



LEADERSHIP

A good “leader” is fair, consistent, and trustworthy and gives and expects respect. Fair, no-nonsense rules, consistently enforced will give your dog the leadership he needs in order to be an enjoyable companion in your home. A good leader has what the subordinate members want (food, games, fun, petting/grooming, interaction). Utilizing these things will have your dog following you in anticipation of what you have to offer.

1. One way of gaining leadership (and/or to teach impulse control) is for you to go through doorways first.
 - ❖ The best way to do this is to teach your dog a wait command to be used at all thresholds (exterior doors, gates, cars).
 - ❖ It is also important that your dog moves out of your way when you walk through the house. If he is in your way, rather than walking over or around him, shuffle your feet (don't kick!), saying something like “Move” as you make contact with your feet.
 - ❖ If your dog is always running ahead of you (either in the house or outside), you can turn and go the other way, no longer allowing him to ‘race’ you.
2. Ask your dog to sit, look at you with attention, or lie down in order to get something he wants. This is teaching your dog to say “please” and “thank you.” Use these commands before he is played with, has his leash attached to his collar, is given his food, throwing his toy, before playing tug, etc. Having him do something for you teaches him to listen and perform before he gets what he wants.
3. For some dogs, “free feeding” may have your dog thinking he’s in charge of the food supply. Offer meals twice a day, removing the food after 15 minutes. This will put you in charge of a resource that is very important to your dog. In addition, it helps with housetraining and weight control!
4. You must go to many locations (at least 20) and train your dog to respond to you in these various environments before you can start to count on her to be reliable in her behavior and listen to what you are asking her to do. You will need treats for a while at first when teaching obedience commands (especially in really busy locations) to help you in getting your dog to respond appropriately to you. Treats may always be needed initially in really high distraction locations (especially new ones). Be sure to make the treat interesting enough to win out in the environment you are in.
5. **CONSISTENCY** is key to all training and interactions with your dog. Set up fair and consistent rules in your household and have everyone follow them. If you are wishy-washy, it is unfair to expect your dog to have any level of consistency in her behavior. For example, your dog may be allowed on a certain piece of furniture but not others -- OR it is only okay if you invite him on the furniture. Assign certain words and use them every time. If you say SIT each time rather than sometimes saying “sit down,” “you sit,” or “sit, sit, sit,” your dog will be less confused and will learn to comply much more quickly with what you want.

6. **Giving your dog feedback must always be given WHILE a behavior is occurring, or your dog will not learn what you are trying to teach.** Whether the feedback is positive or negative, you only have up to 3 seconds from the time the behavior has occurred to give that feedback. Anything past that small window of time is after-the-fact punishment, which will teach your dog not to trust you, and to think of you as someone who is unpredictable. Dogs learn to leave things alone after LOTS of catching them in the act and interrupting what they are doing, which is the same for a toddler. It wouldn't make sense to drag a child to something he broke an hour ago and show him what he did wrong and yell at him. The one-year-old won't understand what you're trying to teach him and neither does your dog.
7. If your dog is turning a deaf ear (i.e., not listening, ignoring your requests, etc.), put him on his leash when in the house and have him go everywhere you go. This gives your dog no options for independence or to get into trouble. Please, **NEVER** leave a dog unsupervised when his leash is on.
8. If your dog continues to push you by either demanding attention, not listening, turning a deaf ear, or challenging you non-aggressively (body slamming, excessive jumping, or mouthing), then you want to stare your dog directly in the eye (this is a confrontational gesture), scowl at him, and use a low, growly voice, saying something like "stop it."

You can also walk toward your dog while doing all these facial gestures, as this really gets the message across that you are in charge of this space, and you mean business. This is much more effective than any hitting, scruff shaking, or rolling your dog will ever be, because this is how dogs communicate with one another. By staring, moving your dog out of YOUR space, and using a low growling voice, you will be letting your dog know that he's crossed the line.

9. It's also important to have a command you give to your dog that signals that you are finished engaging with him, and that he needs to go away. You may say something like "Go" and point. Initially, you may need to stand up and walk into your dog as you're telling him to "go" so that he knows to actually move away from you. Pretty soon, you'll only need the verbal command.

INTERACTIONS AND PERSONAL SPACE

Have you ever watched two or more dogs interact with one another? What you will notice is that the dog that is the leader is the one that ignores the other dog(s) until he/she decides it's time to interact. As the leader of your 'pack,' it is your job to decide when interactions will or won't occur. If a dog is trying to initiate interaction from the leader dog, that leader dog will turn his head or body away, ignoring the dog trying to engage with him. If he continues to pester the leader, he will make his message more clear by staring, growling/snarling and even chasing the dog away. Then the leader will go right back to doing what he was doing. We can imitate much of this type of interaction with our dogs. It will make sense to them because this is what they do with each other, and it will work so much better than trying to do things in our 'human' way, which doesn't make as much sense to dogs.

1. When your dog leans on you, brushes against you, steps on you, puts his head in your lap to be petted, or brings you a toy to play, he is deciding when things are to happen and/or disrespecting your personal space. When your dog initiates any interaction, decline the offer by moving him away, saying nothing and ignore. If you start talking to him when you're moving him away from you, you're giving him negative attention, which is still attention! If you move him away with your hands, be sure your body moves toward your dog at the same time. Wait long enough so that he isn't seeking attention from you, then if YOU want, invite your dog over to do something with you. It is perfectly fine to invite your dog to touch you or interact with you at any time, but **ONLY** when YOU say so! Be

100% consistent on this. Do the bump/move away and ignore 2-3 times. If your dog continues to seek attention, go to #2 below.

2. Your next progression would be to give your dog a hard stare (even scowling at the same time) and use a low, growling-type voice, saying something like “Stop it” or “Knock it off” as you move your dog away from you, even standing up and walking into him to really make your point, then immediately ignore him. *Be sure to keep the verbal “growling” short and effective.* You really want to convey the message that your dog has crossed the line. This is how dogs communicate with one another, and your dog will definitely get the message. Do this 2-3 times. If that isn’t effective, it’s time for your dog to go into a time out (#3 below)
3. **Time-Outs** – It is important to be prepared ahead of time in case a time out is needed. In the room(s) that you are in most often, attach a leash (made of chain preferably to avoid chewing) to something very secure so that your dog won’t be able to go anywhere. It is absolutely necessary that you put your dog in his time out where he can still see you ignoring him (someplace safe where you can keep your eye on your dog, or put him in an area where your dog cannot get to you but can still see you). If you put him where he can’t see you, after 5 seconds he’ll start trying to get back in or will go off and do something else. Remember, dogs have to receive feedback from you as the behavior is occurring in order to understand what you expect. You have up to 3-5 seconds immediately after the behavior has occurred, but no more than that!
 - ❖ There will be times you will skip numbers 1 and 2 altogether. If your dog is completely obnoxious and ‘over the top’ (i.e., launching at you, constantly nipping at you, picking at you and then running away, uses your lap as a landing pad, etc.) *Do the time-out exercise every time needed.*
 - ❖ While your dog is engaged in the inappropriate behavior, in a happy tone say something like “It’s time to go on your leash” and take your dog to the anchored leash or area you will be putting him in.

Ignore your dog completely for about 30 seconds, then release (*as long as he’s not crying or barking*). Don’t look at, talk to, or give food/treats/toys while he’s in a time out. Be sure to have at least 5 seconds of quiet before releasing him. **Note:** If the dog cannot be moved by the owner because he’s too large or owner has a physical reason, then the owner leaves the dog and shuts a door in his face. Stay behind the door for 30 seconds, then return.