

Leadership

A good leader is fair, consistent, 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 other group members want—food, games, fun, petting, grooming, and interaction. Utilizing these things will have your dog following you in anticipation of what you have to offer.

Gaining Leadership

One way of gaining leadership, to teach impulse control, and for your dog's safety, is for you to go through doorways first. The best way to do this is to teach your dog a wait cue to be used at all thresholds—like exterior doors, gates, and car doors. 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.

Please and Thank You

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 cues before play, getting his leash attached, getting fed, or before throwing his toy or playing tug, etc. Having him do something for you teaches him to listen and perform before he gets what he wants.

Free Feeding

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.

Location, Location, Location

You must go to at least 40 locations 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 at first when teaching obedience cues (especially in really busy locations) to help you to get your dog to respond appropriately to you. Treats may always be needed initially in really high distraction locations—especially new locations. Be sure to make the treat interesting enough to win out over the environment you are in.

Consistency Is Key

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 understand much more quickly what you’re asking of him.

Feedback

Whether your feedback is positive or negative, you have only up to three seconds from the time the behavior occurs to give 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 one-year-old child over 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.

Giving your dog feedback must always be given while a behavior is occurring! Otherwise, your dog will not learn what you are trying to teach him.

Ignoring You!

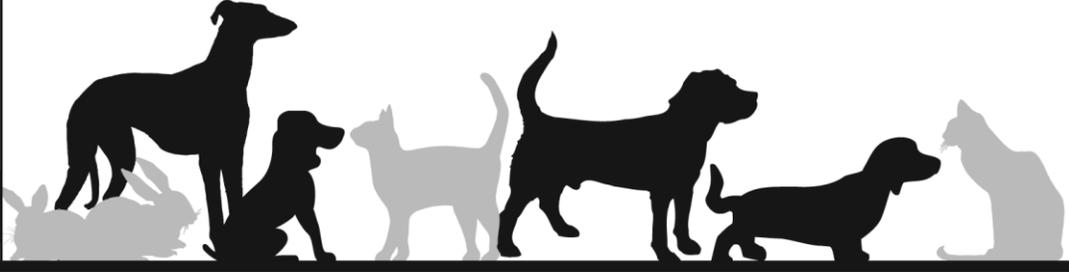
If your dog is (e.g., not listening, ignoring your requests etc), put him on his leash when in the house and have him go everywhere you go. This gives your dog no options for independence or to get into trouble. (Please, **never** leave a dog unsupervised when his leash is on.)

Pushy, Pushy

If your dog continues to push you by either demanding attention, not listening, ignoring you, or challenging you non-aggressively by body slamming, excessive jumping, or mouthing, then you want to stare your dog directly in the eye—which is a confrontational gesture—scowl at him, walk into his space and use a low, growly voice, saying something like “**Stop it!**” then immediately ignore him again.

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. Immediately ignoring afterward is also important because if you continue to engage with your dog, you’re still giving attention to him, even if it’s negative, it’s still attention!

It’s important to have a cue that signals that you are finished engaging with him and that he needs to go away. You may to 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 cue.



How to Get Your Dog to Behave

Many times, the key to getting your dog to do what you want—or stop doing what you don’t want—comes down to using the right technique. A basic knowledge of how behavior modification works can take you a long way in dealing with your dog.

There’s a simple, basic principle underlying all behavior modification techniques. Your dog, like any animal, will behave in ways that *increase* the chance of getting what it wants, and cease to behave in ways that *decrease* the chance of getting what it wants.

Positive Attention

Positive attention includes giving your dog food rewards, praising them, playing with them, or interacting with them in any friendly, positive way. Any time your dog does anything you like and want him to continue doing—like chewing on the appropriate toy, doing something cute, obeying what you ask him to do like sit, down, wait, etc.—give him positive attention. Do the same at the moment the dog stops an unwanted behavior—leaves the cat alone, stops chewing on inappropriate item, removes feet from the table top, etc.

Always remember to praise your dog when he stops unwanted behavior.

Interrupt and Redirect

When your dog is engaged in something you don’t want him to do—chewing the wrong item, feet on the table, walking toward something inappropriate etc.—make a short, sharp, loud sound with your voice like “Ack!” or “Hey!” to

‘startle’ him. For added effectiveness do a sharp hand clap at the same time as your verbal interruption.

This should startle your dog and you should get that “deer in the headlights” look. At that moment, praise your dog for disengaging. After the interruption, your dog, left to their own devices, may return to the source of interest. If this happens, interrupt your dog again, praise them for ceasing the unwanted behavior, and redirect them to do something else, like give them the appropriate chew toy, have them walk toward you, have them sit, etc. By engaging your dog in something new you reduce the chance that they’ll return to the original behavior.

After a time your dog will learn that the stern “**Ack!**” or “**Hey!**” sound means to stop what they’re doing. Always remember to praise your dog when he stops the behavior. You have to keep at this in a consistent way, without sounding irritable with your dog.

The “startle” sound/cue is much more effective than saying “No.” Your dog will naturally respond to the startle sound, but over time may tune you out when you say no. If you think about it, repeating the word no sounds a little bit like you’re barking at your dog. It’s as if you’re all barking together, which isn’t going to teach your dog what you want him to do or stop doing.

Ignore

Ignore any behavior(s) you want to disappear forever—jumping on you without an invitation, demanding attention by barking at you, demanding that you interact with him by pawing, leaning, bumping, placing a toy in your lap, putting his head in your lap to be petted, jumping on the furniture, jumping up toward your face, etc.

You must be ***absolutely consistent*** in this. If you sometimes ignore your dog for jumping into your lap, and sometimes welcome them, the dog won’t get the message. Also, be prepared for your dog to become very insistent with the undesired behavior before it goes away. If the dog isn’t getting results with an action that worked before, they will step up their efforts, and it may become increasingly difficult to ignore them—but you still have to be consistent!

At times you may have to make it clear to the dog that you are deliberately ignoring them. You can do this by turning your head or body away from the dog, folding your arms, or actually walking away.

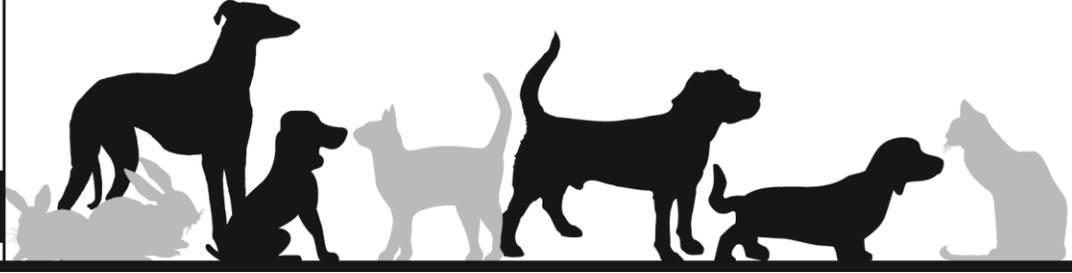
It is *very* important that *you* initiate all interactions with your dog. This is what a dog in charge does with other dogs (see *Interactions and Personal Space* above for details regarding interacting with your dog and degrees of responses to take). In other words, your dog is to be ignored by you until you initiate contact. This is exactly how dogs interact, and it is very effective in teaching your dog to respect your personal space and ultimately listen to you much more attentively.

Negative Attention

Most people don't realize that negative attention—yelling at your dog to get off of you, repeating his name several times to get him to stop doing something, chasing him when he grabs something he's not supposed to have so that you will interact with him—can actually be perceived as a positive thing by your dog. Being scolded is unpleasant for a person, but for a dog it's another way of engaging with a human, and they'll take what they can get!

Your inclination will be to give your dog negative attention when they're doing something you don't like, but don't do it! You could be inadvertently reinforcing the behavior you're trying to eliminate.

If you replace negative attention with interrupt/redirect or ignore, and then add in positive attention at every opportunity, your dog will soon start to behave in a way that works best for both of you.



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 (decision maker) is the one that ignores the other dog(s) until he/she decides it's time to interact. As the decision maker in your household, 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, the leader will make his message more clear by staring, growling, snarling or 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 the "human" way, which doesn't make as much sense to dogs.

Ignore Him

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 is disrespecting your personal space. When your dog initiates any interaction, decline the offer by moving him away, saying nothing and ignoring him. 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—about 10 seconds—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 three times. If your dog continues to seek attention, go to the next paragraph.

Stop It!

When your dog comes back the fourth time wanting to interact with you, give your dog a hard stare—even scowling at the same time—and use a low, growling-type voice, saying something like “**Stop it!**” 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 your 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 only once or twice. If that isn’t effective, it’s time for your dog to go into a time out. (See below.)

Time-Outs

It’s 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 chain leash (to avoid chewing through) to something very secure so that your dog won’t be able to go anywhere. You can also use a baby gate, but it needs to always be handy in case you need it for a time-out. 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 five 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 3-5 seconds immediately after the behavior has occurred, but no more than that!

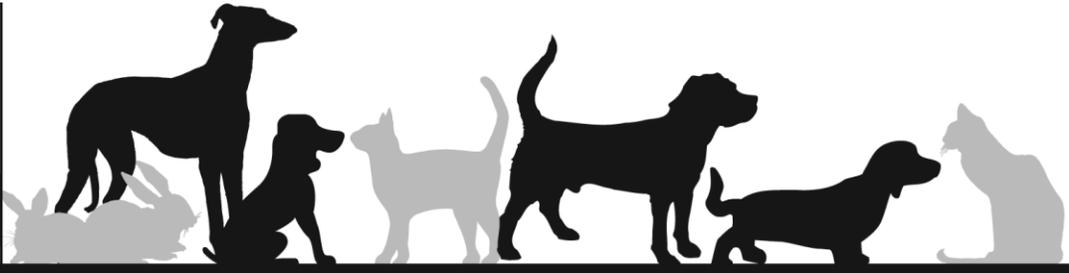
If your dog is being completely obnoxious and “over the top”—launching at you, constantly nipping at you, picking at you and then running away, using your lap as a landing pad, and more, you’ll need to initiate the time-out, skipping all the other steps. ***Do the time-out exercise every time it’s needed.***

If you release your dog while he's still vocalizing, he will think the noise he is making helped get him released! Absence of vocalizing for five seconds is what will get him released.

While your dog is engaged in the inappropriate behavior, in a neutral tone say **"Time out."** and take your dog to the anchored leash or area you will be putting him in.

Ignore your dog completely until he has been calm AND quiet for 5-10 seconds, then release him from the time-out spot. Don't look at, talk to, or give food, treats, or toys while he's in a time-out. If your dog starts to vocalize when you go to release him from his time-out spot, walk away and ignore again until there is calm and quiet for 5-10 seconds, then go back and release him from his time-out spot.

Please note: If the dog cannot be moved by the owner because he's too large or the owner has a physical reason, then the owner can leave the dog and shut a door in his face. Stay behind the door until there is no noise and the dog is calm for 5-10 seconds, then return.



General Information For Living With and Training Your Dog

A good leader gives and expects respect, is fair, consistent, and trustworthy.

- **Your dog doesn't do things out of spite, malice, or jealousy. He may just want attention, is bored, or has learned that negative attention is what he normally gets so he'll take it over no attention at all!**

Say your cue **only once** or you'll start to go into nagging mode, and your dog may start to ignore you! Always count to two, then take action to enforce what you've asked your dog to do (or not do!) .

Appear confident, secure and in charge; your dog will more likely follow your lead.

If you don't like what your dog is doing, tell him to do something else!

Use “**Ack!**” or “**Hey!**” with a robust hand clap (startle) instead of “**No**”. You can also interrupt (“**Ack**”) and redirect your dog to do something else. *Always* praise when your dog stops any unwanted behavior.

Be consistent! Be consistent! Be consistent! Be consistent! Be consistent! Be consistent!

Once your dog knows a cue and chooses to ignore you when you ask him to do it, *always* insist that your dog follow through. Say it once, count to two and then take action.

How your dog shows stress: flight, fight, freezing or fooling around. To help calm her down, talk quietly to her and give her something else to do (such as sit or sit/stay). Be sure that you contribute to calming rather than stressing your dog out even more. **Do not** pull harshly on her leash, yell, repeat cues, or hit your dog. This will only increase her stress level!

Let your dog know when he is being appropriate by giving lots of praise, toys and treats. By doing this, your dog will do more of what you want him to. Be aware of what you give your dog attention for. If it's only for misbehavior, then it will persist! Give praise when your dog is acting appropriately, and ignore or interrupt/redirect when your dog is acting inappropriately.

- **All rewards and reprimands must be given while a behavior is occurring to be effective**—having up to three seconds to give feedback. Otherwise, your dog will not associate the two. **If you do any “after-the-fact punishment” your dog may become fearful and/or come to see you as untrustworthy and unpredictable rather than learning the lesson.**

Important things to remember for success in your training and relationship with your dog

Consistent rules and training are important; give your dog continuous feedback.

Your tone of voice is crucial: praise (happy); reprimand (interrupt with Ack!); and cue (flat and direct).

Fairness in your expectations of your dog—if he hasn't learned it, you have more work to do!

Calm, clear, consistent instructions from you work best.

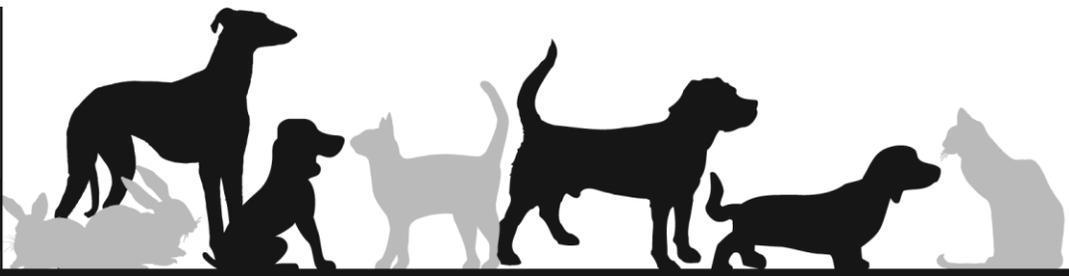
Practice. Always make it fun for you and your dog!

Generalize your training. Train in a variety of locations and practice everywhere you want your dog to listen.

Socialize your dog to different people, places, dogs and things.

Give your dog alternatives! Interrupt/redirect, ignore or obedience cue, depending on the situation.

Make your dog a part of the family. Dogs are social animals and need your companionship.



Referral and Reference Information

The SSPCA Web Site (www.sspca.org)

Provides information on events, pets for adoption, education, behavior handouts, and more.

Canine Good Citizen Test (CGC)

Given by the American Kennel Club For mixed and purebred dogs and held at the Sacramento SPCA quarterly. Contact Val Masters at (916) 504-2842 for dates or vmasters@sspca.org. For more information about the test visit www.akc.org.

Television

It's Me or the Dog with Victoria Stilwell— Positive dog behavior and training program on Animal Planet

Publications

The Whole Dog Journal (800) 829-9165 or www.whole-dog-journal.com

Books and DVD by Author Patricia McConnell, Ph.D

The Other End of the Leash: Why We Do What We Do Around Dogs

For The Love of a Dog: Understanding Emotion in You and Your Best Friend

I'll be Home Soon: How to Prevent and Treat Separation Anxiety

The Cautious Canine How to Help Dogs Conquer their Fears

Feeling Outnumbered? How to Manage and Enjoy Your Multi-Dog Household

Feisty Fido Help For the Leash-Reactive Dog

Lassie Come! How to Get Your Dog to Come Every Time You Call (DVD)

Patricia's Web site is at www.patriciamcconnell.com.

Books By Other Authors

Animals in Translation: Using the Mysteries of Autism to Decode Animal Behavior, by Temple Grandin, Ph.D. and Catherine Johnson

Animals Make Us Human: Creating the Best Life for Animals, by Temple Grandin, Ph.D. and Catherine Johnson

Before and After You Get Your Puppy: The Positive Approach to Raising a Happy, Healthy, and Well-Behaved Dog, by Dr. Ian Dunbar, Ph.D, DVM

Bones Would Rain From the Sky: Deepening Our Relationships with Dogs, by Suzanne Clothier

Don't Shoot The Dog!: The New Art of Teaching and Training, by Karen Pryor, Ph.D.

Help for Your Fearful Dog: A Step-by-Step Guide to Helping Your Dog Conquer His Fears, by Nicole Wilde

Help for Your Shy Dog: Turning Your Terrified Dog into a Terrific Pet, by Deborah Wood

Parenting Your Dog: Develop Dog-Rearing Skills for a Well-Trained Companion, by Trish King, CPDT, CDDBC

Raising Puppies & Kids Together: A Guide for Parents, by Pia Silvani, CPDT and Lynn Eckhardt

The Bark Stops Here, by Terry Ryan

The Culture Clash: A Revolutionary New Way to Understanding the Relationship Between Humans and Domestic Dogs, by Jean Donaldson

Your Outta Control Puppy: How to Turn Your Precocious Pup Into a Perfect Pet, by Teoti Anderson

Books, Videos and DVD Resource

www.dogwise.com