can even schedule her water intake at the beginning. Of course, if it's very hot or if your dog is getting lots of exercise, then she needs to have fresh water available to her all day long. But otherwise, you can give her periodic drinks throughout the day so that you'll know when she'll need to go out - probably about ten to thirty minutes after drinking or eating.

**Rule #3:** In housebreaking, timing is everything. Your dog is going to have accidents - count on it - and the only way you're going to teach her right from wrong is to catch her in the act and correct her. Correcting her after the fact won't do a bit of good, because she won't know what she did or why you're upset with her. And that's why it's so important that you supervise her scrupulously during these early days.

**Rule #4:** Cleanliness counts. Dogs will almost always return to spots that they've soiled before. So if your dog has one accident on the couch, she's likely to have another, unless you thoroughly disinfect and deodorize the area. And remember, her nose is a lot more sensitive than yours, so you're going to have to do some heavy-duty scrubbing to make sure that no traces remain. Your best bet is to use one of the commercial sprays or solutions designed for this very task.

## Puppy Focus

Focus is the single most important command to teach your puppy. If your dog is looking away from you, he is listening to what he is looking at. Distractions are a large part of life, and you need to teach your dog to ignore them and pay attention to you.

You cannot achieve focus simply by your puppy's name. On a daily basis, you will use his name for many different purposes. Worse yet, you will probably yell his name at him when he is doing something wrong.

The term you will use to teach your dog focus will be a consistently positively reinforced term. He will first learn to look at you on command no matter what is going on around him. Next, he will come to you when you call instead of running away off to who knows where. Here are the beginning steps necessary to teach attention.

1. Begin training your dog when he has not had any personal contact with you for several hours. Mornings are great because you generally have had no contact with him overnight. A dog who has had minimal contact is more likely to want to give you his attention when the opportunity presents itself. Walk your dog before starting the session. Do not play with him or talk too much, just put him on a lead and walk him for elimination purposes. Afterward, take your dog back into the house so you may begin his training. Keep a leash on him so that you can retain an element of control.

2. Use food as a reward. It is very important that you know what types of edible reinforcers will work on your dog. A hungry dog will be motivated by food, whereas a well-fed dog may show disinterest. Do not feed your dog his meal before training.

3. You will be teaching him to look at your face on command and a good reason for him to look at your face could be that there is great food falling out of your mouth. You could spit out little bits of treats at your dog, whatever food works for him. If you have a small-breed dog or young puppy, you may get on your knees and show your dog a cracker hanging out of your mouth. When he notices the food, you can let him take a little bit from your mouth. The dog must be able to take this small amount of food gently, to prevent any accidental bites. If your dog is too rough in taking this treat, you may hold the treat in your hand, near your mouth, and give him small amounts as he looks at your face while giving the command. You must eventually be standing erect with your dog looking attentively at your face.

4. Typical commands such as "ready," "look," or "focus" can be used, just be sure to be consistent with your terms. Your dog's name should be used prior to giving the focus command. Making a little clicking sound from your mouth after your command will help to teach your dog to look at you.

Practice this constantly and reward your dog for it. Demand longer periods of focus, as well as focus with distractions. Increase the distraction level while demanding short focus duration. After you have achieved focus at high levels of distraction, such as someone calling your dog, you can move along increasing focus time. When commanded to look at your face, your dog must offer continued focus to you until released or commanded to the next task.

## **How To Train Your Dog To Focus On your Face When Commanded**

Before you can proceed to any basic training of your dog, you must teach him to focus. It is a good idea to begin your initial training by taking your dog into a quiet and familiar environment where he will be least distracted, thereby obtaining the greatest level of focus. Focus is the single most important command to teach your dog. If your dog is looking away from you, he is listening to what he is looking at. Distractions are a large part of life, and you need to teach your dog to ignore them and pay attention to you.

More often than not, a new dog owner will ask why they cannot simply use their dog's name in order to achieve focus. The answer is that on a daily basis, you will use your dog's name for many different purposes. Worse yet, you will probably yell his name at him when he is doing something wrong - much the same way your parents yelled your name at you when you were a misbehaving kid. Your dog is not a child, and if you scream his name at him in a harsh manner, he is sure to stop responding positively to his name.

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3. You will be teaching the dog to look at your face on command and a good reason for him to look at your face could be that there is great food falling out of your mouth. You could spit out little bits of cheese or hot dogs or cereal at your dog - whatever food works for him. If you have a small-breed dog or young puppy, you may get on your knees and show your dog a cracker hanging out of your mouth. When he notices the food, you can let him take a little bit from your mouth.

4. Typically commands such as "ready," "look," or "focus" are used. Any command you wish to use is fine, just be sure to be consistent with your terms. Your dog's name should be used prior to giving the focus command. Making a little clicking sound from your mouth after your command will help to teach your dog to look at you.

So, the order of the procedure is: A) Dog's name. B) Command - "ready". C) Clicking sound from mouth. D) Reward as your dog gives you attention. E) Release from steady command - "okay" or "free".

## **The Perfect Location To Train Your Dog**

In the beginning, you will want to train your dog in an environment that has few distractions. You want to be the most interesting game in the room in order for your dog to pay attention to you. Indoors is definitely better than outdoors, because you can't control the outdoor environment. Joggers, kids playing, cars, and other dogs are just a few of your dog's favorite things that may outrank you in competition for his attention.

If you consistently use the same room in the house to train, he will automatically start to focus on you when you set up to train. Use this room whenever you are going to teach something new. When your dog seems to

understand a new behavior, then you will want to take it on the road by practicing in different environments. It is very important to do this if you want your dog to be well-behaved in public.

Most dogs are perfectly well-behaved in the privacy of their own homes when no visitors are around but turns unstable or high-strung when a friend comes over or when you take him out to the park. This is because your dog won't integrate distractions or generalize his training (be able to apply it to environments other than the one you trained in) well unless you help him.

If you always work in the kitchen and practice having your pet sit two feet in front of the sofa, he will think that the command "Sit" means to "sit two feet in front of the sofa." The first time you take him in the kitchen and ask him to sit in front of the refrigerator, he doesn't do it. He's thinking, "Are you crazy? How can I sit? There's no sofa here!"

Meanwhile, you are thinking that your dog is being stubborn, spiteful, or dumb because he knows very well how to sit and he is ignoring your command. Every time you move to a new environment or add distractions, you may need to back up a couple of steps in your dog's training to let him know that "Sit" means the same thing wherever he is, whether there's a sofa there or not. A group training class provides a perfect opportunity to train your dog in a distracting environment and to teach him this important lesson. You will need to find dozens more opportunities like this for him to understand that "Sit" happens everywhere.

Once he becomes more sophisticated about training and accustomed to working in different environments, your dog will be able to learn new things despite reasonable distractions, and he will be able to generalize more quickly with each new behavior that you teach him.

## **Teaching Your Dog The Word "Off"**

"Off" is the word to use when your dog or part of your dog is on something you want him to get off. You can begin to teach "Off" by tone of voice. In some cases, particularly in those when your dog has previously been warned not to do something, your annoyed tone and the word "Off" will get your point across. But when it comes to jumping on you, the pleasure is so great for the dog that a word alone will not cure the problem.

In the case of jumping, you will have to slip your hand into his collar and pull

him "Off" you sideways, being careful to get him to the ground gruffly but without causing him harm. In other words, move him. Don't toss him. After much repetition and total consistency, your dog will stop jumping up on you.

In the meantime, be content with "Off". If nothing else, it is a good beginning. And even if you let your dog sleep on your bed, you may need to say "Off" once in a while just so you can give him clean sheets!

## Teaching Your Puppy To "Leave It"

There is one command that your puppy needs to learn for his own protection, and that is the safety command of "Leave it." You are out for a walk and puppy comes upon a roadkill or carelessly discarded garbage. For the sake of his health, you command, "Leave it!" and you will need to enforce it with a gentle snap-and-release of the leash. If he does not hear (or understand) the "Leave it" command, get his attention followed by "Leave it."

This one is so important that at four to six months of age you can even use an entrapment as a teaching tool. When the puppy cannot see you do it, plant a piece of trash, maybe an empty cereal box, on the floor and stick around until the pup goes to investigate. As he goes to sniff it, shout "Leave it!" and as he retreats at the force of your voice, say "Good dog."

It is an extremely versatile and useful command. It also has an amusing side effect. Many young puppies respond to the extreme urgency in your voice and not only "Leave it" but do an instant Down flat on the ground!

## Collar Training Your Puppy

Training a puppy or a dog does not mean harshly disciplining him. If you go about it properly, he will think it more fun than any game. Some dogs are more obedient than others, while few fail to recognize the "I mean it" voice. Remain calm, firm, and repeat the words if necessary, time after time until obedience is given.

Work with a puppy alone and not too long. His capacity to concentrate is limited, so stop when you see he has had all he can take. Try to stop on some achievement, which means praise, petting, and perhaps a treat. If

each session ends on a positive note, he will gladly welcome the next lesson.

Keep him on a long leash when teaching new lessons. He cannot run off or get away with ignoring your commands. Although you should work with him without other people or dogs around in the initial sessions, as he learns you can gradually train him to obey commands as they would be given in normal surroundings. He must obey not just when you are alone with him, but in all circumstances of ordinary daily life. Learning to behave in all situations is essential.

When he is older, he will enjoy attending the obedience classes. For most pets, however, home training is sufficient. This is particularly so for the fundamental obedience of the commands "Come," "Sit" "Down," and "Stay!"

Some puppies seem to take naturally to the collar and leash, while others have to be patiently accustomed to the restraint and guidance that they provide. Start yours with a narrow collar, giving as little contact around the neck as possible. Be sure it is loose enough for comfort but not so loose that he can back out of it or scratch it over his head.

Repeat the word collar always in a tone of excitement and pleasure. Some pet owners never put a collar on a pup when he is indoors. However, it has the advantage; if put on immediately in the morning and taken off at bedtime, this suggests to the puppy that he is dressed for the day. Sometimes a pup will bring the collar to his owner's bedside to suggest that it is time to get going.

Also, a collar that is on all the time is a convenience to the owner, it is easier to grab and catch a collar, as a puppy dashes by, than soft, slippery skin! A word of warning: if your pup is turned loose in a fenced yard, be sure the collar will not catch on a post or protruding wire.

## **The Easy Way Of Training Your Puppy To Sit**

At the beginning of the training, your puppy should be wearing a flat or rolled leather collar. Keep the leash handy but begin with it off. Start the training indoors and avoid distractions.

The simplest way to teach your puppy to sit is to hold a toy above his head,

or just snap your fingers while you say "Sit!" If he does not sit to look at your hand, gently seat him by placing one hand lightly on his rump and your other hand under his chin. Gently lift his head and lower his rump as if he was looking up at your hand and say "Sit." Immediately praise him.

Repeat the command "Sit", trying once again to get him to look up at your hand and seat himself. Sometimes, it is just a matter of holding the object in the right spot to get your puppy to sit. When he does, praise him and release by saying "Ok." Try this a few more times and have him sit in a different spot each time. End your session by saying "Ok" and playing his favorite game.

Practice the "Sit," both on and off leash two to three times a day for about five minutes at a time

## Teaching Your Puppy To Sit

The "Sit" command is an easy way to have your puppy show off his good manners. He can sit when visitor comes, when you meet a friend out walking, when you are preparing his dinner, or when he has to wait for just about anything. It is also one of the easiest exercises to practice because you can ask him to sit whenever and wherever you like. A Sit is especially good for little everyday things, like having his leash attached.

The command is to say his name and then "Sit!" All commands should be preceded by the dog's name; that is to get his attention so he knows you are not talking to anyone else. Puppies are proud to have a name. It is when they reach adolescence that they, like other teenagers, pretend they do not hear you. Any time you see the puppy about to sit, quickly say, "Sit, good dog." If he is already sitting nicely give him a "good sit" reward.

The easiest way to teach a young puppy to sit is to get his attention with a treat held in front and just above his nose to make him look up. Then slowly move the treat backward over his head. Because he wants to keep his eye on the treat, his backside will have to drop to the floor. It takes a little practice (on your part, too) but it is a tried and true means of getting an unforced sit. As he assumes the position, give the command, "Sit" and hand out a tiny portion of the treat.

That is motivational teaching. The puppy performs the desired action by himself. The other way is to have the pup beside you on your left side, hold a

treat in front of him with your right hand, and gently press down on his hindquarters with your left hand. With a large puppy, you could put your left arm around his hindquarters and with a gentle forward motion, bend his knees, forcing the sit. As you are coping with all that, brightly say, "Sit."

If you followed the first method, and he is doing a prompt Sit every time you give the command, you will soon graduate to using just the hand signal, making the same upward motion with your hand, palm up as you did in raising the treat over his head, and the pup will do a very nice sit.

## How To Train Your Dog To "Sit-Stay"

The sit-stay is a basic exercise that all dogs should know. Here is how you do it. Hold your left hand, palm back, close to the dog's nose and command 'Stay!' Step out with your right foot and turn and face your dog. Stay close to him at first! Pivot back on your left foot to heel position without circling your dog. Again, tell your dog to stay! Signal back with your left hand and move out on your right foot. Keep your leash slack, but be ready to make a quick correction if your dog shifts position! Now, with the dog facing you, hold your right hand in front of his nose and say "Stay!" and back away to the full length of the lead.

When the dog is at the handler's side in heel position, the stay signal is given with the left hand held in front of the dog, palm back. When the dog is sitting and facing the owner, the stay signal is given with the right hand. It is held with the palm toward the dog and the fingers pointing to the ground. This is the signal that will later be used to make the dog sit from the down position. It should be put into effect at the start of training.

While your dog is facing you at the full length of the leash, circle slowly to the right and pass in back of your dog to heel position. As you move around, take up the slack in the lead with the left hand and hold it on the right side of the dog. If he moves, stand still and repeat the command "Stay!" as you jerk him back to a sitting position. Hold the dog with both hands, if necessary, while you circle around him, but don't let him move from that spot until you give him permission. Stand quietly at his side. Pat and praise him while he is still sitting. Now release him from training and play with him.

Tell your dog to stay and stand in back of him. Stay close at first and be ready to correct him if he moves. The dog is permitted to turn his head but not his body. Correct him if he does. Step back to heel position. Don't praise

him yet. Tell him to stay once more. Step in back of him to the full length of the lead. Return to heel position. Say "Stay!" and face him. Go to the right of the dog and stand in back of him. Walk past him and face him again. Return to heel position. Don't keep saying, "Stay!" Repeat the command if the dog breaks, but otherwise don't say anything. Move slowly in the sit-stay exercise until the dog becomes accustomed to staying by himself. If the dog breaks position, move quickly! Allow as little time as possible between the actual mistake and the ensuing correction. With dogs in heel position, say "Stay!" Back with your left hand, out on your right foot, and go to the end of the lead.

Lean over and put the lead quietly on the floor. Command "Stay!" as you do so. Pick up your lead. Command "Stay!" at the same time. Drop it again without leaning over. Pick it up. Circle back to heel position. Every time your dog moves forward to break the sitting position bounce the palm of your hand against his nose, or lift the lead sharply to throw him back again into position. Keep your lead slack when you step out from your dog!

Use a firm tone of voice when you give a command the first time - a demanding voice if the dog disobeys. Don't keep repeating your dog's name! Stress the command. Don't keep talking to the dog. If he is sitting, let him alone. Repeat the command if your dog is disobedient.

## **How To Teach Your Puppy To "Sit-Stay"**

When teaching your puppy to "Sit-Stay," put him on leash at the beginning of the training. Find a quiet area without distractions. Command your puppy to "Sit" and when he does, tell him to "Stay." As you say the command, drop your voice at the end so that it does not sound like a question. Swing your flat open hand toward the puppy, palm facing him as if you were going to touch his nose with it. Stop short of touching him and withdraw your hand. This is the hand signal that goes with the "Stay" command. Take one step back and wait.

Do not be angry or disappointed when your puppy gets up and starts to walk toward you. Do not think that he is dumb or spiteful. Be kind, firm, and patient with him. Say "No," then walk him back to exactly where he was sitting. Again, command "Sit," signal him and tell him to "Stay." He will probably think that "Stay" means just that and he may want to get comfortable and lie down. Most puppies will do this on the "Sit-Stay" at the point when he figures out what "Stay" means.

You could be so excited he is "staying" that you do nothing, however, lying down on a "Sit-Stay" means that your puppy is breaking the command. This is where the test in your leadership comes into play. Your puppy knows that if you fail to correct his breaking of this command, he can break any and all other commands. So when he lies down on the "Sit-Stay," say "No, Sit-Stay!" Saying "No" tells him that he did wrong by lying down. "Sit" tells him what he should be doing instead, especially as you pull straight up on the leash and seat him again. "Stay" repeats and reinforces the second half of the command that he is working on.

As many times as he breaks the command by lying down or getting up, patiently repeat the three words "No," "Sit," "Stay" and place him back where he was sitting in the first place. This is the way for him to test his limits and to learn the exact definitions of vocabulary words. Know that he is not being bad and that he is trying his best to please you.

As he begins to understand the meaning of "Stay," you will want to gradually lengthen the time he will stay. Have him stay for one minute the first time, three minutes the second time, and then for thirty seconds the third time. Your unpredictability will make your puppy pay attention to you more carefully because he will not be able to second guess your timing.

## Teaching Your Puppy "Down"

As far as command position, "Down" is as low as you can get, and it is difficult for some puppies to accept. What is called the "dominant down", a forced positioning of the puppy on his side with your hand on his neck/shoulder area; is restraint, not teaching.

If your puppy is off-the-wall rambunctious and you are losing control, the dominant down is one method of regaining it - but never in anger, always firmly but gently. The drawback is you can get yourself into a struggling wrestling match - and come out the loser. Placing your hands on the puppy's shoulders and calmly saying "Settle" is a preferable, less combative method. Remember the rule to let a dog perform the desired action by himself.

With your puppy doing a Sit-Stay, hold a treat in the fingers of your right hand (let him sniff it or see it), run that hand in front of his nose, down and out toward your feet. Be prepared to use your left hand on his shoulders only if necessary to guide him into the Down position, which is flat on his tummy

with front legs flat out in front. Deliver the treat and a "Good down" and release.

When the puppy can do a Down all by himself in response to "Down," you can skip the treat intermittently, begin to add a "Stay" and gradually - very gradually - work up to a Down of one minute. As he matures, he will be able to stay down for five minutes (or more if necessary), but even one minute is an eternity for an active pup, and you need to remain within a foot or two to start the exercise over again should he get up.

It cannot be emphasized enough: Go slowly - one step at a time - in all puppy training. If he did it right the first time, chalk it up to beginner's luck, both his and yours! Without steady repetition, he will forget it just as quickly. It takes the patient, consistent practice of each part of an exercise for the pup to learn that he must do it every time you tell him. If you go too fast, you will only confuse him.

And lastly, pronounce each word distinctly. "Sit," "Stand" and "Stay" are easily blurred beyond the pup's recognition. Put the "t" in "Sit." Emphasize the "t" and "a" in "Stay" and put the "a-n-d" in "Stand." Make "Down" an upbeat word, not a growl.

## **Why Your Dog Needs To Learn The "Emergency" Down**

Teaching your dog the "emergency down" will enable you to take the risk of some day taking him off leash in the street. This is taught after your dog has mastered the "Down" command. This exercise is taught in an urgent tone of voice and because of this it is practiced no more than twice a week, otherwise, it loses its punch. In addition, this command relies on the use of body language. If you use these elements properly, you will quickly and efficiently communicate to your dog a sense of emergency and a need on his part to follow your instruction without hesitation - the purpose of the emergency down.

Once learned, this command can be used to stop your dog in his tracks, to stop him from dashing out into traffic, from leaving your sight, or from entering a danger zone that you understand and he does not. In fact, the very point of instant obedience is that you can foresee dangers that he cannot understand. Your dog must obey without thinking, not take the time

to look around and figure out whether or not he should obey you.

When teaching the emergency down, as you are heeling along, lean forward, slide your hand into the dog's collar and as you push your hand straight to the ground, say "Dooooown" in a long, serious, hushed tone, as if something was wrong. Don't use an angry tone. After all, your dog hasn't done anything wrong. Use a tone that lets him know there's trouble brewing and he'd better drop fast. As soon as he does, even with your help, praise him and tell him to heel. This is not a "Down, Stay." It is an immediate drop that we are after.

Practice three of these within half a block of walking and then do not use this command again for three or four days. Keep the element of surprise in it by using it sparingly. Remember, this is taught so that, if you need it, you can use it to save the dog from an accident. If he is a slow worker, you will need him to be quick on this command. If he's not quick in an emergency, the command, and your insurance, are worthless.

Continue to speed up the down by placing your hand inside the collar (not in the ring) and pushing it straight down to the ground as you say "Dooooown" in a secretive tone. Once the dog knows this command and will execute it rapidly, practice it only once in a while. At that time, make sure that some of your practice is done when he is off leash in the yard or in the park.

In order for this command to be an insurance policy, it must work perfectly when your dog is off leash and not particularly near you. In the park, you will have to be louder to be heard. But even so, if nothing happens, rush to your dog, grab his collar, repeat the command, and push your hand straight to the ground as you do. With his leash back on him, heel your dog and repeat the emergency down two or three more times. If you still feel very patient, let him loose again and after five full minutes, try the emergency down at a distance once more. If he ignores you, repeat the above procedure.

When you are ready to train him again, work on the down from a distance and not the emergency down. Obviously, he is not ready for such advanced work yet. When his "Down" from a distance is perfect, go back to the emergency down and try it again. The difference between the two commands is that one is done with a hand signal and tone of voice when the dog is far away from you but looking at you while the other is done whether or not the dog is attentive.

## Training the "Down" Command To A Dominant Dog

A dominant dog is one who becomes unsure when made to change his mood. Since his response to resistance is straightforward, he is compelled to assert himself. He'll push back when he feels the left hand on his shoulder blade and will probably growl. Since he's stressed, he won't show any interest in the food, so any type of ingestion other than a snap at your hand or the lead isn't possible.

This dog is very much misunderstood. Since he's active and direct by nature, he's run into a lot of emotional dead ends in his dealings with people, and so he interprets all change as bad, relative to humans.

Profound hunger is definitely advisable in the early stages of training. When the dog is hungry enough, he will go on the down position smoothly. Improving the contact training is important because the resistance between the dog and the owner or handler is the central issue in this dog's temperament. You want to relax your dog about the status issue and have him learn that flexibility to change is actually good.

Address the problem more directly, because sooner or later you will have to work the dog without food. But first he must learn suppleness to the touch, just as if he was a puppy. Then, when it's time to train without food, put your left foot on the lead while you hold on to it with your right hand. From here you will patiently wait. As long as the dog doesn't overload or panic, slowly increase the pressure downward on his neck.

Do not position your head close to this type of dog. That will intensify his problem and increase his need to resist. As he starts to tire or think about lying down to get more comfortable, talk sweetly to him. This weakens resistance. Amplify the softening sensation by starting to scratch his top-line and his ribs.

You want him to sense that by lying down he becomes the focus of the group. You aren't trying to make yourself dominant, that would only reinforce his unsureness and reconfirm his negative assessment of humans who make him change his mood. You want instead for him to learn that becoming subordinate leads to his highest experience of flow.

When he lies down, rub his belly. It's Ok for him to roll over because he's getting the experience of flow and you want to energize him in this moment so that his top-line is positively affected. His back is absorbing positive contact with the ground, and he's associating you with such a positive drive flow; you are doing a lot to teach him that "Down" is a peaceful pathway. If his top-line becomes supple, each repetition will see him go down faster and with less resistance.

With dominant dogs, the problem is not that they're dominant but that they're brittle, yet at the same time they have a strong sense of themselves. They don't adapt well and usually like to avoid new things. Because they're brittle and change slowly due to a strong sense of place, they appear to be tough dogs, which leads to their being misinterpreted. Consequently, in training they are pushed too fast and too hard. Since they have a strong sense of their place, they inevitably have to learn to push back.

## **Training The "Down" Command To An Overly-Submissive Dog**

The "Down" command is so important that there is no room for any error. There are three types of dogs that will overreact to down training and will have to be handled carefully:

- 1) Dogs that are over-submissive
- 2) The nervous dogs, &
- 3) Dogs that are dominant and aggressive.

In this article, we will discuss about the over-submissive type and the proper way to teach him the "Down" exercise.

## **Training the "Down" Command To The Nervous Dog**

A nervous dog gets hyper-friendly or hyper-frightened when he's touched in training. The friendliness is masking an inner panic that is only revealed when the dog has the chance to get away or is forced to do something he views as unnatural.

This kind of dog should be worked when he is hungry. Feed him lightly in the morning of the day before and then train him on the following afternoon. He can eat his ration in the training routine from your hand. Walk him on the lawn, then pause and kneel next to him and offer him some food.

Get him to make contact on your level and then touch him as he eats. If he seems to be relaxing, start to move from resting place where the handling and touching occurs. The running will burn up some of the dog's nervousness and lessen his negative feelings about the training.

When he seems at his calmest, train him to down with food. Every time he lies down and starts to overreact, break away and run to the resting station so that his nervousness is quickly converted into a purer form of drive expression. Slowly, you are getting him to see his group instinct as a means of success instead of a survival instinct.

Study your dog and determine what activity he seems the most relaxed in, the most free when doing, and use that as a reward for him when he chooses calmness.

## **An Effective Way To Teach Your Dog To Drop On Recall**

Many dogs will do the "drop on recall" better the first time you try it than ever again in their lives. This is because the element of surprise is so powerful that first time that the trained dog simply complies with the command on the spot. Later on, he tends to come more slowly and drop quite slowly. For this reason, this command is used sparingly. If not, you will really slow up your dog's recall.

If used carefully, this command can be a life saver. If you call your dog and then see danger approaching the path he is taking, you can stop him by dropping him and save his life in the process. Therefore, do not use this flashy command over and over to prove yourself, your dog or to entertain your friends. Teach it and then save it for an emergency.

Once your dog learns to readily drop from a distance on verbal or hand signal alone, you can begin to train the drop on recall. In this command, the dog is asked to come from afar and then dropped (given the down at a distance command) when he is half way to you. With practice, your dog can be dropped at almost any time along the way so that if you need to drop him at any point, you will be able to do so.

In order to teach your dog to do this, place him on a "Sit, Stay" position at some distance. Six feet is not enough since that would allow him to get too close after the "Come" before you had a chance to drop him. Ten or twelve feet should do the trick. Call him to come. When he is one-third of the way toward you, raise your arm in the distance signal and say "Down" in a good, strong, and firm voice. Your dog may drop on the spot. If so, wait one second and then call him to come, using both voice and hand signal for "Come." As soon as your dog gets to you and sits in front, make sure to give him lots of love and praise. Do the exercise one more time and then move on to another command.

If your dog does not drop when told, run to meet him and drop him with the raised hand that gave him the down signal. This procedure works very well and, with patience on your part, your dog can learn to accomplish this very stunning looking but very practical exercise. Practice it twice a week, with no more than three times per session.

What if your dog does a perfect drop on recall but consistently creeps in on the come, expecting every plain recall to turn into a drop on recall? In this case, and it is a very common occurrence, work on exercises to speed the recall and defer practicing the drop for a couple of weeks while you do so. Call the dog to come and run away from him, turning at the last moment to let him catch you. Praise wildly.

Occasionally when you are heeling the dog, break away without warning and call "Come, Come" to him. Again, let him finally catch you and be praised. Play recall games with several family members calling the dog to come in random order and zestfully praising him when he does so. When you do practice the drop on recall again, only do it once or twice, following it up with some fast, active work, some speedy straight recalls followed by lots of

praise.

## Teaching Your Dog The "Down" Command From A Distance

To get your dog to lie down when he is not near you will take some work on your part, but it is not as difficult as it looks. It is the prerequisite for a good emergency down and it is therefore an important part of insuring your dog's safety when he is off leash. If you see danger coming and can keep your dog safe with one word, it will be less risky to work him off leash.

With your dog on a "Sit, Stay" position while you are standing in front of him, signal "Down" in the usual way, bending and patting the floor in front of him as you give the command. Praise him and tell him to sit. If he does not sit, slip your hand into the collar and pull straight up, repeating "Sit" as you do. Now tell him to stay and back up one giant step. This puts you one giant step from a correction. Raising your arm straight up as you say the command, say "Down." This is the distance or field signal, used because it can be seen from very far away. If he responds with a down, lower your arm, praise mildly and command "Stay."

After a moment, release him, praise and try again. If your dog does not respond to the familiar word and unfamiliar hand signal, take one step forward with your arm reaching for his collar as you step. Slip the hand that gave the signal right into his collar, pulling down as you repeat "Down." Now, praise him, even though you made him do it. That's how he learns. Now move him to a different spot and try again.

While your dog may not seem too clever when he fails to lie down when you say "Down" and raise your arm instead of patting the floor, he has a right to be confused by a new signal. It might take him a few turns around the block to get used to the distance signal. By the end of your first session on the distance down, he should be lying down with you signaling from six feet away. Always be prepared, particularly in the early stages of the training, to rush back to him and correct him with the hand that gave the signal in one sweeping gesture.

The correction is implied in the hand signal, reminding the dog that even though you are far away, you can still correct him quickly. But no matter how well things go, do not increase your distance for a full week after

reaching six feet away. If you try to go too far too fast, your dog will get the impression that you no longer have good control over him. In fact, if it takes you much longer to get to him, he will become convinced that his suspicions are correct. You have to go slow, particularly when working at a distance.

Once the dog has perfected the "Down" from a distance at a distance of six feet, you can do the training in two ways. You can gradually increase the distance, working farther away when he is cooperative and alert, or shortening up the distance when he seems to be having an off day.

## **Training Your Dog The "Wait" Command**

"Wait" is a very useful command that you can teach your dog. Teaching your pet how to wait is especially important if you are planning to work him all the way through to a reliable off-leash capability. It is one of the several safety commands that you can use to monitor him and keep him safe from potential danger.

There will be times when you need your dog to wait for you but not necessarily to be still. The "Stay" command would not be the appropriate command to use at those times. Also, there will be times when he will be in a hurry to have something or do something. "Wait" will be the right word to tell him that he can have what he wants, but not right away.

Because dogs live in the present moment, teaching them how to "Wait" not only adds an interesting and useful word to their vocabularies, but it also adds a concept that is very difficult for them to understand. However, your dog can understand the meaning of the word "Wait" on a short-term basis. The most effective way to train your dog to "Wait" is by tone of voice. Keep in mind that the tone of voice is one of the most effective tools that you can use in dog training. Your pet needs to be able to understand your tone to properly respond to it.

To understand how this kind of training works, keep in mind that your dog is a pack animal and that you are his pack leader. He looks to you for approval and direction. When he is doing something, anything at all, and you say a word, any word at all in a moderately disapproving tone, he will stop whatever it is he is doing because of your disapproval. For example, when you want him to wait at the bottom of the steps leading out of the park and

you say "Wait" in a serious but not an angry tone, a trained dog will turn and look at you. At this point, say "Gooood dog" in a pleasant tone while he is waiting. If he continues up the steps, say "NO, WAIT!" in a firmer tone.

The difference between the command "Enough" and "Wait" is that "Enough" means stopping the activity for now. On the other hand, "Wait" means a momentarily pause. In the example of the dog waiting to leave the park and jump into the car, the command "Wait" gives him the joy of anticipation. It lets him know that if he pauses for a moment, then he can continue going up the steps and that he has your approval.

Use the command "Wait" when you are putting his food down on the floor. Make him wait for a second, long enough for you to get out of the way before he starts to eat his dinner. He can wait to get out of the car or get out of the door. He can also wait for you to go first through doorways and down flight of stairs. "Wait" must always be followed by the release word "Ok" to let your dog know it is ok for him to continue with the activity at hand.

## Training Your Dog To Stand

"Stand" is one of the basic commands that the American Kennel Club (AKC) requires for its Companion Dog degree. It is formally called Stand for Examination and your dog must not move a toe while the judge goes over his body.

At first glance, the "Stand" does not seem a necessary command for pet dogs. You may, indeed, decide to skip it. But before you do, here's what you can use it for if you decide to teach it. The "Stand" is a wonderful piece of vocabulary to have when you want to groom your dog. "Stand" is nice when you want to cancel out the automatic sit on rainy days, when there's mud underfoot, or when it's too cold for your dog to sit outdoors. In addition, you may want your dog to stand for examination informally. If he's shy of strangers, not well socialized or skittish, having people handle him and pet him while he remains standing still is one of the exercises that will help him overcome his shyness. It's also nice for picture taking and it is easy to teach.

Get your dog onto his feet any way you can; lift him, start him heeling, place your hand under his belly, saying "Stand", and exert a mild pressure upward. Work in a quiet room, without distractions. Be gentle and soothing. Above all, when your dog sits again, do not yell "No-Stand!" In fact, if your dog was standing and you yelled, the very first thing he'd do would be to sit or

crouch. Once you get your dog standing, you can pet him or brush him, keeping one hand under his belly and repeating the command "Stand" in a soothing tone.

Try this routine for about five minutes a day, using the time to groom your dog, pet him, or sing to him. A great time to work on this is right after you come back from an outdoor training session. In about a week, your pet will happily stand on the floor and maybe even in the bathtub.

Now that your puppy has learned to stand on command, next time you brush him, when you finish one side, tell him "Turn around" and gently swing him around with your hands so that his head ends up where his tail was and vice versa. Now, tell him, "Good dog" or "Smart dog" while brushing his far side.

There are other obvious bonuses to training your pet. As you can already see, the more you teach him, the faster he can learn. Once he has the basics down pat, many new commands, games and tricks will be learned almost automatically. Even the complex activities that take time will take less time. In addition, the more your dog learns, the more mutual pleasure there will be in the whole education process. The key to it all is to systematically teach him how to learn. Then, anything is possible.

## Teaching Your Puppy "Stand"

When you give a dog any command, you have automatically assumed a dominant role and put the dog into a submissive one. Standing is a somewhat dominant canine posture, whereas the Sit and the Down are submissive canine positions, so it is sometimes difficult to teach a naturally submissive puppy to Stand when told. Given the command "Stand," many dogs will obey, but quickly lower their tails, ears and head - all submissive body language. Be gentle and patient. A perfect puppy Stand has four feet on the ground (that's the hard part), but it's also nice to see the head up and the tail wagging. Don't worry if at first your puppy would rather be a clown than stand still. Eventually they all grow up.

Let's say your puppy Rufus is learning the word "Stay" which (fortunately in this case) sounds a little like "Stand." Whenever you catch him standing still, it can work to your advantage. The puppy may pause for a moment to figure out which one you said, giving you the perfect opportunity to reinforce it with a "good stand." However, puppies do not spend much time standing around, so you'll have to teach him, not just rely on trying to catch him in the act.

One way is to walk him into a stand.

When he is pretty good at heeling, slow down and as you come to a stop, bring your right hand in front of him (palm side toward his nose) as you say "Stand." Perform this hand signal gently or Rufus will think he is going to be zonked and he'll duck! Practice by taking one or two slow steps (without a "Let's go" command) followed by a "Stand" command. Getting that head held high and happy and the tail wagging calls for a treat poised for a moment with a

"Watch me!" A couple of reasonable or good "stands" are followed by a rousing romp in the early days of training. Standing still is very hard.

Again, take advantage of every possible occasion to ask your puppy to Stand. If you've been asking him to Sit before putting his dinner on the floor, now you can alternate a Sit with a Stand - and offer a treat reward right out of the dinner bowl. Use the Stand command to begin a brushing/grooming session, but release him after a few seconds. A "perfect stand" is only required of an adult dog for about a minute. Standing is necessary for at least part of his weekly grooming, but not standing at attention. In fact, during every grooming session you can make use of the Sit, the Stand, and the Down.

## Teaching Your Dog The "Enough" Command

"Enough" is one of the most unusual yet necessary commands you will ever teach your pet. It is a command that will stop an activity when it is time to do so, which is after it was "Ok" and before it gets to be too much.

To teach your dog the "Enough" command, wait until he is about to go too far with something. A perfect example would be a noise at the door. He runs to the door, listens, maybe sniffs, and then begins to bark. After a good minute or so, you notice that your loyal watchdog is still barking. This is the perfect time for him to learn the word enough!

With a deep, resonant but not overly loud tone, say his name followed by "Enough." What happens next? He will turn and look at you while waiting for a response. You will then praise him immediately for stopping and looking at you. If he resumes barking, repeat the command "Enough!" with a more assertive tone and again praise him if he stops.

However, if your dog is an incessant barker, you will have to get up, go to the door, grab his collar and give him one good gentle shake followed by saying "Enough." Praise him when he stops.

If your dog has not gotten the message at this time and starts yapping again, turn quickly back to him. Give him three shakes this time and then repeat the command "Enough!" Take him away from the door and do an occasional check to make sure he has not sneaked away.

You can use the command "Enough" in a variety of situations. A good example is when you are playing with your dog and you do not feel like playing anymore or when he gets too excited during play and gets too rough and starts mouthing. Say "Enough" and stop the play. If necessary, grab him and hold him until he looks at you then say the command. Do this repeatedly until he gets the message.

Other types of situations when it is appropriate to give this command are the following: when giving treats; when playing fetch, when on an outing. Your dog will quickly learn that "Enough" means that whatever he is doing was ok but it is going to stop for the time being.

It is important to keep in mind that "Enough" and "No" are two different commands and should be used carefully so as not to confuse your dog. "Enough" means that what was happening was ok but has to stop for now. On the other hand, "No" means that whatever he is doing is forbidden now and at all times.

## Teaching Your Puppy To Come

Teaching a young puppy to come when called starts off perfectly. The puppy learns his name and that people use it when they want to give him something fabulous like dinner or a new toy, so he comes running. Well, he soon learns it is not a perfect world. He may hear his name called to come in from outdoors just when he is having fun or while enjoying a nap.

The biggest, the number one mistake people make with this command is to say "Come!" when there is no possible way to enforce it. The puppy only has to disobey a few times when he hears "Come!" and you have taught him (and he has learned) that he has an option. He can come, or not.

Never give him that choice. Only call "Come" if the puppy is on his way into your outstretched arms, or on leash so you can guide him toward you. That rule is in effect until your adult dog is "proofed" (tested by numerous and diverse distractions) at about two years of age. And to be honest, with lots of dogs, it is a lifetime rule.

The second biggest mistake is to call the puppy to come to you and then scold him. Children are guilty of doing this, so be sure that they understand they must never do it to their puppy. If you catch your pet being naughty, you go to him. If he was up to no good and you come upon the scene of the crime even one minute later, it is too late to scold or punish a dog. Just never say, "Come" if you are angry.

Your tone of voice will tell him not to come, not to come anywhere near you; you have set him up to disobey you. So say "Come" when he is happily trotting toward you, or when you have him on leash a few feet in front of you and can guide him to you if he is distracted. Until he is older and much better educated, call the puppy with just his name. When he responds and is racing toward you, then get in a "Come good dog" as quickly as you can say it.

Always use a happy voice, crouch down, open your arms wide, smile, and when your puppy is on his way, say "Come!" If you have been having trouble getting a prompt response, have a treat ready. Another way to encourage a puppy to come to you is to pretend to run the other way. As the pup comes after you, stop, turn and say, "Come!" (Smile, treat or pat.) It is the irresistible game of chase and puppies love it!

## **5 Tips To Remember When Teaching The "Come" Command**

1. Use it sparingly. When you overuse "Come", puppies stop paying attention. When your puppy understands the command, avoid using it all the time. Say it infrequently and make it extremely rewarding.
2. Do not chase your puppy if he does not respond. Practice on-lead for now.
3. Never call for negatives. If you have to groom, bathe, or isolate your puppy, do not use "Come." Also avoid using it when you are angry. You will only scare your puppy out.

4. If your puppy runs away from you, do not repeatedly call or correct him.
5. Use a different command to bring your puppy inside. Coming in from outdoors is a big drag, no more fun than being left alone or ignored. Using the "Come" command when you want to bring him in makes it a negative command. Instead, pick a command like "Inside." Start using it on-lead when bringing your puppy into the house. Quickly offer a treat or ball toss.

## Putting The "Come" Command Into Practice

Try to combine the command "Come" to your daily practice with your puppy. Make sure he sits in front of you before you praise him. This will prevent him from sideswiping you when you call him. You know the routine. You call your dog. He races at you full tilt. Just as you reach out for him, he swerves and departs.

If you call your dog and he doesn't come, go and find him, snap on his lead, then say "Come" in as pleasant a voice as you can muster, and back up, the dog following along to the very place you were standing when you first said the command.

This translates to the dog as "When I call you to come, you come to where I am." Your dog will get it. He understands that when you call him he must go to you.

### **An Alternative Way Of Teaching Your Puppy The "Down, Stay" Command**

Teaching a little puppy to lie down is much easier than teaching a big dog to lie down because this command puts the dog in a submissive, vulnerable position. For this reason, puppy or dog, begin this command at home, indoors. Ask your puppy to "Sit." Now pat the floor, actually tap it and make a sound with your open hand, palm down and say "Down," dropping your voice to give the puppy the low feeling of the exercise.

Some puppies, young ones in particular, will simply lie down to sniff your hand. If yours does, praise him and pet him so that he relates good feelings to lying down when told. If he looks at your hand but does not lie down,

place your other hand behind his forelegs and draw the legs gently forward, repeating "Down, Good Puppy." Pat him as he stays lying down.

When your puppy seems steady or comfortable, tell him "Stay" and get up and back up a foot or so. Break him with "Ok" and praise him warmly. Repeat up to four times the first day. Continue to practice the "Down, Stay," adding it to your regular twice-a-day training routine and shuffling it in with "Sit," "Stay," and "Come."

When working indoors on the "Down," you will probably not need the leash. But if you do, use it. The leash may make your puppy feel more serious. Put it on and let it hang or hold it, whatever works for you. When you say "Stay" and back up, you can pick up the leash handle and take it with you. Your puppy may work better on leash. However, when you begin to practice "Down" outside, the puppy must be on leash so he will not run away or just fool around. But don't start doing "Down" outdoors until he is very comfortable doing it on his own inside. When he is lying down most of the time without the physical assist of pulling his legs forward, you can try the exercise outside.

He may not want to lie down outside on the first few tries. Assist him and then make your "Stays" brief until he gets used to doing this command anywhere with relative ease. Start to increase the time of the "Down, Stay" indoors. Have the "Stay" last five minutes, then one minute, then ten minutes. Do not break the dog because you see he is starting to get restless or starting to get up. He will know that he is controlling the training if you do break him on his clues, so decide ahead of time the length of the "Stay" and stick to it!

If he gets tired or bored, he can fall asleep. In fact, many puppies do. Wake him by gently tapping your foot on the floor. In other words, wake him but do not startle him. In this way, he'll open his eyes but stay on command. Then you can break him with "Ok" and praise him when he gets up.

## **How To Train Your Dog To "Retrieve"**

The "Retrieve" must be learned step by step. First, you should teach your dog to take a very light dumbbell and hold it. Even though a handler has never tried this with his dog he should be able to accomplish it in one lesson. If you are training a dog who refused to retrieve when some other method was used, and he has become stubborn or frightened, it might take two or

three lessons. The length of time it takes will depend upon your skill in using your voice as you tighten his collar.

Teaching a dog to retrieve is one of persuasion, and your voice is your most important asset here. You must use your dog's name repeatedly before each command and do so in a most persuasive tone of voice. Your voice should be kept low, firm, and pleasant, and you should talk to the dog continually as you urge him to take the dumbbell. When your dog takes it, you should immediately sound very pleased and praise him happily and excitedly as you pet him.

Never raise your voice in anger or impatience; if the dog appears to be stubborn, never shove the dumbbell in your dog's mouth or against his gums, never jerk your dog's collar, and don't hit him over the head with the dumbbell. Be gentle but firm with him at all times.

Start your dog in a quiet corner and keep him on a leash for the first three steps. Place the dumbbell under, in front of, and close to, your dog's upper lip, and as you tell him to "Get it," put your third finger behind his canine tooth. This will open his mouth slightly and you can gently slide the dumbbell into his mouth. If you can't use your right hand to open his mouth, use the index finger of your left hand. Quickly tell your dog to "Hold it," as you stroke his nose on top, in one direction away from his nose, with your right hand, and you stroke him under the chin with your left hand. By stroking him this way you will keep the dumbbell in his mouth. You should be praising him as you do this. Keep the dumbbell in your dog's mouth for two or three seconds at first so he can get the feel of it.

Most dogs accept the dumbbell gracefully and hold it firmly the first time. This is especially true of puppies who will actually reach out to take it and hold it for you. However, some dogs will put up a struggle, and you will have to hold their jaws closed gently with both hands around their muzzles as you command them firmly, but quietly, to "Hold it." Generally speaking, the majority of dogs will hold the dumbbell if you are gentle with them and talk to them reassuringly. Be careful not to bang the dog's teeth with the dumbbell.

After placing the dumbbell in your dog's mouth two or three times to get his reaction to it, teach him to take it by himself. Slide your dog's medium link chain or heavy nylon choke collar up high on his neck, behind his ears and high under his chin, and hold it in your left hand. Your right hand will be holding the dumbbell. By pushing against the dead ring with your thumb you will be able to draw the collar into the palm of your hand very steadily and smoothly. Do not jerk the collar, just tighten it smoothly and quickly. When

the dog takes the dumbbell you should let go of his collar immediately and praise him.

## Teaching Your Puppy To Come And Fetch

In teaching your puppy the "Come" command, position yourself several feet away from him. Kneel or bend down, say his name and then come, at the same time you are clapping your hands. Repeat this several times if necessary to get the puppy to come to you. As the puppy begins to understand this exercise, and as you begin to get his attention more easily, move back a few feet farther.

Do not make the mistake of calling him from a distance of twenty-five or thirty yards when he is not paying attention to you. If you do that and he ignores you, you are teaching him that it is okay to ignore you. You are defeating the purpose of puppy pre-training, which is to pattern him to pay attention to you and to do what you ask of him.

Another great activity is the "Fetch" command. Even if you have a breed that is not a retriever, fetching is a great thing for the puppy to learn. It is not only an easy and pleasant way to exercise a dog but is also the basis for many other tasks the dog can learn in the future such as carrying the newspaper.

Teaching retrieving is easy and fun if you do not expect perfect performance the first few times. Remind yourself that this will not come naturally to all pups at first, especially the very independent and the very shy pups. You just have to keep at it. The rewards are great. The younger you begin teaching this, the easier it will be.

Tie a sock or small cloth (white or light color) in a knot. Dangle it excitingly in front of the pup's mouth. Encourage him if he starts to lick it or opens his mouth. Toss the sock a couple of feet in front of the pup. If he goes to it and sniffs, praise him like crazy! If he picks it up, attract his attention to come back to you by calling him, clapping your hands, patting the floor or whatever will entice him to return. Do not overdo this exercise. Two or three retrieves at a time is plenty. If he is not too excited about it, once is enough.

Gradually increase the length of your throw. If the pup reaches the point where he picks it up and runs away, put a cord or string on his collar and gently guide him back to you. Some people prefer using a small ball. The movement is a good attention-getter. Just be sure that you do not throw the ball too far to get the pup's attention.

Experts suggest using a brightly colored ball and rolling it off his nose from the top of his head. If the movement of the ball does not interest the pup, face him close to a wall so that the ball will roll back out towards the pup again.

## Dog Collars & Leads

What collar to use in training is perhaps the most controversial subject in the dog training world. There is a variety to choose from. There are flat collars, and there are choke collars made from leather, nylon, or chain. Finally, there is the pinch collar, also known as the prong or spiked collar. At first glance, it might seem that the most humane collar to use is the flat collar or one of the light choke collars.

These look the least threatening and appear to be the most comfortable. However, if you really wanted to hurt a dog (not on purpose of course!), the thinner the choke collar, the more damage to his throat and neck you could inflict. Also, with a choke collar the dog has an instinctive reflex at his disposal to deal with the sensation of something tightening a grip around his neck. He may misinterpret the correction on the choke collar as a stranglehold and unnecessarily become rebellious or afraid. So things are not always what they seem.

For example, what kind of knife would a patient want his surgeon to operate with, a dull jackknife or a razor-sharp scalpel? Obviously the latter, even though its edge can send a shiver through us. While many handlers start every dog on a flat collar, it is only the first step on the training ladder. The next rung up is a choke collar and finally then to work up to the pinch collar. Remember, we're not using the collar as an instrument of punishment or correction; its function is to shock an inappropriate instinct and then arouse or stimulate an appropriate instinct. When the dog learns to be positively motivated by a light tug on a flat collar and then a stronger tug on the choke collar, he can be introduced to a light jerk on the pinch collar.

Training a dog with a pinch collar is consistent with the way a surgeon uses

his scalpel. The doctor wants to cut out the tumor or damaged tissue and by doing so he arouses the patient's healing powers. While the pinch collar may seem to be a menacing implement, when used properly it is very "clean" and therapeutic.

Finally, when a dog is shocked by the pinch collar in the correct manner he is aroused by the novelty of the sensation. It is a feeling he has never felt before, nor is there an instinct evolved to deal with it. It is a brand-new moment and the handler is free to train the dog how to deal with it.

## **The Proper Way Of Leash Training Your Puppy**

Leash training should not be any problem at all. You can start by playing a simple follow-the-leader game the very first day that your puppy is home. Follow him around and tell him what a good puppy he is. As soon as he is comfortable with this little game, reverse it by getting him to follow you for a while. Call to him, teaching him his name at the same time. Do what you can to get his attention such as whistling, clapping, and praising. You may also bend down and extend your arms to get him to come to you.

In about one week, your puppy will follow you just about everywhere you go. This is the time to add a light leash. A show lead is a good, reasonable priced starter collar and leash combination for fast growing puppies. Put the leash on him and follow him wherever he goes while keeping the leash loose. If you are taking him outside from day one, begin with the leash on every time you take him outside and play the follow-the-leader game off leash inside the house.

Follow him, let him explore and sniff around, making sure it is safe and within his boundaries. After about one week, he will happily walk and follow or walk and be followed on a leash. Every time you take him outdoors, encourage him to follow you the same way you did at home. Playing tug-of-war will not get him to move if he feels stuck. But if you bend down, extend your arms to the side, and use your sweetest voice, he will gladly unstuck himself and run right to you.

Once your puppy learns to follow you around on a leash, you are now ready for the next step. The next phase to leash training will have a strong positive effect on the way he bonds to you. You may do this exercise inside or

outside your home: Tie the leash to your belt and have him follow you wherever you go. He can follow you while you wash your car, water the plants, or while cleaning the house. Your puppy will then become literally as well as figuratively close to you.

At first, you may need to give him a little encouragement to come along. At any rate, he will catch on pretty fast that he is tied to you. He will accept the bond and walk along with you everywhere. You can then tie him on for longer periods and give him your close company while you teach him to stay near you and to watch you. He will be learning to keep his eye on you and to identify with you. This type of exercise will create a meaningful bonding effect between you and your dog.

Remember to stop your puppy whenever he mouths or bites on his leash. Firmly say "No" and take the leash out of his mouth without playing tug-of-war. If he persists, repeat the word "No" followed by a firm but gentle tug upward with the leash to free it from his mouth.

## Fun With Leash-Training

Leash practice should be fun. If the puppy is timid, walk him up and down indoors, pulling gently and coaxing to keep him in motion and in line with you. Then try it in the yard or up and down a quiet street. Never jerk violently, or choke him if he refuses to move. Let him wander off at will; if he sits down, pat and laugh at him a bit, and wait a moment before beginning to get him going. He will soon realize that the leash is a tie between him and you.

Puppies learn more quickly from other dogs than from us. If you have a friend with an older, leash-trained dog, walking together will soon put the idea over to your puppy. When he finds that the leash means "We are going out!" it becomes a friend, not a foe.

Like the collar, it is a signal he soon learns, and will bring to your attention when he wants action! You are teaching him this when you pick it up and say "Here is your leash, we are going for a walk!" At first, start him on a long leash. Go as far away from him as the leash permits, then call "Come (dog's name)!" As you do this, give the leash a little jerk toward you. If he resists, pull gently, and the moment he is within reaching distance, pet and praise him. .

## How To Train Your Puppy To Heal

What is healing? Heeling is not the same as going for a walk. Heeling is an obedience exercise in which the dog stays close beside you, paying attention only to you and where you are going. As your puppy grows up, heeling will become the safe way for you to walk your dog through crowds and across streets, ignoring all normal or unusual distractions. It is the easiest lesson to begin with because you'll be taking your new puppy outside on leash to eliminate and you can practice three times on each trip - on your way out, after he relieves himself, and coming back inside.

This will not be the heeling exercise as done in obedience class, but more of a lesson in "pre-heeling" because you can begin off-lead anywhere that's safe, indoors or out. And instead of "Heel," use the friendlier "Let's go!"

Begin by getting the pup's attention as he's trotting along next to you, to make him conscious of what he is doing. Some pups will follow if you lean over, quietly clapping your hands in front of their nose; some like to hear cheerful chatter; others just want to go wherever you go. As you move along, you can add an occasional, "Sparky, watch me!" No doubt by now you've noticed that some one-word commands are actually two or three words. Just run them together and your puppy will catch on perfectly.

Hold his attention by walking just quickly enough to make the puppy want to keep up with you. If he's not paying attention, stop and begin again. No correction. It all begins with just one step in the right direction, followed by verbal praise. Following a treat that smells good may get him started, but if a young pup's attention is totally elsewhere, this is not the right moment for a lesson. A few minutes of playtime, followed by a drink of water, may put him back on track to try again. Or wait until next time. You can practice anywhere, anytime, on or off leash. As you notice him walking next to you, take advantage of the opportunity to get in a speedy, "Let's go! - good dog."

Be realistic in what you expect of a puppy. A few steps on command earn a reward. A few more steps earn a reward. A week later Sparky is heeling nicely so praise and quit practicing immediately! Practice again later. Puppies arrive in the winter, too, when outside lessons are not possible. A long hallway or a basement is perfect for indoor training. No distractions, limited space so your pup cannot go too far wrong, and you're sure to have his attention because you are the most fascinating thing around.

Add some right turns for variety and to be sure he is really paying attention.

As you make the turn, bend over and clap your hands to keep him on course. Left turns are harder because you have more to do. Put your left foot in front of the pup to gently guide him into the turn. Careful, or you'll step on the pup and he won't think this game is very much fun! However, if your left foot happens to bump the puppy, or he plows into it, don't apologize. If he thinks it was his mistake, he will learn to pay closer attention. Repeat the "Watch me" signal.

## Teaching Your Dog To Heel (Part 1)

When teaching your dog to heel, you'll probably have to start outdoors. Even if you have a small dog and lots of space indoors, heeling is a pretty silly thing to do inside. And most dogs can see that this is so. There's no reason why you can't start out in a fairly quiet outdoor spot and, as your dog catches on, gradually begin to work him around distractions.

Start with a "Sit, Stay." Call your dog to your left side, guiding him with his leash, and say "Sit." This is the heel position: the dog is sitting at your left side, facing straight ahead, his head and shoulders even with your hip. You are both now ready to begin. But first, check and make sure your dog is sitting straight. If he is not, when you start to walk forward, he will either cross in front of you and trip you, or, if he is pointed away from you, he may not even notice that you have started without him.

Having him sit straight inspires him to pay attention. So if he sits crooked, take the time to straighten him each and every time you practice the heel. This means he is facing the same way you are so that when you begin to walk, you and your dog will be parallel. In addition, since the dog is naturally attuned to body language, you are going to cue him by beginning to walk on your left leg, the leg closest to him. You will also move your left leg last, taking a full step with the right and closing up with the left.

In this way, the dog will not only follow the word "Heel," but he will follow your left leg, the one he can see better since it is closer to him. To reinforce this, from now on when you leave your dog on a "Stay," leave by moving your right leg first. In this case, since the dog will not be with you, it does not matter which leg you move last when you stop. So when your dog is moving along with you, start and stop on the left leg and when your dog is remaining behind, leave him there moving your right leg first.

With your left leg, walk forward, say his name, then "Heel." Walk at a nice, brisk pace. If he remains seated or lags, tug and release with the leash, repeating the command "Heel." If he forges ahead, jerk him back and then release the leash, saying "Heel" or "No, Heel!" as you make the correction. Save his name for positive reinforcement. Do not work with a tight leash, forcing the dog to remain at your side. It is better to jerk and release. If you force him to stay in the heel position, he will never learn to assume it on his own on a loose leash.

When correcting him, jerk the leash so that you actually move your dog's front feet back to the place they should be. Do not merely tug away at his neck. This is merely annoying without being constructive; it does not tell the dog where he should walk. As you correct, also sweeten the work by patting your left leg, talking to him, praising him for each and every step taken without the need for a correction.

When you stop, make sure you move your left leg last and your dog must sit. Say "Sit." Praise him when he does. This sit is supposed to be automatic. By the end of your first week of daily practice, your dog should start to sit without being reminded whenever you stop walking. Always praise him for doing so by saying "Good Dog" in your warmest voice and leaning down and hugging him against your leg. You do this by swinging your arm around his left side and back onto his chest. Hugging him against your leg reinforces the heel position as well as the automatic sit, which inspired the hug in the first place.

## Teaching Your Dog To Heel (Part 2)

Don't expect your heeling exercises to work smoothly right away or even all the time. Even dogs have good days and bad days. If your dog is having a bad day, he may still execute a near perfect "Sit, Stay." But he may be too distracted to heel well. That doesn't mean you shouldn't practice. But you might want to cut your practice short this time. Be sure to end on a positive note by doing something your dog will do well even on his bad days. Lessons should end sweetly so that both of you will want to get back to work again the next day.

Of course, if your dog is having a bad day every day, there's something wrong in your training program. How do you train your dog? Are you clear with your instructions? Are you patient, or do you shrug your shoulders and quit in the middle? Are you fair, swift, and forgiving? Are you working long

enough? You should practice for at least half an hour a day. Practice ten minutes on your dog's morning walk after he has relieved himself and twenty minutes on his evening walk.

Once a week or so, work for forty-five minutes or an hour at one shot. Even a five month old puppy can handle it if given a rest in the middle. Ask yourself if your expectations are high enough. Your dog can read your attitude, and he can fulfill it, too. He is not dumb. He can learn to work beautifully, no matter what his breed. It's only a matter of time until he heels well. Be patient and keep working.

If you have passed the above criteria and your dog is still having seven bad days a week, perhaps you are not attentive when you train. Your dog will know this, too, and if you don't pay attention to his work, he won't pay attention to it either. Why should he? But if you do give him thirty minutes a day of your full attention, you'll end up with a well-trained dog.

When you are out working and teaching your dog the virtues of heeling, sprinkle in all his other commands as well. It will give the work variety. It will teach your dog to make smooth transitions between commands, that which will make him look like an intelligent, working creature. This magic usually happens about five weeks along in the training. That's the time when many dogs seem to understand the larger picture, when things click. However, your dog may get the point in four weeks - or in eight.

Don't worry about it. Just enjoy it when you see it happen. At that point, when he's attentive without reminders, when he'll heel with few corrections, when he sits automatically whenever you stop, when he executes his commands on verbal cue without additional manipulation, continue to practice, occasionally pushing the time so that he learns to work for a longer period without a break. Also, intersperse play with your training. And, when you're safely indoors and at home, begin some of his off leash puppy work. By now, he's coming along so well that nothing could stop you!

## **Training Your Dog To "Come-fore" And "Go-to-heel"**

The "come-fore" teaches your dog to sit and face you instead of sitting toward the left side. Keep your lead slack when teaching this exercise. Command "Front!" and then walk backward without moving the position of

your hands on the lead. As the dog is coming in front of you, gradually gather the lead up and coax him in close. Hold the lead tight and command "Sit!" Praise him immediately and then command "Stay." Step back to heel position without circling.

Once again, walk backward, keep your lead slack, then command "Front!" Don't drag your dog around on a tight lead. The lead is used to bring the dog in close and to make him sit in front. Step back to heel position. Command "Front!" Remember, the dog does the turning! All you do is walk backward two or three steps. When the dog turns around, gather the lead up and prompt him to sit. Praise at once.

Stand up straight and do not lean forward towards your dog. Hold your hands low and close to your body. Pull up on the lead to make the dog sit. Insist that your dog sits straight and squarely on both hips. If he sits at an angle, hold the leash tight and cuff him on whichever hip is out of line. Every obedience exercise includes the "come-fore" position. Therefore, it is important that the dog learns to do it correctly from the very start of his training so he will not get into the habit of doing a sloppy work.

**Go-To-Heel:** The "going-to-heel" exercise teaches the dog to go to your left side from the come-fore position. With your dog in the come-fore position, take hold of the lead the same as you do when heeling. Say "Heel!" walk to the right of your dog and keep going. The dog will swing around to your left side automatically. Tell your dog to sit, then praise him! Command "Stay!" and step in front of him again. You should be as near your dog as possible. Again, command "Heel!" Walk past your dog and keep going.

The left hand guides the dog around into place at your left side. Make your dog sit! Tell him to stay and face him again. This time, to make your dog go to heel position, step backward with your left foot after you command "Heel!" and jerk the lead with a snap. This will bring the dog to all four feet. Now walk forward. Guide the dog around into place with your left hand. Make him sit immediately.

In doing the two exercises together, first start with the come-fore. Command "Front!" Walk backward with little motion of your body. Stand up straight. Keep your lead slack while the dog is making the turn. Gather up the lead as the dog comes in front, and hold the lead tight until he sits. Praise and pat him. Next, command "Heel!" Jerk the lead as you take a step backward with the left foot. Praise the dog at once as he swings around to heel position.

You may have to walk backward two or three steps at the beginning, but soon your dog will get the idea of going around to your left side by himself

whenever he hears the command "Heel!" In practicing the going-to-heel exercise, give the command without moving the leash, then snap it when you step back with your left foot. Praise him immediately. Move your feet less each time so that the dog must do most of the work.

## **Is It Possible To Train Your Puppy Off-Leash? (Part 1)**

It can be quite difficult to teach your puppy off-leash. It takes more concentration on the part of both you and your pet. However, it is also one hundred times more rewarding than on-leash work, the work on which it is based. Because it is more fun and more rewarding does not mean you can skip on-leash work and go straight to off-leash work. That would be like building a house without a foundation. You must have an excellent on-leash obedience before proceeding to off-leash work at all.

In addition to all this, the principle behind training off-leash work is somewhat different. In on-leash work, you want to push the dog, gradually, unpredictably, to see how well he'll work and to use his breaking as a way to show him that he must work longer, concentrate better and obey. His breaking and being put back on command is an important part of how and why he learns.

In off-leash work, the opposite is true, and this holds for puppies as well as for dogs. In off-leash work, you want to ease the dog slowly into doing exactly the right thing for longer periods of time. By rushing ahead, even slowly, so that the dog cannot deliver the off-leash skill you want, he learns he can get up and walk away. After all, there is no leash to stop him. You must convince your dog that you have the ultimate power to correct and control even without the leash. In order to do this, you must work very slowly. You must be patient. You must concentrate and work only until the point before which the dog will break.

Taking the leash off your dog outdoors is always a risk. When your dog is fully matured and fully trained, under certain circumstances, you may wish to take this calculated risk in order to let him play in the park or perhaps even heel smartly down the street, right at your side.

Under no circumstances will you want to take any kind of chance with your precious puppy. He is too immature to be able to concentrate reliably. He is

too easily distracted by things that look appealing enough to chase. He is even apt to get spooked by a loud noise he's never heard before. He might even experience a surprising surge of assertiveness and take off just to see what you'll do. Until all these issues are resolved by maturity and advanced training, your prime concern is your dog's safety.

In order to improve your puppy's training, to have fun with him and to give him more of the excellent grounding he needs to do safe, reliable off-leash work outdoors, you are going to do "fake" off-leash work with him indoors and even outdoors in a completely safe location. The work is fake because even when the puppy is off leash, he is still contained by walls or fences. But the puppy is very gullible. He won't really know that he's not capable of being trusted where he might get harmed. He will not only enjoy learning to work off-leash, he will feel incredibly proud of himself.

## **Is It Possible To Train Your Puppy Off-Leash? (Part 2)**

The best way to train your puppy to work off-leash is to do it in a safe location. You are giving him practice at being a grown up while protecting him as the vulnerable baby he is. Within the safety and quiet of your own living room and with your puppy's collar on but no leash, ask your puppy to "Sit" and then, using the hand signal, tell him to "Stay." Now step back and wait no more than one minute. Bend down, extend your arms to the side and warmly call your puppy into them. Praise. Your little puppy has just worked off leash!

After you play with your puppy for a minute or so, ask him to "Sit" again. This time, pat the floor and say "Down." When he lies down, tell him "Good dog-Stay" using a pleasant tone. Back up just a few feet and wait. After two minutes, bend, extend your arms and call him to you. Pet and praise. End your first off-leash lesson by playing his favorite game.

This sort of low key, safe, gentle off-leash training can be done with puppies under five months of age. You will begin the puppy with his grounding of basic commands on leash, and, as you are going forward with his on-leash outdoor work, you can begin his off-leash indoor work on top of your outdoor sessions. Here is a sample lesson:

Put a leash and a collar on your puppy and take him out for a walk. Let him

pull, sniff, and relieve himself. Praise. Put him in heel position, sitting straight at your left side. Tell him to heel and practice heeling with the automatic sit for ten minutes. Now, on a quiet side street, practice the sit stay, the come and sit front, and the stand stay. If your puppy is good at the down stay indoors, try a short one outdoors. Heel another five minutes. Say "Ok, good dog" and let him sniff, pull and maybe relieve himself again. Now you can take your puppy home.

When you get indoors, don't take off his collar and leash just yet. First, put him on a sit stay. While he's staying, unsnap the leash and remind him once more to "Stay." Back up and wait a minute. Release him with an "Ok." Crouch and extend your arms and hug and praise him. Now walk your puppy to another spot or another room and try a down stay. This time you can work him for two minutes. If he should break, take him back to the spot by holding his collar, repeat "Down-stay" and leave him. Then break him and praise. Never break him because he is starting to break anyway. He will know that you did that and your training program will be badly harmed. That is not what is meant by working until just before he breaks.

Working until before he breaks means that you are watching and aware. It means that you can, as time goes by, see the difference between faking and genuine loss of the ability to concentrate and work. Then you will do one last fun game and quit for the day. But any dog can do a two or three-minute down stay. So if you quickly mutter "Ok" as your dog starts to pop up from the down or lift his rump when he's supposed to be on a sit stay, you are fooling no one, least of all your dog. Unfortunately, he'll be the one to eventually pay for your mistake. His training will not be reliable if you "cheat" so that he "looks good." And then when you need the training to be absolutely reliable so that you can use it to save your dog's life, it won't be there, so do not cheat.

## **Training Your Dog Off-Leash (Part 1)**

When training your dog off-leash, remain in a protected area for at least the first month of training. Continue to work on all previous commands and all new safety commands with the regular leash, the drop line, the tab, alternating in no particular pattern. As you work, test your safety devices off leash with the fence bolted. Try the "Drop" on recall, the emergency down, the serious "Come," "No," and "Wait." However, do not work your dog to death or make him into a game.

You can begin to work your dog in the park. Use both the short and long lines so that when you take the drop line off, the dog is still wearing something. After he is working well on drop line, take it off and remind him immediately to heel. If he lags or moves out to the side, make a sharp correction with the tab and then praise him. Work only for a few minutes so that at the time you quit he is still working well. Do not push him into errors. Instead, build the time he will stay with you and obey you smartly without his leash and in this exciting, new environment.

When you are really confident and you are sure that your dog is sharp and obedient on all the safety commands, begin to try "Stays" and "Comes" from a distance in the park, first with the long line dragging and then with just the tab. If he is attentive and obedient now, you may begin to work him on the street.

When you first work your dog on the street with a drop line, work when the street in your area is least crowded and when traffic is lightest. First, there's the problem of distractions, which you do not need at this most difficult stage of training. Second, there's the mechanical problem of people stepping on your dropped long line, unintentionally giving your good dog a correction.

In order to fully concentrate and so that your dog can do the same, keep your first street lesson very short and work when no one is around. Of course, your drop line is dragging so that if your dog tries to run off, he will not be harmed. You will simply step hard onto the leash.

Plan at least a month for each new stage of training to make sure your dog behaves reliably even on his bad days. After a month of work in the park and a month of drop-line work on the street, you should be ready, if that is what you choose to do, to try working on the street with only the tab.

## **Training Your Dog Off-Leash (Part 2)**

After months and months of training your dog off-leash in a fenced area, in the park, with the drop line, and with the tab, you have now mastered your dog and his behavior. He is well trained, better than most dogs you have ever seen. Now, after a run or a hike and after some good obedience work in the park, you are now ready to take your dog to a familiar, quiet street. Start with a heel exercise while holding onto the leash tab. Drop the tab and heel him for half a block. Before you get near the corner, stop, have him sit, then praise him.

Pick up the tab and heel him home. Build his confidence with each session. You may never want to work your dog on busy city streets off leash, but by now when you run your dog in the park, you are sure he will come back when you call him. In addition, if you love the idea of taking a quiet stroll with your off-leash dog on a busy city street, you are well on your way toward that goal. You have to keep working with the tab on your dog's collar and your full attention on him. Soon, this kind of practice and pleasure will become second nature to both of you.

Below are some final points to keep in mind about training your dog off-leash.

1. Your dog does not have to be off leash every minute of an off-leash walk. If you meet a friend, see a great store window or find some other tempting distraction, snap the leash on your dog until you can once more give him your full attention.
2. Always keep a leash with you, even when you plan to keep it off the dog, just in case.
3. Once in a while, remind your dog that you are the leader of the pack. The best nonviolent way to do this is with the long "Down" (one-half hour). This is problem prevention at its finest.
4. Never expect great concentration from your dog when he is all pent up and needing exercise. Always give him a good run before off-leash street work.
5. Be sure you don't get lost on one aspect of dog ownership, training, showing, control. Remember that your dog has a wide range of needs.
6. Even as your dog gets older, give him reminders of you being the leader and reviews of his training. If he doesn't use it, he'll lose it.
7. Keep the love and high spirits in your relationship with your dog. When seeking fine control, don't forget to play some games and have some laughs.
8. When training and behavior starts to look messy, don't be afraid to go back to square one and tighten everything up again, on leash.
9. Don't forget the larger goals: good communication, mutual admiration and understanding, good times, and respect.

## Using A Drop Line and A Short Line In Off-Leash Training

Begin the work of teaching your dog to be as reliable off leash as he is when he's wearing one. Keep in mind that it will go slowly. Nothing flashy will happen right away. You'll have to be very patient. Do not take your dog off leash in an unprotected area unless both of you can truly handle that responsibility successfully.

You will need two tools for this stage of training; a drop line and a short line or leash tab. A drop line is a long leash - 10,12, 15 or 20 feet long. The cotton canvas ones are usually cheap and relatively easy to work with. You will train the dog in a protected area just as you did when he was a puppy, first lying the leash across your palm and then dropping it to the ground as you heel along. Since the drop line is so much longer than the regular leash, it may take your dog some time to get used to it dragging behind him. He may walk bowlegged or sideways at first. Let him work it out.

As you train, alternate between the drop line, the regular leash and the short line or tab. This is a piece of equipment you may have to make yourself. Many dog owners use leather key chains made to be worn on belts and merely eliminated the ring. Others made small leashes from old leashes or broken ones, cutting them down to a comfortable size.

The tab is a little leash, just big enough for your hand to grasp. It dangles from the collar. Its weight is a small reminder to the dog of your control and presence in his life, even when he is "off leash." It is one of the best training tools ever and your dog should wear his most of the time (at least for now).

The short line or tab allows you to make a professional feeling of correction even though your dog is not on leash. The feel of the tab hanging from his collar can remind him that even though he is free, you can still make corrections. Therefore, even when he is far away, the tab will remind him to come when called.

For now, we want to confuse your well-trained dog a little. By alternating leashes and by sometimes using more than one at a time, we will confound the dog. He will cease to know when he's on leash and when he's off. In addition, he will be unable to know which kind of a correction you can deliver and from what distance. He may just give up and behave.

Sometimes you will hang the tab on his collar and add his long line. Then after a warm-up, you will remove the long line and carry on with the training. The dog will not remember if the tab is on his collar or if he's totally free. If he makes a mistake and you can make a good correction with the tab, he'll know you are all powerful. Even an assertive dog can be dazzled by the two-leash method.

## Teaching Your Dog To Come When Being Called

One of the greatest joys of owning a dog is to be able to go for a walk in the park and let him run, knowing he will come when you call. Dogs that do not come when called are prisoners of the leash and, if loose, a danger to themselves and others. If your dog does not come when called, you don't have a reliable dog. Below are five tips to help you teach this command to your pet:

1. Exercise. Many dogs do not come when called because they do not get enough physical exercise. When they do get the chance, they run off and make the most of it by staying out for hours at a time. Every morning your dog wakes up with plenty of energy and the need to exercise. If that energy is not used up, it will transform itself into other behaviors, the most common of which are barking, chewing, digging, and running away or not coming when called. Consider what your dog was bred to do, and that will tell you how much exercise is needed. A few turns around the backyard is not enough. You will need to participate. Also keep in mind that taking the dog for a daily walk or jog is as good for you as it is for him!

2. Be nice to your dog whenever he comes to you. One of the quickest ways to teach your dog not to come to you is to call him and then when he comes, punish or do something he perceives as unpleasant. Many dogs consider being given a bath unpleasant. When he needs one, go get him instead of calling him to you. Another example of unintentionally teaching your dog not to come is to go for a run in the park and call him to you when it's time to go home. Repeating this sequence several times teaches the dog that fun is over! Soon, he may become reluctant to return to you when called because he is not yet ready to end the fun. You can prevent this kind of unintentional training by calling him to you several times during the outing, sometimes giving him a treat, sometimes just a pat on the head, and then letting her

play again.

3. Teach your dog to come when called as soon as you bring him home, no matter how young he is. Ideally, you acquired your pet as a puppy, which is the best time to teach him to come when called. Start right away. But remember, sometime between the fourth and eighth months of age, your puppy will begin to realize that there is a big world out there. While going through this stage, it is best to keep him on leash so that he does not learn to ignore you when you call.

4. When in doubt, keep your dog on leash. Learn to anticipate when he is likely not to come. You may be tempting fate trying to call once he has spotted a cat, another dog or a jogger. Of course, there will be times when you make a mistake and let him go just as another dog appears out of nowhere. Resist the urge to say "Come" over and over again. The more often you holler "Come," the quicker he learns to ignore you when off leash. Instead, patiently go and put him on leash. Do not get angry once you have caught him or he will become afraid of you. He will then run away when you try to catch him the next time.

5. Make sure that your dog always comes to you and lets you touch the collar before you reward with a praise or a treat. Touching the collar prevents the dog from developing the annoying habit of playing "Catch" which means coming toward you and then dancing around you, just out of reach.

## Training Your Puppy How To Track And Fetch

These are just two things you can do to build rapport between you and your puppy and at the same time teach him to respond positively to learning so that his advanced training will be easy.

**Tracking:** Puppy tracking is a wonderful way to get you and your puppy out for a walk. Tracking is natural for a dog and is relatively easy to teach, at least for short distances.

1. Find a park or a nice open area. The initial site does not need to be very big. Tie your puppy to something and let him watch you "lay a track" by placing tidbits on the ground one foot apart in a straight line for ten feet.

Also let him watch you put his favorite toy at the end of the track.

2. Walk back through the same track to the puppy. Take him to the first piece of food, point to it and say "Track." Encourage him to put his head down and keep it down by pointing to the next piece of food. He will quickly start smelling the food from piece to piece! When he reaches the toy, praise him and play with the puppy and the toy. Repeat this exercise three times.

3. If you practice two or three times a week on short tracks, he will become reliable pretty quickly. As his nose keeps to the ground, spread the treats a little farther apart each time you "track." When he can go fifty yards in one direction, lay another track at a 45-degree angle to the right or left. You should also have someone else start laying the tracks so that the puppy will learn to track different people. Do not try to hurry things along by going too far too fast or by making too sharp turns.

**Fetching:** Puppy fetching is important and helpful. It both uses energy and teaches the puppy to return to you. Again, this exercise will help as a basis for more advanced training later on.

1. Find a toy that your puppy really likes. Sometimes this can be difficult if your puppy is the type who does not like to play (and there are those types, it's up to you to teach them to play). A little agility work can loosen up a reluctant puppy, and when they are all wound up they are more apt to fetch. Try using a soft sock or small stuffed toy.

2. Put your puppy on a twenty-foot line. Place the toy in front of your puppy and back up, waving the toy gently on the floor as you move back. When the puppy first grasps the toy, tell him "Good boy!" and very gently tug it for just a second to make him hold it (no tug of war). Let go and praise him as he carries it. If he drops it, repeat the process.

3. After a few successes, throw the toy a few feet from the puppy and tell him "Fetch." When he gets it, praise verbally and let him carry it for a few seconds. Gently pull him to you (do not make him drop the toy by tugging too hard). When he reaches you, offer him a piece of treat for the toy. When he drops the toy, give him the treat. Repeat until he understands what you want. You will both greatly benefit from this game!

## Training Your Dog To Make Turns On The Lead

Check all collars to see that they are the right weight, length, and correctly placed on the dog. Hold the leash in both hands so the dog will be kept under control and the six-foot length will not seem awkward. Start the lesson with heeling and sitting. Make right-about and left U-turns every few feet so that the dog will be more attentive.

Say heel! Jerk! Praise! Again say heel! Jerk! Praise! Keep moving on the about-turn! Command "Sit!" up with the right hand, down with the left. Don't forget the praise. Large dogs can be brought around on the about-turn more quickly if the owner kicks backward with the right foot to rap the dog unexpectedly on the rear. Praise should follow immediately.

Transfer the lead from the left to the right hand before you tell the dog to sit. This will shorten the lead so that you will have control over the dog and can make him sit straight. When you prevent mistakes, you won't have to correct them later. Cuff him before he sits down and don't wait until he is already sitting! If he continues to sit crooked, cuff him harder. About turn! Jerk! Praise! Keep moving. Walk briskly, especially on the about-turn. Use a series of short, snappy jerks to make the dog forget outside distractions.

Jerk the lead in the direction of travel. Not up in the air! That lifts the dog from the floor. When you make an about-turn, pivot sharply to the right and snap the lead parallel to the floor after you are headed in the opposite direction. Keep moving! When you make a left U-turn, bump into the dog to make him draw back by himself. Carry the leash comfortably in both hands. Keep it short but slack, and have your dog under control. Tighten the lead to make a correction, but don't drag or hold it tight. When you snap the lead the right way, you will hear the collar click. Pat your side after you jerk the leash to reassure your dog, and coax him to come in close. While heeling, carry your left arm straight and hold it close to your body. When the dog forges ahead, jerk backward! When he lags, jerk forward!

Don't exaggerate hand motions. Use a wrist action as well as bending the elbow and snap the leash short and hard. Throughout the training, command first, correct second, praise third! Pat your left leg and tousele the dog's head after each correction to overcome hurt feelings. This is done without taking your hand from the leash.

The dogs must sit square and close to the side. Be careful not to step into

your dog! It will make him move away from you. If he sits wide, pull him in close and hold the lead tight until he sits down the way he should. When he goes too far ahead, hold the leash in back of your body in the left hand and jerk backward before you stop moving. If he persists in sitting too far ahead, step across in front of him and block him with your left leg. At the same time, pull the lead tight across your left hip. He must learn never to pass your left knee when either heeling or sitting, and not to sit at an angle. If he does, take up the slack in the lead with the right hand and use your left hand to cuff him on the off-side hip! Praise your dog immediately after the correction so his feelings won't be hurt.

## How To Teach Your Dog To "Go Lie Down"

Many dog owners consider the "Go lie down" as their favorite command. The "GO lie down" not only tells the dog to assume a reclining position, it tells him to do it elsewhere. When you are talking on the phone, drinking hot coffee, or working out, "Go lie down" is the command you need to send your overly affectionate dog someplace else. Do not feel guilty if you cannot give attention to him every time he asks you to. If he's just had his walk, he's eaten well, you've exercised him, trained him, played with him, "Go lie down" is a humane, handy answer to your own personal dog problem.

Before you begin with the exercise, put your dog on leash. Point toward a corner of the room you two are in. Tell him in a pleasant tone, "Go lie down." Now, run with him to where you were pointing, repeating "Go lie down" followed by "Good boy" with a final "Down" as you pat the floor in the corner of the room.

Now, pat your dog's head. Go across the room and sit down. If he stays, after a minute or two tell him "Ok, good boy." You can even pet him when he approaches you. Now repeat the exercise about two more times, varying the minutes that he stays in position.

Each day, try this exercise three times. Work in different rooms so that he will do this no matter where you are. This is preferable to the command "Go to place" or "Go to your bed" because you will want to use this in places where your dog is and his bed isn't.

What happens if your trained dog lies down on the spot when you say "Go lie

down?" Some people would find that funny. They would think that when the dog heard "down", he ignored the other strange words and just obeyed the command he had already learned. They would think that the training was going so well. But you know better, so you will calmly say, "No-Go lie down", taking the dog by his collar and transporting him against his will to the far side of the room, the side you pointed to.

If your dog makes this mistake early on, it is a genuine misunderstanding that you can and will correct without taking it personally and with patience. However, if your dog is already doing the "Go lie down" and then when you say it he lies down at your feet, beats his tail on the floor and pastes his ears back, he's acting. He is using passive assertion to get his way instead of doing your bidding. Don't be mad. He can't help it if years of selective breeding made him smart, assertive, and witty. Dogs are built to try to rise to the leadership of their packs.

Some dogs take the obvious, aggressive route to the top. Others are more subtle in their attempts. In either case, it is not a personal affront, nor is it to be accepted. It is part of being a dog owner that you look at your pet, think about his behavior, understand him, love him, and remind him of the limits you have set for him. In fact, the "Go lie down", aside from being very useful, is another wonderful, nonviolent way to remind your dog that you are the leader of the pack.

## **How To Train Your Dog To "Scent Retrieve"**

Because dogs are drawn more to articles of nature than to manufactured items, start by placing six twigs (bark chips work equally well) in a four-foot-by-four-foot area. Wear scaled, rubber, kitchen gloves when handling the articles to avoid scenting any, and position them so none touches another. Put one of the objects inside your shirt to scent the item thoroughly, and go leash up your pet.

When the two of you arrive at the training site, heel to a point ten feet from the nearest article. After giving your dog the command, "Stay," withdraw one of the scented objects from your shirt. Capture attention by flipping the item in the air a few times. Pass it once under pooch's nose, remind "Stay," and walk to the unscented articles. Place the scented article peripherally near the others such that you can be sure of its location. Return to your dog, briefly

put your hand near his nose, then command, "Find It," while gesturing encouragingly toward the articles. Repeated "Find Its" and gestures to get your dog moving are permissible.

As your companion approaches the objects, follow slightly behind. You need to be nearby, but not so close as to distract. When nearing such curious things, almost any dog lowers his head to examine them. (The dog who shows scant interest should be encouraged via voice and gesture to do so; he shouldn't be forced.) As he inspects the items, softly praise, "Good."

Should he try to pick up any article other than the correct one, gently intone, "No, No," while guiding him from it. When your retriever eventually sniffs the right one - regardless whether he reacts to it - instantly respond excitedly, "Good Find It - Bring!"

Pet your companion, telling him what a Good Find It he did, and walk him from the training area, allowing him to carry his prize if he wishes. End the session at this point to guarantee finishing high, which would be at risk were the routine repeated. When you do Out the article, use only minimal force in taking it should your dog fail to release when commanded. Don't chance dampening enthusiasm through compulsion.

After three training sessions like the foregoing, switch to placing the scented object among the others prior to bringing your pet to the area. A week later, change to using ring articles by substituting them for whatever items you've been using. Should you meet any resistance to the formal articles, inserting them inside individual, cloth gloves can make the objects more canine-acceptable.

## **How To Train Your Dog To "Drop On Recall"**

The first time that you try a Drop on Recall with your dog, try to have the right attitude. If you have a negative attitude your dog will sense it, and you will probably show it when you give him the signal. Always expect your dog to do the work correctly. As you train each individual dog you will learn to read him so you can determine what his reactions will be to a given situation. For instance, a very sensitive dog will probably Drop fast the first time you give him the Down signal on a Recall, but he will turn so that he faces away from you. By giving this dog quick praise in a happy tone of

voice, you will soon have him dropping fast and looking at you.

By communicating with your dog you will have a fast, happy, reliable, accurate worker. The handler who doesn't teach his dog this preliminary exercise before he trains his dog to Drop, either verbally or by signal, has to correct his dog dozens and dozens of times when he is responding to his call. This has a crushing effect on the dog, and his Recalls become slower and slower as he half-heartedly responds to his handler's call and anticipates being corrected on his way in.

Use a signal for the Drop because it teaches the dog to be more alert and attentive, and it is one more signal that the dog will use in the Utility work. The majority of people who shout "Down" at their dogs do so in a very loud, unpleasant tone of voice. If you decide to use your voice, make it firm but pleasant and just loud enough for the dog to hear you. A loud, intimidating tone of voice is as much an error as a hand signal held too long.

When your dog has mastered the first step have him Sit at Heel and give him the command to Stay. Go back about forty feet, turn and face your dog, wait a few seconds, and then call your dog to you saying, "Sparky, come." Remember to use your dog's name first in giving all commands except the Stay command. When he has covered two-thirds of the distance, give him the Drop signal and say "Down." The dog will Drop. Command him to Stay while you go up to him and praise him in a very pleased tone of voice. Again tell him to Stay, and leave him; go back to your first position, wait a few seconds, then call him in to you and have him Sit. Praise him, and then have him go to the Heel position and praise him again. If you do not intend to Drop him with the verbal command, just use the signal.

If the dog does not Drop, take a heavy step toward him and repeat the signal. Quickly walk up to him and pet and praise him if he Drops. A dog that stubbornly ignores the signal needs a different approach. Go up to the dog and stand in front of him. Give him the verbal command "Down" and the signal. He will obey you because you are standing in front of him, so have him Sit and Down twice in succession, and say "Good" each time he Drops. Now continue with his lesson. He should be left in a Down position, and the handler should go back forty feet, call her dog and Drop him when he is halfway in. If the dog Drops, the handler should quickly pet and praise him. This routine should be practiced by doing three or four straight Recalls, then practicing a Drop on Recall. When your dog becomes proficient at dropping fast, a word of praise should be given instead of going up to the dog each time and petting and praising him. Even when he is fully trained, a word of praise for a good Drop will let your dog know that you appreciate his good work.

## Training Your Puppy How To Track And Fetch

These are just two things you can do to build rapport between you and your puppy and at the same time teach him to respond positively to learning so that his advanced training will be easy.

**Tracking:** Puppy tracking is a wonderful way to get you and your puppy out for a walk. Tracking is natural for a dog and is relatively easy to teach, at least for short distances.

1. Find a park or a nice open area. The initial site does not need to be very big. Tie your puppy to something and let him watch you "lay a track" by placing tidbits on the ground one foot apart in a straight line for ten feet. Also let him watch you put his favorite toy at the end of the track.
2. Walk back through the same track to the puppy. Take him to the first piece of food, point to it and say "Track." Encourage him to put his head down and keep it down by pointing to the next piece of food. He will quickly start smelling the food from piece to piece! When he reaches the toy, praise him and play with the puppy and the toy. Repeat this exercise three times.
3. If you practice two or three times a week on short tracks, he will become reliable pretty quickly. As his nose keeps to the ground, spread the treats a little farther apart each time you "track." When he can go fifty yards in one direction, lay another track at a 45-degree angle to the right or left. You should also have someone else start laying the tracks so that the puppy will learn to track different people. Do not try to hurry things along by going too far too fast or by making too sharp turns.

**Fetching:** Puppy fetching is important and helpful. It both uses energy and teaches the puppy to return to you. Again, this exercise will help as a basis for more advanced training later on.

1. Find a toy that your puppy really likes. Sometimes this can be difficult if your puppy is the type who does not like to play (and there are those types, it's up to you to teach them to play). A little agility work can loosen up a reluctant puppy, and when they are all wound up they are more apt to fetch. Try using a soft sock or small stuffed toy.

2. Put your puppy on a twenty-foot line. Place the toy in front of your puppy and back up, waving the toy gently on the floor as you move back. When the puppy first grasps the toy, tell him "Good boy!" and very gently tug it for just a second to make him hold it (no tug of war). Let go and praise him as he carries it. If he drops it, repeat the process.

3. After a few successes, throw the toy a few feet from the puppy and tell him "Fetch." When he gets it, praise verbally and let him carry it for a few seconds. Gently pull him to you (do not make him drop the toy by tugging too hard). When he reaches you, offer him a piece of treat for the toy. When he drops the toy, give him the treat. Repeat until he understands what you want. You will both greatly benefit from this game!

## **Training Your Dog The "Down" Command For A Dog Show**

Training your dog for a dog show means many hours of detailed training instructions. One of the most basic of commands that the judges look for is the simple "Down" command. When you give the Down signal, your right hand and arm should be raised quickly. Show your dog the palm of your right hand with your arm just about shoulder high. Many handlers give their dogs poor signals and wonder why their dogs fail to respond. Don't bend your wrist backward over your shoulder, as the dog will ignore this type of signal. Get your hand in plain view where your dog can see it.

Usually in the Open Class at a show, the judge will instruct the handler to Drop his dog opposite the jump or himself. This means that the dog will cover about half the distance before he is Dropped. Very few dogs ever Drop opposite the specified object. Study your dog thoroughly, and practice with him until you can Drop him exactly where you want him. To get your dog to Drop at a certain point, you will have to run up to him quickly the second he takes that extra step. As he does, say "No," and repeat the Down signal.

If the dog ignores you, go stand in front of him, have him Down, and Sit. He will get the message and behave himself. Be sure to praise him in a happy tone of voice. Although the regulations say the most important part of the exercise is the fast Drop, it follows that if you can Drop your dog at any specific point during a Recall, it proves that he is fast and accurate.

Your dog will learn this exercise very quickly, so be sure not to overdo it. If you practice it too frequently, he will start to slow down, anticipating the Drop. When this happens, call him in quickly without dropping him. Do not practice the exercise every day. Practice dropping your dog in different locations, and increase or decrease the distance between you to vary the routine. If after the Drop the dog starts to walk in slowly in response to your call, go up to him, put your finger in the ring of his collar and give him a quick pull toward you as you say "Come" and run backwards. You might have to repeat this two or three times, but it is a very effective way to get a dog to move fast.

## **Training Your Dog The Proper Table Etiquette**

Your puppy needs to learn proper table manners if he is to become a good house-dog. He must learn to give up his food to you without a struggle. He must also learn not to take food that does not belong to him. Training your puppy both aspects of table manner early on will prevent biting over his meal or over a stolen food later on. Since both aspects go against the dog's natural instinct, they are necessary lessons to learn for him when he lives with humans. It is often necessary for dogs to be trained against their natural instincts or they can become threats to their families.

Every time you feed your puppy, tell him "Ok" as you place his dish in front of him. Nothing conscious will get through for the first few weeks, but something is definitely getting absorbed. Your puppy is beginning to learn that you will give permission when he is to eat.

After a few weeks of this automatic training, put the bowl down and do not say ok. In fact, do not say anything. If he waits for you, in about 2 seconds say "Ok" followed by "Good dog" and let him enjoy his meal. If, on the other hand, he goes for his food, gently pull him back with your hands on his collar and say "No." You may have to repeat this if necessary. When he looks up at you or waits for about two seconds, say "Ok" followed by "Good dog."

Continue with the "Ok" every time you feed your puppy. Twice a week, have him wait for the "Ok" until he knows to wait for the command before he starts with his meal. You can then continue to say "Ok" when you feed him without testing him every week. This is not and should not be a contest of wills. Never use this exercise as a trick to show off to your friends and other

people that you have this control over your dog that he would not touch a piece of meat unless you told him he could. It is not supposed to be a trick, but proper etiquette to teach him not to take food that does not belong to him.

In about a month or so, your puppy should have no problem waiting for the "Ok" signal. While you are teaching him restraint, occasionally add food to his bowl while he is eating using your bare hand. If he growls when your hand comes near his bowl, say "NO!" and take away the food. Feed him again at his next scheduled mealtime.

Once every other week, when he is in the middle of his meal, call his name to get his attention or say "No" and take away his dish. If he does not growl, add a treat to his meal and return the dish immediately, followed by saying "Ok, good boy." Once your puppy allows hands near his bowl, accepts the removal of his food and waits for his "ok," you have successfully communicated to your dog that he does not have to protect his meal as he would have in the wild.

## **Dogs Do Not Learn By Dominance And Submission**

Many people believe that dogs learn by dominance and/or submission. This is an interesting theory that appeals to our sense of logic and the way nature appears to be ordered from the point of view of the human ego. Supposedly, dogs can learn to respect another individual through dominance. This presupposes that they can perceive another being's point of view. Humans can indeed entertain others' points of view, yet we know that no one learns to work effectively through the dominance/submissive model.

No matter how much employees respect their boss or how submissive they may act around him, they expect to be paid fairly. Not enough pay and the attraction turns to resentment and a poor working attitude. Since humans reject and resist such an approach whenever they experience it, how can we expect the dog, with his more limited view, to work on this basis?

Not only does dominating a dog make him resistant to cooperation, but dominance has nothing to do with the smooth operation of wolf society. While it may appear that the leader is the most dominant in a pack of wolves, and that the inferiors have a profound respect for this "alpha" wolf

because he is so dominant, that is a surface misreading of their lives.

Supposedly, this dominant individual teaches the other members of the pack what their lesser stations are, bringing order and stability into the group. However, the reason this individual is superior is because, within the group mood, he is endowed with the most uninhibited temperament and perceives order when the others sense disorder.

This produces an emotional balance, a self-confidence level that makes him active and direct in his behavior when the others are reactive and indirect. This confidence is then broadcast through his body language and probably through an internal chemistry revealed when he eliminates.

Given the pack leader's internal balance, he will experience the least amount of stress when passing on to less familiar ground, as negatives are smaller in his sense of order. In addition, the pack leader will feel the strongest compulsion to be first on any path that leads outward to the hunt as he acts in the most straightforward manner.

The inferiors will depend on the pack leader's enthusiasm to draw them across a threshold that may have a stronger inhibiting effect on them. An individual doesn't become superior by being dominant; the leader, to feel complete, needs the group behind him. Only by guiding the hunt does one become a leader.

## **How To Instill Calmness In Your Dog**

Calmness means the appropriate response in any given situation. It is a quality we must completely understand in order to properly train our dogs.

A dog gains calmness by focusing on an objective and then attaining it through action. He can't think his way to calmness nor can he learn it through the example of another. A dog learns to be calm by doing. If a dog's action leads him to fulfillment, patience becomes a learned skill. And if a dog gets enough practice in a variety of endeavors, he can develop an overall character trait of calmness.

The biggest mistake is made by attempting to calm a dog by trying to train him to be still. Whether the owner yells, pleads, nags, grabs the dog in some way, or stares, he is only going to make the dog nervous.

The most effective way to train a dog to be patient and focused is through the most active of his instincts: the prey instinct. Calmness and patience in the face of denial are built into the prey instinct. Through the prey instinct the dog can learn that a condition of denial is not only temporary but is positive, as it is a predictor of eventual success.

## **Advanced Dog Tricks: How To Train Your Dog For The High Jump**

With your dog present in front of you, erect both jumps, configuring them at low height and setting them ten feet apart. Do it again. Then walk your dog to a point between the obstacles and a dozen feet behind them. Aim the animal toward the High Jump, and command, "Stay." Walk to an equidistant spot, relative to the obstacles and the dog. Emphatically point and step toward the High Jump and command, "Hup."

As your dog sails over the correct jump, praise, "Good Pup," and take him back to the starting point. Command, "Stay," return to the location opposite the animal's, and repeat the exercise. Do the routine twice more, then end the session. On the next day, repeat the preceding exercise once. Then "Stay" your companion, having first aligned him toward the other obstacle, the Bar Jump. Return to your command location, and - adding pronounced body language - command him over this second jump. If he does as well with it as he did with the first hurdle - and he probably will - great!

Now the work is gradually raising the jumps' heights, repositioning them until they're eighteen to twenty feet apart, phasing out aligning pooch toward either jump, and starting him from at least twenty feet. During the teaching sequence, should your pet take any action other than the correct one, don't chastise him. Perform some work at which he excels (to finish high), and call it a day. Initiate a more structured method tomorrow.

## Directed Jumping - Structured Method

Begin by leaving your dog on a "Sit-Stay", fifteen feet from and facing a Standard High Jump. Walk to the hurdle's opposite side and command, "Hup." Skip the finish. Repeat the exercise, but this time move leftward a few feet as your pet leaves the ground; turning to face him as he lands. Run through this routine three more times, then close the session.

Start the next period by leaving your dog on a Sit-Stay, fifteen feet from and facing a standard High Jump. Walk to the obstacle's other side, and after standing there for a few seconds, move a few feet to your left. Adding an exaggerated hand signal, verbally command your dog over the jump. (Should he attempt to run to you, block him and repeat the "Hup" command while gesturing toward the obstacle. If need be, lift him over the hurdle.) Repeat this new procedure three times before ending the period.

Over the next few sessions, gradually position yourself farther left until you're twenty feet removed from the centerline between the two jumps. Though less distance is required in competition, the extra-mile principle operates here by saying to your dog that he's to clear the indicated obstacle regardless how far you are from it.

The next stage is steadily moving your pet's starting point to your left (his right). "Sit-Stay" your friend three feet left of the two jumps' centerline, and walk to a point opposite his new starting position. Adding excessive body language (stepping and pointing toward the desired jump), command, "Hup."

## 3 Ways To Teach Your Dog Not To Shy Away From Collar-Grabbing

Twenty percent of dog bites occur when a family member reaches to grab the dog by the scruff or collar. One doesn't need to be a rocket scientist to figure this out. Obviously, the dog has learned that when people grab him by the collar bad things often happen. Consequently, the dog becomes hand-shy, plays Catch-Me-If-You-Can, or reacts defensively. It is potentially dangerous to have a dog dodge you when you reach for his collar. For example, you need to know you could effectively grab your dog if he ever

tried to dash out the front door.

So teach your puppy to enjoy being grabbed by the collar. First, prevent your pup from forming negative associations to human hands, and second, teach your pup that being taken by the collar has only positive consequences, like so:

1. If you let your puppy play without interruption, and then take him by the collar to end the play session, of course he will come to dislike your reaching for his collar because a collar grab signals the end of the play session.

Starting in the house and later in the park, frequently interrupt puppy play sessions by taking your puppy by the collar, asking him to sit, praising him, offering a piece of kibble, and then letting him go play again. The puppy thus learns that being taken by the collar is not necessarily the end of the play session. Instead, a collar grab is a short time-out for refreshment and a few kind words from his owner before the puppy gets to play again. Also, interrupting play allows you to use resumption of play to reward your puppy for sitting and allowing you to take him by the collar.

2. If you lead or drag your puppy into confinement, he will no doubt come to dislike being taken by the collar, as he will come to dislike confinement.

Instead, teach your puppy to enjoy confinement. Stuff a bunch of hollow chew-toys with kibble and put them in your puppy's confinement area, and then close the door with your puppy on the outside. In no time at all, your puppy will beg to go inside. Now simply instruct your pup, "Go to your bed (or crate)" or "Go to your playroom (long-term confinement area)" and open the door. Your pup will happily rush inside and settle down peacefully with his chew-toys.

3. Above all, promise your puppy that you will never (never) call your puppy and then grab him by the collar to reprimand or punish. Doing this just once will make him hate coming when called and hate when you reach for his collar. If you punish your puppy after he comes to you, he will take longer to come the next time. Eventually slow recalls will become no recalls. Your puppy will still misbehave; only now you will be unable to catch him! If you ever punish your puppy after taking his collar, he will soon become hand-shy, evasive, and defensive.

## **How To Properly Treat Your Dog When Leaving & Upon Entering Your Home**

Dogs who must face long periods of time alone should be greeted and left calmly. The owner should not make good-byes dramatic or prolonged, pleading with the dog not to chew or bark. When the owner returns, the dog should be greeted simply but affectionately. Over-dramatic hellos and good-byes often keep dogs on edge. After the owner leaves, the dog is still excited from being petted and cuddled, and possibly pleaded with to "be good." The owner may leave feeling better, but the dog may be on the edge of emotional collapse. Greeting and leaving scenes must not be the high points of the dog-owner relationship.

When it comes to entering your home after being gone, to burst into the house or apartment laden with special treats and then effusively greet the dog may be alleviating some of your own guilt over leaving the animal isolated, but it's a disservice to the dog. The dog's psychological alarm clock tells it when to expect the owner home. The dog gears itself up for the happy moment, the treats, the play session. If, by chance, the owner is late, as is often the case because of subway, bus, or traffic delays, the dog's anticipation can turn into frustration, and its frustration into destructiveness, whining, or barking.

## **Learn How To Train Your Dog Not To Cross Streets Or Driveways Without You**

Would you like to train your puppy to automatically stop at the street without any verbal cue from you? This can be done by you starting to walk five feet from the street with your dog heeling at your side. As you walk toward the street, give no indication that you are going to stop. What you want to happen is for your dog to automatically stop and sit, since she recognizes this as a street even though you continue to walk past the curb and out on the street. When you do stop, both of your feet are on the street though your puppy is sitting at the curb.

You need to give yourself some leash room because you are increasing your speed as you move into the street - so you're adding a little more distance

between you and your puppy. You are adding more leash because you don't want to inadvertently jerk your dog onto the street. If your dog follows you onto the street, turn around and pop the leash and say, "No! Back! Street!" Your hands should be over her right ear where all the pops take place. Later you can control her if she starts to enter the street by quickly turning around and saying "Back-Street Sit!" Practice this on as many street corners as possible. As your dog begins to identify streets on her own, you will notice that she will stop at driveways as well.

Next as you take your training further, you will step even further out into the street - a full car width away from the curb. Also at this level, you can drop the leash from your hands; however, make sure the leash is just in front of your feet so that you can quickly step on it just in case your puppy decides to bolt across the street. You can use a ten-foot leash for this level - with a longer lead you can more easily step on it if your pup starts to run away.

You want your puppy to get used to the idea that you are standing even further into the street and that she can't join you unless you give the command to bring her to your side and sit. If she follows you onto the street, don't panic or react with fear by screaming at her. This is a new exercise and her instinct will be to stay at your side. Stay calm. Turn this mistake into a positive training session. Direct her back to the curb while you say "Back" as you initiate your movement backward with your left foot while your left hand chops the leash toward your waist. When her front paws hit the curb, say "Street," and when her hind legs hit the curb say "Sit."

Once your puppy is safely back on the curb, then step back out onto the street a full car width away from the curb. Because this exercise adds distance from your pup, she will increase her focus on you. This is what you want - to be seen as the leader of your pack on the street.

This exercise is not only good for dogs, but for owners as well. Many owners are nervous being in the street with their dog, so they tend to rush across the street. But rushing across the street sends a bad message to your dog. She is learning that it's okay to blindly rush across the street. And if she does it with you, she will do it on her own someday if she gets loose from you.

## The Importance Of Enrolling Your Dog In The Right Training Class

Enrolling your dog in a training class is a vital part of the obedience club as well as your dog's education. The dog is brought into contact with other dogs and has the opportunity to overcome his problems under supervision. At the same time, the owner has the advantage of associating with those who have had experience as he gains knowledge by observation. In addition, classroom training helps to prepare both the owner and the dog for participation in the Obedience Trials at dog shows.

Training classes may be held independently at an obedience club when sponsored by another organization, with the exception of privately owned and professional groups. Dog owners may also attend classes endorsed by the Education Department of the Society. Other groups that are sponsoring dog training programs include the board of education, adult education centers, and departments of recreation, humane societies, and community centers.

The participants need not necessarily be members of the sponsoring organization to enroll in the class. Fees as well as other charges must be decided upon what courses will be given, the number of lessons per course, and the day of the week and hours that are most suitable for training.

The public is becoming more broad-minded on the subject of dog training and it recognizes the benefits derived from such activity. Authorities have been persuaded to open the doors of school gymnasiums, community centers, and city halls. Park officials, YMCA's, and churches also cooperate in offering training programs. In some instances, universities permit the use of campus grounds. Armories and privately owned riding stables frequently contribute their facilities.

A big disadvantage can be overcome when the training is held outdoors. More dogs can be accommodated and there is no problem about quarters in which to work. When the training is done indoors, it is impractical to work in a room smaller than 40 or 50 feet square. However, such places are hard to find. The larger the room, the better, but the rent for a large room is often prohibitive.

The type of floor in the training room is important. Results will be poor if the dogs slip and the owners have a hard time keeping their footing. Rubber matting will remove this hazard, though it can be quite pricey. A room at

street level is preferable to one where it is necessary to climb stairs. Quarters with a door opening onto the street are more desirable than an inside room with long passageways.

When the dogs are exercised at frequent intervals there should be little cause for complaint, but some owners are reluctant to take their dogs outside when it involves a long walk. The training room with a stage or balcony has added advantages. The extra space will provide a place for the dogs to stay when they are not working and for visitors to observe the class.

## 4 Things To Look For In A Dog Training School

Enrolling in a dog obedience class can be a rewarding experience for both you and your dog, but choosing the wrong class can make the experience unpleasant for both of you. If you are lucky enough to live in an area where you have a selection, shop around. Observe the class prior to taking your dog.

Below are 4 things to look for in a dog obedience class:

**Individual Attention:** Is the size of the class such that the instructor is able to give individual attention when needed?

**Pleasant Atmosphere:** Is there a relaxed friendly atmosphere in the class? Tension and disorder will affect both your ability to learn as well as your dog's.

**Training Concept:** Is the approach to training used in the class consistent with your own feelings about dog training? Does the instructor want you to do something to your dog that you are unwilling or reluctant to do?

**Instructor Expertise and Ability to Teach:** Does the instructor seem knowledgeable about dog training? And beyond that, is the instructor able to communicate his or her knowledge effectively?

## The Importance Of Finding The Right Dog Trainer (Part 1)

What makes a great Dog Trainer? If an individual is to judge how each and every dog is to be handled in a training class, he must possess the experience and the expertise. Not that of taking just one or two dogs through the preliminaries, but the kind of knowledge gained from working with dogs of all breeds and under all conditions. The temperament and individual characteristics of each dog must be considered and the training technique varied to meet the occasion.

When a trainer knows what he can expect from a dog and what his reaction will be, he has the advantage. The trainer automatically anticipates the dog's next move and decides whether to force the issue or to lessen his demands. There is an art in knowing when to be gentle, when to be firm, when to rebuke, and when to encourage. The good trainer is born with essential qualities that give him the natural ability to coordinate his body motions with every move the dog makes. The result is perfect timing. That is why some trainers succeed where others fail. When the trainer is definite in his actions because he knows what he is doing, the dog then knows that he knows, and the result is respect! Respect gained through admiration and not through fear will bring a happy response that is proof of one's training personality.

A dog can be forced to be obedient, but he cannot be forced to like obedience! Therefore, the expert is not a bully. He recognizes the fact that all training is progressive and that each new step becomes easy if the preceding lessons have been thoroughly understood. He is not afraid to retrace his steps momentarily if in so doing it will give the dog confidence. Because of his experience and understanding, the proficient trainer is aware of the disastrous effects caused by nagging and he will avoid it at all costs. Because he is patient, he does not become exasperated if results are slow in coming. The clever trainer succeeds in making the dog feel responsible for the correction. He is kind, yet firm, and above all will make obedience fun for the dog.

A good trainer, however, does not necessarily make a good training class instructor. Some people may train at home and give private instruction with success, but when faced with a large group they lack the necessary qualities of leadership. In the training class it is not a question of working out a single problem, but of solving about thirty to fifty different problems all at the same

time.

The training director must be a likable person and have the admiration and respect of his pupils. He must have diplomacy and be patient and tolerant of others. It is not always easy to teach someone else how to accomplish what one is able to do oneself. The good training director never permits the class to be held up for a long period of time while he discusses one dog's problem with the owner, nor does he hold back the group for one or two backward dogs. The owners with special problems should be asked to come early or to stay after class for personal instruction.

## **The Importance Of Finding The Right Dog Trainer (Part 2)**

A good dog trainer/class director should divide the beginners' group into two parts. This will allow for a rest period at which time the owners may watch the others and see how they train. Knowledge can be gained from watching, if only to learn what not to do! He should not dismiss his class without introducing a new exercise or a variation of the class routine in order to encourage the owners to practice at home. The owner who thinks his dog is good and needs no training between sessions can be made to understand that there is always room for improvement.

The initial meeting of a training class should be held without dogs unless it is a club affair and the dogs have had previous training. The confusion that results when a group of untrained dogs and inexperienced owners come together for the first time is too much to cope with and little training would be accomplished. A quiet meeting where problems can be discussed calmly and the various steps are demonstrated without the noise and excitement is more productive. This will give the beginner an over-all picture of what he is expected to accomplish during the weeks that follow.

The trainer would do well to demonstrate the basic steps with two or three untrained dogs brought to the class for this purpose. When this is followed by a short exhibition with dogs that are already trained, the group can see by comparison how quickly results may be achieved. A question-and-answer session will benefit the entire class.

The questions should be repeated clearly by the instructor and his answers given so that everyone in the class can hear. Usually one person's question is

relevant to the problem of other members of the group. A general discussion will thus avoid time-consuming repetitions of the subject.

Participants should be warned what to expect the following week when they arrive with their dogs. They should be shown how to stop uncontrolled barking by keeping the dogs on a short leash, and how to handle the situation if a dog fight develops. It must be impressed upon the owners never to stand still while his dog lunges forward toward another dog. He must turn away and jerk hard on the leash. A demonstration should be given of the proper way to control an aggressive dog by a careful quick jerk on the leash and a sharp "No!" This technique can be used to prevent fights and to stop excessive noise.

He should remind the owners not to feed their dogs for several hours before coming to class and to see that they are exercised. Request the owners to keep their dogs on a short lead when entering and leaving the building, to walk in the center of all hallways, and to keep the dogs (particularly the males) away from corners and posts. A dog that deliberately misbehaves inside the building should be barred from the classroom.

## **Does Your Puppy Nip & Bite?**

Never allow your puppy to bite. This sort of thing will become a bad habit and be hard to break later on. If he bites your hands, give him a tap on his nose or under his chin. He will probably yelp, but he needs this lesson as early in life as you can give it to him.

A puppy that is allowed to nip and bite becomes very bold and aggressive as he grows older. Then when he gets to be over a year old, the harassed owner takes him to a professional trainer to be tamed down. Such dogs present a problem to both their owners and society in general. It takes a firm, experienced trainer to get them under control.

Many owners are so upset by their dog's uncontrolled behavior and aggressiveness that they decide to give him away. Unfortunately, what they do not realize is that the next person does not want a problem dog either. So take my advice and control your puppy while he is young and trainable.

## Nipping And Mouthing

Mouthing and nipping are two different issues. Mouthing is a communication skill to get you to do a particular thing. Less pressure, less annoying, but still not particularly charming. Nipping is a puppy thing; it is interactive and playful. Nipping puppies are bossy and manipulative and need a firmer regimen.

Mouthing is often an attention-getting behavior. If your puppy uses it to communicate a need to go out, respond. If, on the other hand, your dog mouths you for a pat, ignore it. If he becomes too annoying, get a water spray and spritz him discreetly in front of his nose, hiding the spray in your hand and spritzing as you avoid all eye contact, comments, or pushing.

When you use the spray this way, you are performing a cause-and-effect correction rather than interactive discipline. Interaction involves eye contact and physical manipulation - not good. Cause-and-effect corrections result in unpleasant reactions that your puppy will try to avoid.

Nipping is another one of those puppy things that you need to refocus. When your puppy still hung out with his litter mates, he nipped during play and to determine his rank. He also soft-mouthed his mother affectionately. When you bring your puppy home, this behavior continues.

## A Nipping/Biting Puppy And How To Prevent It

If your puppy is younger than 16 weeks and are constantly nipping, it's normal behavior - young puppies mouth a lot. They mouth when playing; they also mouth to communicate their needs. If your puppy starts mouthing, ask yourself these questions: Is he hungry or thirsty? Does he need to eliminate? Is he sleepy? Does he need to play? Remember, puppies nip when they feel needy (just like a baby cries). If your puppy does not let up, ask yourself if he wants something, like an outing, exercise, or a drink. The following things can help you control mouthing and nipping:

1. If your puppy does not need anything and he still will not quit, crate or isolate him with a favorite bone. Do not scold your puppy as you isolate her. Calmly place the puppy in her area.

2. Whenever your puppy licks you, say "Kisses" and praise her warmly. Encourage licking by slathering your hands with a frozen stick of butter.
3. Withhold your attention when your puppy nips softly. Keep your hand still; withdrawing your hand is an invitation to play and nip harder.
4. If your puppy starts biting down hard, turn quickly, say "Ep, Ep!" and glare into her eyes for two seconds; then go back to your normal routine. If she persists, try spritzing yourself with Bitter Apple or affix a leash onto your puppy so that you can tug the lead sharply to the side. If necessary, place her in a quiet area to cool off.

If you have a puppy who still nips when he is older than 16 weeks, you need to start curbing it now. Although nipping will continue, you need to make clear that it is unacceptable. Following are a few tips to help you:

1. Stop all challenge games. These games include wrestling, tug-of-war, chasing your dog around, and teasing. When you engage in these types of activities, you're sending the wrong message. These games teach dogs to clamp down hard on any object - a leash, the laundry, your shirt, or even your skin - and challenge.
2. Discourage all nipping, whether it's a bite on your arm or a nibble on your finger. Teeth do not belong on human skin, period.
3. Purchase a few weapons to use in defense, such as Mouth Spray, Bitter Apple spray, or a long-distance squirt gun. Never stare at your pup while you spritz or spray her; doing so turns an unpleasant result into a confrontational interaction.
4. Leave a leash on your puppy so you have something to direct her with and can avoid physical confrontation. If your dog's not wearing the Teaching Lead, place a short lead onto her buckle collar.
5. If your puppy begins to mouth, turn to him, use a lead or collar to snap her head from your body, or spritz the region he is nipping with a spray. Do not glare at him; otherwise, he will perceive your actions as confrontational play.
6. If he continues to nip, ask yourself these questions: Do I look convincing? Am I snapping or pulling? (Pulling encourages play.) Is my dog taking me seriously? You may need more training before you earn his respect.

## The 2 Most Common Fears Your Puppy May Have

**Fear Of Other Dogs:** You may find that your puppy is not social toward other dogs. It may be that either your dog was taken too early from his mother and litter-mates, or the litter-mates may have been much larger and stronger than yours, leaving your puppy socially apprehensive. Some very dominant puppies separate themselves from litter-mates and, on their own terms only, solicit play.

Some puppies have manifested their strong defensive drives in this nonsocial behavior pattern. These puppies can be helped by simply not allowing them to run away when approached by other puppies. On rare occasions, the puppy would actually attempt to bite the other pup. Most often, having the puppy confront the fear has been extremely helpful in resolving the defensive social aggression.

When adult dogs show fear of other dogs, there is a little chance that this fear can be resolved. Once seeded, this fear appears to overwhelm affected dogs. Since resolution is not always possible, management may be the way to go.

Keeping your dog on a leash in public will help. While on a leash, it is helpful to teach your dog how to focus on you in the presence of other dogs. He should not be allowed to run free off a lead in the park because at any minute a dog may show up and cause a fear response that may cause your dog to bolt into the road or simply run away. In a controlled situation, perhaps a fenced-in yard, you may be comfortable with him having an off-lead exercise. A fenced-in school yard with a gate that you can close will do just fine for short runs or fast walks. Always be aware of what is around you at all times to prevent any accidents.

The use of a head halter is often useful in controlling fearful dogs. A dog can feel secure when he is being controlled by the face. His options disappear, and he proudly follows his owner's lead. This is how it should be. Training a behavior such as "Down-Stay" provides us with a bit of control around other dogs too. "Down-stay" is incompatible with running away.

**Fear Of Being Inside A Car:** Often dog owners think that they own a dog that has motion sickness and that will vomit all over the interior of the family

car. Sometimes they are right, and it is solved by the dog having an empty stomach and taking frequent short rides. Carsick dogs usually get over it quickly when you practice the short-ride routine.

Car phobic behavior may stem from a previous accident, a chronically nauseated rider, or perhaps something as simple as a noisy muffler or backfire. Bringing the dog to within sight of the car, giving him a treat, and then bringing him back to where he feels comfortable is a good place to begin this conditioning. Eventually, he may actually be eating his meals in the car.

The dog will graduate to eating in the idling car, and soon will be eating in the moving car. The meals are obviously removed from the car once the dog has shown no reluctance to jump in. If your dog has motion sickness, then feeding will not be the way to go. Veterinarians can offer a motion sickness remedy for those who are afflicted.

## **Taking A Joyride With Your Dog, But Without The Mess!**

Not many dogs suffer from true motion sickness (ranging from excessive drooling to vomiting.) In most cases, a dog who gets carsick has developed a negative association with riding in the car. It is likely that the dog who gets carsick doesn't go for many rides other than going to the vet. We might compare his reaction to that of a child who, every time he gets in the car, goes to the doctor for a shot. It wouldn't take long before that child, or your dog, associates the car with an unpleasant experience.

To prevent car sickness, make sure you take your puppy for frequent, short, pleasant rides ending in play. If he does get sick, don't reinforce the behavior by giving him a lot of attention, petting, and talking to him. That kind of response from you tends to reinforce the dog's reaction, rather than alleviate it. If you already have a problem with your dog getting carsick, the following are suggestions that will benefit you both.

- 1) Open all the doors to your car with the engine turned off and coax your dog into it. At the same time, use a command, like "Get in the car," said in a happy tone. If your dog won't get in on his own, place him in the car. Once in, offer him a treat, laugh and talk happily to him, and immediately let him out of the car. Repeat this five times. You should notice that he is becoming

less reluctant to get into the car. Repeat this until your dog willingly gets in on your command. Remember to keep laughing and offering treats.

2) Once your dog is getting into the car on his own, close the doors on one side, engine still off, and repeat the above. If he shows apprehension, continue to work on this step until he is relaxed again. Keep laughing and giving treats.

3) When he is comfortable at step two, tell your dog to get in the car, give him a treat, and close all the doors. Laugh and talk to him and give him another treat. If he shows apprehension at this stage, repeat it until he is calm.

4) Tell your dog to get in the car, close the car doors and turn on the engine. Don't go anywhere yet. Give your dog a treat, laugh and talk to him, and turn off the engine. Repeat the process until he is comfortable then move on to the next step.

5) Get in the car with your dog, give him a treat and take him for a short drive, a quarter of a mile or less, and return home. Take your dog out of the car and play with him. Make the game lots of fun, including lots of laughter.

6) Gradually lengthen the trips you take, always beginning them with a treat for getting in the car and ending them with a play session.

Throughout this exercise, your attitude and tone of voice are critical. You must maintain a light and happy demeanor. At no time should you act concerned about your dog's behavior. Avoid a sympathetic tone of voice and phrases like, "It's ok," or "Don't worry." This kind of concern conveys itself to your dog as apprehension on your part. Since he doesn't understand your words, and can only pick up your emotional state, what he gets out of this is that you are apprehensive about the car ride too. Therefore, there really must be something to throw up about. To overcome this, use lots of laughter and always have a happy attitude.

## Playing With Your Puppy

The puppy who learns the rules of fetch-and-carry has taken a big step forward into being a well-trained adult dog. In this way, he also finds that learning can be fun. Roughhousing, though not too roughly, teaches him to play and not bite and to work to get something he wants, still without hurting the person holding it.

In the course of a good rough and tumble, you will use words that he will remember next time. He will learn "Stop that," if he gets rough himself. If he needs reprimanding, a firm "No!" and a quick tap on the rump should make him behave.

Protect your puppy against what is really teasing, as when children call it "play" to steal his toys and hold them out of reach or to wrestle too roughly and hurt him. In addition, never play with him, or let children do so, until the point of exhaustion.

Reward him when you are teaching him something new, and let the play increase his understanding of you and your understanding of him. The time you spend with him can develop into a closer bond. He is learning, among other things, that you are his owner.

## Fun And Neat Tricks To Teach Your Puppy

When your puppy has learned some of the basic training needs, you can practice by turning it all into fun. For example, put the puppy in a Sit-Stay, back off a foot or two, show him a soft toy and toss it to him. Don't go for a catch that requires a Superman leap into the air. The idea is to have him actually catch it!

Put him in a Sit-Stay and let him watch you hide a toy under the edge of a nearby chair. Keep him on a stay for a moment more, perhaps as you wonder out loud "Where is Teddy?" Then give him the release and cue, "Okay - find Teddy!" If he hasn't figured out what to do, help him look for it, but let him "find" it.

Going back to the "as" routine, you can teach your puppy almost any trick that he can perform by himself simply by giving that action a one-word command. (Don't worry if it's actually two words.) Dogs like to roll over onto their backs and wriggle, especially on a nice thick rug! Turn this back-scratching into a trick by catching Sparky as he begins and saying, "Sparky, roll over. Good boy!"

As your puppy grows up, he'll understand more and more of your language and you'll be able to use phrases that have great impact as tricks. For example, instead of saying "roll over," say, "Sparky, can you do your rollover exercises?" to bring on a wriggling, leg-flailing routine that is worthy of applause. For starters, keep it simple.

When Sparky has reached the stage of being able to hold a steady Sit-Stay, you can add another trick. Balance a small dog biscuit on top of his nose as you say, "On trust." (You may have to hold his head steady the first few times.) When he has held it for a second or two, give him the release signal ("Okay" or "Take it") as you gently but quickly lift his chin up, which will toss the biscuit into the air so he can catch the biscuit as it falls.

Kids and puppies love to play hide-and-seek, but anyone can get in on the game. Dogs seek by scent, so at least in the beginning crouch down to be nearer the pup's level. Put Sparky in a Sit-Stay, let him see you hide (behind a chair or a door), crouch down and then call out "Okay!" Be sure he finds you even if it means you have to call out his name a couple of times. Make a big deal of it when he does - and then repeat the game. Don't make it any more difficult until he can find you instantly at the first level.

Reward him occasionally with a small treat, but make finding you the most exciting part of the game, which means you will progress slowly from hiding where he can at least partially see you, to hiding in another room and eventually the back of a clothes closet where your scent will be masked. He won't play if it isn't fun, so be sure he does find you every time.

Shaking hands is an old favorite and easy to teach - touch the toes and most pups will raise that paw. Lift it gently and say, "Shake hands" (or "Give me a paw") as he does. When that much has been mastered, you can turn it into a paw raised higher, and without shaking it, say, "Wave goodbye!" But that's for later; a polite puppy handshake is fine for now. The opposite of "Off for jumping up" is two paws raised in a jump-up greeting, only on a command of "High five!"

## 3 Agility & Coordination Puppy Games

**1. Open Tunnel:** Use one barrel or tunnel at first, then add two or three more as the puppy learns to move through them. Have a friend pick your puppy up and gently put him in the tunnel while you reach through the other end and coax him to you with a bit of bait or his ball. He will quickly learn to run through it on his own.

**2. Closed Tunnel:** Begin as you did with the open tunnel, but hold a sheet up at the end of the tunnel the first couple of times the puppy is sent through. As he reaches you the third or fourth time, let the sheet down. Each time, let the sheet down sooner until he can run through and push the sheet up by himself. Be sure to make sure he is secure each step of the way. Do not let the sheet get tangled around him.

**3. The "A-Frame" Game:** Put two leashes on the puppy. Get on one side of him and have a friend on the other. Use a piece of food and slowly coax him up and down the A-frame. Most puppies want to go over too fast, so be careful. A person on each side helps ensure that he goes up the middle.

## Fun And Games With Your Puppy

Along with learning his responsibilities and duties, your puppy is also open to learning whatever tricks and games you want to teach. But before you decide to teach him any game or to let some cute puppy behavior continue, ask yourself whether what you think is cute now will be cute in a full-grown dog.

Dogs of all breeds will "Fetch," "Bring," and "Give." Especially if you have a sporting dog that you might hunt with someday, teach the "Give" or "Drop it" command at the same time you teach "Fetch." Otherwise, you will spend your hunting days chasing down your dog to get the birds you thought you were going to have for supper!

Once you have taught the basics, you can teach him anything that works well to amuse you both, bond you, and make your lives together happier. The more you are your pup's teacher, the more firmly your pup looks to you as the leader of the pack. As your puppy knows more, he will welcome advanced lessons, be the lessons about what games you like to play or what jobs you want him to do.

Just like children, but on a more limited scale, the puppy thrives on going beyond the basics. While you stick firmly to consistency in things like feeding times and obeying certain commands, you and your maturing puppy can also cope with varying amounts of inconsistency. It is in these areas of innovation that you allow your pup's own unique personality to blossom.

Many people find great fulfillment in obedience training their dogs. A basic obedience course is necessary for anyone who is going to raise a civilized puppy, but one can go far beyond the basics. It all depends on what you want. Watching a well-trained obedience dog work is a pleasure, and in dog shows, it is the obedience ring where you will see the real honesty of dog and owner functioning as a team.

You can go beyond obedience into tracking, too. One does not have to have a bloodhound to participate in this sport. The puppy who has been taught the game of "Go find" can grow up to "Go find" in a very serious way. Dog-sledding is also becoming an increasingly popular sport. If you have ever watched well-trained herding dogs work, you know what precision they exhibit, and you can guess at the time and love it took to train them.

The more you learn about your puppy and his breed, the more you will see that your horizons are limited only by how much time and expense you want to invest in having fun with your canine companion.

## **Teaching Your Dog A Classic Trick: Roll Over & Play Dead**

If you have trouble getting your dog or puppy on her back, it may be helpful to work on the "Roll Over and Play Dead" exercises. These exercises get her used to the idea of being on her back. As with other tricks, make it a game for her by using a toy or treats. This way, you won't have to fight her to lay on her back.

A rollover is nothing more than a Down position with a twist to the stand position. To do a Roll Over, first place your dog in a Down position. Once she is down, then see which way her body is curving. If it is curving more to the left, then you want to roll her over on her left side. If she is curved more toward the right, then you want to roll her over on her right side.

Hold a motivator and rotate it near her nose and say "Roll Over." Rotate her nose until it is stretched over her neck and guide the motivator over a little in the direction that you want her to roll over. This will rotate her shoulders around and bring her on her back. You may need to take a step to the right or left, depending which way she is rolling over, to gain better leverage as you guide her in the Roll Over with the motivator. The momentum of her roll will swing her hind legs over and she will go into the stand position. At first, she may turn only half of the way over, so you may need to assist her to complete the rollover by nudging on her hind legs to make the full rotation.

This is a good exercise because it makes your puppy feel vulnerable. She must trust you because she is off her feet and exposing her underside. A dog's underside is a tender spot - under the abs and neck is the area where dogs try to attack during a fight.

You can also train her to play dead. Place her in a down position and use the same rotation with the motivator to make her rollover, but when she gets on her back, hold the motivator above her to keep her on her back. Try to keep her on her back for a few seconds as you let her nibble at the motivator that is right above her. Say "Bang! Bang!" while the other hand points at her chest like a pistol. Let her receive the entire treat upside down. Letting her receive the reward in this position allows her more time to play dead.

This is a great exercise to work if you are angry at your dog for something she has done. Instead of yelling at her or hitting her, keep your voice calm and say "Bang! Bang!" Your dog will lay in a submissive pose on her back as she plays dead.

## **Advanced Tricks: Training Your Dog To "Retrieve Over High Jump"**

Should your dog be only so-so in any elements of basic obstacle or retrieving training, shore up weak areas prior to initiating the "Retrieve Over High Jump." Otherwise, the animal may extend previous problem behaviors into the new activity.

When starting the Retrieve Over High Jump, begin that day's session with a Retrieve followed by a recall over the jump. If your dog doesn't perform each exercise well, work on problem areas until you're satisfied. Initiate formal High Jump retrieving by having your dog Sit in front of and facing the jump

from a distance of ten feet. Set the height even with the animal's elbows. Have him take and hold a dumbbell.

Command, "Stay," verbally and via the hand signal. Walk to the jump's opposite side, preferably by stepping over it (to suggest the correct route). Position yourself within touching distance of the obstacle. As one flowing action, slap the top board's edge, command, "Bring - Hup!," and back away to create landing room. Repeat the sequence three times, and end today's training.

The next day, with pooch at heel, throw a light dumbbell over the jump, sending him as it lands by sequentially commanding "Hup," "Bring" and "Hup." The first "Hup" sends the animal, and "Bring" should be timed while he's airborne, going for the object. Command the second "Hup" immediately after the dog picks up the dumbbell. Now the task becomes phasing out the commands used only for teaching, waiting several seconds before sending the dog after the dumbbell, and gradually raising the jump to the desired height.

## **Training Considerations in Multiple-Dog Households**

Dogs living in pairs, trios, or larger colonies all need to have a special relationship with their human family. I say special because in order for the humans to have control of the environment some form of training is needed. This training should be done with one dog at a time until the relationship is solid and clear. Although it is fine for the dogs to be with one another for scheduled play sessions during the day, it is far more important for each dog to have private time with the family for bonding and training. Once you have good control of your pack, then you can begin to expand on the time that they spend together. Block out a little training time every week for training your group. Keep them sharp in obedience, whether it is one-on-one or the whole group.

Generally, your dog's name would only precede an in-motion command such as "let's go" or "heel." Stationary commands such as "sit" usually do not call for your dog's name prior to the command. But in a multiple-dog setting, it is helpful always to use each dog's name so that each one may be controlled without confusion. If you lined them up in a "sit-stay" and called just one, the others should remain in the "sit-stay." If even one began to move you'd

make an ugh-ugh sound followed by the command "Sparky, staaaaay."

How do people really keep numerous dogs and maintain peace and harmony? It's an attitude, a learned way to behave around dogs. Some owners are naturals and just have "it". These owners have a quiet, calm, yet very strong attitude combined with a sense of fairness and compassion that earns them the trust of their dog. Some things come faster for some than for others, but the more contact with dogs that you have had the better you will be. Learning how to read the structure is one imperative component for success. You are calling the shots, but beyond that it is crucial for you to support the hierarchy as it naturally falls. You can't choose who is in charge for them, they must do it, and hopefully without violence.

There are cases upon cases of dog owners who report that their dogs get along fine by themselves, but problems develop when the owner comes home. This is a clear indication that the owners are disrupting the natural order and the subordinate dog is owner-reinforced to be dominant. The way to avoid these problems is to side with the dominant dog and help the subordinate to become comfortable in that space.

Realistically, it is more natural for us to yell at the growling dog than it is to yell at the dog that is being growled at. This is wrong. We should side with the dominant dog to try to avoid a fight. If you discipline the subordinate as the dominant dog does then things will change. A common fight scenario is who may greet a visitor first. The dominant dog is allowed to greet first. If the subordinate should be so bold as to try to get to the door first, the dominant dog might attack. Help this situation out by teaching the subordinate to hang back when someone comes in. On a natural level, the dominant dog will allow the subordinate access to the visitor, but in his own time, and the subordinate should wait and look to him for that time.