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### The dreaded disclaimer

The information in this eBook is provided for educational purposes only. I make no warranties or guarantees, express or implied, as to its accuracy or usefulness for your particular dog. This information is what I do or would do with my own dogs. I accept no liability for the content of this eBook, or for the consequences of any actions taken on the basis of the information provided.

If you have an aggressive dog who has growled, shown his teeth, or bitten you or anyone else, you should get professional help.



My name is Michele Welton, and I've been a "dog person" for over 30 years.

### Trainer and Competitor

I trained my first German Shepherd when I was 14 years old. Since then I've trained, shown, and titled many other breeds (Beauceron, Norwegian Elkhound, Beagle, Italian Greyhound, Miniature Poodle, Chihuahua) in obedience, agility, herding, tracking,

schutzhund, and conformation events.

### Instructor and Behavioral Consultant

In Southern California I founded The Canine Advisory, where I was **head obedience instructor** and **breed selection consultant**. My advice on choosing, raising, and training dogs was featured on the Orange County TV News Channel and in the Orange County Register newspaper.

### Author of Pet Care Books

But my true passion is **writing**. I'm the author of:



## **Longer Life For The Dog You Love**

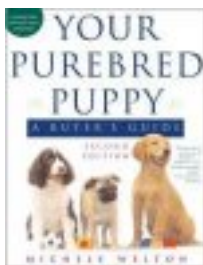
Maximize your dog's health and lifespan! 13 steps you can take right now to reduce your dog's chances of developing health problems -- and if he does develop them, to greatly increase his odds of beating them. With the information in this eBook, you'll help your dog outlive other members of his breed -- and do so in greater health, safety, and comfort.

[You can purchase this eBook directly from my web site!](#)



## **Your Purebred Puppy: A Buyer's Guide**

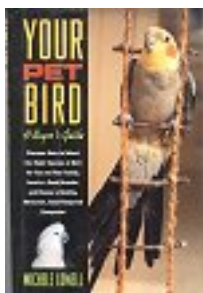
Published by Henry Holt & Co., 1990. This breed selection guide sold over 50,000 copies across the U.S. and Canada. By the year 2000, a lot had changed in the world of purebred dogs, so I was delighted when my publisher asked me for a Revised Edition!



## **Your Purebred Puppy: Second Edition**

Published by Henry Holt & Co., 2000. This 320-page book is the **best breed selection guide** you'll ever find! You'll learn all about the temperament and behavior of 200 dog breeds, so you can choose and buy the perfect breed for your family.

[You can purchase this book directly from my web site!](#)



## **Your Pet Bird**

Published by Henry Holt & Co., 1994. This hardcover book includes beautiful color photos and profiles of the parrots and songbirds most commonly kept as pets. You'll soon be able to read this book **FREE** on my upcoming web site about pet birds.



## **Your Purebred Kitten**

Published by Henry Holt & Co., 1995. Profiles of over 35 breeds, from Abyssinians to Turkish Vans. I'm also going to make this book available **FREE** on my future web site about cats. Coming soon!

## **Web Designer and Webmaster**



Visit my web site at <http://www.yourpurebredpuppy.com> to learn how to choose and raise your dog!

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Introduction: How to ruin a perfectly good pet

### Consider these three philosophies:

1. "Dogs are better off when they're allowed to be uninhibited."
2. "Dogs should not be restricted by rules and expectations."
3. "I just want my dog to be my friend."



If you want to raise an intelligent, well-behaved dog, **THESE PHILOSOPHIES DON'T WORK.**

Oh, you'll end up with an  
uninhibited, unrestricted, liberated dog,  
all right...

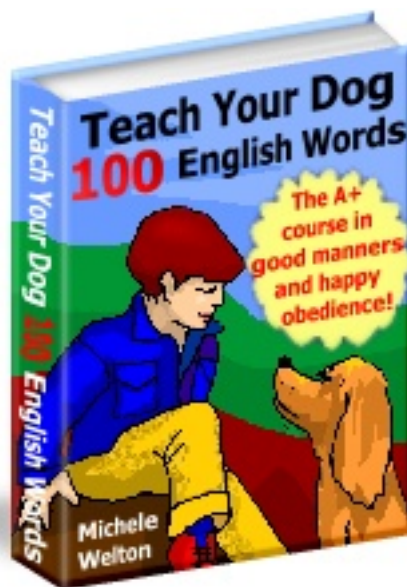
**but he will also be:**

uneducated,  
unruly,  
unreliable,  
and unhappy.

---

## If that doesn't appeal to you...

READ ON and you'll learn about a very different philosophy for raising your dog -- a philosophy that will produce **the smartest, most well-behaved dog you've ever owned.**



Meet Kathy Armstrong and Jake



I often get phone calls from **distressed owners** who are having trouble with their dog. Let's listen in on a phone conversation between myself and a typical dog owner.

We're about to meet **Kathy Armstrong** and **Jake** -- a well-meaning owner and her good-natured but undisciplined dog, who will follow

us all through this eBook.

---

**Kathy:** "Michele, my dog Jake is being difficult. I can't make him do anything. He only listens to me when he's in the mood."

**Me:** "I see. Would you say Jake is behaving **rudely**?"

**Kathy** (surprised): "What do you mean? How can a dog be rude?"

Ah, how indeed! Let us count the ways!



### Talking back

**Me:** "Does he sometimes **sass you back** when you tell him to do something? Bark back at you?"

**Kathy:** "Well, if it's something he doesn't want to do..."

---

### Keeping just out of reach

**Me:** "Does he sometimes **dart just out of reach** when you stretch your hand toward him?"



**Kathy:** "Well, sure, if he doesn't want to be caught."

---



## Hanging onto objects

**Me:** "Does he ever brace his legs and **refuse to let go** when you try to take something away from him?"

**Kathy:** "Well, if it's something he wants to keep..."

---

## Pestering you

**Me:** "Does he often **nudge you for petting** when you're trying to read the paper, or talk on the phone, or visit with guests?"

**Kathy:** "Yes, he does that when I'm not paying attention to him."

---



## Stealing food

**Me:** "Does he **steal food** off your plate when you leave it on the coffee table? Does he get into the garbage?"

**Kathy:** "Um..."

---

## Grumbling when annoyed

**Me:** "Does he ever **grumble at you** when you wake him up? Or when you move him from his favorite chair? Or when you reach toward his food bowl while he's eating? Or when you touch some "sensitive" part of his body, like his tail or foot?"

**Kathy:** "Yes, he doesn't want me to bother him."

---



## Struggling during grooming

**Me:** "Does he **struggle or complain** when you try to open his mouth to look at his teeth? How about cleaning his ears? Or clipping his toenails?"

**Kathy:** "True. He doesn't like me to do that."

---

## Running away from you

**Me:** "When you catch him doing something wrong, does he **run away from you**? Does he lead you on a merry chase around the house or yard?"



**Kathy:** "Uh-huh -- so I can't scold him."

---

## Getting back at you

**Me:** "When he doesn't get his own way or when he's upset with you, does he ever **destroy things** or **pee on your belongings** or on your bed?"

**Kathy:** "Yes, he does sometimes get back at me."

---



## "Telling off" guests

**Me:** "Does **Jake** decide who's welcome in your home and who isn't? Does he continue to **bark or grumble at visitors** even after you've let them in?"

**Kathy:** "Well, if he's excited -- or if he doesn't like them..."

---

## Jumping on guests

**Me:** "Ah, and if he does like them, is he calm and polite? Or does he **jump all over them**?"



**Silence, then...** "I'm beginning to see your point."

---

**Me:** "And you said he **only obeys when he's "in the mood..."**"

**Kathy** (sighing): "You're right, Michele. Jake does do quite a few of those things. **Are they really that bad?**"

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Why rude behaviors are bad

**Me:** "I'm afraid so. All of these behaviors are **rude and disrespectful**. If a dog is allowed to do ANYTHING that's rude or disrespectful, he will believe that he is **higher in the pack order** than YOU are."

**Kathy** (puzzled): "And the pack order is...?"





**The pack order is like a ladder.** A ladder of **hierarchy**. Like wolves, dogs are sociable animals who like to live with other sociable animals in a group or pack.

All packs have a "pecking order". At the top is the most dominant animal, the **Pack Leader**. He (or she) establishes all the rules and makes all the decisions.



Next in line is the Number Two animal, who can tell everyone else what to do -- **except for the pack leader**. Then the Number Three animal, who can tell everyone else what to do -- except for the pack leader and Number Two. And so on, right down to the most submissive one of all, who can't tell anybody else what to do.

Now YOU might think this kind of structure sounds harsh, **but pack animals love it!** They know instinctively that the well-being of any group depends upon each member being able to handle his or her respective position. With a pecking order, **they know exactly where they stand with each other** -- and who is who in the pack.



The pack instinct is why dogs wedge themselves into our families, rather than prowling along the fringes, like most cats. Cats are solitary animals who like to do their own thing. **Dogs are pack animals who like to belong.** That one instinct makes a tremendous difference in the way each pet should be raised.

When a dog joins your family, even if your family is only YOURSELF, a pack is formed.

Oh, yes, in his mind it certainly is, and his instincts compel him to seek out its structure.

## Who is the leader? Who is the follower?

Whoever is allowed to establish the rules and make the decisions is the leader.



---

Now you understand **why your dog needs the security of knowing who is in charge.** And also why, if you don't establish YOURSELF as the leader, **your dog will feel compelled to assume the role.**

If he does, you will see those "rude and disrespectful" behaviors. Your dog isn't actually being rude or disrespectful. He is carrying out his role as pack leader. He figures that **since YOU haven't assumed the role, HE has to do it.**

---

**Kathy** (anxiously): "But I don't want to control my dog. I just want him to be my friend."

We'd all like to think of our dog as the perfect friend. But friends are **EQUALS**. A healthy relationship with your dog has to be very different.

**Me:** "Kathy, Jake can never be just your friend -- **because he's your dependent**.

**Think about it.** Jake depends on you for his food, his health, his safety, his very life. There are times when you have to do things with Jake that he doesn't understand and doesn't like:



- give medicine that tastes awful
- pull a sharp stick out of his teeth
- roll him onto his back to remove a tick from his belly

Jake doesn't understand that medicines will help him, that sticks can puncture his throat, that ticks carry disease. Without this knowledge, **Jake doesn't know what's best for him**. For his own safety, he must always accept your greater knowledge and judgment.

For your own peace of mind as your dog's guardian and caregiver, **you have to know that you can restrain and handle him** in any way you see fit, at any time you see fit.

If your dog won't accept little things, such as clipping his toenails or cleaning his teeth or giving up a toy or sitting quietly while you attach his leash, then he won't suddenly accept something major that you have to do with him. **You have to start with little things.**"



---

**Kathy:** "But I'm worried that if I take charge all the time, he'll resent me."

**Me:** "Oh, no, Jake won't resent you -- **he'll respect you!** You'll not only be making him the most well-behaved dog you've ever had, but also the **happiest and smartest!**"

**Kathy** (startled): "Come again?"

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## Why "follower" dogs are happier and smarter

### **Follower dogs are happier because they're secure.**

They know that **YOU have everything under control.** They don't have to worry about trying to figure out our complicated human world. They can relax and enjoy life while **YOU handle all the decisions.**



---

**Follower dogs are happier because they're appreciated by everyone who meets them.**

Their positive behavior skills **are noticed by other people**. Your dog understands the appreciative tone of compliments, as well as your pleased reaction. Dogs LOVE this kind of praise and attention.

---

### **Follower dogs are happier because they get to go more places.**

Well-behaved dogs are **easy to bring places** -- and they are more often allowed to stay in places where those causing a ruckus are asked to leave.

---

### **Follower dogs are happier because they know the consequences of every behavior.**

When they know which behaviors bring **praise, petting, and rewards** -- they can choose to do these. And when they know which behaviors bring scolding -- they can easily avoid these.

---

### **Follower dogs are happier because they learn what your human "sounds" mean.**

Like anyone who learns a foreign language, **dogs feel empowered** when they **understand what you're saying**.

**"sit" = plunk  
butt on floor**

### **Finally, follower dogs are SMARTER because their brain has been developed.**

The simple act of teaching your dog **anything** makes his brain stronger and faster, which in turn makes him more successful learning OTHER things. In other words, **his intelligence and learning skills start to "snowball"** with the very first thing you teach -- and keep right on snowballing with every new word.

**Now... what dog wouldn't love all that?"**



---

**Kathy:** "But I thought dogs **automatically** wanted to please the people they love!"

**Me** (smiling): "Dogs want to please **the people they respect**. They want to please **leaders**. Dogs simply co-exist with non-leaders. Or ignore non-leaders. Or **CHALLENGE** non-leaders."

They will love you either way,  
**for dogs do not equate love with respect.**

**They love blindly;  
but they respect only those  
who have earned it.**

So teaching them to respect you **will in no way diminish their love for you** -- and teaching them to respect you is mandatory if you are to take proper care of them.

## So if you already have your dog's respect...

✓ You need to know **what to do** to keep it.

## And if you've lost his respect...

✓ You need to know **what to do** to get it back."

**Kathy** (resolutely): "I think I understand. Tell me what to do!"

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Why educate your dog



Teaching your dog to respect you means **educating** him.

**Educating him means teaching him lots and lots of words and their meanings.**

As you're teaching him, he will come to **respect** you as a fair and capable leader. Because of that respect, he will **change** his daily behaviors to much better ones.

## Education = Respect = Better Behavior

---

Educated dogs are the **happiest, smartest, most confident dogs** in the world. They have learned so many words and good behaviors that they fully understand what is expected of them.



- **They know what to do.**
- **They know what NOT to do.**

Dogs love the security of knowing what to do, and what not to do.

And since **YOU'RE the one who taught them these things**, they have come to view YOU as their trusted partner and leader. They look up to you. They believe in you. They will do anything for you. **They trust you to do anything with them.**

An educated dog is a true companion, while an uneducated dog is just a casual pet.



## If you don't educate your dog...

- He will never be the dog he could have been.
- He will always be less intelligent.
- Less able to figure things out.
- Less "aware" of his own worth and abilities.



You know the old saying...a mind is a terrible thing to waste.

A dog who is properly educated is a "thinking" dog. A "thinking" dog is not a robot who does things mechanically. A "thinking" dog listens carefully. He looks at your face, "reads" your expressions and body language, and tries to piece individual words together into complex actions.



**"Where's your rope toy? Where is it?"**

**Go find it!**

**Oops, that's your hedgehog toy! Drop it.**

**Find your rope toy!**

**Is it upstairs? Go upstairs! Get your rope toy!**

**Good girl, you got it! Now bring it here.**

**Come! Good girl!**

**Give it to me! Thank you!"**

Interested in a dog like that? First, your dog has to learn the meaning of those important words. That's where YOU come in! **And that's where this eBOOK comes in!**

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How your dog learns language



**Yes... if you link the words to the appropriate object or action.**

Dogs learn language just like infants do. You hold up a teddy bear and say "teddy" to your infant, over and over.

But imagine if you said "teddy" to your baby, over and over -- **but didn't hold up the teddy bear.** Your baby wouldn't have the slightest idea what you meant!



Until you connect a word with an object or action, words are only meaningless sounds.

Think about that.

---

When you listen to a conversation in a foreign language, you can't understand it. Because...

- **The words are not connected to anything concrete.** The foreigner simply chatters on and on, without pointing to anything in the real world.
- **The sounds all run together.** You don't know where one word ends and the next word begins. Don't foreign languages always sound impossibly fast? They sound like one long run-on sentence, with no separate words. **Well, that's what English sounds like to your dog!**

But let's say a French man repeated a single sound -- one sound only -- let's say the sound "*pom.*" If he repeated this clearly and distinctly, while at the same time **holding up an apple**, you'd get it, wouldn't you? You wouldn't know how to spell it -- it's actually spelled **POMME** -- but you'd understand that the sound "*pom*" refers to the rounded red fruit with the stem and green leaves.



**You must do this with your dog, too!**

1. Emphasize one sound clearly and distinctly.

2. Connect the sound to the appropriate object or action.

**In this way, a sound becomes a WORD to your dog.**

A word is a sound with meaning. You must **SHOW** your dog what that meaning is.

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How to teach your first word

Let's teach your dog **his very first word** -- perhaps the most important word in his entire vocabulary.

## **WORD #1: "NO!"**

**"No!" means:**

- that a certain behavior is not allowed
- that your dog must stop the behavior
- that he must not repeat it

Now you might think this is pretty obvious, that you should just be able to say **"No!"** and your dog should understand. But remember... your dog is not born understanding English. You have to **SHOW** him what **"No!"** means:

---

**example**

Suppose you're watching TV. When a commercial comes on, you wander into the kitchen for a glass of water. Through the window you see your dog Jake digging a hole in the tulip bed. You raise the window and shout, "**Jake, no! No digging! No!**"

Jake looks up, startled. He stops digging. You step away from the window, out of his sight. You wait, watching.



If Jake resumes digging, you slip out the side door and pick up the garden hose that you've coiled there for just this purpose. You tip-toe across the lawn just far enough to get into range. You turn on the water and blast Jake's hind end! He leaps into the air and scrambles away. You repeat, "**No! No digging!**"

**Here's what Jake learned:**

He was doing "something". Unfamiliar sounds floated out of your mouth. He continued to do the "something" -- and suddenly, mysteriously, he got soaked from behind! He wasn't hurt in any way, but boy, was he startled!

Jake logically concludes that the sounds ("**n-o-o-o**") must have **meaning** -- must be, perhaps, a warning of some kind.

Let's see. What action was he engaged in just before he heard the sounds, and again, just before getting soaked? Hmm. Digging. Perhaps the sound "**no-o-o**" has something to do with digging!



Well, if you remember, Jake didn't stop either, the first time! **Most dogs WON'T stop what they're doing the first time.**

Even the first FEW times.

Because at that point, **"No!"** is still a meaningless sound to them. To become a word, it must be **connected** to something **tangible**, something **physical**.



With Jake, we accomplished that by sneaking out with the hose and surprising him. We could also have tried charging out with a squirt gun and Indian war whoops.

The point is to **add something startling and mildly unpleasant to the sound "No!"** so the sound takes on meaning and becomes a **WORD**.

In other words, you must **BACK UP** your **"No!"** with something that makes an impression on your dog.

---

## Back up your "No!" with a Time Out.

With most dogs, this is what I start with. Because many dogs have never really been shown what you **DO** and **DON'T** want them to do.



So, rather than correcting them sharply when they are simply ignorant or confused, **start out by calmly showing them what you want.**

For example, if your dog gets into the trash, lead him to the overturned trash can, put his head close to it, and say firmly, **"No. Don't touch."**

Then put him in his crate for a 15-minute Time Out while you clean up the mess.



**Time Outs can be as useful for dogs as they are for children!**

Time Outs also give **YOU** a chance to **calm down** after your dog has done something bad.

Some trainers will tell you, "Never use your dog's crate as punishment, because then your dog will dislike the crate and won't want to sleep in it."

I've never found this to be true. **I've always used the crate for Time Outs** and my dogs still enjoy the privacy of their "safe den." They go in **voluntarily** to rest and sleep.

---

## Back up your "No!" with a squirt of water.

You've already seen this one in action! For many dogs, a **sudden spray of water** from a plastic spray bottle or squirt gun is one of the most effective "enforcers" of the word **"No!"** It is especially persuasive with **small dogs**. Also, by the way, with **cats**.

However, some dogs pay no mind to the pathetic little squirts of a typical squirt gun. You can buy **heavy-duty water cannons** that look like submachine guns, but obviously you can't use these indoors -- unless you don't mind living in Waterworld.



But they can work well outdoors. For example:

- for a dog who's digging holes in the garden under your window
- for a dog who's getting into the trash can just outside the back door
- for a dog who's standing on the porch barking





A **garden hose** also works outdoors -- though it can be awkward to get to quickly and silently. Often the dog has stopped his unacceptable behavior by the time you've gotten the hose turned on, uncoiled, dragged toward him, etc. For chronic offenders, clever owners hang a hose right outside the back door, with the water always turned on and a hose control that allows for instant on-off when you flick the switch.

I do have to "rain on the parade" here and admit that some dogs ENJOY being squirted. So this correction doesn't always "hold water." Heh-heh.

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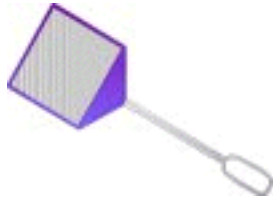
## Back up your "No!" with a sudden loud sound.

Many dogs are startled by **sudden loud sounds**. If you follow up your harmless **"No!"** sound with vigorous hand claps, or shaking a can full of pennies, some dogs will stop a bad behavior.



Even better, he may stop the behavior the **NEXT** time you simply say **"No!"** -- because he doesn't want to bring on the unpleasant sound.

**Better still, he may NEVER repeat the behavior** because he has learned that it will draw a **"No!" plus** that unpleasant sound. And THAT, my friends, is the goal -- that he not even **START** a misbehavior!



A **FLY SWATTER** is another sound-maker that provides a triple surprise. The **thwack!** as it smacks the wall or table. The **whistling sound** as it cuts swiftly through the air. And if your dog is close enough, he may also feel the **sudden breeze** that disturbs the air.

---

## Back up your "No!" with socks tossed at his hind end.

For larger dogs, a light magazine will do, too, or a lightweight sneaker. It's the unexpected **pop on his rear end** that makes dogs think twice about repeating the behavior that caused it.



If you want your dog to know exactly where the correction came from, **stare firmly at him** when he whips around in surprise. Repeat **"No!"** for good measure.

## **Are there times when you DON'T want your dog to know where a correction came from?**

**Yes!** Some dogs are more impressed when a correction appears to come out of nowhere. If you zing his hind end with something, then immediately go back to reading your paper, humming nonchalantly and not even looking at him, your dog may conclude that the correction is a **natural result** of having done that particular behavior.

In other words, the **behavior itself** is correcting him! If he believes this, he is more likely to not do that behavior...**even when you're not in the room.**

---

## Back up your "No!" with a firm collar grip and dominant stare.

Here you use both hands to grip your dog's collar **under his chin, or on each side of his neck.** You lift his head up and look sternly into his eyes. You might even lift him high enough that both his front paws are **just slightly** off the ground. This is an unsettling, rather vulnerable position for him -- **good.**

A collar grip and dominant stare is a **more direct, more personal correction** than the others. I use it for **serious offenses.** For example, mouthing on your hands, nipping at ankles, growling or grumbling, obnoxious fussing during grooming, and the like.

I also use it for **persistent offenses.** For example, if I've just corrected a dog by clapping my hands or squirting water, and he seems to listen at the time, **but then repeats the same offense a few minutes later,** I may decide to "get in his face" and really make an impression with this firm collar correction and stern eye contact.

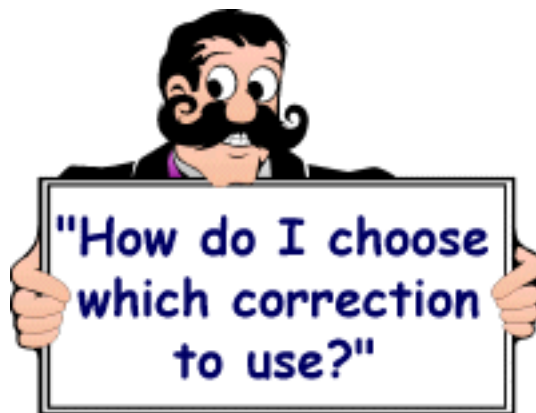
Don't do this with really aggressive dogs! With such dogs, you need professional help.

---

## **Back up your "No!" with an open-palm swat on his hind end.**

On the scale of Directness and Firmness, **this is as far as you should ever need to go** with virtually any dog. And again, don't do this with really aggressive dogs. Get professional help.

If you try these corrections for a few weeks and your dog is still unresponsive, you should **consult with a professional trainer**. He or she can evaluate your dog up close and personally, and can help you figure out what's going on.



## **Base your choice on two things:**

**Which correction fits the infraction best.**

- For example, the balled-up socks or magazine can be tossed

when he is sniffing the garbage in the kitchen and his back end is facing you.

- The spray bottle or squirt gun is a good choice for barking, or pestering the cat.

### Your dog's reaction and results.



A proper correction should make your dog stop the misbehavior, drop his tail, flatten his ears, and shrink his body a bit.

**His expression and body language should clearly say, "Oops! Chasing the cat wasn't worth THAT."**

If he flings himself onto his back, dribbling urine, you came on too strong.

If he keeps right on doing what he's doing, or if he stops for a moment, **then goes back to the misbehavior as soon as you turn your back**, you need to **"up"** the level of your correction. Or **combine** two of them.

In other words, let your **DOG** be the one to tell you -- through his expression and body language, but most of all, through the **RESULTS** -- which correction is appropriate for him.

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Eight common mistakes when teaching "No!"



## Mistake #1. Don't say "No!" without being ready and able to back it up.

### example

When her TV show went to commercial, Kathy Armstrong wandered into the kitchen for a glass of water. Through the window she saw her dog Jake digging another hole in the tulip bed. She raised the window. "**Jake, no! Cut that out!**" Jake stopped digging and looked up. Kathy hurried back to the TV as the commercial ended. Jake resumed his digging.

### Here's what Jake learned from Kathy's "correction":

That when he does certain things that are enjoyable to him, his owner's head sometimes appears and vague sounds float out of her mouth. **Nothing else happens.**

Jake logically concludes that the sound she makes ("**n-o-o-o**") must be a coincidental background sound. Sort of like the incidental sounds of flying dirt that he hears when he digs a hole. **The sound "n-o-o-o" carries no consequences.** He can ignore it, just as he ignores the sound of the flying dirt. Just another of life's little mysteries.

If you ever use the word "No!" with your dog and don't back it up -- by doing whatever it takes to **MAKE HIM STOP** the behavior -- you're teaching him that "**No!**" is a meaningless sound that can be ignored.



Be especially careful when you're occupied with doing something, such as watching TV or talking on the phone. Some dogs (like some children) learn that if you're busy, **you may yell at them, but you won't make them stop.** Not a good lesson!

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**Mistake #2. Don't try to teach your dog that "No!" means "ethically or morally wrong."**

**You may be wondering:** "How can I get my dog to understand which things are the right things to do, and which things are the wrong things to do?"



The answer is: **You can't.** Your dog will never understand that some things are morally and ethically right, while other things are morally and ethically wrong.

For example, to your dog, there will never be anything inherently "wrong" with grabbing a toy from another pet. **You can't teach him values**, such as "sharing is kind." You can't teach him to step into another living creature's shoes and empathize with their feelings:

- "Don't you realize that your sister Fluffy will feel **sad** if you steal her toy?"
- "Can't you see that jumping on my white pants ruins them and **upsets** me?"

- "Don't you understand that chewing up my Beanie Babies is a **mean** thing to do?"

**If your dog could talk, this is how he would answer those questions:**

- "Huh?"
- "Huh?"
- "Huh?"



**example**

Kathy Armstrong held up her ruined sandal and waved it at her dog Jake.

**"Jake, now you look at this! This pair of sandals cost me seventy-five dollars and now you've ruined them. It took me weeks to find these sandals. They were a perfect match for my turquoise outfit. It was wrong of you to do this, Jake. It was mean. You've made me very unhappy and you darned well better be sorry. Are you listening to me, Jake? Do you understand me?"**

All Jake understands is that chewing shoes apparently causes his owner to blurt out a long monologue of **meaningless, harmless words**. As Kathy waves the sandal around, he stares longingly at it and wags his tail. He remembers where he got this tasty toy. He also remembers that there were lots more in the same place.





When you correct your dog, don't get into rights and wrongs, morals and values. **Don't explain WHY to your dog.** An unacceptable behavior should simply be linked to the word "No!" and backed up with a physical correction.

**This behavior = NO!** Case closed.



**Mistake #3. Don't keep using the same correction if it doesn't make your dog stop the behavior.**

It's tempting to choose a particular correction -- for example, the squirt bottle -- because you LIKE it. But the question should always be:

**Does it work for your dog?**

**example**

When Jake persisted in gnawing craters in the upholstery, Roger Armstrong bought a plastic squirt gun. When he caught Jake chewing, he ran toward the dog, squirting madly.

Well, that was just fine and dandy with Jake! He bounded into the air, trying to catch the water with his tongue. The "game" ended when Roger, backpedaling frantically from his enthusiastic dog, tripped over the ottoman and fell on his backside.

An hour later, Roger returned to the living room and found a fresh hole dug in the sofa. Jake was curled up in it, chewing happily on the plastic squirt gun.

**Believe it or not, this happens a lot!** Owners will complain that they tried the squirt gun (or garden hose, or fly swatter, or rattling pennies) again and again. **And it didn't work.**

Now, sometimes there is something amiss with their **timing** or with their **attitude** as they're carrying out the correction. For example, they may not be quick enough or stern enough or consistent enough.

But sometimes they've simply chosen the **wrong correction** for their particular dog.

- Your dog will show you, by his body language and **by the results**, whether a particular correction works for him.
- **Dogs will always do what is most to their advantage to do.**
- If your dog believes that the FUN of doing a particular misbehavior outweighs the DISCOMFORT he receives from a particular correction, **he will keep doing the misbehavior.**
- Only when the DISCOMFORT of the correction outweighs the FUN of the misbehavior, will he stop doing the misbehavior. **Because he believes it is no longer worth it.**

Your job is to find the correction that makes YOUR dog decide that a particular misbehavior is no longer worth it.

Each dog is completely different when it comes to which correction will stop him from doing a particular behavior. **You should strive for the gentlest correction that will stop the misbehavior, but ultimately,**



**it is your DOG who must be the decider of which correction that must be.**



**Mistake #4. Don't ASK your dog to stop what he's doing.**

**example**

As Kathy Armstrong struggled to pull another sandal out of Jake's jaws, she tried to reason with him. "**Ja-a-a-a-k-e,**" she pleaded. "**Come on now, Jake, be a good boy. Let me have it! Jake?**"

Jake heard the **wheedling tone** of her voice, the clutter of words that made her appear indecisive, the **question marks** that sounded as though she were giving him a choice. His answer was to clamp down and tug more firmly.

**Your tone of voice means everything to your dog.**

Clip out your "**No!**" **crisply**. Keep your voice **low and serious**. This is usually harder for women than it is for men, which is one reason dogs often respond better to a man's corrective voice than to a woman's.

**But don't go to the other extreme! If you use a loud or high-pitched voice...**

- **Some dogs will lose respect for you.** They interpret loudness or shrillness as a demeaning loss of control, and they conclude that you are a **screechy, blustering person**.

- **Some dogs will become so fearful that their survival instinct kicks in.** They "freeze up" and become unable to think. A dog in the throes of extreme fear is definitely intimidated by you, **but he is incapable of learning a darned thing**.



### **Mistake #5. Don't smile or laugh when you say "No!"**

#### **example**

Roger Armstrong couldn't help chuckling as he pulled Jake away from the spitting kitten.

**"Hey, Jake,"** Roger said. **"Leave the cat alone."**

But he had to admit it had been exciting to watch his athletic dog in hot pursuit of the fleeing cat. Roger wasn't especially fond of cats, anyway.



Jake looked up at him, panting and grinning. He could tell by his master's smile and relaxed body language that he wasn't really in trouble -- that in fact, his master approved of his macho-ness.



If you secretly think it's cute when your dog unrolls the toilet paper and runs through the house with it, you need to **keep those thoughts off your face and out of your voice** Otherwise, your dog will "read" your true belief and conclude that your **"No!"** doesn't really mean much.

## Your facial expression and body language are important!

**Match your stern voice with stern body language:**

- Draw yourself up to your full height.
- Pull your eyebrows together into a frown.
- Purse your lips together.
- Stare piercingly into your dog's eyes.



**Mistake #6. Don't add affection and petting to your corrections.**

**example**

**"Jake, how many times have I told you to stay off the sofa!"** Kathy complained. She wrapped her arm around the dog and pushed him onto the floor, her hand sliding along his back in a gentle stroking motion. As soon as he was down, she smiled at him and tickled his head. As she headed for the kitchen, Jake jumped back onto the sofa.



Many dogs are happy to "take a correction" if it also means personal attention and touching. In fact, if they think you might pick them up or pet them during or immediately after correcting them, **some dogs will deliberately misbehave just to get the petting!**

**Make your corrections swift and business-like.**

- Don't add personal attention such as affectionate eye contact or a smile.
- Don't rest your hand on your dog's head or body while you're scolding him.
- Don't pick him up and hold him.

**Instead...**

- Say, "**NO!**" Squirt with water gun.
- Turn your attention **AWAY** from your dog and go about your business, ignoring him.

In this way, your dog learns that **only when he is behaving well**, will he get personal attention in the form of pleasant eye contact, smiling, touching, holding, and petting.



**Mistake #7. Don't CALL your dog if you're going to correct him.**

**This is one of the most common mistakes owners make!**

If you call your dog ("**Jake, come here.**") and he comes to you, and **you scold him or do anything unpleasant with him...**

1. he will associate his name and the word "**Come**" with **discomfort**
2. and he will thereafter be **reluctant** to respond to those words.

You **NEVER** want your dog to think that obeying "**Come**" might cause discomfort.

And don't try to fool your dog by adopting a wheedling, coaxing tone. "**Come here, Jake, Mommy's not going to hurt you, come on, sweetheart.**"

Because if your dog follows his trusting nature and believes you -- **and then discovers your deception** -- he will not only distrust the word "Come", but also he will distrust **YOU**.



**The moral is this: Whenever you need to correct your dog or do anything uncomfortable with him, GO GET HIM. SILENTLY.**

And if your dog **runs away from you** when you're going to get him?

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## Mistake #8. Don't chase your dog.

### example

When the Rubbermaid trash barrel crashed to the kitchen floor, strewing garbage everywhere, Jake knew he was in trouble. Kathy was rushing toward him, hands outstretched. Jake feinted left, rushed right. The chase was on!



When they don't want to be caught, many dogs will dart just out of your reach, dive under the table, behind the sofa, and **lead you on merry chases** around the house.

**You must never play this game.**

Promise yourself right now that you will **never again run after your dog**. Because every second that he eludes you cheapens you in his eyes. He **KNOWS** he is defeating your efforts and his little victories make you look like a bumbling fool.

**Instead, track him down:**

- **Don't say anything.** Remain silent.
- **Don't run.** Walk firmly and purposefully, leaning forward with intent, keeping your expression stony-faced, drilling your dog with your eyes.

**Here's what usually happens:**



- Most dogs are baffled and unnerved by this kind of **persistent, methodical following**.



- Most dogs will eventually **shrink down and give up**. HINT: If your dog does this quickly, make your correction much milder to encourage this behavior.

- Some dogs, in fact, learn to **freeze in position** whenever they've done something wrong and been caught at it. They've learned through experience that their owner will track them down -- **to the ends of the earth if necessary** -- in order to give a deserved correction, so they figure they might as well stop and get it over with!

### **Once you have him, here's what you do:**

When your dog has given up and/or you have him absolutely cornered so you can be sure of gripping his collar **without any risk of lunging at him and missing...**

1. Do so.
2. **Lead your dog** to the scene of the crime (the stolen food, the chewed slippers, the housebreaking mess). As you lead him, give his collar an **occasional jerk**. Use common sense! Temper your jerk according to your dog's size and personality. You would jerk a Chihuahua's collar with one finger. You would jerk a gentle submissive dog much more gently than a feisty dominant one.

3. **Show** your dog the bad deed and tell him firmly, **"No!"** Add the **back-up correction** that works best for your particular dog.
4. If you have to clean up some mess he has made, put him in his crate for a **15 minute Time Out**. Otherwise, let him go. **Don't spare him a second glance**. If he tries to make up to you by fawning around your feet with a sorrowful look, **ignore him**.



Your **coldness** at this time is very effective in impressing upon him how serious you are about misbehaviors.



If you have a dog who dances out of reach almost every time you reach for him, a **hand-hold** will help solve the problem.

**A hand-hold gives you something to latch onto when you need to catch your dog.** A hand-hold is a piece of light rope or sturdy string attached to your dog's buckle collar. It should be just long enough to swing short of the ground when he



walks. (You don't want him stepping on it and jerking his own neck!) Some people cut an **old leash** to the proper length and clip it to the collar.

Smart-aleck dogs who consistently run from you should wear a hand-hold whenever you're around to supervise them. Take off the hand-hold when you have to leave them unsupervised.

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## Five more ways to tell your dog "No"

Well, we've certainly spent a lot of time on **"No!"**, haven't we? That's because it's so important!

**You must be able to STOP your dog from doing what you don't want.**

But you'd get sick of saying, **"No!"** all the time, so let's talk about other words and phrases you can use as **substitutes** for **"No!"**

### **WORD #2: "AH-AH!"**

Anyone who has raised a child is intimately familiar with this guttural sound. It's a natural sound of **warning and rebuke**. Children and animals seem to understand it instinctively.

**"Ah-ah!"** is a great word to use when a misbehavior happens **suddenly and unexpectedly**.

**example**

You're cleaning tartar off your dog's teeth with a dental pick. He starts to pull his head away. You need to stop this movement instantly so you don't accidentally chip into his gum. A sharp "**Ah-ah!**" should stop him cold. It bursts from your throat more quickly than you can form your lips around "**No!**" Try it right now, for practice.

For many owners, "**Ah-ah!**" is actually a **better** word to use than "**No.**" Because if you have been saying "**No**" to your dog for a long time (without knowing how to enforce it), it may have become a long-standing habit for him to ignore it. Starting fresh with "**Ah-ah!**", where now you know how to **back it up** with something physical, is a great idea.

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### **WORD #3: "STOP THAT!"**

I often use this phrase with a dog **who is being persistent and annoying**. For example:

- a dog who keeps insisting on being petted after I've stopped
- a dog who keeps wriggling when I'm grooming him
- a dog who keeps whining for something

**Watch your tone of voice!** Don't plead with your dog. Say "**Stop that!**" very firmly. And your facial expression and body language should convey annoyance and indignation, as though you can't believe your dog is acting so ridiculously. Correcting a dog effectively means being an actor!

Always remember that your tone of voice, your facial expression, and the way you hold your body are just as important to your dog as your actual words.

## WORD #4: "DON'T TOUCH!"

**story** Suppose you've caught your dog chewing on something. You take it away and say "**No!**" as you hold it firmly in front of his face. Now add, "**Don't touch!**" It's a phrase that comes naturally under these circumstances, so you'll probably say it with force and feeling. Good!



You can also use this phrase as a **pre-emptive warning** to let your dog know that **something is off limits**.

For example, if you bring home a hamster and your dog sniffs the cage too eagerly, warn him, "**Don't touch!**" You want him to get the message that this new creature is like a shoe or slipper:

- **precious to YOU**
- **forbidden to HIM**



Of course, there are some critters who wouldn't need your help! "**Don't touch!**" they warn, waving their claws. If your dog persisted, they would "**up**" the force of their message. Take a lesson from them and teach your dog in the same natural way, **by adding negative consequences to actions you don't want repeated.**

---

Now we come to two correction words that some trainers consider **TABOO:**

**WORD #5: "BAD!"**

**WORD #6: "SHAME ON YOU!"**

Some trainers will tell you not to use these words at all. Just as child behavioral experts tell you not to call your CHILD "**bad.**"

**They have a point, for two reasons:**

1. First, you're not supposed to label an **individual** as bad, but rather his **behavior**. In other words, you're not supposed to say, "**YOU'RE a bad kid (or dog)!**"



This makes perfect sense for children, who do indeed internalize your words and can form negative self-images based on your negative characterizations of them.

But most dogs are too rooted in the moment to do this kind of deep analysis. Very few dogs slink around the house, moping about their self-image and thinking of themselves as worthless.

2. But remember, there is a **second reason** these phrases are frowned upon by many trainers. This second reason deserves thinking on your part.



Using these words **might put you in such a negative mood** that you start thinking of your dog as INHERENTLY bad. As though he was born a bad dog and will always be a bad dog.

This is not a constructive attitude at all.

**So here's what I think...**

Don't use these words if your relationship with your dog isn't very good right now. It will only make it that much harder to see your dog in a positive light.

Otherwise, if you have a normal happy dog and you really believe that he's inherently a good dog, you're not going to do any harm by **occasionally** reacting honestly to some particularly bad behavior with the outraged phrase, "**What did you do? What a bad dog you are! Shame on you!**"

It's such a normal human reaction that **we all do it** from time to time -- yes, even the trainers who tell you not to!

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The rules of your household

Let's take a break from learning new words. Let's talk about the importance of **establishing one set of rules** in your household.



**Everyone in your family must agree on what your dog can and cannot do:**

- If **you** don't allow him upstairs, your spouse and kids can't allow it either.
- If he can't sleep on the sofa on **Monday**, he can't sleep on it on Saturday either.
- If he can't jump on **Aunt Martha** when she comes visiting, then he can't jump on **Uncle Fred** either.



**No "maybe's" or "sometimes" or "just this once."**

You may think you're being "flexible" but your dog pegs it as **indecisive**. **He will start to test your rules** to find out which ones are really rules, and which ones are up for grabs. Dogs do not do well with gray areas.

**If you allow one gray area, your dog is driven by instinct to second-guess another of your decisions, and another, and another, to find out where the limits are.**

**Decide on the rules.  
Stick to them.  
Consistency.  
Everyone.**



## How to praise your dog

### WORD #7: "GOOD!"

Now, you don't want to be in Correction Mode all day long, just waiting for your dog to make some little mistake. If you're going to let him know when he is **wrong**, you have to let him know when he is **right**, too.

**Watch for good behavior, too!**



Praise your dog whenever he does **something you like**, even if it's only resting quietly on his blanket or chewing on his bone.

**"GOOD boy, Jake! GOOD dog! GOOD bone!"**

Notice how you can use "Good" to refer not only to your DOG, but also to the **good thing he's doing**.

**"GOOD bone!" "GOOD sit!" "GOOD come!"**

---


### Five tips for praising your dog

- **Pitch your voice higher** than your normal speaking voice. A low-pitched, serious "Good dog" sounds more like a growl, which is why dogs often don't respond as well to a man's praise

as they do to a woman's. **Tone of voice matters.** So lighten and brighten your voice when you're telling your dog what a good boy he is!

- **Exaggerate each syllable. "Goo-oo-ood giirrr-lll!"** Brisk, clipped words sound like commands or reprimands. Praise words should be **s-t-r-e-t-c-h-e-d out** so your dog can savor them.
- Just as you added a physical "**back up**" to your correction words, sometimes **add a physical "back-up"** to your praise words. A pat on his head, a tickle under his chin, a scratch of his muzzle, a rub of his chest, a biscuit, a moment of play.

**But only sometimes.** If you did it ALL the time, he would come to expect it as his "due" and he would become disappointed or irritated whenever you forgot.

- **Smile** when you praise your dog. Dogs can see, hear, and appreciate a smile, just as people can. 
- Even if your dog is an adult, **tell him he's "a good puppy."** The word puppy makes you think of fuzzy fur and playful puppy antics, and your voice will take on a **fond tone** that even elderly dogs can hear. It will make both of you feel happy!

---

## One of my favorite praise words is:

### WORD #8: "YAY!"

This is a terrific word to use when your dog is **starting** to do something right and you want to reassure him that he's on the right track.

#### example

When your dog is learning how to climb stairs, and isn't quite sure he can do it, watch for him to put his paw tentatively onto a new tread.

**Immediately encourage him** with a cheerful, "**Yay! Good boy!**"



Also use "YAY!" when your dog has **successfully completed** something that you have been working on. For example, after a successful housebreaking trip, "**Yay! You did it!**" will let your dog know that he has accomplished something that really pleased you.

---

**Yay!** Your dog has learned eight words so far, all related to correction and praise. These eight words show him the consequences of everything he does -- positive and negative.

#### Dogs learn almost entirely by:

- **the consequences of their actions**
- **your reactions to their actions**



**If you always add positive consequences and positive reactions to his positive behaviors...**

and **always add negative consequences and negative reactions to his negative behaviors**, your dog will choose to do the positive behaviors and avoid the negative behaviors.

Because it is to HIS advantage to do so -- and that's what dogs want to do.

So even if your dog learned only these eight words -- and no others -- he would be further ahead than many other dogs.

**But we have 92 more words to teach him!**

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First, though, I would like to advise you to...

[Learn About Your Breed](#)

Your dog does certain things because they are genetically programmed into him.



Most breeds were developed, long ago, for a reason. That reason usually had to do with **working ability** such as herding sheep, killing rodents in the barn, running down rabbits, treeing raccoons, flushing gamebirds out of the brambles,

pulling carts and sleds, guarding and protecting, and so on.

When people were developing these breeds, they found that **certain behavioral traits** best suited each type of work. By only breeding together males and females who HAD those behavioral characteristics, these behaviors became **"hardwired" into your breed's genes.**

**"He barks and barks!"** wails the writer, who can't concentrate on her work.



Of course he does. He's a Norwegian Elkhound, bred to bark sharply while hunting and cornering game. **The tendency to bark when excited is in his genes.**



**"He's so aloof with my friends!"** wails the society woman.

Of course he is. He's a Neapolitan Mastiff, a wary guarding breed. **The tendency to be cautious and standoffish with "outsiders" is in his genes.**

**"He nips at my kids' heels when they run!"** wails the mother of four toddlers.



But he's a Border Collie, bred to do this with sheep, you see. **The tendency to chase and gather moving objects is in his genes.**

**Now look at these two breeds.**

Breed	Developed to	Traits that helped
Jack Russell Terrier	Chase and kill rodents	Working on his own, independence, feistiness, chasing things, digging holes, strong teeth and jaws, aggression toward other animals
Cocker Spaniel	Find and fetch birds for his hunter owner	Working closely with people, following directions, bringing things back to his owner, being an agreeable companion during the day's hunt

See all the behavioral differences? Simply because of **what they were bred to do**, Jack Russell Terriers and Cocker Spaniels are as different as night and day!

Find out what your breed was developed to do, so you will be able to predict the behavioral traits he is likely to have.



## Different breeds have different needs -- and different abilities -- when it comes to training and learning.



Some breeds learn quickly, while others learn slowly. Some breeds are willing to please, while others are stubborn.

And the two aren't always connected -- a dog can learn slowly, yet be so eager to please that he tries hard and simply requires patience and repetition on your part. On the other hand, a dog can learn quickly, but be so stubborn or independent that he doesn't obey even when he has learned the command and knows what you want!

By knowing **what to expect from your breed**, you will be aware of potential trouble areas. For example, when your Jack Russell starts digging holes, you know you'll have to work harder to get him to obey **"No!"** than you would with a Cocker Spaniel.

Genetically-based behaviors are always more difficult to change because they're programmed in.

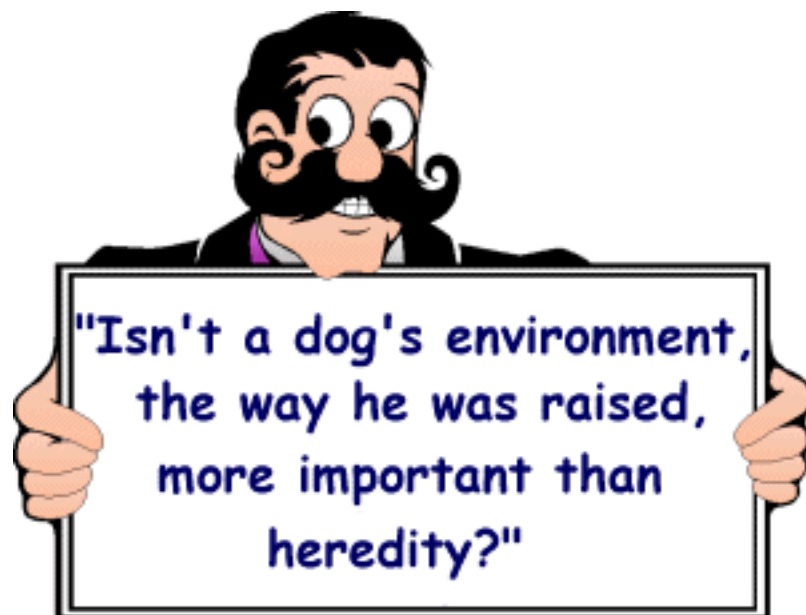
## Take heart, though.

Even if your breed is stubborn or independent, **by teaching him new words**, he will come to view you as a calm, capable authority who is worth listening to and worth respecting. He will be more inclined to want to please you -- **because he respects you.**



And just as learning a second foreign language is always easier than learning the first one, **your dog will learn the later words in this book more quickly than the first words.** Because he will have gotten the hang of the **concept that sounds have meaning.** His mind will be more active and alert. Teaching and learning will become faster and easier for both of you.

**So don't give up too quickly,** even if your breed is challenging to work with in the beginning!



With some dogs, yes. Some dogs who are born with a genetic predisposition for aggression or high energy or independence, **can be turned around** with proper raising and education.

But with other dogs, **NO.** Their genetic tendencies are so strong that they resist attempts to modify them. Many Jack Russells, for



example, will never be trustworthy around smaller animals, no matter how hard you work with them.

What I'm saying is that temperament and behavior are definitely **influenced** by environment. How well your puppy was socialized, whether his experiences and interactions with the world have been positive or negative, and so on.

But it all starts with innate genetic temperament. **It all starts with the genes your dog was born with.**

So whenever possible...

Try to choose a breed who already has the genes that match your personality and lifestyle and what you're looking for in a dog.

### In other words...



If you absolutely can't have a digger, don't get a terrier.



If you absolutely can't stand a barker, don't get a Shetland Sheepdog.



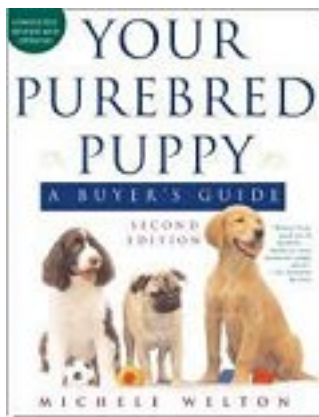
If you absolutely can't abide a high-energy dog, don't get a Weimaraner.

Of course, **you already have your dog now**, and you love him and will do the best you can with whatever temperament he has. I'm here to help you do just that!

But for your next dog, think about using a Breed Selection Guide to help you choose the best breed for your personality and lifestyle.

---

**Of course, my favorite Breed Selection Guide is my own book!**



***Your Purebred Puppy: A Buyer's Guide*** teaches you everything you need to know to find a beautiful, happy healthy purebred dog who will be a joy to your family for many years to come!



**You'll learn, step by step, how to sort through all the breeds and select the perfect one for you.**

You'll evaluate yourself and your lifestyle, decide which canine characteristics would best suit you, then choose a breed who tends to have those characteristics.

- The **lifestyle questionnaire** will help you evaluate your personality and lifestyle. You'll match your answers against the breed reviews and score each breed for suitability.
- The **reviews and photos** of 200 dog breeds (including many rare breeds you may never have heard of!) will help you choose the breed that has the traits you're looking for. Each profile includes:

- |                                 |                     |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|
| ● Temperament and behavior      | ● Ideal owner       |
| ● Attitude toward other pets    | ● Lifespan          |
| ● Behavior problems             | ● Shedding          |
| ● Aggression or shyness         | ● Brushing          |
| ● Suitability for novice owners | ● Grooming          |
| ● Suitability for children      | ● Colors            |
| ● Health clearances required    | ● Exercise needs    |
| ● Sociability with strangers    | ● Ease of training  |
| ● Cautions when buying          | ● Training hints    |
| ● Activity indoors              | ● Popularity        |
| ● Height and weight             | ● Origin of name    |
| ● Natural or cropped ears       | ● History/past uses |
| ● Natural or docked tail        | ● Similar breeds    |

Bottom line? When you finish reading this book, you will know exactly how to buy the perfect dog for you!

***Your Purebred Puppy: A Buyer's Guide, Second Edition*** is available from Amazon Online and comes with a 30-day money-back guarantee!

**Order Now!**

[If you're online,  
click here to order!](#)

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## "What if I want a mixed breed dog?"

**Excellent choice!** I heartily recommend mixed breed dogs.

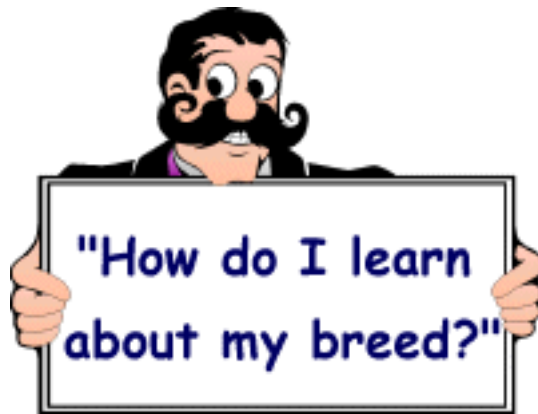
Purebred dogs are often strongly focused toward **working behaviors** (guarding, herding, digging, chasing) that can be a nuisance in the average household. Their "hardwired" traits **can be difficult to change**. Purebred dogs are also in **serious trouble** as far as health goes -- they are prone to many genetic disorders and it can be difficult to find a healthy one who will live a normal lifespan.

Mixed breeds, on the other hand, tend to have more flexible, moderate, **middle-of-the-road temperaments** that often fit better into the average household. I have owned mixed breeds all my life and love them dearly!

---

Now let's go back to focusing on your current dog, and on helping him to be the best companion he can possibly be.

You need to find out what to expect from him as you prepare to teach him the next **92 words** in this eBook!



When it comes to learning about the true characteristics of your breed, there are some resources you can believe... but there are others **you should take with the proverbial grain of salt.**

---

### A grain-of-salt book



***The AKC Dog Book*** contains the American Kennel Club's Official Standards of conformation for each breed. These Standards describe each breed's appearance. Usually they have only a sentence or two on temperament, and it's the **official club line**, which means it reflects the temperament the club WANTS the breed to have.

Now, sometimes the temperament the club wants their breed to have **does** match the actual temperament of the breed.

But with many breeds, the **actual temperament** is quite different than what the Standard is seeking!

**Let's look at an example.** The official AKC standard for the Siberian Husky says:

*"His intelligence, tractability, and eager disposition make him an agreeable companion and willing worker."*

Sounds good to me! The Siberian Husky sounds like a Golden Retriever, doesn't he? **Yet in real life...**

- The Siberian **IS** intelligent -- but his intelligence includes **clever manipulation** to get what he wants.
- He **IS** tractable -- with people and usually with other dogs. But he has strong instincts to **pursue anything that runs**. He can be deadly with cats, small pets, and wildlife.
- He **DOES** have an eager disposition -- for doing **what he wants to do**, especially vigorous outdoor exercise.
- He **IS** an agreeable companion -- when you can meet all of his many needs. He **IS** a willing worker -- as a sled dog and backpacker. But getting him to work in something **a bit more practical for the average household** -- **obedience**, for example -- is a very different story!



**And the rest of the story isn't anywhere in the Standard.** The Siberian Husky is prone to theatrical screaming when he doesn't get his own way... often becomes obstinate and sulky when corrected... howls when bored... digs holes in the yard... chews furniture... is a master escape artist... likes to roam....

**The moral is this:** You should learn and study the official Standard for your breed if you're interested in showing your dog. But for learning about practical, day-to-day temperament and behavior, you need a much better source.

**Visit my website:**  
**Your Purebred Puppy**  
**for honest reviews**  
**of 180 breeds**

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How to teach your dog the names of things

Now that you know something about your breed and what to expect from your dog, let's go on to our first **object word!**

**Object words are very easy to teach:**

- You hold up an object.
- You repeat its name clearly.
- You do something interesting with it!

Let's start with a couple of object words that virtually every dog is eager to learn.

**WORD #9: "BISCUIT"**

## WORD #10: "COOKIE"



Some owners call every treat, simply, a **treat**. Others use different words for different types of treats.

**Biscuit** might be used for a commercial dog biscuit, while **cookie** might be used for a real cookie or cracker.

## Biscuit Time

I like to establish a scheduled Biscuit Time. For example, right after breakfast. **Dogs love patterns** and quickly learn to look forward to Biscuit Time. In this expectant frame of mind, they are ready and willing to listen to their new word and to associate it with its tasty object.

Being in such a positive learning pattern at this time means you can also introduce NEW words right after your dog has had his biscuit. In other words, it's an optimum time for learning, because your dog is in such an upbeat mood!



There may be one disadvantage to a fixed Biscuit Time. Some dogs become **too rigid** about it. They start getting restless, pacing or whining or nudging you. They may even become upset if you're late.

With such dogs, adhering to a schedule is **NOT** a good idea. Break them from the pattern by **offering the biscuit at RANDOM times** -- one day in the morning, next day in the afternoon, next day in the evening.

With pattern-oriented dogs, occasionally **skip** the biscuit



altogether. This makes them less expectant, and thus less stressed when everything doesn't happen according to their expectations.

### Now, what should you do at Biscuit Time?

1. Ask your dog, **"Want a BISCUIT? Who wants a BISCUIT? How about a BISCUIT?"**
2. Proceed jauntily to the cupboard and take down the box. Rattle it and repeat with excitement, **"Want a biscuit?"**

**Exaggerate the key word.** Say it more clearly, more deliberately, and more loudly than the other "filler" words in the sentence.

3. Let your dog watch you take the biscuit out of the box. He may already be excited, but if this is your first time doing this, and he's never had one from this box, he may not know what it is. You may need to hold it near his nose to give him the idea.
4. I should mention that there are some dogs who couldn't care a fig about commercial dog biscuits. To get them excited, try a cheese cracker or oatmeal cookie.



**Now. Once your dog is focused on the biscuit, he's going to lose interest fast if he doesn't get to eat it!**

But we want him to eat it in a **civilized manner**

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## Teach your dog to be polite

All right! It's time for your dog to actually DO something!

### **WORD #11: "SIT!"**

Your dog is going to sit before he gets his biscuit. **Think of it as saying "please."**



Your dog gives you something (**a polite sit**) before he gets something in return (**a treat**).

### **Here's how to teach it:**

1. With your dog standing (or dancing around!) in front of you, hold the biscuit so it gets his attention.
2. When he's looking at the biscuit, say **"Sit!"** Say it only once. Say it crisply. Pronounce that "t" at the end: **"siTT!"** Your voice shouldn't go UP at the end. In other words, don't say "Sit?" as though you're begging him to "please please sit?"



3. As you say, "**Sit,**" move the treat out away from your body and up to a level just above your dog's head. You're basically moving it on a 45 degree angle **away from your body and upwards.**

This motion encourages many dogs to drop their hind end into a sitting position. This is because he has to bend his neck further back to be able to see the biscuit when it moves higher over his head. And since his neck can't bend **too** far back while he's in a standing position, **he should automatically drop his hindquarters into a sit.**

Don't hold the biscuit too high or he'll jump for it!

4. If he doesn't sit on his own, **use your hands to place him into a sit.**

There are at least two ways to make your dog sit.

- One method is **Pull Up and Push Down.** With your right hand, pull up on his collar. With your left hand, push down on his hindquarters and hips. (Don't push down on his sensitive BACK.)
- Another method is **The Fold.** Place your right palm on his chest. Place your left hand (or forearm, depending on how big he is!) around his rump behind his back knees. In one

smooth motion, push his chest toward his rump, while tucking his back knees forward to fold him into a sit over your hand or forearm.

5. **As soon as he is sitting**, give one word of praise: "**Goo-oo-d.**" This is one time when you should keep your praise quiet and calm. If you praise too enthusiastically, he is likely to start jumping around.
6. Take your hands off him. **If he holds his Sit for even a couple of seconds**, give him the treat.
7. If he doesn't hold the sit, **don't give him the treat**. Use your hands to replace him in the sitting position. If he gets up again, reposition him again, but be **firmer**. If he continues to stand up, use one hand to hold him in position. In the beginning, **you want him to succeed with this new word**, even if he needs help. After a couple of seconds holding him in position, give him the treat.

As you can see, you're introducing this word very gently. Within a few sessions, your dog should be sitting when you say "**Sit**" or at the very least, holding the sit once you guide him into it. **You shouldn't have to keep holding him in position.**

**If he's not getting it, you'll need to become more**

## insistent.

- If he's not sitting when you say, "**Sit,**" use a **sharper tug** on his collar and a **firmer push** on his hindquarters. You want to send the message that it would be much more comfortable for him if he sat himself rather than waiting for you to seat him!
- If he keeps getting up, start saying, "**Ah-ah!**" **AS he breaks position.** Timing is very important here -- he must hear the "**Ah-ah!**" **AS** he is getting up, so he will associate the corrective word with the action of breaking the sit. And when you replace him in the sitting position, **be much firmer.**

---

## One pitfall to watch out for:

When you tell your dog to sit, does he ever bark at you?

example

"**Jake, sit.**" "Bark!"

"**Jake, sit down!**" "Bark bark!"

Frustrated, Kathy tried to grab his collar, but Jake danced backwards, just out of reach. He bowed his front end close to the ground, hindquarters high in the air, tail wagging impishly. "Bark! Bark!"



Kathy sighed and went back to making toast for breakfast.

A dog who **barks back at you** when you tell him to do something is **sassing you**. This is as harmful to your relationship as it would be if your child said, "I don't wanna! Make me!" and you ignored it.

**SO...**

If you have a sassy dog, **put him on leash** before you tell him to do anything. Or attach a **hand-hold** that he can wear all the time you're watching him. Leashes and hand-holds give you something to latch onto when your dog barks back at you. Give it a sharp tug, and at the same time, tell him firmly, **"No. Stop that."**

---

## **Another pitfall to watch out for:**

Does your dog bark at you to tell you he wants a treat?

**example**

Jake stood beside the cupboard where the biscuits were kept. He looked expectantly toward his owners, who were eating breakfast at the kitchen table. "Bark!" he said loudly.

Roger looked up from his coffee. **"No, Jake,"** he said. **"I'll give you a biscuit when we're done."**

"Bark!" repeated Jake. "Bark! Bark!" He scampered around in small circles, chasing his tail and acting silly.



Across the table, Kathy laughed. "He's such a character," she said.

"Yeah, but we shouldn't give him anything until we're done," Roger said.

"Bark! Bark!" shouted Jake, seizing a plush hedgehog toy and barreling around the kitchen.

"I'm just about done," Kathy said hastily, pushing her chair back, still chewing her toast.

"Bark!" said Jake, running toward her.

**"Here's your biscuit, Jake. Sit. Sit down. Jake..."**

Jake stood on his hind legs, snatched at the biscuit, missed, rushed off to find his toy hedgehog.

**"Jake, sit!"** Kathy called.

**"Sit, Jake!"** Roger chimed in from the table.

Jake raced back to Kathy with the hedgehog hanging lopsidedly from his jaws. He dropped the toy and slid into a half-crouching sit, his hindquarters not really touching the floor, poised for take-off. As Kathy lowered her hand toward his nose, Jake exploded into mid-air. He grabbed the biscuit, accidentally scraping Kathy's thumb with his tooth.

Gingerly, Kathy counted her fingers. "Well, he did sit," she said with a sigh.



## What is Jake doing here? He is being demanding.

When you allow your dog to be demanding -- and I'm not talking about actually giving or not giving the treat, I'm talking about simply allowing him **to do something demanding** -- he doesn't conclude that you are a wonderful person.

He concludes that you are lower in the pecking order than he had thought -- which makes **HIM HIGHER** than he had thought!



Allowing one demanding behavior, however innocent it may seem, always leads to another demanding behavior. Because your dog is compelled by his instincts to **grab the inch you offer and see if he can make it a foot**. He tests his position in the pecking order (the pack) to see if he can advance himself.

**Your answer must be a firm NO.**



Notice that your dog doesn't actually have to **GET** the food to be demanding.

It's the very act of **staring** at you, or **barking or whining** at you, or **poking** you with his nose or paw, that is demanding.



It goes without saying that you should never give him a treat or any food when he demands it. **But just as importantly...**

**...you need to let him know that the begging and demanding behaviors themselves are unacceptable.**

Tell him firmly, **"No!"** If he persists, put him in his crate, or outside in the yard, for 15 minutes. Don't give him a treat at all that day.

---

## **One more politeness to teach**

- Your dog is sitting nicely, "saying please" for his biscuit.
- You're not allowing him to bark back at you.
- You're not allowing him to demand a biscuit.

## **He is learning politeness!**

Now we want to add one more polite behavior to Biscuit Time. **Your dog should take the treat gently** from your hand. He shouldn't grab at it like a starving savage.

---

### **WORD #12: "EASY!"**

1. With your dog sitting in front of you, hold the treat in front of

his mouth.

- Don't hold it **too far away** or he'll lunge forward for it.
  - Don't hold it **over his head** or he'll jump up for it.
2. Say the new word, "**EEEE-zee.**" Draw it out as a long word, like you're cautioning him to be careful.
  3. If he tries to snatch at the treat, close your fingers quickly and don't let him have it. If he moves out of the Sit position, use your hands to make him sit again. Caution him again, "**Easy!**" Open your fingers slowly to give him another chance to be a lady or a gentleman.
  4. **Only release the treat to him when he stays put and takes it gently from your fingers.**

By learning to follow your directions -- to sit before receiving a treat, and then to take it gently from your hand -- your dog is learning that treats are not "free manna falling from heaven," but rather are given as rewards **when earned through positive behavior.**

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More food words your dog will love!

**WORD #13: "CHEESE"**

**WORD #14: "POPCORN"**

Go ahead and teach **at least two more** food words to your dog. **"Cheese"** is a good one. Most dogs love cheddar cheese, and an occasional piece is tasty and nutritious.

Other snack foods dogs usually enjoy include:

- "Popcorn"
- "Cracker"
- "Banana"
- "Apple"
- "Carrot"
- "Pretzel"



Remember to practice "SIT!" and "EASY!" whenever you offer any treat to your dog.

---

**WORD #15: "CATCH!"**

You don't always have to hand the treat to your dog. **He can catch it in mid-air, like this!**



Well, okay, maybe not exactly like that!

1. Position yourself so you're about a foot away from your dog, and get his attention. Once he knows you have a treat, he will probably try to get closer to you, so **you may have to dance around a bit to create some space** between the two of you!
2. Hold up the treat so he sees it. Say, "**Catch!**"
3. Toss the treat gently toward his mouth. **Be ready to move!** If it bonks him on the head or falls harmlessly to the ground, you need to grab it with your hand or cover it with your foot before he can snatch it up himself.

**You only want him to have the treat if he catches it!**

4. Some dogs have excellent eye-mouth coordination and learn this trick quickly. Other dogs take longer. With a slow learner, try standing or kneeling right in front of him, holding your hand **only a few inches** from his mouth, and tossing it from there. **Aim right for his mouth**, which may encourage him to make a token grab for the so-close treat.

**Note:** There are a few dogs who are uncomfortable when you toss anything toward them. If your dog is intimidated by the tossed treat, this is not the trick for him. **Don't frighten him.**

## Everyone must use the same words

### Hopefully your dog has now learned 15 words!

As you're accomplishing this worthy goal of teaching vocabulary words to your dog, keep two things in mind:

### Everyone in your family must use the same words.

In other words, **DON'T DO THIS:**

**example**

"Jake, sit!" said Roger.

"Sit down, Jake," said Kathy.

"Come, Jake!" Roger called.

"Here, Jake!" Kathy called.

"Do you need to go out?" asked Roger.

"Do you need to go potty?" asked Kathy.

Teach your dog **ONE WORD OR PHRASE** for each object, action, or behavior.

Later you'll expand his vocabulary by using substitute words -- but not until he has the **FIRST** word down pat.

Everyone in your family must agree on **ONE WORD OR PHRASE** for each object, action, or behavior.

## Each word or phrase must mean only one thing.

Here's an example:



We haven't gotten around to teaching "Down!" yet, but we will soon. **"Down!"** means your dog should assume a lying down position. **It will be much harder to teach this meaning if your dog has come to associate the word with other actions.**

**example**

Jake Armstrong loved to jump. He jumped on people. He jumped on furniture.

Sometimes he jumped straight up into the air just for the sheer joy of being airborne.

Understandably, Roger and Kathy were not so enthusiastic about Jake's jumping. When he reared up and plunked his forepaws on them, they shouted, **"Down, Jake!"**

When they found him sleeping on forbidden furniture, they exclaimed, **"Get down, Jake! Get down off there!"**

Once, Jake bounded up the stairs into the attic. When Roger found the dog up there, he motioned toward the stairs and ordered, **"Jake, go down!"**

Poor Jake! His owners are using the same word for three different actions -- and **NONE of these actions is the one that "Down!" is supposed to mean.** Remember? It means to assume a lying down position.



As we work through our 100 English words, go over each word with everyone in your family. **Make sure you're all using the same word or phrase for the same object, action, or behavior.**

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Don't talk too much

By now you've probably noticed how important it is to emphasize

- **SINGLE** words and
- **SHORT** phrases.

In other words (how shall I put this kindly?), **DON'T TALK TOO MUCH!**



This advice may be hard for chatty people to follow. But if you chatter a lot, **your dog will struggle to pick out the few words he knows,** the few words that apply to him, from everything else you're saying.

He will become **stressed** trying to wade through all the "background

noise." Eventually, **he will start tuning you out** just to preserve his sanity. This is not what you want!

---

So, instead of rambling on and on about how your day went, **use short sentences** that emphasize **one key word or phrase**.

- **"Do you want your SUPPER? Time for SUPPER!"**
- **"Do you want to go OUT? OUT in the YARD?"**
- **"Here's the KITTY! KITTY cat."**
- **"Where's your BALL? Find your BALL!"**

When your dog learns to trust that you will use **simple words** that he understands, he will pay much closer attention to you.

Speaking of attention, let's make absolutely sure your dog knows his name -- **and RESPONDS to it by paying attention to you when you say it.**

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Does your dog have a good name?

**story** Roger Armstrong welcomed his guests into the house. He pointed to his dog Jake, who was bounding around the room, barking with wild abandon. "That's Jake," Roger said. "Also known as Pinhead. Boy, is



he a numbskull. If they had nursery school for dogs, he'd flunk it!" His guests laughed, looking at Jake with good-natured pity.

If your dog's name or nickname is **Dumbo**, you obviously don't think much of his mental abilities. Probably you don't ask much of him, either.



The problem is, your dog can TELL that you don't think much of his abilities, and **he will live up to those expectations**. In other words, your minimal expectations only encourage him to continue with his "dumb" behavior.

Change his name or nickname, and you'll change your expectations of him. Then when you start requiring more from him, he will change his behavior accordingly.

The same with a name like Trouble, or Killer. If you expect your dog to be mischievous, or aggressive, it comes through in your voice, in your facial expressions, in your body language. **And your dog is likely to give you exactly what you expect.**



I recommend using optimistic names and nicknames that suggest high intelligence and good nature.

If you've already named your dog something less than

complimentary, **you can still change his name**. People who adopt a dog from an animal shelter or rescue organization usually change its name. A **more flattering name** can start your new and better relationship off on the right foot!

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## Getting your dog's attention

**WORD #16: YOUR DOG'S NAME**

**WORD #17: "PAY ATTENTION!"**

1. Put your dog's leash on and lead him into a quiet room.
2. Tell him to **"Sit!"** Stand in front of him, facing him. With a small dog, kneel.
3. Put one hand under your dog's chin and your other hand on his forehead. **Tilt his head up so he is looking into your eyes.**
4. Say, **"Jake. Pay attention. Pay attention."** (At this point, most dog training books would remind you to use your OWN dog's name -- not Jake's name. But I don't believe anyone reading this eBook could be that clueless, so I won't remind you!)



5. Look into his eyes for **10 seconds**, gently stroking him under the chin and repeating, "**Jake. Jake. Pay attention.**"
  
6. After 10 seconds, remove your hands and say quietly, "**Good boy.**" Unsnap the leash and let him go.

Practice this **enforced eye contact** once or twice every day for a week, THEN IT'S...

### **Time for a test!**

Put a handful of treats in your pocket. With your dog on leash, wander around the house or yard. **Don't pay any attention to him.**

**When his attention is NOT on you**, when he is looking at something or sniffing something, stop walking and say his name clearly, "**Jake.**"

If he doesn't immediately look at you, give a gentle tug on the leash. This is NOT a correction -- just a gentle tug to get his attention. The instant he looks at you, praise him, "**Good boy!**" and give him a treat.

Resume your walking. **When his attention has wandered away from you again**, repeat the exercise. After 3 to 5 repetitions -- no more! -- stop for the day. Practice again the next day.

**It shouldn't be long before he looks immediately at you when you say his name.**

## What kind of collar and leash you should use



### **I definitely don't recommend choke collars.**

Sometimes these are called slip collars or training collars. I used them for years -- and even required them in the obedience classes I taught because it was "conventional wisdom" that dogs had to wear a choke collar in order to be trained.

But I started seeing too many cases **where dogs' throats were damaged by choke collars**. A choke collar applies **sudden sharp pressure concentrated at one point** on your dog's neck. This can damage the trachea (your dog's windpipe).

Also, the **choking sensation** frightens many dogs. And choke collars **can tear the hair** around your dog's neck. I don't use these collars any more. Ever.



Instead, I recommend a **flat buckle collar**. It simply buckles around your dog's neck. **Most dogs never need anything more.**

**[PETsMART Online](#)**

has most of the training items  
that I recommend.



For toy dogs, I recommend the **Sunburst Nylon Puppy Collar**, which is 3/8" wide and made of soft fabric that lets the buckle "seek its own hole" so it's completely adjustable for perfect fit.



For small dogs, I recommend the **Nylon Puppy Collar**, which is 5/8" wide. For medium-sized dogs, I recommend the **Single Layer Nylon Dog Collar**, which is 3/4" wide. For large or strong dogs, I recommend the **Double Layer Nylon Dog Collar**, which is 1" wide.

If you have a **longhaired dog**, a flat buckle collar has one disadvantage. It squashes the hair, creating a depression around the neck (like the depression a ring causes on your finger). Owners of longhaired breeds often prefer the **Rolled Leather Bridle Collar**, which is a narrow, rounded collar that doesn't put as much pressure on the hair.



---

For strong dogs who pull vigorously on the leash, a **Prong Collar** is the next step up. It may look like a medieval torture device, **but the prongs are rounded and dull, and they spread the pressure evenly around your dog's neck**

A prong collar has been referred to as "power steering" because you only have to give a gentle tug and most dogs respond quickly. And it can only tighten so far around his neck, never enough to choke him. You don't slip a prong collar **over** your dog's head like a one-piece choke collar. Nor do you buckle it on like a buckle collar.

**Here's how to put on a prong collar:**

1. Grasp one prong with one hand and its neighboring prong with your other hand.
2. Pinch one of these prongs together until it disengages from its neighbor.
3. Move your hands apart to open the collar into a U-shape.
4. Place it around your dog's neck, **up high behind his ears**.
5. Slip the two disengaged prongs back together, closing the collar around your dog's neck.
6. The collar should be snug enough **that it doesn't slide around**. If you need to make it smaller, take it off and remove one of the prongs. If you need to make it larger, you can buy additional prongs or move up to the next size collar.
7. Arrange the collar on your dog's neck so **the prongs are on top of the neck**, where the neck is toughest. The section of the collar without the prongs goes underneath the neck.
8. Slide the ring that the leash attaches to onto the **RIGHT** side of your dog's neck.
9. Clip on the leash -- and you're ready to go!

You will probably find that your dog needs a prong collar **only for a very short time**, to settle him down and bring his rambunctiousness or stubbornness under control. Then you can try the regular buckle collar again.

---

## Leashes



My favorite leash is the **Cotton Web Lead**, which feels like flexible cloth. Very few pet stores carry these leashes, but they are carried at PetsMart Online.

You'll have a choice of **5/8" width** or **1/2" width**. For most people, 5/8" fits their hand comfortably. If you have tiny hands, or a tiny dog, you might try the 1/2" width.

If possible, get a **4-foot leash** and a **20-foot leash**. You'll use the 4-foot leash for teaching most words, and the 20-foot leash for teaching a few very important words where you need to get **a good distance away** from your dog.

If you can afford another few dollars, add the **2-foot leash** to your shopping cart. It will come in handy for some words **where you need to keep your dog close to you**, without a lot of extra leash getting in the way.

---

## Head Halters

There is one more piece of training equipment you might find appropriate for your particular dog. The **Gentle Leader** is a "head collar" that looks like a **horse's halter**. The theory is: **Where the head goes, the rest of the body follows.**



With some dogs, **these halters work almost magically**. They can turn a hyperactive puller into a calm follower, with very little effort on your part.

Because the leash connects under your dog's chin, **these halters require different leash-handling techniques** than those I describe in this eBook. There is a **35-minute video** you can buy that shows you how to use the halter. If you do decide to give the Gentle Leader a try, I recommend getting the video, as well.



Absolutely! I don't recommend:

**Chain leashes.** These are useless for any purpose. They're cold and unyielding in your hand, and they clank and clatter against your dog.

---

## Harnesses

**A harness is no good for training.** With a harness, the leash connects to the middle of your dog's back, which means you can't



guide his head. To teach many words, you must be able to guide your dog's head.

A harness can be useful for walking a **toy dog with a thin delicate windpipe** or any size dog with a **throat problem** where nothing should be pressing on the throat.

**Harnesses definitely don't belong on strong dogs who pull.** Remember, a harness is the perfect restraint to pull against -- **it was MADE for sled dogs and cart dogs to pull against!**

If you do use a harness for general walking, **get the right kind.**



**This is a Y-shaped harness.** The straps come down from each shoulder to form a Y on your dog's chest. The bottom of the Y goes down between his front legs and meets up with the strap that wraps around the stomach. This harness **doesn't encircle your dog's throat** and is safe and comfortable.

**Unfortunately, it is hard to find in stores.** Most harnesses in stores have a strap that wraps around your dog's throat, which defeats the reason for getting a harness in the first place!

---

## **Retractable Leashes**

A **Retractable Lead** is too clunky and awkward for training purposes, but it's okay for walks.



**Just don't abuse it.** I've seen people allow their dog to roam to the end of a 16-foot retractable leash in a crowd of people. The dog could approach people who didn't want to be approached, jump on them, or tangle the leash around their legs.

**Use retractable leashes sensibly.** You can allow full leash length in open fields or parks or along quiet roads. But when people or other dogs are passing by, or when you're walking on or near a busy street, **shorten the leash so your dog is close beside you** and fully under control.

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Teach your dog to sit still and look at you

Now that you have a safe and effective collar and leash for your dog, we'll do some important work on **"PAY ATTENTION!"**



1. Have your dog **"Sit!"** beside you, **on your left side**. He should be facing the same direction you are. His head and ears should be about **six inches** from your left leg. This is called **Heel Position**.

**He must be on leash. Use a 2-foot or 4-foot leash for best control.**

2. The goal here is simple. **He should REMAIN sitting beside you.** If he tries to stand up or lie down or walk away, use your hands to replace him in **Heel Position.**
3. If he **continues** to break position, start saying, **"Ah-ah!"** **AS he breaks position.** Replace him more firmly -- with a sharper tug on his collar and a sterner push on his hindquarters.

---

**When he will remain sitting  
for about 10 seconds, the next goal  
is for him to "Pay Attention" to you.**

**He will also learn a new word:**

**WORD #18: "OKAY!"**

1. With your dog sitting in Heel Position, say his name, **"Jake."** He should look up at you -- **but he must not get up!** Put him back in position if he does.
2. Once he is looking at you AND holding his sit position, say in a calm voice, **"Pay attention!"** If he keeps looking at you for even a second or two, praise him. **"Good boy! Good attention!"**

3. Then raise your voice into a cheerful **"OKAY!"** This is a **release word**. It means he no longer needs to hold his position. In effect, he is free to go!



At first, you may have to encourage him to move, by walking forward yourself and guiding him with the leash so he breaks out of the Sit position and begins moving around. But he'll quickly learn what **"Okay"** means. It will become one of his favorite words!

4. Over the next few weeks, increase the time you ask your dog to look at you. Start with just a couple of seconds and **build up to 30 seconds**. During these longer times, occasionally remind him, **"Pay attention. That's it. Good! Pay attention."**

---

**Now. That's how the exercise is supposed to go!**

**But what if...**



**If your dog doesn't respond to his name at all...**

You need to go back to [Word #16: Your Dog's Name](#). Practice walking around your house and yard with your dog on leash. Occasionally say his name, **praise and reward with a treat** when he looks at you, **correct with a firm tug on the leash when he doesn't**.

### **If your dog responds to his name, but keeps getting distracted and looking away...**

- Place your index finger **near his eyes** to catch his attention. Then draw your finger quickly back **toward your own eyes** to remind him where you want him to focus. Do this rapidly in a **flicking motion**.
- Talk to him. **"Look here. Listen to me. Are you paying attention? GOOD attention."**
- With a large dog whose head is close to your left hand, **tap his skull playfully** with your fingers. Trainer Diane Bauman calls this, "Knock, knock! Is anyone home?" Similarly, with a large dog, use your left hand to **lightly tug** on his cheek or whiskers.
- Hold a **treat or toy** near YOUR mouth so he must look up at you to see it. Move it around slightly as you remind him, **"Pay attention."** At the end of the exercise, after you release him, give him the treat or toy.

This one often works like magic -- **but don't fool yourself**. Your dog is really looking at the treat or toy, not at YOU. The whole point of this exercise is for your dog to pay attention to YOU. So if you resort to this trick, do it only for a very short time.

- **Tug on the leash** to get and keep his attention. First gently, then more sharply.
- If nothing else works, **lift his head** with your hands and hold it so he must look at you.

**"Pay attention!"** is an extremely important word for your dog to learn.

**It is the foundation for further training.**

If he won't pay attention to you, it will be harder to teach essential words such as **"Come!"** and **"Heel!"**

**So keep working on this phrase.  
Don't give up on it!**

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Teach your dog to sit and stay

You've gotten your dog to sit quietly beside you. But what if you want him to STAY sitting, even when you're not standing beside him? **Can your dog learn to stay sitting while you walk away from him?**

## Yes! Let's teach him how to do that.

### WORD #19: "STAY!"



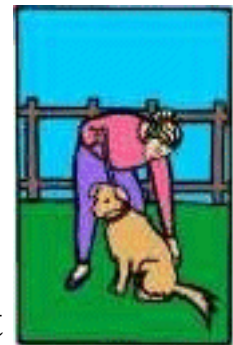
1. Start with your dog sitting in **Heel Position**. He is on your left side, facing the same direction you are, with his head and ears about six inches from your leg. Use the **2-foot or 4-foot leash**.
2. If you're using the 4-foot leash, **fold most of the leash** into your right hand so the length of leash between your hand and his collar is short and straight.
3. Place your **left hand** in front of your dog's eyes, about six inches from his eyes, your fingers pointing down, your palm open and facing him. This **hand signal** suggests to your dog that you want him to remain where he is. At the same time, say, **"Stay!"**
4. Take one small step forward **with your right foot**. **Starting with your right foot is important**. It's furthest away from your dog, so he can't see it move very well. If you stepped forward with your LEFT foot, he might follow your motion and try to walk with you.

5. After your ONE step, **pivot to face your dog**, no more than a **few inches** in front of him. As you're taking this one step and pivoting, **use your right hand to raise the leash over your dog's head**. You want it slightly taut. Slightly! Don't strangle your dog! You want the leash just snug enough to suggest to him that he should hold his position even though YOU'RE moving.
6. If he starts to stand up, **DON'T repeat the word "Stay!"** Dogs connect the word they hear with the action they are performing at that moment. You certainly don't want him to connect the word **"Stay!"** with the action of moving.

In fact, you kind of WANT your dog to move once or twice... because if he never moves, he'll never learn what HAPPENS if he does!

7. So what does happen? Well, if you're quick enough, you can **tug the leash** upwards and slightly backwards to check him and keep him in position.

If you're too slow and he makes it all the way to his feet, **use the leash and your hands** to quickly scoot him back into a Sit.



**Don't move your own feet.** Just hold his front end in position with the tight leash, reach over his back from your position in front of him, and push his hind end into a sit. Once he's sitting again, remove your hand from his rear end and continue to hold the leash **slightly taut** over his head.



If he moves again, replace him again. Remember, he is still in the process of LEARNING this new word. But if he KEEPS breaking position, start saying, "**Ah-ah!**" AS he breaks position and replace him more firmly, with a sharper tug on the leash and sterner push on his hindquarters.



No problem! Use the leash to pull him back up. The first few times he does this, say nothing. If he continues, add a firm, "**Ah-ah!**" AS he sinks into the down position and jerk him up more sternly.

8. At first, aim for your dog holding his Sit-Stay for **10 straight seconds** without standing up or lying down. Count in your head: one one-thousand, two one-thousand, etc. Each time you have to correct him, **start your count again.**
9. When he has sat for 10 straight seconds, **pivot back to his side.** Use the leash over his head to help him hold his position. Dogs often get excited when they see you coming back -- but he must hold his position!

10. When you get back to his side, **pause for 5 seconds**, so he learns to be patient and NOT to misinterpret your return as a cue to get up. If he DOES get up, just reposition him. Say nothing. Count 5 seconds again.
11. When he has held position for the 5 seconds while you're standing beside him, **praise him MILDLY** (so he doesn't get too excited). If he gets up when you praise him, just reposition him. Praise him mildly again.
12. When he is holding position for your praise, you can "release" him with a cheerful **"OKAY!"**
13. **Practice "SIT-STAY!" two or three times a day, doing three sit-stays at each session.** More than this would be **tiring and boring**. Each day, try to add another 5 seconds to your count until by the end of the week he is holding for **30 seconds**. Also begin to relax the leash so you aren't holding it over his head as a reminder to hold position.

---

## Advanced sit-stay!

Can your dog do these four things?

- Hold his Sit-Stay **for 30 seconds?**
- Hold his Sit-Stay **even after you've returned to his side?**
- Hold his Sit-Stay **even while you're praising him?**

- Hold his Sit-Stay **until you tell him, "Okay!"?**

**YES? Then let's make it more challenging!**

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### **Circle around him.**

Instead of returning to your dog's side with a simple pivot, **circle around him counterclockwise**, i.e. go behind him and return to his right side **from the rear**.

The first few times you try this, **hold the leash slightly taut above his head** as you go around him, to remind him not to move. Otherwise, he may try to turn with you, to see where you're going! With a medium to large dog, you might even place your left hand on his head as you're going by him, to help hold him in position.

If he turns his head to watch you, that's fine, but he mustn't swivel around on his rear end.

---

### **Add distractions.**

Instead of standing still, walk back and forth in front of him. Or circle around him as though returning to your position beside him -- but don't stop; make a full circle until you're back in front again. Or cough. Or laugh. Or hum. Or whistle a happy tune.

After a few days of these simple distractions, is your dog still holding his Sit-Stay? Great! Have one of your kids walk by. Still okay? Have one of your kids walk by, **bouncing a ball**. Have one of your kids RUN by. Have one of your kids skip rope.



**Instruct your child NOT to call the dog, NOT to even LOOK at the dog.** Distractions should be normal things that might go on in your house or yard while he happens to be holding a Sit-Stay.

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### **Increase distance.**

After a week of distractions while you're standing right in front of your dog, **move to the end of the leash**. (If you've been using the 2-foot leash, graduate to the 4-foot leash.) **Repeat the distractions.**

If your dog breaks his Sit-Stay at this point, **return to your position in front of him** before you correct him. In other words, **DON'T try to correct him from the end of the leash**. You'll only end up pulling him **toward** you.

Especially don't call out, **"Stay!"** when you see him starting to move. He should never hear this word when he's in the process of moving.

Instead, let him experience the **consequences** of moving, which means you rush at him, grab him, and firmly reposition him in his original spot -- the **EXACT SAME SPOT**.

---

### **Increase time.**

After a week of leash-length distractions, **begin increasing time** from 30 seconds to 45 seconds (for a couple of days), then 60 seconds (for a couple more days), on up to **3 minutes**. **And that's plenty long enough for sitting still.**

---

### **Finally, drop the leash.**

The complete Sit-Stay program should take **4-6 weeks** to accomplish. In the end, your goal is to walk around the room doing "normal household things" for up to 3 minutes while your dog holds his Sit-Stay. **What a fine dog!**



**DON'T LOOK DIRECTLY AT YOUR DOG** when practicing "STAY."



If you meet his eyes, he may think you're inviting him to come to you. Or he may feel uncomfortable being stared at, and will lie down or move away from your direct gaze.

So look to the right of your dog. Look to the left. Look upward and count the dust bunnies on the ceiling.

**Use your peripheral (corner-of-your-eye) vision** to keep track of your dog so you can quickly correct him if necessary. But **DON'T** stare at him.

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Teach your dog to come when you call him

Your dog has been sitting still for many weeks now! He's been learning calmness and patience. Now he'll get to express his energy and enthusiasm as we work on **the opposite of Stay**, which is...

**WORD #20: "COME!"**

Along with "No!", "**Come!**" is the most important word in a dog's vocabulary. For the rest of his life, your dog should never hear the word "**Come!**" without being required to obey it.

Every dog that I have ever owned, large or small, young or old, of every breed, has come when called. **Every dog.**

Unlike fun words such as "Catch!", where it doesn't really matter whether your dog learns it or not, **"Come!"** is a **mandatory word that must be mastered.**

---

## Four key steps in teaching "Come"

There are **four key steps** to teaching your dog to Come when he is called. Study each step carefully before you start working with your dog. **Don't skip any of the steps!**

The first three steps are **on leash**, so you can MAKE your dog come if he chooses not to. **Remember...** **For the rest of his life, your dog should never hear the word "Come!" without being required to obey it.** In the beginning, you need a leash to GUARANTEE that your dog will come every single time he hears the word.

### Step #1 in teaching "Come"

1. Attach the **4-foot leash** to your dog's collar and stroll around the house or yard with him. When he has wandered to the end of the leash, and his attention is on something else, stop walking. Call his name in a cheerful voice, **"Jake!"**

This sounds familiar, doesn't it? You did this when you were teaching your dog his name. When he hears his name, **he should turn to look at you.**

2. Immediately crouch down, open your arms invitingly, and call in a happy voice, **"Come!"**
3. **The instant he starts toward you**, pat your hands together and praise and encourage him, **"Come! Good boy!"** Make sure the leash hangs completely loose as he is coming toward you -- **don't reel him in like a fish.**
4. As he approaches you, **don't reach out to grab him.** Instead, keep encouraging him with your hands and voice to **come all the way to you** so his nose or head touches (or practically touches) your chest or knees or some part of your body. **Pet him and play with him for a few moments.**
5. Then tell him, **Okay!"** to let him know he doesn't have to stay near you any longer. Begin walking again. Repeat the exercise when he wanders away again.
6. **NOW.** What if he didn't come to you? Or what if he came partway, then stopped? Or what if he came to you, but ran past you?



**That's why we attached the leash!**  
Use the leash to guide him to you.

**Then praise him as though he HAD come on his own.** The goal here is to have him succeed every time in carrying through the action that fits the word. **One way or another, he must come to you.**

7. Practice indoors, and also outdoors in your yard. **Always with the leash on, so he MUST come.** Give him dozens and dozens of experiences hearing the word "**Come!**" and coming toward you, whether voluntarily or guided by the leash. Praise him **the instant he starts moving toward you**, as well as when he arrives. Occasionally give him a treat.

---

## Step #2 in teaching "Come"

1. After a week of practicing in your house and yard, **take him for a walk.** When he is really distracted by something, such as sniffing a fire hydrant or watching another dog across the street...
  - Stop and stand still
  - Call, "**Jake, come!**"
2. **Immediately start backing up -- TROT backwards.** If your dog responded properly to your Come command, he will

already be heading toward you as you're backing up.

Make sure the leash hangs completely loose as he is coming toward you -- don't reel him in and don't shorten the leash as he gets closer. Pat your hands together as you back up. Praise and encourage him all the way, "**Come, good boy, come!**"

3. Go about **ten feet backwards**, then stop. Keep encouraging your dog to come all the way to you so his nose or head touches you.
4. Praise and pet him for a few seconds. Then tell him, **Okay!**" and continue your walk. Watch for another distraction so you can call him again.



**No problem -- you have a leash!**

Since you're backing up, it will be only a moment before you get to the end of the leash.

**Keep backing up!** If your dog is inattentive or focused on something other than you, that's his problem! Keep backing up when you reach the end of the leash -- **and give the leash a good firm "snap."**

## What's a "snap"?

A **"snap"** is a **Quick Jerk and Release**. Here's how you do it. Quickly move your hand **toward** your dog. This creates a tiny bit of slack in the leash. The instant you have that tiny bit of slack, **SNAP** your hand **backward** then quickly move it **forward** again.

The **QUICKNESS** and **SUDDENNESS** of this **forward-back-forward motion** makes the leash slack, then tight, then slack again. This throws your dog off-balance and wakes him up! If your first snap causes him to come toward you, terrific! If not, snap again.

**VERY IMPORTANT!** A snap is not a steady pull! Don't hold the leash taut. Don't pull your dog toward you.



The purpose of a sudden snap is to wake your dog up and motivate him to leave the distraction and come to you **with the leash hanging loose between your hand and his collar**. You don't drag him toward you.

As with all good training, **what you are doing is providing consequences**. You are showing your dog that if he is more interested in the distraction and ignores your words, an **uncomfortable leash snap** is the result. But if he leaves the distraction and comes to you, **praise and petting** is the result.

**Remember to provide GOOD consequences, too!**

**As soon as your dog comes toward you, praise him!** Encourage him to keep coming. Keep backing up, to make him cover a good amount of ground. Then stop and act as though he had come to you on his own -- praise with enthusiasm!

**You always want your dog to believe that "coming to you" is associated with goodness.**

---

### **Step #3 in teaching "Come"**

1. After a week of practicing **"Come"** during walks, let's try something new. In your yard, have your dog **"Sit!"** and **"Stay!"** Now go to the end of the leash.
2. Wait about ten seconds, then call your dog. **"Jake, come!"**
3. **Immediately start backing up -- trot backwards.** If your dog responded properly to your Come command, he will already be heading toward you as you're backing up.  
  
Make sure the leash hangs completely loose as he is coming toward you -- don't shorten the leash as he approaches. Pat your hands together as you back up, and praise and encourage him all the way, **"Come, good boy, come!"**
4. After about ten feet, stop backing up, but keep encouraging your dog to come all the way to you so his nose or head touches you.

5. Praise and pet him for a few seconds. Then tell him, "**Okay!**" and give him a minute or so of free time before you place him in another Sit-Stay and repeat the exercise.

6. **The third time, TEST your dog.**

The **third time** you place him in a Sit-Stay, **DON'T CALL HIM**. Instead, **return to his side** and release him with "**Okay!**"

This will teach him not to expect to Come every time.

7. Over the course of the week, **keep him guessing**. Sometimes **call him**, sometimes **return to him**. Vary your time and distance, too. Sometimes wait **30 seconds**. Sometimes wait **60 seconds**. Sometimes use your **4-foot** leash. Sometimes use your **20-foot** leash.

---

## Step #4 in teaching "Come"

### The last step!

1. Go outside in the yard and **drop your end of the leash**. Watch for a time when your dog is wandering around the yard, not looking at you. Call cheerfully, "**Jake, COME!**" If he comes, praise the heck out of him!



If he doesn't come... if he ignores you, or just stands there looking at you, or heads off in another direction... repeat, "**Jake, COME!**" **one more time**, in a firm serious voice. If he responds to your strong tone, praise him happily.

## 2. **But if he still doesn't come, go get him.**

As you walk toward your dog, he may just stand there, waiting for you. If so, your next step will be easy!

### **But if he runs away from you...**

We've been over this before, haven't we? Remember what you should do if you need to correct your dog and he runs away from you? That's right!



- Track him down.
- Don't run. Don't chase.
- Don't say a word.
- Just put daggers in your eyes and stalk him.

Baffled and unnerved by your persistent, methodical following, he will most likely, eventually, shrink down and give up. Or you will get close enough to step on the end of the leash and stop him in his tracks.

**So. Whether he just stood there waiting for you, or whether you had to track him down, the goal is to get hold of his leash.**

Pick up the leash and give it a good strong tug to **propel him** in your direction. Start trotting backwards, saying, "**Come, come come!**" Your voice should be quite firm here -- not cheerful. After all these weeks, your dog knows darned well what "**Come!**" means. He deliberately chose to ignore it.

Back up all the way to where you started when **you first called him** -- to the point where, had he obeyed this word that he fully knows, he would have ended up. Needless to say, your dog probably hasn't enjoyed this little trip very much!

## **But he has just been introduced to a fundamental lesson...**

**If he doesn't come to you of his own free will, he will be corrected all the way from Point B (where he heard the command) to Point A (where you gave the command).**

This is a critical lesson for him to learn. It means **there are consequences** when he disobeys you.

NOW...once you **BOTH ARRIVE** at point A, **you must change your attitude dramatically.** Praise him! Pet him! Scoop him up, if he's small. Do whatever you have to do to get his tail wagging!



## The message you want to send is this:

"Wherever I am when I call you is a happy place full of praise and petting. **If you come to me on your own**, you'll get all that praise and petting immediately.

If you don't come, I'll come **get you**. I'll give you uncomfortable tugs on the leash **AND you'll end up in the same place ANYWAY!"**

3. Practice this exercise **every day for several weeks** until your dog is rock-solid. Then replace the dragging leash with a shorter hand-hold, which will still give you something to hang onto if you need to catch and correct him.

**To sum up, then:**

**Each and every time you say "COME!", you must see that your dog comes.** One way or another, he must end up at the point where you called him.

**With this word more than any other word...**

if you are not in a position to enforce it should he happen to choose this particular instance to disobey it... if you're on the phone, or in the shower, or on a ladder painting the house, and you **KNOW** you won't be able to go get him quickly if he disobeys you...

**Don't say the word.**



## Teach your dog not to run out the door

### WORD #21: "WAIT!"

Be honest --- has anything like this ever happened at your house?

**example**

Kathy Armstrong cried, "**Watch out for the dog!**" Her friend Mary Sue had just arrived for a visit. Mary Sue had started to pull open the screen door so she could come into the kitchen.

Jake, of course, spotted the crack of daylight and made a mad dash for it. Startled, Mary Sue leaped backwards. She managed to slam the screen door an instant before Jake barreled into it, leaving yet another nose print in the battered black mesh. Mary Sue looked down through the screen at the Armstrong's exuberant dog. "What a nuisance he is," she thought.

### Here are two reasons why Jake's behavior is unacceptable:

**It could cost him his life.** If he gets through the door and spies another person or dog or cat or squirrel, he will very likely take off with the same blind impulsiveness. **Probably he will be hit by a car.** It happens all the time.





**It is unfair to your guests.** Visitors shouldn't have to be paranoid about your dog barreling past them. As our dogs' guardians, **WE** have the responsibility of **teaching them not to run outside**, even when a door or gate tempts them.

---

## Here's how to teach **BOUNDARIES**:

1. Inside your house, **with your dog on a 4-foot leash**, walk toward the front door as though heading out for a walk.


If you have a screen door on the outside of your front door, prop it open ahead of time so it won't be in the way when you open the front door. **In other words, when that front door opens, you want your dog to have an "open shot" to the Great Outdoors.**

2. When you reach the front door, **tighten the leash**, say, **"Jake, wait!"** and open the door. When he sees the outdoors, he will probably try to rush out.

Say **"Ah-ah!"** and use alternating pressure on the leash to show him that you don't want him to go through the door.

**"Alternating pressure"** means you tighten the leash to PULL him backward, then you loosen it again.

Be quick! Don't let him get all the way through the door before you pull him back. Tighten the leash **as soon as his toenails go over the threshold!**

3. Your first few pulls should be just strong enough to **slide/drag him back into the house**. But if he continues to rush for the door each time you loosen the leash, **make your pulls sharper and more jerky** -- like the "snaps" you used when you taught your dog to come when called.
4. You may have to "check" him ten times -- or a hundred times. It doesn't matter. **When the light bulb finally goes on and he waits inside the open door with no tension on the leash**, praise him!  Close the door. Lead him into another room for a short break. Then head toward the front door again and repeat the whole exercise.

---

### **"Wait" on a completely loose leash**

1. After practicing **"Wait!"** like this for a couple of days, **make one important change**. As you approach the door, **don't tighten the leash**. Just say, **"Wait!"** and open the door.
2. Without the reminder of the tight leash, when the door opens he may try to rush through. **The split second his toe moves over the threshold**, say sharply, **"Ah-ah!"** and **SNAP!** him back inside the house. You're truly correcting him now. Once he's inside, say again, **"Wait!"** and slacken the leash to give him another opportunity to rush through.
3. And another, and another, and another, until he accepts the reality that **"Wait!"** means the same thing as it meant yesterday -- **not to go through the door**.

The choice is ultimately his -- your job is simply to provide the consequences. Each time he steps out, he is snapped back in, which makes it crystal clear to him that stepping over the threshold is NOT to his advantage. It gets him nowhere.

**Remember -- teaching new words means:**

- giving your dog lots of opportunities to take some action
- providing a positive or negative consequence to that action

**Your dog will do what benefits him most.** He will avoid doing what makes him uncomfortable. It is up to YOU to provide the benefits (praise, petting, treats, a loose leash) and the discomfort (corrections), **so he will make the right choices.**

4. When he finally stays inside the house with the leash loose and the front door open, praise him, **"Good boy!"** Close the door. Lead him into another room for a short break. Then head toward the front door again and repeat the whole exercise.



---

**"Wait" with distractions**

Remember the distractions you used to "proof" your dog when he was learning what **"Stay!"** meant?

**It's time for distractions again!** When the front door is open and the two of you are standing there, practicing **"Wait!"**...

- Hum or whistle a happy tune.
- Do a few knee bends or jumping jacks.
- Talk to an imaginary visitor at the door.
- Sit in a chair near the door (inside the house, of course!) and read aloud from a book.

Your dog may decide to just stand there, or he may sit, or lie down, or even walk around within the limits of the leash -- it doesn't matter. **He simply can't pass through the open door.**

### **Is he still waiting? Good!**

- Have one of your kids walk by, OUTSIDE the door.
- Have one of your kids walk by, bouncing a ball.
- Have one of your kids RUN by.
- Have one of your kids skip rope in the front yard.

**Remember, your child must NOT speak to the dog, or even LOOK at him.**

**Now switch to a longer leash.** When your dog is doing well with distractions on the 4-foot leash, graduate to the **20-foot** leash. Now you can get quite a distance away from him, always staying inside your house, of course. He may choose to walk around with you, or he may decide to hang around near the open front door, peering out. **But he may not pass through the door.** Hold onto your end of the

20-foot leash in case he should try to bolt. **Repeat all the distractions.**

---

### **"Wait" while YOU go outside**

1. Switch back to a shorter leash. With the front door open and both of you standing there, repeat, **"Wait!"** Now **YOU** step over the threshold. Keep some tension on the leash -- upward and backward -- as you step through the door, to help hold him in position on HIS side of the door.
2. **As soon as your foot hits the ground outside**, turn and face him. Now he should be inside the house, and you should be just barely outside, on the porch or stoop.
3. Caution him, **"Wait!"** and loosen the leash. He may try to rush outside to join you. **The instant his toe crosses the threshold**, use the leash to bounce him back inside the house. **You stay put on your side!** Once he's back inside, caution him, **"Wait!"**, and loosen the leash again to give him another chance to either rush out or stay put.

**DON'T LOOK AT YOUR DOG** when practicing "WAIT."



If you meet his eyes, he may think you're inviting him to come to you. Or he may feel uncomfortable being stared at, and will lie down or move away from your direct gaze.

So look to the right of your dog. Look to the left. Look upward and count the clouds.

**Use your peripheral (corner-of-your-eye) vision** to keep track of your dog's position so you can quickly correct him if necessary. But **DON'T** stare at him.

4. **No matter how many times you have to bounce him back inside**, when he does finally stand there -- actually, he can stand or sit or lie down or even walk back and forth, just so he **stays on HIS side of the threshold** -- he has just done a marvelous "Wait!"

5. Praise him. **But softly**, so he isn't tempted to rush out to you. **"Good boy. Wait. Good boy. Wait."** Hold up your hand like a stop sign, to help remind him.



6. Finally, say, **"OKAY! Come!"** That should bring him running across the threshold! If not, use the leash to encourage him to join you outside. Good boy!

7. Now it's simply a matter of gradually getting further away from the door and adding more tempting distractions as your dog waits inside.
8. Sometimes, instead of calling him outside to join you, **go back inside the house**, praise your dog for waiting, and close the door. In other words, **don't always give him an "Okay!" to come out.**

In practical life, there will be many times when you need to go outside for a moment by yourself -- say, to accept a package from UPS. Then you'll go back in **without your dog ever being allowed out**. He must learn that he doesn't ALWAYS get to cross the boundary after a "Wait."

### Other places to practice "Wait"

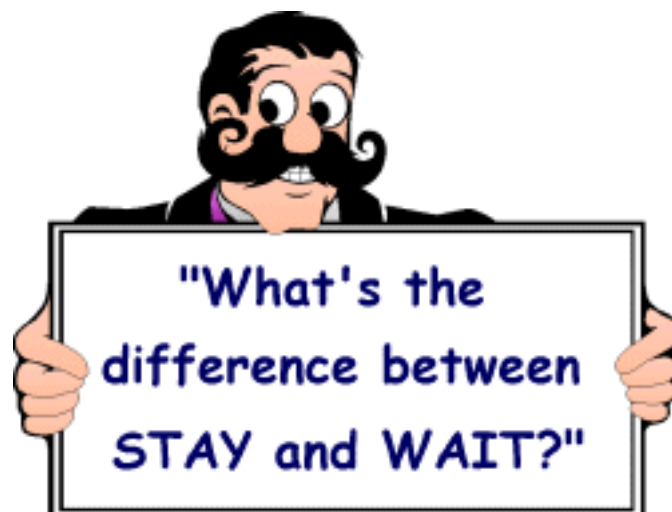
- Have your dog **"Wait!"** before going **INTO** your house. For example, after a walk, say, **"Wait!"** and open the front door. Don't let him go inside until you've given the Okay.
- Have him **"Wait!"** at the **back door** before going **OUT** into the back yard. Or have him **"Wait!"** before coming **INTO** the house from the back yard.
- Have him **"Wait!"** before going through **sliding glass doors**, such as patio doors.



- Have him **"Wait!"** before going in -- or out -- of the **gate** to your property.
- Have him **"Wait!"** on one side of an **open doorway**, such as the doorway between your kitchen and living room.
- Have him **"Wait!"** at the **top of the stairs** before going down. Or at the **bottom of the stairs** before going up.



Don't have him "Wait!" off-leash, anywhere where he could dash into a busy street. According to Murphy's Law, a dog will always choose the very worst possible moment to forget or ignore a word -- and all it takes is once for your dog to be dead.



## Excellent question!

**"Wait!"**

**"WAIT!"** means **"Don't cross a certain boundary."**

You use it when you don't want your dog to pass through a door, a doorway, or a gate, or when you don't want him to enter a certain room, or to go up or down a flight of stairs.

The boundary must be clear to him. **He must be able to see the difference between "here" and "there."** For example, a physical marker such as doorposts, or gateposts, or stairs. Or a change of footing such as vinyl floor to carpet, or grass to concrete.



With **"Wait!"**, as long as your dog doesn't cross the boundary, you don't care whether he stands, sits, lies down, or wanders around on his side of the boundary. He simply can't **cross** it.

---

**"Stay!"**

**"STAY!"** means **"Hold an exact position."** You put your dog in a specific position and place, and he has to stay in that exact position and place.



For example, if you put him in a sit position, he has to stay in that sit position, in that exact place. He can't lie down, or stand up, or move two feet to the right.

As you can see, **"STAY" is much stricter than "WAIT."** Sometimes you **NEED** that strictness. For example, you may want your dog to sit and stay so the vet can examine his ears. Sit. Stay.

**One position.** You don't want him thinking he can stand up and move two feet to the right or wander around!

- When you need your dog to SIT in one spot, that's **"STAY."**
- When you need him to LIE DOWN in one spot, that's **"STAY."**
- When you need him to STAND STILL in one spot, that's **"STAY."**

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Teach your dog to wait inside your car

**Here's another great place where you can use "WAIT!"**



**Inside your car.**

You should be able to open your car doors when your dog is in the back seat -- **and he shouldn't jump out until you tell him to.**

He will also learn a new word for jumping into the back seat.

**WORD #22: "UP!"**

1. With your dog on his 4-foot leash, walk toward your parked car. When you reach the rear door, say, **"Wait!"** and open the door.

The first couple of times, hold the leash **slightly taut** to remind him that you don't want him to rush forward.

2. When you loosen the leash, be prepared to check him quickly if he tries to jump in. The goal is to have him wait at the car door **with the leash loose**. Once he is doing that, tell him, "**Okay! Up!**" and encourage him to jump in.

Help him if necessary. Use your hands to boost him -- or treats if they motivate him.

3. **Now for the hard part.** Close the door and let him stay in the car alone for 10 seconds. Then caution him (through the closed door): "**Wait!**" Open the door and quickly get hold of the leash -- use it to correct him if he tries to jump out. Caution him again, "**Wait!**" and completely loosen the leash to give him the opportunity to stay in or jump out.

And another opportunity, and another, and another, until he realizes that "**Wait!**" means the same inside the car as it did inside your house! Then praise him, "**Good boy!**" Close the door to the car and repeat the exercise.

4. After several repetitions, let him come out. "**OKAY, Jake! COME!**" That should bring him bounding out!
5. When he is no longer making any attempt to jump out when the door opens, **make the exercise more challenging**. Switch to your **20-foot leash** so you can get further away from the open car door, yet still have control over him if he should leap out.

Oh, and **add distractions** -- you know about distractions!

At some point you will probably try this exercise without the leash. **Take precautions.** If your dog is one who might jump out and run, practice inside your garage with the door closed, or while parked in your driveway behind a secure fence. **Don't take any chances if you live near a busy street.**

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## Keep your dog safe inside your car

Let's talk about **car safety**. When we practiced "**Wait!**", your dog was loose in the back seat. But it isn't safe for him to **RIDE** in the car like that.

**Just like a child, your dog should ALWAYS be buckled in. Either he wears a harness that's fastened to something solid in the back seat -- or he rides in a crate that's been buckled into the back seat.**

**story** As Jake leaped from the back seat into the front, Roger Armstrong startled and jerked the steering wheel violently to one side.

**"Jake!"** he exclaimed. **"For the love of Pete, will you settle down?"** But with the wind whistling through the open windows, Jake couldn't hear him. The excited dog thrust his head out the passenger window, squinting his

eyes against the wind. Then he bounded across the front seat and into Roger's lap, craning his neck out the driver's side window to see if things were any more interesting over there.

**"Jake!"** shouted Roger, shoving the dog sideways and struggling to steer with one hand. Jake leaped into the back seat, flung his paws onto the rear window ledge, and began barking at a motorcycle behind them. **"Jake!"** Roger shouted in vain.

---

**If you allow your dog to ride loose in the car, to roam around the car, to climb from seat to seat, to lean out the window, or to bark at whatever catches his eye...**



you are sending him the message that **impulsive behaviors are acceptable** and that **he need not control himself**. Such free-wheeling behaviors are NOT the path to calmness and self-control.

---

**Even worse, you're putting your dog, yourself, your passengers, and other drivers on the road in danger.**

- Your loose dog may CAUSE an accident by jostling your arm. Or his antics may distract you from paying full attention to the road.
- In an accident, your loose dog can be flung against the windshield, or through an open or shattered window into the

street. The impact will kill or injure him, or set him loose in traffic.

- In an accident, his **hurtling body may smash into YOU** just as you're trying to regain control of your car. Or he may smash into other passengers, injuring them.
- In an accident, doors pop open unexpectedly, or rescue personnel pull open the doors. **Your loose dog will take off in a panic.**



If you truly care about your dog and the people around you, secure him in the back seat with a harness and seat belt, or in a crate.

---

## **Your dog should absolutely not ride:**

- in the front passenger seat
- on your lap
- on the rear window shelf

"But he **LIKES** riding there!" you protest. Doesn't matter. You can provide happiness to your dog in plenty of other areas of his life. **The car requires safety above all else.**

---

## But if he's not supposed to be loose in the car, why did we teach him to "Wait!" in the back seat?"

Because at some point, you will have to **unbuckle his harness or open the crate door**. That's when "**Wait!**" comes in mighty handy, because you don't want him darting past you. And you never know when you might need to step away from your car for just a moment while your dog is loose inside. **You definitely want him to stay there!**

I was going to talk about the practice of dogs **riding in the bed of an uncapped pickup truck**. But as I think about it, I can't imagine that anyone reading this eBook would even consider such a **dangerous and idiotic practice**. So I won't waste another word on it.

---

Finally, let's teach your dog the **NAME** of this big mechanical contraption he's riding in.

### **WORD #23: "GO CAR?" (or "GO FOR A RIDE IN THE CAR?")**



Attaching a word or phrase to an **upcoming event** helps your dog develop the mental skill of **visualizing** that event as he anticipates the fun that he has come to associate with it.



Ask him, "**Want to go for a ride in the car?**" or the shortened "**Go car?**" Then **follow up immediately** by clipping on his leash and heading toward the car.

**Make sure there's no delay.** Don't ask your dog if he wants to go for a ride, then get bogged down finding his collar and leash, checking the weather, finding the right jacket, visiting the bathroom, grabbing a snack, or answering the phone.

**Make your preparations ahead of time.** Know where the collar and leash are. Find out what the weather is and decide which jacket you're going to wear. Put a snack in your pocket. Go to the bathroom.

THEN ask your dog, "**Go car?**" and get him out to the car right away.

When introducing new words, you must deliver on your promises very quickly so he makes the connection!



Has he had the chance to associate car rides with a **fun time**? Or does he only go in the car when he's going to the vet's or to the groomer's or to the boarding kennel?

If the latter, you're right, he is likely to have an UNPLEASANT association with car rides. Your cheerful "**Go car?**" may send him running into his crate or under the bed!

**You can fix this...sometimes.** Take your dog **FUN** places in the car. Drive him to the park. To the woods. To the beach. **Even if it's only a block away.** Play cheerful music and sing along. Have someone ride along with you and feed your dog his favorite treats.

The goal is to give your dog some **pleasant associations** with the car so he will change his opinion of it.



**If you're a real traveler...**

and you want to bring your dog along, I recommend a travel guide called **On the Road Again With Man's Best Friend.**

It contains listings of 18,000 pet-friendly accommodations, including motels, bed and breakfasts, resorts, and inns.

Of course, any establishment may change its pet policies, so you must call ahead to verify the information. But in my opinion, of all the pet travel guides available, **this is the best one to start with.**



If you're online right now, you can [click here](#) to order it.

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## Teach your dog to fetch a ball

### WORD #24: "BALL"

Most dogs learn this word very quickly. Especially since we're going to do some very interesting things with it!



**First, let's simply teach him the word.**

**"Jake, BALL! See the BALL? Good BALL!"**

Emphasize the word you want him to pay attention to. A few extra words are okay, but too many will dilute the importance of the one word you want him to pick out.

**In other words, DON'T DO THIS:**

**example**

"Hey, Jake, here's a ball, a great big red ball, do you want to chase it? Do you want it? Good boy, Jake, come here, look at this, hey, do you want it?"

**This is WAY too much.** You're trying to teach your dog the general concept that **one particular sound = one particular object**. This concept is tough enough without adding a slew of extra sounds to the mix!

Bounce the ball, roll the ball, toss it against a wall, do whatever it takes to get your dog looking at the ball.

**WORD #25: "GET IT!" (or "FETCH!")**  
**WORD #26: "GIVE!"**

Now that your dog knows the word for ball, you'd probably like him to **do something** with the ball. To run after it when you throw it. To bring it back to you so you can throw it again. We call this **retrieving**, or more informally, **fetching**.



## Some dogs are natural retrievers.



- **Sporting (gundog) breeds**, such as spaniels, setters, and retrievers, are often natural retrievers. This makes sense, because they were originally developed to find and fetch birds for hunters.
- **Herding breeds**, such as collies and shepherds, are often natural retrievers. They were developed to chase and gather moving sheep. So it's pretty easy to extend those chasing and gathering instincts to thrown balls and sticks.
- **Certain small breeds** such as Poodles and Boston Terriers love to retrieve balls and other toys. They were bred to be lively and playful and to have a strong desire to interact with their owner.



## Some dogs are **NOT** natural retrievers.



**Hound breeds** such as Beagles, Bassets, and Greyhounds have strong chasing instincts and may pursue a ball, but they will seldom bring it back. They were developed to **run down** prey -- NOT to bring the dead creatures back to the hunter.

- The same is true of **northern (sled-dog) breeds** such as malamutes and huskies. They have strong predatory (chasing) instincts, but they **EAT** their prey -- they don't bring it back.



- Similarly, **terriers** were developed to chase and **kill** rodents. Most terriers are much too possessive and independent to bring things **TO** people. They would rather keep everything for themselves! (Two exceptions are Jack Russell Terriers and Fox Terriers -- they often love to retrieve.)

Now don't get me wrong... many of these dogs can **learn** to retrieve. But the training can be **difficult and frustrating** because you're going against the breed's natural instincts.

### Here's an example of how **difficult retrieving is:**

**story** In AKC obedience competition, many dogs succeed at the novice level. **Far fewer succeed at the intermediate and advanced levels.** Why is that?

Because in the novice class, dogs have to heel, sit, lie down, stand, stay, and come. Almost every dog can learn that. But in intermediate and advanced, **dogs have to retrieve** -- and that single requirement knocks out a whole lotta dogs!

So if you have a dog who won't retrieve, don't feel alone. You can try to teach him, **but don't get too discouraged** if the training doesn't go as quickly or as smoothly as you'd like.

---

## The most common methods for teaching retrieving:

### The Natural Retriever Method

1. Choose a long hallway in your house. Close all the doors along it, so that once your dog has run down the hallway he can't duck into any side rooms.
2. Get your dog excited about his ball (or another favorite toy). When he's barking and jumping for it, throw it down the hall. Encourage him, **"Get your ball! Get it!"** or **"Fetch your ball! Fetch!"**



3. If he runs to get it and, miracle of miracles, brings it back to you, tell him cheerfully, **"Give!"** and take it from him. If he

hangs on and refuses to give it up, place your left palm under his jaw, palm up. Your thumb should be on one side of his jaw, your four fingers on the other side of his jaw. Using all five fingers, press his **LIPS** firmly inward against his **TEETH** as you say again, "**Give!**" If you're pressing in the right place, his mouth will open. Take the toy. Praise him!

4. If he ran to the toy and picked it up, but wouldn't come back, or if he grabbed it and ran off with it, **don't chase him**. Call him: "**Come!**" He knows how to do that.

If he DOESN'T come, **forget about the fetch game and make sure he obeys "Come!" Remember, he must obey THAT word EVERY TIME.**

5. If he does come to you, but drops the toy on the way, that's okay. Praise him for coming. **Go get the toy** and try again.
6. If he consistently chases the toy but doesn't bring it back -- or if he won't chase the toy at all -- you'll need to try a different method.

---

## The Step by Step Food Method

Here you will systematically teach your dog to:

1. take the toy from your hand

2. hold the toy in his mouth without dropping it
3. reach for the toy when you hold it away from him
4. bring the toy back to you when you toss it

This method works best when your dog is hungry, so skip his morning meal for a few weeks while you're teaching these words. Don't worry about starving him -- he'll be getting plenty of treats during your practice sessions!

**Choose a soft treat that's easy to gulp down.**

Cheese or cooked chicken work well. Crunchy treats take too long to chew and tend to scatter on the floor, causing your dog to become distracted as he snuffles around for crumbs.

**First you will teach your dog that when you press the toy against his mouth, he should open his mouth.**

1. Choose an area that's quiet and free of distractions. Put the leash on your dog. Get him sitting on your left side. Kneel down and tuck the leash under your knees so you have control of him, but both your hands are free.
2. With your left hand, hold onto his collar. With your right hand, **hold the toy in front of his mouth** so it is actually **touching** his mouth.
3. In a cheerful voice, say, "**Get it!**" or "**Fetch!**" He probably won't open his mouth, so you'll have to do it for him.



**Now follow this closely.** Take your left hand off his collar and place it on **TOP** of his muzzle. Your thumb should be on the right side, your four fingers on the left side, with the top of his muzzle nestled in the fleshy crook between your thumb and forefinger. Press all five fingers **against his lips** so his lips press inward against his teeth. His mouth should open. With your right hand, quickly place and hold the toy in his mouth as you repeat, "**Get it!**"

4. **Make sure the toy fits comfortably in his mouth.** It shouldn't be so small that it could roll back into his throat. It shouldn't be so bulky that it would be uncomfortable. A **wooden dumbbell**, available at pet supply stores, is a good choice for teaching retrieving.
5. After only a second or two, praise him, "**Good boy!**" Say, "**Give!**" as you remove the toy from his mouth. **Immediately give him a treat.**
6. **Repeat the exercise four more times**, then **STOP**. Later in the day, do another five repetitions. **By the end of the week, your dog should voluntarily open his mouth** when you touch the toy against his lips.

---

**Now you will teach him to actually HOLD the toy.**

1. Place it in his mouth and say, "**Hold it.**" Put one hand under his chin, stroking it a bit to keep his head up. **When his muzzle is tilted up**, he is less likely to spit out the toy. Praise him softly, "**Go-oo-od boy**" as he holds the toy.

2. After only **3 to 5 seconds**, say, "**Give!**" Remove the toy, praise him, and give him a treat.
  3. If at any point he tries to spit out the toy, try to intercept him by saying, "**Ah-ah!**" and quickly close his muzzle around the toy. If he does manage to spit it out, simply start again. Replace it in his mouth and say, "**Hold it.**"
  4. **When he is holding the toy reliably**, move your hand further away from his mouth. Gradually increase the time to 8 seconds, 12 seconds, and finally 15 seconds. That's long enough.
- 

**Now you will teach him to move around with the toy in his mouth.**

1. When he will hold the toy reliably for 15 seconds, without your hand on his mouth, suddenly stand up and say, "**COME, Jake.**" **Quickly place one hand under his chin** to help keep his head up. **Hook your other hand in his collar** under his neck and guide him to follow you as **you walk backward a few steps**.
2. As before, if he tries to spit out or drop the toy, try to intercept him by saying, "**Ah-ah!**" and quickly closing his muzzle around the toy. If it does fall to the ground, simply start again by replacing it in his mouth and saying, "**Hold it.**"

3. Work up to moving your hand completely away from his mouth as you walk backwards. **You want him to be able to follow you around holding the toy.**
4. Since he knows how to "Sit" and "Stay" and "Come," you can also put him in a Sit-Stay, holding the toy, and have him Come to you, **still holding the toy.**

---

**Finally, you will teach him to reach for the toy.**

1. When your dog will accept the toy being placed in his mouth and will hold it as you both walk around, work on this final step. With your dog **STANDING** beside you, hold onto his collar with your left hand. With your right hand, **flash the toy an inch in front of his nose.** Say, **"Get it!"**
2. If he reaches forward and takes it, remind him to **"Hold it!"** If he holds it, praise him, **"Good boy!"** Say, **"Give!"** and take it from him. Praise and treat! Good job!
3. Now, if he **DOESN'T** reach forward to take it, use your grip on his collar to **tug him firmly toward the toy** until his mouth presses against it and he does take it.
4. Once he has this down pat, encourage him to reach further for the toy. Offer it a couple of inches in front of his nose. **"Get it!"** When he reaches toward it, **turn smoothly clockwise** as you sweep the toy slowly away from him at eye level. This

encourages him to "chase" and grab it.

5. When he can catch the moving toy held a full arms' length away, **begin lowering it toward the floor**. Make sure he has to bend further down each time to catch it. Soon you will place it on the floor just in front of you, with your fingers touching it, then with your hand near it but not touching it.



6. Finally, **toss it in front of you**, only a couple of feet away. At first you may need to point to the toy and urge him to pick it up. **You may need to step forward and touch the toy** as you encourage him to come pick it up.

But soon he should be moving forward enthusiastically to retrieve it on his own!

And there you have it -- a step by step program for teaching your dog to retrieve!

Some people are visually-oriented. They like to see things being done, and they learn best by watching someone else do it. **Videotapes are good for that!**

**Positively Fetching** is a **60-minute VHS video** that demonstrates, step by step, how to teach your dog to retrieve, using treats as motivation. It also comes with a 45-page booklet so you can follow along by reading.



If you're online right now, [click here](#) to order it.

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## The Compulsive Method

If your dog doesn't respond to the first two methods, he is a good candidate for **The Compulsive Retrieve**.

Now, that sounds grim, but actually the Compulsive Method of retrieving **is no more compulsive** than teaching the word "**Come!**" was. When you tell your dog to Come, you add positive consequences when he does come, and negative consequences when he doesn't.

## The Compulsive Retrieve works the same way.

You start out by teaching your dog to open his mouth and hold the toy, just as you did with the Step by Step Food Method. Then when you get to the step where your dog must reach forward for the toy, **you add negative consequences if he refuses.**

Negative consequences means **pinching his ear** between your thumb and forefinger until he reaches forward to take the toy.

Now, calm down! Try this. Take your thumb and forefinger and pinch your own earlobe. No, don't use your finger NAILS! Just the PADS of your fingers! It's annoying, but not excruciating, don't you agree?

The Compulsive Method produces the most reliable retriever. Even if your dog becomes distracted by something else, he will still fetch the toy because he knows there are negative consequences if he doesn't.



If you'd like to try this method, I recommend the following books to help you.



[Beyond Basic Dog Training](#) is a "bible" for those interested in the Compulsive Retrieve and precision obedience training, especially for medium to large dogs.



[Competitive Obedience Training for the Small Dog](#) is especially recommended for teaching the Compulsive Retrieve and other obedience exercises to small dogs.

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Say, you know that word "**Give!**" we just learned? Well, here's another situation where it comes in mighty handy.

**story** "**Jake, let go!**" Kathy Armstrong ordered. The dog had discovered her scarf lying on the floor and had pounced on it with delight.

Jake clamped his jaws on one end while Kathy tugged fruitlessly at the other.

"**Let go!**" she repeated. Instead, Jake braced his front legs and gave a mighty tug. The r-i-i-i-p-p-ing was very loud.

Kathy lost her grip, but managed to grab hold of his head before he could get away with his torn prize.



With both hands she tried to pry his jaws apart. Jake wagged his tail good-naturedly, but refused to let go.

If your dog did this, you could simply say, "**Give!**", couldn't you? And if he didn't open up, you know how to leverage open his mouth with your fingers on top of his muzzle, or under his muzzle, pressing his lips inward against his own teeth.

**Isn't knowledge a wonderful thing?**



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Teach your dog to find things

## **WORD #27: "WHERE IS IT? FIND IT!"**

**Suppose you'd like your dog to go find his toy and bring it to you, so you can play with him.**

**"Where's your ball? Find your ball!"** is learned eagerly by some dogs -- and not at all by others.

If you have a natural retriever, or if you worked diligently with your dog and got him to retrieve by one of the methods described above, you should be able to coax him into this next step -- **finding his ball when it's not in sight**. This is such a fun game for those dogs who will do it!

## So let's give it a try:

1. Place your dog's ball (or another favorite toy) across the room. Take your dog to the OTHER side of the room. Encourage him, "**Where's your BALL? FIND your BALL!**"



You're making your first attempt here to COMBINE words, with one word familiar, and one new.

2. Some dogs will immediately begin scouting for the ball, while others will need help. **Guide your dog toward the ball** by pointing and motioning. Walk toward it, gently clapping your hands to encourage him to follow you. If necessary, **go right up to the ball and touch it** -- anything to help him succeed.
3. When he finally spots it, praise him and use the familiar words, "**Get it! Get your ball!**" If he's retrieving reliably, he should be happy to pounce on it and bring it to you.



Once he understands that **"Find!"** means he needs to scout around and use his eyes and nose to search for something, you can place his ball in another room and send him after it!



**Be supportive and helpful.** Don't just stand there and watch your dog fail. Follow him around and encourage him, **"Where is it? Where's your BALL? FIND IT! Good boy!"**

Help him succeed again and again. With repeated successes, he will develop his own confidence and stick-to-it-iveness.

For dogs who just don't get the hang of finding and retrieving their toys, have them find treats! Hide treats under empty soup cans or towels and tell your dog, **"Where's your cookie? FIND IT!"** Watch him sniff and snuffle and tip the cans over looking for the treat!

---

## **WORD #28: "BRING IT!"**

**Suppose your dog picks up something in his mouth -- and you'd like him to bring it to you.**

It doesn't make sense to tell him to "Get it!" or "Find it!" when he's already holding it in his mouth.

You need another phrase. **"Bring it here!"** Or even more specifically, **"Bring your ball! Bring it here!"**



**How you teach this word depends on the individual situation.** You now have so many helpful words at your disposal that you should be able to combine them to show your dog exactly what you want him to do! **Let's look at an example.**

**example**

Suppose he is playing with his ball and you say, "**Bring your ball! Bring it here!**" You crouch down and clap your hands to encourage him to come to you.

If he doesn't come or if he runs off with the ball, now what?

Well, you could call him with "**Come!**" He knows that one. Yes, he might drop the ball as he runs toward you, but then you can send him back after it with "**GET your ball!**" He knows that one, too. When he goes back to pick up the ball, you could add the new phrase, "**Bring it here!**" so he makes the connection between the familiar act of retrieving and the new word "**Bring!**"

However you have to help him, you need him to associate "**Bring it!**" with the action of coming toward you, holding whatever object is in his mouth.

To help him make this connection, use the phrase, "**Bring it here!**" whenever you notice your dog heading toward you with ANYTHING in his mouth.

**example**

This phrase is also useful when your dog has picked up something that you want to take

away. For example, my dog often discovers my nightgown lying on the bed, and she runs off with it. This isn't a crime, but I would like to have my nightgown back! So I tell her, "**Bring it here!**" I praise her for bringing it to me, and I trade the nightgown for one of her own toys.

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## Teach your dog the names of his toys

### **WORD #29: "TOY"**

### **WORDS #30, #31, #32: NAMES OF INDIVIDUAL TOYS**



Speaking of toys, there are many objects your dog can retrieve -- or find -- or bring to you. Usually, most of these are toys.

You can call all of them simply "TOY", if you want.

**But it's more fun to give individual names to at least some of them.**

### **First, let's teach the generic word "Toy."**

1. Place one of your dog's toys across the room. Beside it, place an **unappealing non-toy** -- such as a hammer or dictionary.
2. Send your dog to "**Get your toy!**" (Make sure he retrieves the toy and not the hammer or dictionary!)
3. Repeat this with different toys until he gets the idea that "**Toy**"

means his own **personal playthings** -- any of them.

4. Eventually place SEVERAL toys among SEVERAL non-toys. Make sure the non-toys are REALLY unappealing, so he won't be tempted to take any of them. Send him to **"Get your toy!"** **He can choose any toy he wants** when the generic term "TOY" is used. (Again, of course, he mustn't retrieve the non-toys! A simple **"Ah-ah!"** should stop him if he errs.)

**Now we'll teach the individual toy names.**

**story**

Here's how I taught my dog Buffy the names of her stuffed rabbit, duck, parrot, and monkey.

I began by putting away all toys except the bunny rabbit. For a few days she and I played only with the rabbit. She carried it around and wrestled with it and I used every opportunity to name it for her: **"Is that RABBIT? Good RABBIT!"**



I threw it for her, encouraging her to **"Get RABBIT!"** I hid it in another room, encouraging her to **"Find RABBIT!"** Of course, with no other toys to choose from, she brought the rabbit every time.

Then I brought out her stuffed duck. I placed them side by side and said, **"Get RABBIT!"** The first time I tried this, she grabbed the rabbit. Wow! She was a genius!

Well, not exactly. The next time I sent her for the rabbit, she tried to pick up the duck. The instant she reached for it, I said, **"Ah-ah!" Get RABBIT!"** She hesitated, then

grabbed the rabbit. "**Good girl!**" I said.

But during one attempt, she was too quick for me. She seized the duck and brought it back to me. I simply said, "**No, no**" and put it back with the rabbit so she could try again. Soon she learned that she only got praise when she got the rabbit.



After a few days of successfully fetching the rabbit, I put it away entirely and focused on the **DUCK**. Again I taught her the word by saying, "**Is this your DUCK?**" and "**Get your DUCK!**" and "**Find your DUCK!**" Then I put the duck beside another toy (NOT the rabbit yet). I had her practice retrieving the duck while ignoring the unnamed toy.

The hard part came when I placed the rabbit and the duck side by side. I sent her first for one, then the other. Now she had to remember both words -- and which word went with which toy!

This type of challenge really develops your dog's thinking skills and memory.

---

## The "Musical Toys" Game

Once your dog knows several toys by name, you can play **Musical Toys**. Here's how I play it with Buffy. I gather all the toys whose names she has learned. I place them in a small group on the floor. Then I send her after each one, one at a time.

"Get your dinosaur!"

"Get your monkey!"

"Get your bone!"

"Get parrot!"

A similar game is "**FIND THE X!**", where I send Buffy **in search of** a specific toy. For example, "**Find DOLLY!**" She runs from room to room, rejecting all the other toys in favor of Dolly, which she eventually locates and brings to me.



**It's very important with these games that your dog always succeeds.**

If Buffy returns with the wrong toy, I take it from her, saying gently, "**No no, find DOLLY!**" Then I go with her on a dolly hunt. Same thing if she looks everywhere and can't find Dolly. **I always help her succeed.**

I can also do a general "**Find a toy!**" and Buffy runs to find whatever toy catches her eye. Here **the choice is hers** and I enjoy watching her select which one she wants to bring to me. Next time her choice may be different. Sometimes I wonder what criteria she uses to decide! Are dogs "in the mood" for certain toys at certain times?

---



For exercising jaws and mind,  
relieving boredom,  
and venting energy,  
I recommend the following toys...

All toys are available at  
[PETsMART Online](#)



**Nylabones** - hard nylon bones for vigorous chewers

**Gumabones** - softer bones for less vigorous chewers

If you drill holes in Nylabones and  
Gumabones, you can insert soft cheese or  
peanut butter to make them even more  
tempting to chew!

The Petite size is suitable for toy dogs. The Regular and Wolf sizes are best for most dogs. Only giant dogs need Giant or Souper sizes.

**Replace Nylabones and Gumabones once your dog has chewed off the knuckle ends.**



**Kong Toys.** Made of thick, heavy rubber, with a hollow center where you can stuff treats. Your dog will love exercising his creativity and persistence as he works to get his snack!



**Cotton Rope Toys** and **Nylafloss.** These help clean, massage, and floss your dog's teeth and gums.



**BALLS.** Most dogs love the fuzziness of **Tennis Balls.** Also try a **Funny Ball,** a hard rubber ball that bounces in unpredictable directions.

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**Stuffed (plush) toys IF your dog doesn't try to destroy them.** Carefully examine stuffed toys and remove pieces that could be swallowed, such as plastic eyes and nose, bowtie around the neck, stringy tail, care label, etc. If your dog is a chewer, don't buy toys with squeakers inside. **Avoid beanbag toys**, which are easily punctured.

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- **Homemade toys.**

- Old **socks** or **towels** knotted together.
- A **plastic water jug** or mouthwash bottle, washed thoroughly, cap removed. For interactive fun, you can tie a string or rope to these toys and drag them around for your dog to chase.
- **Ball on a stick!** Drill a hole in one end of a foot-long dowel. Attach a 6-foot cord to the dowel. Thread the other end of the cord through holes drilled in a tennis ball. Now wave the ball around for your dog to chase!

**Always think safety.** Replace socks when they fray, so threads don't get swallowed or wrapped around your dog's tongue. Replace water jugs when plastic pieces get chewed out. (If he tries to eat the plastic, water jugs aren't for him, period!)

## I recommend AGAINST...

- Rawhide. Can peel off in soggy strips and choke your dog.
  - Pig ears. Become soggy and slippery and can lodge in your dog's throat. Ingredients-wise, they are loaded with fat and can cause diarrhea and vomiting. To top it all off, they stink and can stain your carpet.
  - Cow hooves. Can break into sharp slivers that can punch through your dog's throat and intestines.
  - "Ingestible" chews such as cornstarch bones. Despite the marketing hype, dogs were never intended to eat cornstarch. And cornstarch may not be all you get in these chews, i.e. additives and preservatives.
  - Anything "smoked." Loaded with cancer-linked nitrites and preservatives.
  - Soft rubber toys. Thin rubber squeaky toys are okay for very small, gentle, non-chewing dogs, but many dogs destroy them in about 30 seconds -- especially dangerous if they have squeakers or bells inside.
-


# Tips for managing your dog's Toy Box

1. **If your dog is showing any rude behaviors, pick up all toys except for two.**

Some dogs are showered with toys, many of which they disdain or ignore.

**This is not a good attitude.**



 If your dog is a destructive chewer, it's even more important to pick up most toys. Because if the floor is littered with a zillion toys, your dog may assume that **everything** is a toy and potentially chewable, **including your belongings.**

2. **If your dog is NOT showing any rude behaviors, give him LOTS of different toys!**

Toys of different sizes, shapes, and textures **stimulate your dog's mind** as he pokes, prods, mouths, and figures out how to play with them. Look over my list of recommended toys and offer Nylabones in different shapes, hard rubber toys, balls, ropes, and MAYBE stuffed animals that squeak or make other interesting noises.

3. **Rotate toys.**

Let your dog have his toys for **two or three weeks**, then put them away and offer a **set of different toys.**



Rotating toys keeps your dog's mind open to **accepting new things**, which is a healthy attitude. You don't want a rigid dog who is so focused on one special toy that he gets upset when it can't be immediately located.

Removing familiar toys for a few weeks also **makes them seem new and exciting** when you return them.

HOWEVER -- with a destructive chewer, it is often best NOT to rotate toys, but instead to choose two toys, and two toys ONLY. Then he learns that these two objects are the ONLY things he is ever allowed to chew on. Everything else is off limits.

#### 4. **Don't allow possessiveness.**



If your dog becomes possessive of a toy and won't give it to you, or growls over it, **take it away immediately**. For a full month. No ifs, ands, or buts. In this way, he may come to appreciate that toys are not free gifts, but are privileges that YOU can bestow and take away, **based on his behavior**.

## Teach your dog to walk without pulling on the leash

Since not every dog will learn to retrieve or find toys or bring them to you, let's move on to an easier word (actually it's a phrase) that **every dog CAN learn!**

### **WORD #33: "GO FOR A WALK?"**

As you might guess, this is a beloved phrase that dogs learn very quickly! All you need to do is to say it in a happy tone of voice and then **follow up IMMEDIATELY** by clipping on the leash and taking your dog for a walk.

**Don't delay after asking this question.** Know ahead of time where the leash is and where your jacket is. Go to the bathroom. THEN ask your dog, **"Want to go for a WALK?"**

And if the phone rings on your way out, let the answering machine get it. You're going for a walk!

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### **WORD #34: "LEASH"**

AFTER your dog shows that he understands **"Want to go for a walk?"** (by dancing around with excitement), add one more level of complexity. **Ask him to find his leash.**

Even dogs who bombed out on **"Find your toy!"**, even dogs who refuse to retrieve anything, can usually learn **to run to where their leash is kept**. They may not fetch it, but they'll usually run toward it!



**Of course, first you have to teach them what "Leash" means -- and where to find it.**

1. As with any other object word, you teach "Leash" by holding up the leash, showing it to your dog, and **emphasizing the word**.
2. Then you put it in its place -- always the same place -- on a hook on the wall, or in a drawer, or in the closet. Now encourage your dog to run to it. **"Where's your leash? Find your leash!"**
3. **Run to the leash yourself.** Make a big production out of showing it to your dog. **"Yay! Good leash!"** Melodrama works!



Of course, if your dog IS one of those who loves to retrieve, have him fetch it and bring it. Assuming he can reach it.



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Once you're actually out walking, **your dog must walk politely**. Nobody wants an unruly dog who pulls and lunges and gasps on the leash like **The Hound of the Baskervilles**.

## Why pulling is bad

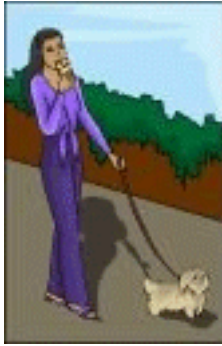
- **Because it's uncomfortable for the walker.** Even if YOU can manage to hold onto your pulling dog, how could anyone else take him for a walk if they had to?
- **Because dogs who pull are not practicing self-control.** They are **acting impulsively** and **focusing on self-gratification.** Self-control is extremely important in developing a well-behaved dog.
- **Because dogs who pull are showing disrespect.** YOU are on this walk, too. **YOU, in fact, are supposed to be the leader who sets the pace of the walk.** A pulling dog hardly even knows, or cares, that you're there.
- **Because your dog is representing his breed badly in public.** You don't want people shaking their heads at the (German Shepherd) (Cocker Spaniel) (Labrador Retriever) who can't even walk on a leash. As owners, **it's up to each of us to do our part** to show the public that the breed we've chosen is trainable and capable of good manners.

### **WORD #35: "DON'T PULL!" or "RELAX!"**

**There are two good ways you can go for a walk with your dog.**



You can have him **HEEL** very close beside you on your left side. This is a very formal way of walking.



Or you can let him wander a little in front of you or off to either side -- **as long as he doesn't pull on the leash**. This is a more informal way of walking.

Right now let's learn this second way of walking, the more informal way.

When you take your dog for a walk, **you want him to enjoy himself**. He needs to have some freedom on the leash so he can sniff and snuffle around a bit, and even relieve himself if necessary. You don't want him to be so concerned about maintaining an exact position beside you that he can't even look around at the scenery.

**You just don't want him to pull!**

Now, the natural tendency when your dog starts to pull on the leash is for you to pull backwards, trying to hold him back. But if your dog is pulling in one direction and you're pulling in the other, how can there possibly be a loose leash with no pulling? **You're both doing it!**





**No**, the key to counteracting your dog's pulling is the **Quick Snap and Release**. Remember you learned this when you taught your dog to "Come!" **Let's review it.**

## Quick Snap and Release

1. **Create a loose leash.** Very quickly, move your hand **toward** your dog. This creates a tiny bit of slack in the leash, just for a moment. And it throws your dog slightly off-balance -- since now he has nothing to pull against!
2. **Snap.** The instant you have that tiny bit of slack, **SNAP your hand backward very quickly.** Don't pull the leash steadily -- tug/snap! This sudden snap will throw your dog even more off-balance and should actually propel him a few inches in your direction.
3. **Release.** Since your dog was propelled toward you, now there will be MORE slack in the leash. **Stop your quick tug/snap** so the leash **STAYS** nice and loose. That's why it's called Quick Snap **AND RELEASE.**
4. **Warn.** In a warning tone, say, "**Don't pull!**" or "**Relax!**"

Keep right on walking as you do all four steps.

---

**For dogs who continue to pull, add these steps:**

1. As you snap the leash, **turn and walk briskly in the opposite direction**

Your dog will find himself **behind** you and will need **to catch up** with you. (Isn't it much better to have him behind you and scrambling to catch up, rather than pulling ahead?)



2. After taking only a few steps in the new direction, suddenly **reverse yourself** so that now you're walking in your **original** direction.



Again your dog will find himself trailing behind and will have to catch up. It won't be long before he realizes that "for some bizarre reason", **his tightening the leash causes you to walk in the opposite direction!**

Your frequent changes in direction hinder him from progressing on his walk -- and those leash snaps make him darned uncomfortable. These are NOT to his advantage, **so he will begin taking on the responsibility for keeping the leash loose.** You'll soon notice that whenever the leash tightens, he will quickly hasten to loosen it before you have the chance to do one of your cuckoo direction changes. You'll probably also notice him periodically glancing over his shoulder to make sure you're still there!

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If all else fails, remember the **Gentle Leader** head collar.



The theory is that where the head goes, the rest of the body follows. With some dogs, **these halters work almost magically**.

Available from [PETsMART Online](#)

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## How much exercise your dog needs

**story** Every morning, Roger Armstrong took Jake for a quick walk before he went to work. They walked down the driveway. They walked up the street to the telephone pole on the corner, where Jake lifted his leg. They walked back home.

After supper Kathy took Jake around the block. On Saturday, they drove Jake to the park and walked him a couple of times around the jogging track.

So when the vet suggested that Jake's high energy level required more exercise, Roger and Kathy exclaimed with some indignation, "What?? He gets **plenty** of exercise!!"



Kathy and Roger would be stunned to learn that Jake isn't getting even **HALF** the exercise he needs.

Energetic dogs require vigorous exercise every day, or every other day. This doesn't mean a leisurely walk around the block. **It means several miles, or a good hour or so, of brisk exercise.**

## Brisk exercise looks like this:





If you have **TWO** high-energy dogs who romp and play with each other in the house and yard, excellent. They will burn off energy through wrestling and chase games. Add some brisk sessions of ball-playing or stick-fetching, and they're pretty much all set.

Otherwise, you'll need to exercise your high-energy dog yourself. If you don't, he will become restless and hyperactive and will try to release his pent-up energy through destructive chewing, digging, and barking.



**"Misbehavior" is often caused by too little exercise.** If your dog is not getting the exercise he needs, **no amount of correction or training will help.**

You will continue to have trouble with hyperactivity, destructiveness, and other "acting out" behaviors because your dog is trying to vent his bottled-up energy. **You must get him out and exercise him.**

## Breeds who need lots of exercise



Many breeds with a reputation for over-exuberance and/or destructiveness are simply breeds with very high energy levels **who need more exercise than they're getting.**

Here are just a few of the most common breeds who are often mismatched because **they require more exercise than they get** in the average household.

- Airedale Terrier
- Alaskan Malamute
- Australian Shepherd
- Beagle
- Border Collie
- Brittany
- Dalmatian
- English Springer Spaniel
- Golden Retriever
- Irish Setter
- Jack Russell Terrier
- Labrador Retriever
- Siberian Husky
- Vizsla
- Weimaraner

When placed in the wrong home, these dogs are often described as "bouncing off the walls." In reality, **they are simply high-energy dogs who were developed for long days of working. Their need for exercise is hardwired into them.**



If you can meet their exercise needs, these dogs are fine. If you can't, the dog deserves another home that CAN, and you need to choose a different breed. **Don't try to fit a square dog into a round family!** Both the dog and the family will be unhappy.



This won't help...



**But this might!** This device, called a **Springer Bicycle Jogger**, attaches to the side of your bike. Your dog is held in position **away from the bike**, so he can't interfere with the pedals or wheels. The coil spring absorbs any pulling he might do, so you should be able to maintain balance as you ride. I've never tried one, so can't say how well it works, but I've seen other people using them. Available from [PetsMart Online](#)

**CAUTION!** There are some dogs who cannot take this kind of vigorous exercise. For example, heavy dogs such as Mastiffs, Great Danes, Newfoundlands, and Saint Bernards. Short-faced dogs such as Bulldogs. Short-legged dogs such as Bassets. Obese dogs. Elderly dogs. Very small dogs such as Toy Poodles.



Some toy breeds are billed as The Perfect Apartment Dog because "They never really need to go outside."

This is sad. **Most toy dogs are little athletes!** They love to romp on grass, to sniff out the latest doggy news on fire hydrants, to hike with you along a woodland trail.



Toy dogs should not be confined to their house and yard. **Get them out.** Even a 1/2-mile (10-15 minute) walk -- in good weather -- will be much appreciated and will help socialize them to the "goings-on" in the big wide world.

---

**Don't let your walk turn into a "pee-fest"**

**Don't let your dog lift his leg on every bush, fire hydrant, and telephone poll.**



**Dogs who pee against every vertical object are obsessed with "marking territory."**



"Marking" makes them feel bossy and self-important. This attitude often carries over into other areas of their life, such as ignoring your rules or bickering with other dogs. Unneutered males are by far the biggest offenders, but some neutered males do it, too. Dominant females, spayed or not, may also do it.

**Cut it wa-a-ay down.** Choose one or two hydrants or poles at the beginning of your walk and take your dog to these immediately.

If he tries to stop elsewhere during the walk, tell him **"No!"** and **tow him along at a steady clip.** Refuse to stop for him.

He'll soon learn that **he must relieve himself as soon as you go out** rather than holding it for distribution throughout the walk. Having taken care of business, he can relax and look around during the walk, instead of lunging for every blade of grass and turning the walk into a compulsive pee-fest to show how tough he is.

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Teach your dog to "heel" close beside you

**WORD #36: "HEEL!"**



As promised, let's talk now about a more formal type of walking.

**Heeling** means your dog stays at your LEFT side, with his head very close to your left knee. The leash hangs completely loose, forming a big U-shaped loop between your hand and his collar.

A heeling dog is very attentive to you. If you turn to the right or left, a heeling dog will immediately turn with you, **maintaining his position beside your knee**. If you slow down or speed up, a heeling dog will slow down or speed up, too. If you stop walking, a heeling dog will sit beside you and wait for your next move.

**A heeling dog is impressive to watch  
and very easy to walk!**

Ah, but...is such a walk fun for him? For short periods, it can be, especially when you make a game out of it, making quick turns, encouraging him to maintain his position, and praising him for his attentiveness.

Heeling is a terrific exercise for teaching your dog to pay attention to you!

But as I mentioned earlier, on a normal walk you want your dog to have **some** freedom on the leash so he can sniff around a bit, and relieve himself if necessary. You don't want him to be so concerned about maintaining an exact position beside you that he can't even look around at the passing scenery.

**So for normal walks, "Don't pull" or "Relax"** should be sufficient to keep your dog reasonably close to you without pulling on the leash.

**But there are times when you need more control.**

For example, if you have to walk through a crowd. Or if there is a dog or cat or squirrel nearby. Or if your arms are full of groceries and you can't be tripping over a dog walking in front of you or switching from your left side to your right side. This is when **"Heel"** comes in mighty handy.

## So let's teach your dog to "HEEL!"

**Note!** To COMPETE with your dog in obedience trials, heeling must be extremely precise -- much more precise than what I'll be showing you here. If you think you might have any interest in showing your dog in obedience competition, I recommend the following two books to teach precision heeling.



**Beyond Basic Dog Training** is a "bible" for those interested in the Compulsive Retrieve and precision obedience training, especially for medium to large dogs.



**Competitive Obedience Training for the Small Dog** is especially recommended for teaching the Compulsive Retrieve and other obedience exercises to small dogs.

---

### **What your dog needs to know before he can heel**

If you're only interested in basic, non-competitive, around-the-neighborhood heeling, it's really quite simple to teach -- **IF YOU HAVE YOUR DOG'S ATTENTION.**

Remember how much time we spent teaching your dog to **"Pay attention!"** If he knows how to pay attention, basic heeling is not difficult.

**But if he won't pay attention, basic heeling is VERY difficult -- and precision heeling is impossible!**

So if your dog still doesn't look at you when you say his name, if he still doesn't maintain eye contact with you when you say, **"Pay attention!"**, go back to **WORDS #16 and #17** and get him up to speed before you attempt to tackle heeling.

---

### **How to give your dog "heeling" clues**

Since this type of walking is more formal than usual, you should

give your dog **clues** that you will be expecting something different from him than normal walking.

- **Always have your dog "Sit!" before you start to heel.** He should be on your left side, facing the same direction you are, his head close to your left knee. If you always start your heeling **by having him sit in Heel Position**, he will soon pick up on this clue and be ready to heel.
- **Always take your first heeling step with your LEFT FOOT.** Since he's sitting beside your left leg, if you start walking with your left foot, he can't help but notice you moving. He can immediately rise from his sit and maintain his position walking beside you. Make this first step a small one, so he has a chance to get up from his sitting position and still keep up with you.

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## Teach your dog to heel

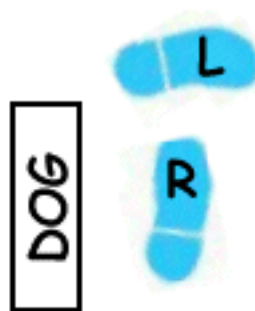
1. If you have a 2-foot leash, this is the perfect time to use it. Otherwise, use the 4-foot leash. With your dog sitting in Heel Position on your left side, call his name, **"Jake!"**
2. When he looks up at you, say **"Pay attention!"** and make sure he is focusing on you. Say, **"Jake, heel!"** and take your first step -- a small step -- with your **left foot**.
3. Take only **six or eight steps** at first. Use your short leash to keep his head fairly close beside your leg. Don't hold him

tightly -- **use short gentle tugs** to keep his head from getting ahead of or behind your leg.

4. After six or eight steps, **make an "about turn" and walk in the opposite direction.**

**Turn to your RIGHT** -- away from your dog. As you turn, lower your hand (the one holding the leash) to the level of your dog's head. Let the leash wrap tautly across your legs and left hip as you make the turn. The snug leash will keep your dog's head close beside your left leg as you both make the turn. Encourage him, **"Keep up, Jake! Good boy!"**

5. Proper footwork as you make this turn can help your dog keep up. Study the diagrams below and **practice each step without your dog** until you can make the about turn smoothly.

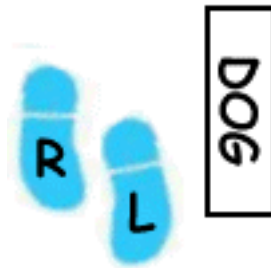


- a). Signal to your dog that you are about to make an about turn by **planting your left foot** directly across the path of your right foot.

DOG



b). Keep that planted left foot still. **Swivel your RIGHT foot** 180 degrees so it's facing in the opposite direction. Both feet should now be heel to heel.



c). **Take a long step with your left foot** so it passes your right foot and begins your movement in the new direction.

6. After taking six or eight steps in the new direction, **make another about turn**, go six or eight steps, make another about turn, and so on.

7. Soon you may be dizzy! **Time to stop.**

- Take a couple of short baby steps.
- **Plant your right foot.**
- Bring your left foot **slowly** into position beside your planted right foot.

**If you're consistent with this...** the baby steps, the firm planting of your right foot, and the SLOW movement of your left foot will all become **clues** to your dog that you're about to **stop**

8. As you stop, say, **"Sit!"** Pull up on the leash with your right hand and push down on your dog's hindquarters with your left hand. Make sure he is sitting straight beside you, facing the same direction you are. Praise him!
  
9. After a moment or two, repeat the whole process. Call his name, **"Jake!"** When he looks up at you, say **"Pay attention!"** and make sure he is focusing on you. Say, **"Jake, heel!"** and step off with your LEFT foot.
  
10. **Heeling is mentally tiring for a dog. Practice for only two or three MINUTES.** You can hold another two- or three-minute heeling session later in the day.

---

### **Heeling on a completely loose leash**

- After two weeks of heeling with a fairly short leash, you can begin loosening it. If his attention wanders, remind him, **"Jake, pay attention."** Use hand motions to focus his attention to your face. If necessary, **tug or snap the leash** to get him to refocus on you.
  
- When you make your about turns **with a loose leash**, bend



forward so you're down close to your dog's eye level. Bring your hands together out in front of you and down low. **Pat them gently together** to catch his eye. Encourage him to make the turn with you: "**Keep up, Jake! Good boy!**"

- When you stop, instead of telling your dog to Sit, **just give the leash an upward tug**. Soon he should start to **sit automatically when you stop**, before you have a chance to tug the leash. Good boy!

---

## Fun heeling patterns

By now you're probably bored with walking in a straight line, making an about turn, and walking in another straight line. Try these different **heeling patterns**.

- Make a **90-degree turn** to the left, and continue walking.
- Make a **90-degree turn** to the right, and continue walking.
- Walk faster. Break into a **trot** with long floating steps.
- Walk more slowly. Take l-o-n-g, s-l-o-w steps. **Drag out each step** so your foot is in the air longer than usual. Don't take short baby steps! Your dog will become confused and will keep trying to sit.

- Walk in **circles**. First large circles, 15 feet across. Then smaller circles, 5 feet across. Circle to the right. Circle to the left.
- Combine circles by doing a **figure-8 pattern** around two posts (or two chairs, two books, two rocks, two orange traffic cones) placed on the ground about eight feet apart.
- **Are we having fun yet?**



One source says that hunting dogs and guard dogs walked on the left side so the hunter or soldier could carry and use his gun in his right hand.

Whatever the reason, your dog must heel on your left side for obedience competition. But in agility (an obstacle course for dogs), it's very helpful if your dog knows how to walk and run beside you on EITHER side. So agility people teach their dog an additional phrase:

## WORD #37: "RIGHT SIDE!"

1. Start out heeling with your dog on your left side. Then say cheerfully, "**Right side! Good boy!**"
2. Make an about turn to your LEFT. Use the leash to guide your DOG into making an about turn to his RIGHT. Both of you continue heeling in the new direction, except that he's now on your right side!



3. Heel with him on your right side for a dozen steps, then say, "**Heel! Good boy!**" and make another dual about turn -- TOWARD each other. This will put him back on your left side. Heel with him on your left side for a dozen steps, then switch again.

Most dogs enjoy these quick switches **if you make a real game out of it**, aiming for enthusiasm rather than precision. My small dog often jumps on me excitedly as she is making the switches -- that's okay with me!

## Teach your dog to find his way home

### WORD #38: "GO HOME!"

Here's a really practical phrase for your dog to learn. No one wants to imagine this happening -- but **suppose your dog got out of your house**. He wanders up the street, by some miracle avoiding being hit by a car. Then he takes a good look around him and decides that this big wide world is no place for this here little doggie! **He wants to go home.**



### Does he know his way home?

If your dog gets most of his exercise in his house and yard, **perhaps you don't take him many places**. A depressing number of dogs **seldom see the outside of their house from the sidewalk**. How can they find their way home if they get out?

Sure, some dogs might backtrack their own scent home. Some dogs might wander around aimlessly and accidentally end up near their house, where they happen to pick up their scent or their owner's scent on the gate or driveway.

**But your dog will be much better off if he learns what his house looks like from the outside -- and how to find it when he's down the street or even on a nearby street.**

The obvious way to teach this, of course, is to take your dog outside, on leash, and encourage him, in an excited voice, to **"Go home!"**



1. Choose a door to designate as **HOME**. Make sure it is a door your dog would have easy access to, if he ever did get out. In other words, don't pick a door behind a closed gate.
2. As you're leaving the house with him, let him watch you place at the door, perhaps on the door mat, **one of his favorite treats**. Make a big show of placing the treat there.
3. Lead him **a very short distance away**, just down the steps or down the walk.
4. Point him in the right direction and urge him, **"Go home!"** Then **RUN to the door with him** and point out the treat so he can gobble it up.
5. With such an incentive, he'll master this phrase very quickly!

When he becomes trustworthy enough that he dashes immediately to the door -- by the way, let him pull all he wants for this exercise! -- and **IF YOU DON'T LIVE ON A BUSY STREET** -- drop the leash and let him drag it to the front door while you trot along behind him.

6. Now it's only a matter of getting further and further away from home and showing him the way home from different directions.

Once you've told him "**Go home!**" -- don't dawdle. Don't let him stop to sniff anything. **GET HOME FAST** so that he makes the connection. Encourage him all the way, "**Go home! Good dog!**"

If along the way he tries to turn up the wrong walkway, use the leash to check him gently, "**Ah-ah. Go home!**"

**Always have a treat waiting at home for him**, or at least give him one from your pocket when you arrive.

If, heaven forbid, your dog ever **DOES** get out, **prop open his "home" door so he can enter the house**. You don't want him to make his way home only to find his door closed and wander away again. Of course, if you have other pets, you'll need to confine them safely in other rooms of the house while the "home" door is open.

**WORD #39: "LIE DOWN!" (or "DOWN!")**



**"Down!" means your dog should lie down in a prone position.** It DOESN'T mean "Get off the bed or sofa." It DOESN'T mean "Stop jumping on people." **Use the word "Down!" only for that specific purpose -- to tell your dog to assume a lying down position.**

**Here are the most common ways  
to teach your dog to lie down:**

**Using hands only**

1. Put on his 4-foot leash. Get him sitting in Heel Position on your left side.
2. Crouch or kneel beside him. Tuck the leash under your knees so both your hands are free.
3. **Place your left hand, palm down, on top of his shoulders.** You can hook your fingers in his collar, if you like, for more control.
4. Place your right hand and wrist, **palm up**, against the **BACK of his front legs**, down around the level of his ankles.

5. Say, "**Down!**" Sweep your right hand and arm forward and slightly upward. This scoops his front legs forward and slightly upward **so his legs come to rest across your hand and wrist** -- maybe across your forearm, too, if he's a big dog!
  6. **At the same time**, push down on his shoulders with your left hand -- **and with both hands working together**, lower him into a lying down position. Say again, "**Down!**" as he goes down.
- 

## Using hands and leash

1. Put on his 2-foot leash. Get him sitting in Heel Position on your left side. You can either stand beside him, or kneel down.
2. **Place your left hand, palm down, on top of his shoulders.** Hook your fingers in his collar, if you like, for more control.
3. With your right hand, **grasp the leash VERY CLOSE to his collar** -- right at the snap, or just below the snap.
4. Say, "**Down!**" and push down on his shoulders at the same time as you **pull or tug the leash downward and slightly to the right.** Your dog should sink into a lying down position. Say again, "**Down!**" as he goes down.



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## Using foot and leash

I recommend this method ONLY for dogs who strenuously dislike and resist (or growl) when physically handled.

1. Put on his 4-foot leash. Get him sitting in Heel Position on your left side.
2. Hold the end of the leash in your right hand **so it forms a large U-shaped loop** between your hand and your dog's collar.
3. Say, **"Down!"** and step on the loop with your left foot **as you pull the leash upward with your right hand. You're using your foot as a sliding pulley.** As you pull the leash up on YOUR side of the pulley, your dog's head should be pulled smoothly down to the floor on HIS side of the pulley. Say again, **"Down!"** as he goes down.
4. **Now, this doesn't always happen smoothly!** Often a dog will struggle as his head is pulled toward the floor by "unseen forces." Just keep up the pressure calmly, and most dogs will eventually relax and lie down.

## 5. If you're having difficulty...

- Make sure **you're planting your foot properly**. Your foot pressure should be firm enough so the leash doesn't slip out, yet with enough "wiggle space" underneath the sole of your shoe so the leash can **slide** as you pull it upward. You may need to experiment with **different shoes** to find one that allows the leash to slide properly.
- Make sure **the loop is formed fairly close to your dog's collar**. If the loop is too far away, there will be a lot of leash to slide through the foot "pulley" and your dog will have more time to brace against it and struggle. Experiment with forming the loop at different places along the leash until you find the most effective "fulcrum point."

**NOW.** Once your dog is lying down, you're only halfway there. **Now you need to KEEP him lying down -- for 30 minutes!**

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Teach your dog to stay lying down for 30 minutes

### **Yes, 30 minutes!**

In most obedience classes, your dog learns to lie down and stay for three minutes while you stand at the end of the leash.

### **The problem is, in real life, this is useless!**

Say you have guests over. After your dog greets people, you want him to go lie down. But you don't want to have to stand at the end of

his leash and watch him, while everyone else is having a good time!  
And three minutes is **much too short** a time to be helpful.



No, what you want is a dog who will lie down and stay put in a corner of the room, **off leash**, while everyone else moves freely around the room. After awhile, you can allow him up to stretch, visit, go outside, etc. **A reasonable time for him to remain down is a half hour or so.**



**Actually, he will.** In fact, it's EASIER for him to stay lying down for 30 minutes than for 3 minutes. During a 3-minute down, he is waiting the whole time to get up. He watches you intently, shifts restlessly, tenses his muscles when you look in his direction. He is poised for the slightest sign that the three minutes are up.

Whereas, during a 30-minute down, most dogs relax and go to sleep!

## How to teach the 30-minute "Long Down"

1. After you place your dog down, hold him there for a few seconds with your hands, praising him softly. Then remove your hands slowly. He will probably leap right up.

**The instant he starts to get up -- don't wait until he's all the way up!** -- use your hands and/or the leash to place him back down.

If you had to use your foot on the leash to get your dog down, obviously you won't use your hands now. You'll have to keep using your foot each time he gets up.

2. **It's very important that you be quick here! Don't give your dog time to leap up and cavort around.** As soon as he BEGINS to rise, dart your hands in there and replace him in the down position -- or tug him back down with the leash -- or both.
3. **Persistence is the key.** The first time you try this exercise, your dog may get up **100** times. No problem. You will replace him **101** times.

This is an exercise of "**Who can outlast the other.**" If YOU don't give up, **your dog will eventually sigh and stay down** -- and you will have just taken a giant step forward in his eyes!

The stonecutter hammers at his rock a hundred times without so much as a crack showing. Yet at the hundred and first blow it splits in two, and it was not that blow that did it -- but all that had gone before. *Jacob Riis*



Oh, I'll believe it! There are MANY amusing antics your dog may pull during the Long Down.

### He might stare at you.

- It might be an **intent** stare as he tries to send you the telepathic message, "I want to get up RIGHT NOW."
- It might be an **eager-beaver** stare. "Is it time to get up now? Huh? Is it?"

- It might be a **hopeful** stare. "Wouldn't you rather play with me and cuddle me? Can I crawl into your lap?"



- It might be a **pitiful** stare. "This is awful. You're so mean to me. I feel miserable."
- Or he might flatten his ears and **refuse to look at you at all**, his grumpy body language clearly saying, "Fine. Have it your way. I'm never talking to you again."

### **Your response should be:**

Remember when we were practicing "STAY!" and "WAIT!" and I cautioned you **NOT to stare** at your dog? Many dogs interpret eye contact as an invitation to interact with you. Your dog, then, may try very, very hard **to make eye contact with you** during the Long Down, so he can assume his most charming or pathetic expression and persuade you to stop this foolish exercise and play with him instead.

**Ignore it.** If you like, put the TV on, or look at a magazine. Just make sure you're watching him out of the **corner** of your eye so he doesn't sneak away!

---

### **He might inch forward.**

"Just one inch. There, that didn't hurt anything, did it? After all, I'm still lying down. How about another inch? How about two inches... oh boy, I'm getting closer to your lap (or closer to the door)..."

**Your response should be:**

Don't allow the first inch. **Scoot him back to his original position.** With a small to medium-sized dog, you can often slide him back without even raising him from the down position.

**Be careful with your hands.** Don't stroke or pet your dog as you slide him. Because, believe it or not, some dogs will deliberately crawl around just so you'll put your hands on their body. **Be quick and businesslike** as you slide him back to his original position and immediately get your hands off him.

---

**He might s-t-r-e-t-c-h his front legs.**

"Oohh... big stretch... that felt good...let's try another stretch... let's crawl a little while we're at it... let's shake ourselves and stand up..."

**Your response should be:**

**Scoot him back to his original position.**



**He might "discover" imaginary fleas.**

"They're so itchy! I simply MUST sit up and scratch them!"

**Your response should be:**

**There are no fleas.** Place him back down without waiting for him to finish scratching. Otherwise, as soon as he's "done," he will stand up and stretch and amble off, hoping you've forgotten about this whole "Down" thing.

---

**He might nibble at the carpet, or on his leash.**

"I need SOMETHING to do. I'm so BORED!"

**Your response should be:**

**Tug or snap the leash.** Tell him, "**No. Stop that.**"

---

**He might whine or bark at you.**

"This is BORING! Do you know how BORING this is?"

**Your response should be:**

**Tug or snap the leash.** Tell him, "**No. Stop that.**"

---

**He might shift position by rolling from one hip to the other.**



**Your response should be:**

**Nothing.** Your dog doesn't have to be a statue. He just has to stay lying down in his original place.

---

**He might flop onto his side so that he's sprawled flat.**

**Your response should be:**

**Nothing.** This position is comfortable, especially if he wants to sleep. But watch out for the dog who tries to extend his flop into a "Roll Over" trick, which puts him well away from his original position.

**Roll over = Place back in original position!**

---

**Three reasons why the Long Down is one of the most valuable exercises you can teach your dog:**

1. **It's practical.** Everyone, at one point or another, needs their dog to lie down and stay there.
2. **It's calming.** Your dog learns to settle down, to relax, to be patient. These qualities are especially important to instill and nurture in energetic or excitable dogs.



3. **It's leadership.** Your dog learns that **sometimes he has to do something simply because you say so.** Yes, it's boring. He isn't being petted or cuddled or spoken to. He can't entertain himself by chewing on a toy. He just has to lie there quietly, or go to sleep -- **because YOU want him to.**

There is no better exercise than this one for establishing leadership with your dog!



When the half hour is up, call out in a cheerful voice, "**Okay, Jake!**" and encourage him to get up. I doubt it will take very much encouragement!

It is very important that **YOU** always be the one to release your dog from the Long Down. If anything interrupts you before the half hour is up (the phone or the doorbell), release your dog with **"Okay!"** -- **and get him up** BEFORE you walk away.

Otherwise he will almost certainly get up while you're busy elsewhere, and you won't be able to correct him from a distance. So think ahead and **release him first**. Don't ever let him think he can decide for himself when to get up.

**Practice the Long Down every day.** As your dog gets more reliable, you can progress to sitting in a chair and watching TV or reading a book. **Just keep one eye on him.** You don't want him walking around the room while you're engrossed in Chapter 6.



When you can depend on him to stay put while you're right beside him, begin standing up and **walking around the room**. Eventually you should be able to leave the room for **a minute or two** (you can caution him to **"Stay!"** if you like), and return to find him still down. **What a marvelous exercise in self-control!**

---



- Try the **foot and leash method** of teaching your dog to lie down, so you don't have to put your hands on him.
- Or adapt the exercise so **you're sitting on a chair.**

1. With your dog on leash, sit on the chair. Tuck most of the leash under your behind so you're sitting on it. Measure out **just enough leash** so your dog could lie down (if he wanted to) **right beside the chair.**



2. He doesn't HAVE to lie down, though. He is free to **sit or stand**, if he wants to. This isn't really a Long Down exercise, but it IS an exercise in **control and leadership.**

**Because you are going to LIMIT his actions.**

If he stands on his hind legs and puts his paws on you, SNAP the leash downward. If he barks at you or nudges at you, SNAP the leash sideways. If he chews on the leash, SNAP it out of his mouth. Add **"No"** or **"Stop that"** to each snap.

3. Since you are correcting him when he jumps, barks, nudges, paws, or chews, and since the very short leash doesn't allow him to go anywhere, **and since you will NOT pet him or talk to him or even LOOK at him** -- he will eventually decide to just stand or sit or lie down quietly. **Good! Round One goes to you!**
- 

### Why your dog is growling

Growling is usually a sign of disrespect. Your dog believes that he is higher in the pecking order than you are, and that you have no right to be making him do anything he doesn't want to do.



**This is an attitude problem, a relationship problem between you and your dog.** The problem may have been going on for some time now, or it may be rearing its ugly head for the first time **because the Long Down is all about leadership and who-is-in-charge-here.**

Dominant dogs instinctively recognize that if they give in on this exercise, they are allowing you to be the leader -- and some of them are not willing to do that.

---

### Five things you should do:

- **Neuter your dog.** Reproductive hormones make dominance problems worse. Neutering will lower your dog's hormonal levels **so he doesn't feel so compelled to be in charge.**

- **Confine your dog.** Any dog who is growling at family members should NOT be allowed freedom of the house. **Put him in his crate or pen** and only take him out when you're interacting with him and training him. We'll be talking more about crates and pens later in this eBook.
- **Leash your dog to your waist.** Whenever you're puttering around the house, take your dog out of his pen and attach his leash. Tie your end of the leash to your waist. **Now he must follow you around.** Both physically and psychologically, this helps establish **you as the leader** and **him as the follower.**
- **Practice obedience exercises.** For five minutes straight, several times a day, practice a quick succession of all the obedience exercises your dog has learned so far. "Heel." "Sit." "Stay." "Come." "Down." **Leader-Follower again.** YOU are giving commands. HE is following them.
- **Continue with the teaching program in this eBook.** Go back through everything you've read and spend extra time studying it. When your dog is disrespectful toward you, it usually means that you're responding to his actions in one or more ways that isn't quite right.

**Thus, to change your dog's attitude, some of the actions and behaviors that need to change are YOURS.**

---

## Also make sure you're doing these things:

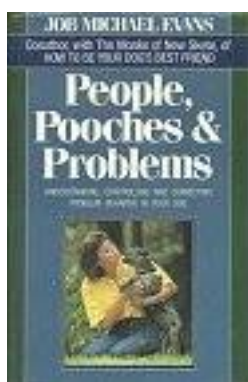
- Your **tone of voice** must be low and firm when giving commands and corrections.
- Your **facial expression** must be serious when giving commands and corrections.
- Your **body language** must be erect and confident when giving commands and corrections.
- Your **rules** must be consistent and enforced. If you tell your dog to do something, you must make him do it. If you tell him he can't do something, you must make him stop. EVERY TIME
- Your **vocabulary words** must be consistent. The same word or phrase for the same action or behavior.
- To get hold of your dog when he's done something wrong, you must **track him down** methodically. Never call him; never chase him.



- You must put a stop to **small demanding behaviors** such as barking back at you, nudging you, or pawing at you. If minor infractions are allowed to continue, your dog will NEVER respect you.

So continue teaching your dog the words in this eBook. The teaching process itself will make a difference in his attitude toward you. You'll learn about more actions you can take to improve his respect for you -- and you'll learn about more things you should STOP doing.

### Finally, I recommend this book:



In my 20+ years of training dogs and instructing obedience classes, I've never found a better book for dealing with behavior problems than [People, Pooches, and Problems.](#)

The author, Job Michael Evans, pulls no punches. He loves his dogs dearly... but he brooks no nonsense from them when they act up. This is exactly the relationship you want with your dog.

(Oh, I should mention that Job Michael Evans also has a great sense of humor and is fun to read!)

**If you're online right now,  
[click here](#) to order this book.**

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Signal your dog to lie down -- from across the room

Before we move on, **there is one more Down exercise to teach your dog.**



- It's impressive.
- It will wow your friends.
- It may save your dog's life.

**story** Suppose you're outside with your dog, and somehow he gets away from you at the worst possible time. Perhaps the leash breaks. He runs across the street. You call him. He turns to come back to you. But there is a car coming...

Sometimes **Come!"** isn't the best word to use to regain control of your dog. Sometimes you just want him to stop dead in his tracks and stay there.

## Those are the times for the Emergency Down.

You shout, **"Down!"** You raise your right arm high in the air, a signal clearly visible from afar. Your dog drops like a stone to the ground and stays there.

Now, is that impressive, or what? Do you see the value of such an absolute control word, **especially when it's the only word that might save your dog's life?**

## Step #1 in teaching the Emergency Down

1. With your 4-foot leash attached, stroll around the house or yard with your dog. When he has wandered to the end of the leash and his attention is on something else, stop walking. Say his name, "**Jake!**"
2. When he looks at you, **raise your right arm high in the air** -- make it a sharp, definitive gesture, all five fingers pointing firmly toward the sky.
3. **At the same time**, say, "**Down!**" and **take a large fast step** toward him. Grab his leash **just below the snap** and stop him in his tracks before he can take any steps toward you. The goal is to keep him as close to his original position as possible.

**WHY?** Remember the example where your dog was across the street and a car was coming? If you gave him the down signal and he walked several feet toward you **BEFORE** lying down, he might be under the wheels of the car! So you need to be picky when teaching this word -- **your dog must lie down as close to his original position as possible.**

4. **Tug the leash downward** to encourage him to lie down. If necessary, reach one hand over his head onto his shoulders to help push him down.

5. Once he is down, praise him softly, "**Good boy**" and caution him, "**Stay.**" Step back to the end of the leash and wait about 10 seconds.
6. Then return to him and release him: **Okay!**" Praise him lavishly and cavort around with him to let him know he has just accomplished a wonderful thing!
7. This can be a stressful exercise for a dog, so don't practice several Emergency Downs in a row. **One is enough.** Then play with your dog and don't try another one until later.

---

## Step #2 in teaching the Emergency Down

**Now.** It's all well and good to **place** your dog into the down position when he's first learning it, but at some point **you want him to start going down by himself.**

1. After a week of placing him down, raise your arm sharply in the down signal and tell him, "**Down!**"
2. If he doesn't lie down immediately, **use the leash to bounce him back to his original position** -- where he was standing when you gave him the command. In other words, if he ignored your "Down" and walked toward you, use the leash to swing him firmly back to where he was standing. **Then use the leash, just as firmly, to put him down.**

3. After a week or two of practicing in your home and yard, **try this exercise while you're out for a walk.**
- 

### **Step #3 in teaching the Emergency Down**

1. Put your dog on a Sit-Stay and go to the end of the leash. Raise your arm in the down signal and tell him, **"Down!"** **Wait one second for him to comply.**
2. If he lies down, remind him to stay and praise him. Wait 10 seconds, then return to his side as though completing a regular Sit-Stay exercise. Release him, and praise!
3. If he didn't go down, **take a large fast step** toward him. Grab his leash **just below the snap** and firmly tug him down. Step back to the end of the leash, wait 10 seconds, then return to his side and release him.
4. Play with your dog for a few minutes, then place him in another Sit-Stay. This time, **CALL HIM. "Jake, come!"**
5. Play with your dog for a few minutes, then place him once more in a Sit-Stay. This time, **return to his side** WITHOUT downing him or calling him.

**You're teaching your dog to pay close attention to your words.** By varying what you say and do, he will learn to LISTEN, rather than to anticipate.

**Also vary your time and distance.** Wait 30 seconds one time, 60 seconds the next time, 15 seconds the next time. Practice on the 4-foot leash, the 20-foot leash, and eventually off-leash.

---

## Step #4 in teaching the Emergency Down

### The final step!

1. Go outside in the yard and drop your end of the leash. Watch for a time when your dog is wandering around the yard, not looking at you. Call his name, "**Jake!**" When he turns to look at you, raise your right arm high in the air and call in a commanding voice, "**Down!**"
2. If he goes down, caution him, "**Stay!**" Walk toward him, repeating your caution to "**Stay!**" When you reach him, crouch down and pet him. Praise him softly. Make sure he stays down as you do so. Then release him with, "**Okay!**"
3. If he didn't go down when you told him to, walk calmly out to get him. Say nothing. Take hold of his collar and **lead him to the spot where he was originally standing** when you told him to lie down. Then use the leash to put him down there, and tell him, "**Stay!**"

4. Walk back to where **YOU were originally standing** when you told him to lie down. Wait 10 seconds, then return to him. Crouch down and pet him. Praise him softly. **Make sure he stays down.** Then release him with, "**Okay!**" and praise the heck out of him!
5. **Practice every day** until your dog is rock-solid. At some point you can replace the dragging leash with a shorter hand-hold, which will give you something to hang onto if you need to catch and correct him.

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## Teach your dog to walk away from temptation

### **WORD #40: "LEAVE IT!"**

When you go for a walk, does your dog scout along the ground for things to pick up and eat?

Sooner or later a dog who is in the habit of playing vacuum cleaner **will snatch up something dangerous.** Something sharp or toxic. He will come upon a piece of chocolate, which is poisonous to dogs. He will grab a mouthful of grass that has been sprayed with pesticides. He will swallow cigarette butts, or chewing gum, or aluminum foil, or broken glass that tastes of sweetened soda.



**Nip this bad habit in the bud with "Leave it!"**

When you take your dog for a walk, **make it a rule that he may not pick anything up**. Stay alert and watch what he sniffs at. If it's something he might pick up, say sharply, **"Leave it!"** and **snap the leash** to make him turn away from the temptation.

## STAGE SET-UPS

If your dog has a particular weakness for some tempting delicacy, such as crumpled aluminum foil, you can stage a "set-up." Crumple some foil and dab it with something tasty. Drop it on the sidewalk. **Practice walking your dog past it again and again** -- correcting him whenever he tries to nose or lick or pick up the object.

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**"Leave it!" is also a great word to use...**

- When your dog is sniffing another dog.



When your dog is pestering a cat or other small critter.

- When your dog is obsessed with sniffing at fire hydrants or telephone poles.
- When your dog is rooting around in the laundry basket.

You can probably come up with other situations where you'd like your dog to **immediately stop what he's doing and move on to something else.** That's the time for **"Leave it!"**

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Teach your dog to drop whatever is in his mouth

## **WORD #41: "DROP IT!"**

**"Leave it!"** will PREVENT your dog from picking up something, or sniffing something, or pestering something. In other words, if he is sniffing at a cigarette butt, **"Leave it!"** should bring him up short so he turns away and leaves it alone.

But what if he has ALREADY grabbed it and is munching on it? Then what do you do? Well, you can TRY **"Leave it!"** Some dogs may drop the taboo item. Other dogs need a more specific command.

Perhaps you're thinking, "I've taught my dog to **"Give!"** Yes, that does work for many items. But do you really want your dog to spit a cigarette butt (or a dead bug) into your hand?



When you simply want your dog to spit something out onto the ground, even when you're some distance away from him, the phrase you need is **"Drop it!"**



## Here's how to teach it:

1. Play with your dog so that he's romping around with a toy or stick or sock in his mouth.
2. Suddenly call out, "**Jake, drop it!**" Your tone of voice is important -- **you should sound firm and commanding, but NOT angry.**
3. If he actually drops the toy (often from sheer surprise), praise him! Quickly pick up the toy and toss it for him **so he can have it again.**

In real life, you will usually have him drop things he CAN'T have back. But when first teaching this word, he will be much more willing to go along with it **if he believes he will get the object back!**

4. If he didn't drop the toy, no problem. He hasn't yet learned this, after all. Walk toward him and take hold of his collar. Say again, "**Drop it!**" and **gently open his mouth** so the toy falls to the ground. Praise him, pick up the toy, **and toss it for him.**
5. Practice with a variety of items -- **most of which you should return to him.** Or have him drop the object and give him a treat in return. Soon he should be willing to drop whatever he has in his mouth, knowing you will probably give it back to him or substitute a tasty treat.

## Teach your dog when "Enough Is Enough"

### WORD #42: "ENOUGH!"

**example**

**"Jake, stop pestering me!"** Kathy was sitting on the sofa trying to read People Magazine. She had been petting Jake as she read, but after awhile she just wanted to read.

But Jake wouldn't quit. He kept shouldering himself between her knees and wedging his head into her lap, clearly saying, "Pet me! Pet me!" Kathy kept pushing him away, but he only wagged his tail and came charging right back.



**That's what often happens** if you pet your dog too much, if you hold your dog too much, if you sit on the couch absently stroking your dog while you're watching TV or reading a book.

**You're creating a dependency that is unhealthy.**



- Some dogs become **jealous** toward other people or other animals, because they don't like you giving your attention to anyone else.

- Some dogs get so accustomed to the fondling and cuddling that when you take your hand away or go out for the day, they become **angry and sulky**. They may act out their emotions by barking persistently, or by digging holes, or by having housebreaking "accidents," or by destroying something.
- Some dogs become **nervous and insecure**. They don't know how to face the world without your hand resting on their back. Such dependency, of course, is terrible for their mental and emotional health.



## There are two lessons to be learned here:

1. **Don't pet your dog too much.**
2. **YOU decide when to stop.**

---

### How to teach your dog a healthy independence

1. When you sit on the couch with your dog, pet him for no more than a minute or two. Then tell him, "**Good boy. That's enough.**" Take your hand away.
2. If he nudges for more, put him on the floor and tell him firmly, "**No. Enough!**" Say "**EEE-NUFF!**" with emphasis. Go on watching TV. It's up to him to find something else to do.
3. If he **STILL** persists in seeking attention, put him in his crate

for 15 minutes. **Don't speak to him as you do so.** Simply repeat, "**No. Enough!**" as you lead him to his crate, place him inside, and close the door.



Every dog occasionally solicits petting by climbing onto your lap or nudging your hand. **When it happens, say, once or twice a day, that's fine.** When it happens **more frequently**, your dog is being demanding and/or dependent.

## Take control of his soliciting behavior.

1. **Pull your hands back.** Put them behind your back if necessary. If you push your dog away, you're putting your hands on him -- which is exactly what he wants!
2. Tell your dog to "**Sit!**" When he does so, pet him for **10 seconds ONLY.** Thus, the petting becomes his reward for following YOUR command, rather than your following HIS command of "Nudge nudge nudge, I insist that you pet me right now."



3. After the 10 seconds of petting, tell him, "**Enough.**" If he tries to solicit more, repeat sharply, "**No! Enough!**" and put him in his crate for 15 minutes.

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Teach your dog to be quiet

**WORD #43: "SPEAK!"**

**WORD #44: "QUIET!"**

- Does your dog bark when someone comes to the door? Good. BUT... **does he keep right on barking** after you open the door?
- Do you find yourself trying to read your visitor's lips because you can't make out what he's saying over the racket your dog is making?
- Do you find yourself grabbing at your dog, trying to shush him, while also trying to pay attention to your visitor?



**This must be stopped.**

**If your dog keeps barking or growling even AFTER you've answered the door...**

- he is taking it upon himself to decide whether a visitor is a threat or not -- **when he should be leaving that decision up to the pack leader** -- **THAT'S YOU!**

- OR he is simply barking mindlessly and impulsively -- exercising no self-control whatsoever.

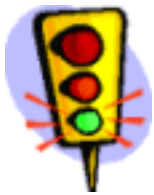
**This is not the kind of dog you want!** If your dog is a natural watchdog who sounds the alarm when he hears the doorbell or sees someone on the front porch, fine.

**But then he must turn the situation over to you.** If YOU decide the person is harmless, or even welcome, your dog must trust and accept your judgment -- with a closed mouth.

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**For him to do that,  
he needs an on-off switch.**


You will teach your dog **to bark on command** and **to STOP barking on command**. This allows him to use his voice sometimes, which IS natural and enjoyable for him to do.



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## Teach your dog to bark on command

1. Notice what makes your dog bark. The vacuum cleaner? The doorbell ringing? A jingling collar that suggests another dog passing by?

2. Have someone help you by turning on the vacuum or ringing the doorbell or jingling a collar. (If you can't get any assistance, you'll have to do it yourself.)
3. Encourage your dog to **"Speak! Speak!"** Add a **hand signal** by making a "talking mouth" with your right hand, i.e. snapping your fingers up and down so the four fingers close to touch the thumb, then open again, then close again, like a fast-talking mouth ("gab gab gab").
4. Sometimes barking yourself (**"Speak! Ruff! Ruff!"**) will motivate your dog to chime in. You might tie him to a post or have someone hold his leash while you stand just out of range with a tempting toy or treat and encourage him to **"Speak!"** Such playful teasing is okay, since you won't need to keep doing it once your dog learns the word. 
5. If your dog responds by barking, tell him, **"Good boy! Good speak!"** Clap your hands. Jump around. Keep him excited. Make "speaking on command" a really fun experience for him!



## Teach your dog to stop barking on command

1. Now, to get him to stop speaking, tell him, **"Enough. Quiet."** He is already familiar with the concept of "Enough" meaning "No more."

2. If he utters a single additional woof, tell him sharply -- **AND VERY LOUDLY -- "QUIET!"** Bellow, if you like. If this doesn't shock and silence him, try a squirt gun. Or attach a leash or hand-hold and snap it sideways, repeating, **"Enough. Quiet."**
- 

### Combine your on-off switch with Sit and Stay.

1. Make sure your dog has his leash or hand-hold on. Have a friend come to the door and knock or ring the bell.
2. Your dog will probably rush the door, barking. Go with him. Even though he is already barking, **TURN HIM ON** with **"Good boy! Speak!"**
3. Then **TURN HIM OFF. "Enough. Quiet."** Correct with the squirt gun or leash as many times as necessary. (Your friend outside will just have to be patient!)
4. When your dog is finally quiet, tell him, **"Sit."** When he is sitting, tell him, **"Stay."**
5. Open the door. You know how to correct continued barking, and you know how to correct breaking his Sit-Stay. You're all set!



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## Other forms of barking

- Does your dog bark at the neighbors when they're in their back yard?
- Does he bark at the neighbor's dog?
- Does he bark at passersby on the sidewalk?
- Does he bark when other neighborhood dogs bark?
- Does he bark at the garbage truck, the UPS truck, the Sears truck, or other vehicles that pull up near his house?



If he offers a few woofs when these events occur, fine.

**If he barks for more than 30 SECONDS,  
he's a nuisance.**

A well-behaved dog does not disturb the neighbors. They have a right to peace and quiet in their own home and yard. If my neighbor's dog barks at me when I'm standing or sitting or working in my own yard, or if he barks and barks at anything that catches his attention, I will call Animal Control with no hesitation whatsoever.

I repeat: Your neighbors have a right to peace and quiet in their own home and yard.

Owners of noisy dogs often try to defend their nuisance dog by protesting "He's a good watchdog!"

**He most certainly is NOT.** A dog who barks and barks is "The Boy Who Cried Wolf." No one even comes to their window to see what he's barking at any more.

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## Why is your dog barking?

- He may bark at passersby because he's trying to **chase them away** from his territory. And you know what? In your dog's eyes, it works! If people walk by, and he barks, and they **keep going**, your dog believes **HE has chased them away**. It never occurs to him that these people didn't WANT to come onto his property in the first place!
- He may bark for the opposite reason -- because he views passersby as **potential friends and playmates** who should be **encouraged to come closer** with enthusiastic barking.



He may bark because he's trying to **call you home**. Such dogs usually have an **unhealthy dependent relationship with you**. They think they can't get through the day without you, so they howl for you. Since you invariably DO come home at some point, your dog believes that his barking works. Each day, he repeats it until you finally "hear him" and come home.

- Some dogs try to **call you home** not because they "miss" you, but because **they're used to being the center of attention** and they're ANNOYED that you're not there to entertain them. These dogs are **demanding** that you come home, in the same

way they demand attention when you have guests over, or when you're talking on the phone, or when you try to hug your spouse.

- Some dogs bark because they're **bored** and need to **vent their energy**. They're not getting enough **physical and mental exercise** to tire them out.



- Some dogs bark because they're **lonely**. Most dogs are sociable creatures who need the companionship of other sociable creatures. **Very few dogs are truly happy staying home alone all day.**

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## How to stop indoor barking

**If your dog barks when you're home**, that's easy to correct.

**If the barking was warranted...**

i.e. someone was at the door, thank your dog for alerting you. Then tell him, "**Enough. Quiet.**"

**If the barking was unwarranted...**

i.e. he saw your neighbor through the window and barked, correct him the way you'd correct any other unacceptable behavior. Tell him, "**No! Stop that!**" and back it up with something physical. A squirt gun or spray bottle is often an excellent correction for barking.

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**If your dog barks when you're NOT home**, that's harder to correct!

- **Block his view of his "territory."** Pull shades or drapes, or put other barriers between your dog and the outside world. Or leave him in a room without a view -- or in an indoor pen. For short periods (up to four hours), you can leave him in a crate. (You'll be learning more about crates very soon!)



- **Muffle sounds.** Put on the TV, radio, or CD. Let him listen to something **peaceful and restful** -- classical music, environmental/nature sounds, or easy listening music.



Don't leave him with hard rock or rap music, or with sitcoms or talk shows. Loud argumentative voices are stressful to listen to.

- **Encourage independence.** Re-read [Word #42: "Enough!"](#) and make sure you aren't fostering an unhealthy dependent relationship with your dog. **He must learn to do things on his own**, without your always being there to pet him or talk to him.
- **Don't allow demanding behaviors.** Re-read [Another pitfall to watch out for](#), which discusses demanding behaviors. Make sure you're not allowing your dog to demand biscuits, or petting, or playtime. He must learn that **he cannot order you to do anything**, including coming home.



**Provide more exercise.** Re-read [How Much Exercise Your Dog Needs](#). MANY barking dogs are not getting enough BRISK exercise. Offer more walks, runs, hikes, swims, bike rides, ball-chasing, stick-fetching. Sign up for weekly obedience or agility classes, where your dog can exercise both his body AND his mind.

- **Take your dog more places.** Whenever possible, take your dog with you when you visit friends, or when you have to drive to the corner store for a gallon of milk. (Just don't leave him in the car alone for more than a few minutes -- and NEVER in hot weather!)



- **Get him a companion.** If your dog is left alone for more than four hours each day, unless he is truly aggressive toward other dogs, **he should have a companion.** Most dogs are sociable creatures who need to be with other sociable creatures.

**The second dog should be a calm, well-behaved adult who is a CONFIRMED non-barker.**

**If you work most of the day...**

**ABSOLUTELY DO NOT GET A PUPPY!**

**A puppy will follow the lead of the first dog and turn out just as barky. And puppies require far too much socialization and training to be left alone for more than four hours a day. Puppies belong only in homes where there is someone home most of the day.**

- **Do the same routine whenever you leave and return to the house.** This routine will relax your dog and make him less inclined to bark or to get into mischief while you're gone. **I'll discuss this routine further along in this eBook!**
- **Finally, stage "set-ups."** This means leaving the house, lurking close by until you hear your dog barking, then charging inside to correct him.

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## **How to stop outdoor barking**

As with indoor barking, **if your dog barks outdoors when you're at home**, that's easy to correct.

**If the barking was warranted...**

i.e. someone was at the gate, and your dog barked, thank him for alerting you. Then tell him, **"Enough. Quiet."**

## **If the barking was unwarranted...**

i.e. he saw your neighbor standing on her patio and barked, correct him the way you'd correct any other unacceptable behavior. Tell him, **"No! Stop that!"** and back it up with something physical. A squirt gun or spray bottle is often an excellent correction for barking.

**If your dog barks when you're NOT home**, that's a problem!

## **A big problem.**

If your dog is outside and barks when you're not home, **I believe it's completely unfair to your neighbors** to experiment with attempts to block his view, to increase his exercise, etc., in the hopes that the barking will stop. He will still be barking and disturbing the peace of other people, as you're pattering around with his environment to see what "might" work.

As for getting him a companion to keep him company, forget it. TWO outdoor dogs who are barking are clearly worse than one!

**If your dog barks when he is outdoors, he should be outdoors only under supervision. Bring him indoors whenever you leave the house.**



**Then I'm sorry to say  
that you and your dog  
won't get much out of this eBook.**

Now, if your dog is a **working** sled dog, or a **working** hunting dog, or a **working** farm dog, your primary reason for owning him is probably to have him work for you. These dogs may be content giving up family life **because they are allowed to regularly do the work they were genetically bred to do**. Because they are "hardwired" to work, they're happy with this life.



But if you want a dog as a family pet and companion, **only an indoor dog can fulfill this role**. Dogs are sociable creatures **who need to BE WITH their family** -- lounging in the same room, listening to conversations, waiting for you to come out of the bathroom, bringing toys to you, lying on the rug near the fire or television.



**Dogs who spend their days outdoors** are "outside" their pack, living on the edge of it, never really immersed in day-to-day family life. They will never develop their intelligence, their listening and thinking skills, and their reasoning abilities the way indoor dogs can.

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## Why is your dog outdoors?

**If he is outside because a family member is allergic to him...**

**He needs a different home, and you need a different breed.**

Consider the Poodle (all three sizes), Bichon Frise, Maltese, Yorkshire Terrier, and some wiry-coated terriers. These are the safest breeds for individuals who are allergic to dog fur, shed hair, or dander.



Unfortunately, if you're allergic to dog **saliva** -- which is more common than you might think -- you have a tougher road to hoe. Because even if a dog doesn't lick you directly, he will lick his own body and then lean against you or jump onto the sofa or bed, transferring saliva traces to you, or to the furniture.



Allergy sufferers are usually better off **choosing an adult dog** rather than a puppy.

With an adult, you can tell fairly quickly whether the dog is going to bother you or not. Whereas if you start with a puppy, his puppy coat might be okay, but when the adult coat comes in many months later, it may NOT be okay.

Then you've spent all that time getting attached to him, and he to you.

Sometimes a rescue organization will let you adopt one of their dogs on a trial basis so allergy compatibility can be checked out.

### **If he is outside because he's too energetic or rambunctious...**



you need to offer more exercise and work on all the training words in this eBook to calm him down.

If he requires more exercise than you can give, **he needs a different home and you need a different dog** who CAN be happy with the exercise you have to offer.

### **If your dog is outside because he isn't housebroken or because he's destructive in the house...**



you need to get a crate and start crate training and housebreaking. We'll be talking at length about crate training and housebreaking in just a moment.

And again, if you don't have the time to do this, or if your work schedule doesn't allow for it, then **your dog needs a different home and you need a different dog** who is already housebroken and well-behaved indoors.

## Teach your dog to stay quietly in a crate

I've already talked a little about crates. For example, I mentioned putting your dog in his crate as a "time-out" when he had been misbehaving.

**A crate is a plastic airline kennel or wire cage.** It should be just large enough that your dog can stand up, turn around, and lie down comfortably to sleep.

### **Every dog should have a crate.**

**A crate makes a perfect "den" -- a place of security for your dog.**

Just as children love to tuck themselves into clubhouses, dogs love to "hide" in small enclosed darkened areas -- under the table, behind the recliner, under the blankets on the bed. By giving your dog **a sanctuary all his own**, you help him feel safe and secure.

**A crate is perfect for housebreaking.**

Having a den appeals to your dog's natural instincts not to soil his sleeping quarters. In other words, **he doesn't want to go to the bathroom where he has to sleep!** The smaller the crate (so long as he still has room to stand up and turn around), the faster housebreaking will go. We'll talk more about Housebreaking in just a few minutes.

**A crate is perfect for preventing mischief when you're not able to supervise your dog.**

Virtually all puppies and teenage dogs **between two and eighteen months old** will get into mischief **if they are loose in the house** and you can't see them.

Dogs are driven by instinct and curiosity to "learn" about their surroundings. **Unfortunately, they "learn" with their mouths** -- picking up and chewing and swallowing everything that's not nailed down -- and some things that are!



It's natural, yes -- but if it occurs repeatedly, **it will become a bad habit** that will be difficult to break. Not to mention the damage done to your home and belongings, and the **danger** of your puppy getting into something that could poison or choke him.

Stop these habits from developing -- and protect your puppy's life -- by **crating him** whenever you leave the house or are otherwise unable to supervise him.

**A crate makes a perfect nighttime bed.**



When your dog is sleeping in his crate, you don't have to worry about what else he might be doing. Eventually you'll be able to leave the crate door open or remove it entirely. He will continue to go into his crate, on his own, for sleeping and quiet time.

## **A crate is perfect for safe car rides.**

We've already talked about car safety. Your dog should either be buckled into the back seat with a doggy harness, or **he should ride in a crate buckled into the back seat.**

## **A crate is perfect for staying in motels, or at the home of a friend.**

When you're in a strange place, your dog may not behave as he normally does. You don't want him having an accident or getting into mischief in someone else's home! **Having a crate for your dog when you're visiting shows courtesy and respect for your host.**



## **A crate is perfect for periods of short confinement when you don't want your dog out and about.**



For example, when you're waxing the floor. When you have guests over who are allergic to dogs. When you have to do something with one dog, and need the other one out of the way. When you find a strange cat on your porch and need to bring it into your house until you can find its owner. When your dog is ill and you need to restrict his movements.

The list of instances where you **suddenly need your dog safely confined** goes on and on.

**A crate is where your dog will have to stay when he goes to the vet's or the groomer's.**

A dog who is accustomed to a crate **will be much less stressed** when he has to stay temporarily in one elsewhere. As our dog's guardian, it's our responsibility **to prepare him for the real world** so he's not frightened when "new things happen."

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## The best kind of crate

### What I like about plastic crates

- Compared to wire crates, plastic crates create a more enclosed, **cozier** "den" atmosphere.
- Plastic crates **restrict his view** of his surroundings, making him more likely to just curl up and go to sleep.
- Plastic crates are **warmer** than wire crates. In cold climates, if you turn your heat down at night, your dog will be more snug in a plastic crate. This is especially appreciated by toy breeds and shorthaired breeds.
- Plastic crates usually have a handle on top and are **easier to carry** than wire crates -- at least, the small ones are!
- Plastic crates come in a variety of **colors** and look less "kennel-ish" than wire crates.



## What I don't like about plastic crates

- Compared to wire crates, plastic crates are **more difficult to clean**. There's no removable pan, so if your dog goes to the bathroom, you have to reach way in to clean it.
- In hot climates, if you don't have air conditioning, plastic crates are **stuffer** than wire crates. This can be uncomfortable for dogs with heavy coats. It can be downright dangerous for dogs with short faces.

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## Plastic crates -- the right size

**Buy a crate that will be large enough for your dog when he is an adult. That means:**

- tall enough for him to stand up in
- wide enough for him to lie flat on his side
- deep enough so he doesn't **NEED** to curl up to sleep.

**Use this chart as a guide:**

Crate Size	Adult Weight	Typical Breeds
Small	5-20 lbs	Toys
Medium	20-30 lbs	Beagles, Cockers
Intermediate	30-50 lbs	Bulldogs, Keeshonds
Large	50-70 lbs	Airedales, Boxers
X-Large	70-85 lbs	Retrievers, Dobermans

Now, for housebreaking purposes, **you need to make the crate smaller** by "walling" off the back area with some type of divider. Otherwise, your puppy will go to the bathroom in one half of his crate, and sleep in the other half -- and housebreaking will take much longer, if it ever gets accomplished at all!

I've used many plastic crates over the years and I prefer the **Pet Porter** or **Vari-Kennel**, both made by Duskocil. Compared to other brands, I find them more durable, easier to open, and more secure when closed. [PETsMART Online](#) has Duskocil crates.

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### What I like about wire crates

- Wire crates come in collapsible models that can be **folded** and stashed easily in the closet or in the trunk of your car.
- Wire crates have **removable pans** that slide out for **quick and easy cleaning**.
- Wire crates allow **more air circulation** in hot, stuffy weather, a boon if you don't have air conditioning. This is especially important for dogs with heavy coats or short faces.





## What I don't like about wire crates

- Their **openness** doesn't create that secure den atmosphere that most dogs prefer. However, you could drape a towel or sheet over the top, back, and sides. Tuck the ends of the towel under the crate so your dog can't pull it inside to chew on it.
- Wire crates are not very elegant-looking. They look like kennels. And they tend to **clink and rattle** when your dog moves around in them.

---

## Wire crates -- the right size

Use this chart as a guide:

Crate Size	Adult Weight	Typical Breeds
22" deep	5-10 lbs	Small Toys
24" deep	10-25 lbs	Larger Toys, Terriers
30" deep	25-40 lbs	Beagles, Cockers
36" deep	40-70 lbs	Airedales, Boxers
42" deep	70-90 lbs	Retrievers, Dobermans
48" deep	90-110 lbs	Akitas, Malamutes

I've used several wire crates over the years and I prefer the **Midwest** brand. It's sturdy and reasonably priced. [PETsMART Online](#) has **Midwest crates**



As with plastic crates, you'll need to make the wire crate smaller for housebreaking. PetsMart sells a **wire divider** for this purpose, so you don't have to make your own.

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### A more elegant crate



Finally, if you'd like something a little more handsome, a little more unusual than your typical crate, [PETsMART](#) offers the **PetZazz Enduro**. Its corners are rounded, which makes it look more sophisticated and also helps prevent the crate from damaging floors and walls. The plastic base won't snag carpeting and snaps off for cleaning.

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## Where to put the crate

**Where there's family activity going on.**

- Kitchen
- Dining room
- Living room
- Family room



Definitely DON'T put the crate in an **isolated area** such as the basement or garage or utility room.

**If your dog isn't housebroken**, try to put the crate **near the door that leads to the back yard**. This helps prevent accidents as your

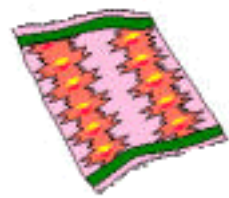
dog leaves the crate and heads toward the door.

Don't place the crate where the sun might shine directly on it, or where a heating/cooling register or fan or air conditioner might blow on it. **Drafts are very bad for dogs.**

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## What to put inside the crate

- **If your dog is housebroken,** put a **thick towel or blanket** in the crate. Remove any labels and fringes so your dog can't chew on them.



You can buy a crate pad made of foam and covered with a slick washable cover. However, I find these covers very difficult to take off and put back on. And if your dog has any accidents in his crate, including vomiting, the cover can become stained and smelly. If anything gets through to the foam pad, it can really stink.



**If your dog is not housebroken,** put **newspapers** in the crate. You can add an old towel on TOP of the newspaper, but it **shouldn't** be thick and absorbent. If your dog urinates in his crate, **you WANT him to be uncomfortable on wet bedding!**

- **Don't use commercial "housebreaking pads" in the crate.** Don't use them anywhere else in your house, either. **They encourage your dog to go to the bathroom inside your house** which is a tough habit to break later on.

- **Don't put a water bowl in the crate.** It will spill, or he will splash in it and make a mess. And during housebreaking, too much water just makes your dog need to go out more.
  - **Put a chew toy in the crate** so he has something constructive to do. I recommend a Nylabone, Gumabone, or Kong toy. **Don't give him rawhide, pig's ears, or cow hooves.** We've already gone over the dangers of these.
- 

## Teaching your dog to use his crate

Once you have your crate and have found a good place to put it, it's time to teach your dog to go inside it and relax.

### **WORD #45: "GO CRATE!"**

Some books recommend that you wait for your dog to go into the crate on his own. They advise you to **encourage** him to go in by putting his food dish inside, or by tossing a toy or treat inside, but that you should not force him to go in.



Now, if you have an adult Great Dane or Rottweiler, I agree! **But if you have a puppy of any breed, or a small- to medium-sized adult, I prefer the direct approach.**

---

## Getting your dog used to his crate

1. Take your dog outside for **brisk play and exercise** before his first crating experience. If he's tired, **he's more likely to nap** when he goes into the crate.
2. **Lead your dog** (or carry him, if he's very small) to the crate. NEVER call him with a Come command. Remember when we talked about the Come command, I cautioned you not to use it if you were going to follow it up with something your dog won't like.

Now, your dog **WILL come to enjoy** the security of his crate -- when HE goes in on his own. But at the beginning, when it's YOUR idea that he should go in the crate -- **and then you close the door** -- he may consider the whole experience a bummer. **So don't call him.**

3. At the crate door, say in a happy voice, **"Go crate!"** Place him inside, praise him cheerfully, and **give him a treat**. Close the door and leave the room.
4. **Expect protesting**. Unless you live in an apartment with close neighbors, **ignore it**. It should subside when your dog realizes that you're not coming back and that he might as well chew on his bone or drift off to sleep.
5. As soon as your dog becomes quiet, **wait five minutes**. In other words, **he must go 5 minutes straight without barking or whining** before you let him out.

---

## Letting your dog out of his crate

**The WAY you let him out is very important!** If you rush to the crate, fling open the door, and welcome him out like a released prisoner, he won't relax the next time he's in the crate. He will be anxious the whole time, just itching to be released "from exile" and welcomed like a long-lost cousin.

**Instead, be low-key and matter-of-fact.**

1. Walk casually toward the crate.
2. Say quietly, "**Hello, Jake. Good boy.**"
3. Open the crate door and say quietly, "**Okay!**"
4. **DON'T TOUCH HIM.** Even if he comes bursting out of the crate, don't pet or play with him.
5. Instead, say, "**Do you need to go OUT?**" (We'll be learning this phrase very soon!)
6. Head straight for the door to the backyard. Either let him outside, or take him outside, to his potty area.



Yes, even if he has only been confined for five minutes. You want to establish the habit that after being in the crate, he will ALWAYS be able to go outside. This understanding will help him to "hold it" while he's in the crate.

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## How to handle barking or whining



If a full hour goes by (less if you have close neighbors), and your dog still hasn't settled for five minutes straight, **a correction is in order**.

First, try correcting from a distance. Stick your arm around the corner and fire a well-aimed **spray of water** from a strong squirt gun.

Other options include shaking a metal can full of coins, and using the remote control for your stereo or TV to suddenly blast the sound on and off.

Whichever correction you choose, stop it the instant your dog stops barking or whining. The lesson should be that **his own barking causes a spray of water or a loud startling sound** -- and that his silence **STOPS** them.

If corrections from a distance fail, and your dog continues to bark or whine, storm into the room and give the crate a good hard shake, along with a firm **"No! Stop that!"**

Under no circumstances -- unless your house is on fire! -- should you remove your dog from his crate when he is barking. Don't even remove him to CORRECT him. Many dogs are perfectly willing to take your correction if it includes getting out of the crate.

**Make sure every family member understands that your dog **must never be let out of the crate during or immediately after barking**. If you let him out, you are TRAINING him to bark when he wants out!**

---

## Teaching your dog to go into his crate

After you've lead (or carried) your dog to his crate and put him inside a number of times, he should fully understand the phrase "**Go crate!**"

**The next step is to get him to go into his crate on command.**

1. Wait for a time when he is in the same room as the crate. Call his name, "**Jake!**" He should look at you. Gesture toward the crate and say cheerfully, "**Go crate!**" Your voice should be happy and excited.
2. This is the first time you've tried this, so he will look quizzically at you. **Walk toward the crate**, patting your hands together to encourage him to follow you. If necessary, take his collar and lead him toward the crate, repeating cheerfully, "**Go crate! Good boy!**"



3. At the door to the crate, take your hand off his collar and **encourage him to go in himself**. A strategic **nudge** or motivating him with a **treat** may be necessary!
4. As soon as he's inside, praise him! **"Yay! Good crate!"** Give him the treat. Close the door. If he is quiet in there for a minute, open the door and calmly release him.

Remember to be very casual about the release. You want him to be excited about going INTO the crate -- not hyped about coming out!

5. Once he has come out, let him wander around for a minute, then **send him back inside the crate** Practice this routine **three times** then take him outside for his potty break.
6. Now it's simply a matter of persistence and repetition. Soon you should be able to **send him to his crate from a different room**. **Follow behind him to MAKE SURE he ends up in his crate**. As with all vocabulary words, never tell him to **"Go crate!"** without making absolutely sure he does so.

Dogs love patterns. If you always send your dog to his crate immediately before or after a certain event, such as bedtime or dinnertime or when you pick up your car keys, he may head for his crate as soon as he observes the "trigger" event.

My dog Buffy is really good at patterns. When I was teaching her to go into her crate, I would say, in a cheerful voice, "**Guess where YOU have to go?**" just before I said, "**Go crate!**" NOW all I have to say is, "**Guess where YOU have to go?**" and she makes a beeline for her crate. Guests love it!

### If your dog is large and **REALLY** reluctant...

What if your dog really IS an adult Great Dane or Rottweiler? Or what if he's a smaller dog who resists so forcefully that it's just too difficult for you to physically put him in his crate?



### **Then we'll move more slowly!**

1. Place the crate near your dog's **favorite sleeping area**. Inside the crate, put a thick blanket **with his scent** (or your scent) on it. In other words, not a freshly-washed blanket with no scent. You want the crate to smell homey and familiar.



2. At mealtime, **put his food bowl inside the crate**. Place it **just inside the door** where he can see it. Make sure the door is **propped open** so it can't accidentally close on him.

He'll soon realize that he has to stick his head in to eat. Over a period of days or weeks, depending on his degree of reluctance, **slide the bowl further back** in the crate until finally he must enter the crate to eat.

3. At some point when he is doing well, **close the door**. If he accepts this calmly, let him stay in the crate for only **a minute or two** before you open the door and let him out.

However, if he protests, you'll have to leave the room and **wait until he stops barking or whining** before you return to let him out.

By the way, whenever your dog is NOT in his crate, **leave the crate door open** so he CAN go in if he wants. **Praise him** whenever he does go in of his own accord. Occasionally give a treat.



**Absolutely not.** I won't leave a dog in a crate for more than 4 hours during the day.

Nighttime is different. Your dog settles down to sleep and his metabolism, including his digestive system, slows WAY down. So spending 8 hours in his crate at night is fine.

**But AFTER he has slept all night, he needs activity during the day.** You can't head off to work for 6 or 8 hours each day and leave your dog in a crate. **In my opinion, it would be absolutely cruel.**



**No, that's not enough.**

- A crate is just too small for your dog to be stuck in for more than 4 hours

**AND**

- **He would be terribly lonely.** Dogs are social creatures -- they must not be isolated in a small space for hours on end, with only a brief visit or two during the day. **Companion dogs require much more space, and more companionship, than that.**



- **Get an adult dog who is already housebroken and well-behaved,** who doesn't need to be crated during the day. Animal shelters and rescue organizations usually have many to choose from.

- **Even better than one adult dog -- get two.** They will keep each other company during the long hours without you. Sometimes rescue organizations have two adults who have lived together and come in together, who get along famously, and who will be trustworthy in the house while you're gone.



- **Absolutely do not get a puppy.** Puppies require FAR too much attention to be left alone all day. To thrive and grow to their potential, they require mini-interactions and brief learning experiences sprinkled **throughout the day.**

Don't be tempted to get **TWO puppies**, hoping they'll be less lonely.

- Puppies need ongoing socialization and training that only YOU can provide. TWO puppies left alone all day just means TWO of them are not getting what they need.
- Housebreaking two puppies can be a nightmare when you're not sure which one is having the accidents.
- Two puppies are very likely to bond to each other, rather than to you. That seldom happens with two adult dogs.

## If you already **HAVE** a puppy...

If you already have a puppy, or if you have an older dog who is **chewing up your house** or **having accidents** when you're gone -- and you work all day -- **you're faced with a very difficult situation.**

Puppies and destructive dogs must be confined when you're gone. For their own safety and to keep your house intact. **Yet you must NOT crate them for more than four hours.**



The solution -- which is NOT ideal, but may be all that's possible under the circumstances -- **is exercise PEN**. An ex-pen keeps your puppy or dog confined so he cannot get into trouble, yet provides more room to stretch and to move around than a crate does.



In lieu of an ex-pen, you can use a **gate** to block off a bathroom or small laundry room.

[PETsMART Online](#)

has exercise pens and gates.

**(Note that some dogs will jump or climb out of an ex-pen or over a gate!)**

**DON'T PUT YOUR DOG IN A SMALL ROOM AND CLOSE THE DOOR!**

**Many dogs become frantic behind a closed solid door and will bark and scratch vigorously to escape.**

An exercise pen or small gated-off room works well to confine a puppy (or an adult dog who is getting into trouble) when you're gone for more than four hours a day.

**But it doesn't address the loneliness issue. Your puppy SHOULD be running around and playing during his formative months. He SHOULD be interacting with people all throughout the day. A puppy left all alone most of the day is LONELY and unhappy. He will never become the dog he could have been.**

**In my opinion, people who work all day should only keep a pair of small, well-behaved adult dogs who will keep each other company and who can get most of their exercise indoors.**

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How to housebreak your dog

If owners could choose only one skill they wanted their dog to have, **HOUSEBROKEN** would be **VERY HIGH** on the list!



# The two keys to housebreaking

## Confinement -- so your dog can't "go" in the **WRONG** place.

Confinement means that until your dog is housebroken, **he is never allowed to walk freely around the house.**

Confinement means **every minute of every hour of every day** -- unless you are sitting with your dog, playing with him, walking him, feeding him, grooming him, teaching him something, or otherwise interacting with him.

Because if he is loose and you take your eyes off him for just a few moments, **he can go to the bathroom on your floor -- and the bad habit is begun.**

## Regular (or constant) access to the **RIGHT** place to "go."



This means you **LET** him outside, you **TAKE** him outside, or he lets **HIMSELF** outside through a doggy door. Or it can mean you provide him with newspapers or a litter box.

**He must have SOMEWHERE to "go"** -- on a regular, reliable basis.

If the only place your dog has a chance to "go" is outside on a regular schedule, or on newspapers or in a litter box, that's the habit he will develop. **If you let him loose in the house, then he can GO in the house** and THAT'S the habit he will develop. **It's up to you!**

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## Three ways to provide confinement and bathroom access



### **METHOD #1:**

**Confinement in a crate.**  
**Take outside to bathroom.**

**This is the most common and most effective method of housebreaking.** Whenever you're not interacting directly with your dog, he is safe in his crate.

You can also **tie his leash to your belt** so he accompanies you around the house. But keep your **EYE** on him, so he doesn't pee on the floor right at your feet!

**On a regular basis throughout the day, you take him outside to a specific potty area to go to the bathroom.**

**WORD #46: "DO YOU NEED TO GO OUT?"**

**WORD #47: "GO OUTSIDE!"**

**WORD #48: "HURRY UP!" or "BE QUICK!"**

1. Establish a **regular feeding schedule** so your dog's digestive cycle is predictable. Every dog is different in how quickly he digests food and therefore how soon he needs to "go" after a meal.



For example, feed him first thing in the morning, then note when he needs to have a bowel movement. Feed again around 5 p.m. and see if that gives him enough time to digest his food so that he has to "go" again during his last bathroom stop before bedtime. **Adjust his dinner time** until his natural need to "go" matches your bedtime schedule.

2. Make sure there is **no water bowl** in his crate, especially at night. Of course, you also have to make sure you provide him with **SOME** chances to drink during the day!
3. Establish a **regular in-and-out schedule**. In the beginning, try to take him out about **every two hours**.



Start with first thing in the morning. Then whenever he wakes from a nap. Immediately after he eats or drinks copiously. Immediately after play periods. Whenever he suddenly sniffs the floor or begins walking in circles. And finally, last thing at night.

4. Ask him, "**Do you need to go out?**" Your questioning tone suggests that something interesting is about to happen.
  
5. **Put his leash on.** Tell him, "**Go outside!**" and head briskly for the door. **Use the same door** every time.
  
6. **Choose a potty area.** It should be **the same spot** every time, though you may have to **experiment** to find out where your dog "goes" best.
  - Some dogs prefer grass.
  - Some dogs hate grass, especially in wet weather, or when the grass is too deep, or when it's too short and prickly.
  - Some dogs get so occupied with sniffing all the scents on grass that they can't focus on their "business."
  - Some dogs prefer dirt or gravel.
  - Some dogs need privacy -- they want to "go" behind a bush.
  - Some dogs need no distractions -- they can't concentrate if there is any activity nearby.
  - Some dogs are too intimidated to "go" if they see another dog or hear another dog barking.
  - Male dogs who lift their leg need a vertical object to pee against.
  - and so on!

7. Take your dog directly to his potty area, **on leash**. In a cheerful voice, tell him, "**Hurry up!**" or "**Be quick!**" or even "**Go potty.**" **Speak pleasantly** -- don't be stern or commanding. You want your dog relaxed!
  
8. **Now stand still. IGNORE YOUR DOG ENTIRELY** -- except to watch him out of the corner of your eye. If you look directly at him, he will pay attention to you instead of concentrating on doing his business. Similarly, **don't say anything**, other than to occasionally remind him, in a calm voice, to "**Hurry up!**" Talking will only distract him.
  
9. If he just stands there or sits or lies down, **take a few steps** in one direction or another. **This will get him moving again**. But for the most part, you want to **stand still**. Your dog can circle around you, so there are plenty of spots he can "go" within the length of the leash. If you walk around, he will come to look at these outings as "walks" rather than as dedicated bathroom breaks.
  
10. Keep an eye on your watch. **Allow your dog about 5 minutes**. If he hasn't gone by then, **bring him back inside** and put him in his crate without a word. Go about your business elsewhere in the house. In ten or fifteen minutes, **take him back outside**. From your persistence he will learn that he must go to the bathroom -- even a token drop or two -- before he is allowed to run and play.





**Romp and play with him** for awhile before you bring him back in. Or, if the weather is bad and he's anxious to get back inside, bring him inside and play with him indoors.

12. Then, unless you're going to groom him, or sit with him on the couch, or teach him a new word, or take him for a walk, **he goes back in his crate.**



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### **METHOD #2:**

**Confinement in an exercise pen.**  
**Constant access to newspapers or a litterbox.**

If you're gone more than four hours a day, try this method of housebreaking.

From the perspective of cleanliness, it's really only practical for small dogs, **but if you're gone more than four hours a day, you should only be keeping a small dog (or two small dogs) anyway.**

A **litterbox** appeals to many people because it looks tidier than newspapers and is easier to clean.

However, many dogs don't like to limit their elimination to such a small area. If you've ever watched a dog looking for "just the right bathroom spot," you know how they like to wander around in circles!





Litterboxes work best for **really tiny dogs** such as Chihuahuas, Maltese, and Yorkshire Terriers. And even then, the bigger the box, the better.

**A regular cat box is too shallow for a dog.** They tend to back up to the edge and leave their deposits on or over the side! Try a **clear plastic storage bin** from someplace like Wal-Mart. Cut a **squared-off U-shape** in one side to make a step-over entrance, leaving enough of the box below the entrance to still hold the litter in the box.

### **DON'T USE REGULAR CAT LITTER!**

Regular cat litter should not be used for dogs -- **OR FOR CATS!**

The new modern "clumping cat litter" **also clumps in your pet's stomach.** It gets into his stomach when it sticks to his feet or coat and he licks himself. It also includes chemicals, fragrances, and antibacterial agents -- **none of which are good for your pet.**

Instead, use a natural litter such as "CareFresh" or "Yesterday's News." These litters are made of recycled newspaper. **They're safe, non-toxic, dust-free, and environmentally friendly.** Find them at pet supply stores such as PetsMart, and at health food stores that carry pet products.

If you're online, you can read more information about cat litter safety at

<http://www.sonic.net/marina/articles/altern8.html>

**A litterbox is more natural for a female than for a male.** The reason is obvious -- males who lift their leg can spray urine everywhere! With a male, it's especially important that your litter box have three high sides, and that your dog be a small one. Some people put a vertical pole covered with plastic into the litterbox or elsewhere in the pen.

## How to teach your small dog to use a litterbox:

### WORD #49: "GO BOX!"

1. **Shape your exercise pen tightly around the litterbox** so the box fills ALL of the pen except for a small blanket or bed, food and water bowls, and a toy. **Leave no open space.**

Few dogs want to soil their bed, so they will almost always go in the box **if you give them no other choice.** This builds the correct habit from day one.

2. **Place your dog on his blanket in the pen.** As you did when crate-training, you should expect some initial noisemaking. **If the barking or whining doesn't subside within a short time, correct it.**
3. Once your dog is quiet in his pen, occasionally **encourage him to step into the litterbox** by holding a treat in front of his nose and leading him in. Tell him, **"Go box!"** as you do so. Give him the treat once he's inside.





4. **Whenever you see him step into the box on his own**, even to play, praise him. **If you actually see him go to the bathroom in there**, praise him lavishly and give him a treat!
5. After he has been using the litterbox reliably for a few days, **slowly expand the size of the pen** so he has some room to play.

However, if he makes a mistake by "going" on the new open floor inside the pen, rather than in his box, reduce the pen again **so he MUST go in the right place**. Give him another few days in the small pen before you try expanding it again.

6. Remember, he should only be **OUTSIDE** the pen when you're interacting with him or when his leash is tied to your belt so that he must follow you around.

When he IS outside the pen, **occasionally use a treat to lead him back into the pen and box**. Give him the treat once he is actually in the box. This helps him remember where his bathroom is and gives him pleasant associations with going to it.

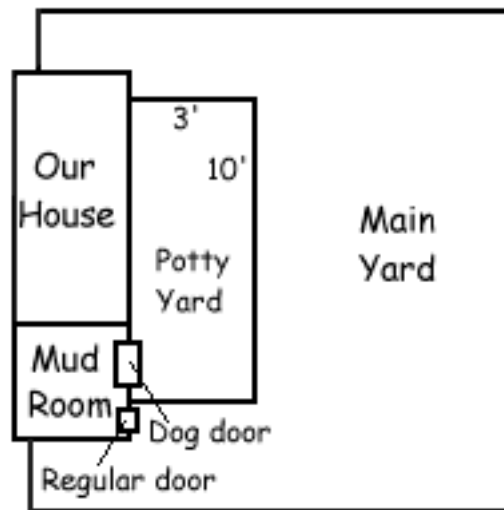


### **METHOD #3:**

**Confinement in a small room.**  
**Constant access to an outside yard via a doggy door.**

**Classic Pet Door** available from [PetsMart Online](https://www.petsmart.com)

We have a small mud room off our kitchen. In the mud room is a **Classic Pet Door** leading outside to a small fenced "potty" yard.



When we have to leave the house **for more than four hours**, we put our dog Buffy in the mud room. We put a gate between the mud room and the kitchen, so she is confined to the mud room, **with access to the potty yard via the doggy door.**

This method of confinement and bathroom access should only be considered **IF YOUR DOG DOESN'T BARK WHEN HE GOES OUTSIDE.**

1. As with the other methods of housebreaking, when you're first teaching him how to use the doggy door, **your dog must be confined in his small gated room whenever you're not interacting with him.**
2. For the first few days, **remove the heavy flap** on the doggy

door, or tie it up so your dog has free access through the hole into his potty yard.

If he is reluctant to go through the hole, have someone stand **INSIDE** the room with him while you go **OUTSIDE** in the potty yard and crouch down before the open hole. **Now you and your assistant should take turns waving treats through the hole and calling him.** You should soon have him running in and out through the open door!

If he is an especially small or sensitive dog, you may want to hang a **light towel or cotton cloth** over the opening for a few more days, as a gradual transition toward the heavier vinyl flap. Use the treats to teach him that the cloth is indeed "push-able" and that he only has to poke his nose through it or under it in order to scramble through.

**Eventually you'll move on to the heavier flap.** Though it looks daunting at first, rest assured that even toy dogs **CAN** move it.

3. Periodically throughout the day, go into the little room and ask your dog, **"Do you need to go out? Go outside!"** Use **hand motions** to encourage him to do so. **If necessary, lead him to and through the door by the collar.**
4. **You go outside, too.** Block the door on the outside, just temporarily, so he can't come right back in.

**Don't block the door on the INSIDE!**

He won't be able to see the solid barrier through the flap, so he might rush through the flap and ram his head into the barrier.

5. Pick a spot to stand where you can observe your dog, but **DON'T INTERACT WITH HIM**. Let him go about his business, which hopefully will include going to the bathroom!

Do you see the advantage of **separating** the potty yard from the main yard -- and making it **SMALL**? If your dog can run around a big yard, he will want to play and explore rather than focus on doing his business.

6. **After 5 minutes**, if he hasn't gone to the bathroom, remove the barrier so he can come back inside if he wants to. Go back in the house and go about your own business for ten or fifteen minutes, **then try again**.
7. When he finally does go, make a big deal out of it! **"Yay! Good boy!"** Give him a treat. Then **romp and play** with him for awhile, either outdoors in the big yard, or indoors in the house, before returning him to his gated room.

In this way, he learns that he must go to the bathroom -- **even a token drop or two** -- before he is allowed to run and play with you in the main yard or in the house.

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## Dealing with accidents

### 1. Correct your dog.

- Get hold of his collar.
- Take him to the evidence.
- Pull his head down NEAR the evidence -- but NOT touching it.
- Tell him, "**No! No! No!**"
- Give his collar a firm shake.

### 2. Take him to the correct bathroom spot.

- If his bathroom spot outside and you usually **take** him there, that's what you should do. Tell him, "**Go outside!**" and take him out, stopping only long enough to snap on his leash.
- If his bathroom spot is outside and he usually uses the **doggy door** to get there, tell him, "**Go outside!**" and escort him -- **firmly!** -- to the doggy door. Make sure he goes out. Give him a good push!
- If his bathroom spot is a litterbox, tell him, "**Go box!**" and **take** him there.

### 3. Crate him.

Immediately after having an accident, most dogs will NOT go again right away. (Big surprise.) So your trip to the correct bathroom spot will likely be unproductive. It doesn't matter. **The point is to remind him where you want him to go.** When you return to the house, **put your dog in his crate for a 15-minute time-out.** Don't speak to him as you do so.

### 4. Clean up the mess.

Soap and water is not enough. Detergents will clean the stain, but they don't get rid of the microscopic odor particles, which will attract your dog back to the soiled area.

**Ammonia-based cleaners are the worst of all**, because your dog's urine contains ammonia. So he is ATTRACTED to ammonia products. That's not what you want!

White vinegar mixed with water does a good job, but the best type of cleaner is an **enzymatic cleaner**.



An enzymatic cleaner actually breaks down (i.e. eats!) the microscopic odor particles.

My favorite enzymatic cleaner is **Nature's Miracle**. It is completely non-toxic and removes odors and stains with no "cover-up" perfume smell.



Some dogs may "catch on" to the concept in a week. Some take several weeks. Some don't "get it" for many months.

We're talking about **mental learning** here -- how long it takes for a dog to UNDERSTAND what housebreaking means.

## A better question might be:

**"How long does it take before a dog can PHYSICALLY go many hours without eliminating?"**



This may dismay you, but **up until about six months old, most puppies can't last longer than 2 to 4 hours** -- even if they UNDERSTAND the concept of housebreaking. Their bowels and bladder are just not physically developed enough to hold it longer than that.

People who buy 7 week old puppies need to be patient for MONTHS while their infant's internal organs develop.

Adult dogs over a year old may be able to go 8 or 9 hours. However, some perfectly normal adults can only go about 6 hours. You have to learn and accept the limitations of your own individual dog.

**But let me ask you this:**

How long are **YOU** comfortable "holding it"? Don't you usually make at **LEAST** one "pit stop" during the day?

Your dog should be granted the same courtesy. Even if he can physically hold it for 8 hours during the day, **he shouldn't have to -- day after day.**

**Night time is different.** At night your dog's metabolism, including his digestive functions, slows down. **Most dogs, including puppies, can sleep 8-10 hours through the night, without needing to go.**

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## **Some breeds are harder to housebreak**

As an obedience instructor and behavioral consultant for over 25 years, I consistently receive more housebreaking calls about certain breeds than others.

### **Problematic breeds include, in no particular order:**

- Maltese
- Yorkshire Terrier
- Bichon Frise
- Chihuahua
- Beagle
- Basset Hound



- Cocker Spaniel
- Chinese Crested
- Dachshund
- Italian Greyhound
- Lhasa Apso
- Min Pin
- Pug
- Shih Tzu
- Silky Terrier
- terriers in general

You'll notice a preponderance of smaller dogs on the list. Generally, **toy breeds and terriers are the most difficult to housebreak. Hound breeds** are often problematic, as well.

Toy dogs are especially dominant on the list because owners often buy them "to spoil rotten" and so they are reluctant to crate them. ("The little darling would be so unhappy!")



The problem is, a toy dog finds it so easy to sneak behind a chair or under the coffee table, **where it takes only a few seconds for the deed to be done.** The result can be hard to see and often goes undiscovered for weeks, if it ever is discovered. **By then the bad habit is entrenched.**



However, even when carefully crate-trained, toy breeds often take longer -- sometimes MUCH longer -- than larger dogs.

It may have something to do with their internal organs being smaller or less developed than larger dogs. Miniature dogs are not natural creatures; in other words, **shrinking their structure may also affect their internal organs.** Witness the notorious problems toy

dogs have with their teeth, which often don't fit properly inside their tiny mouth.

Whatever the reason, **expect more problems with tiny dogs.** Be extra-stingy about allowing them their freedom in the house -- some toys are not ready until twelve or fourteen MONTHS old!



The key word is **gradual**. Your dog needs hundreds of experiences "going" in the correct bathroom spot. **Give him plenty of time to build the right habit.** If you grant them full freedom too soon, a sudden string of accidents can set things back in a hurry.

**When your dog is six to eight months old...**

during a time when you're reading a book or working on your computer...

when you normally would have had him in his crate...



let him loose in the room with you.

## But take precautions.

- **Close the door** so he can't wander elsewhere.
- While you're working, **glance up regularly** to see how he's doing.
- **After an hour**, take him outside. If he doesn't go to the bathroom, put him in his crate for awhile. If he does go, praise him lavishly and give him another period of freedom in the same room.

As you can see, you don't throw your house open to him all at once. **One room at a time. One hour at a time.**

And if he has an accident when you're giving him more freedom, **go back to more supervision for a while.**

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# If your dog is having housebreaking problems...

## "My dog goes to the bathroom in his crate."

- Make sure the crate is **small enough** that your dog can't sleep in one end and go to the bathroom in the other. Put in a divider, if necessary.
- Make sure you're not crating your dog **longer** than he can physically hold it. **He should NOT be crated for more than four hours during the day.**
- Make sure he has had a chance to go to the bathroom **before** you put him in the crate.
- Make sure he hasn't drunk a **lot of water** just before being crated. And no water in the crate overnight.
- Make sure the bedding material is not too soft and plush -- or it will absorb urine and allow him to sleep in comfort after he pees in his crate. **If he does "go" in his crate, you want him to be uncomfortable.**



- If your dog seems to be peeing frequently, have your vet check for a **urinary infection**.



- Make sure you have worked out his **eating schedule** and **elimination schedule**.

For example, my dog goes to the bathroom at 7 a.m., has a light breakfast at 8 a.m., goes again sometime during the day, eats supper at 10 p.m., goes again immediately after eating, then sleeps in her crate for the night. During the day she also goes out to pee a couple of times. This schedule works well for her and for us. **You'll need to work out your own best schedule -- but there does need to be one.**

- Move the crate to where you can see it easily. Then if your dog whimpers or scratches at the crate door, you can take him out quickly.

If he is having difficulty making it through the night, move the crate into your bedroom. Small crates can even be placed on your nightstand. **If he cries in the night, take him outside.** His need to go out at night should diminish as he gets older.

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### **"My dog lifts his leg in the house."**



This is often more of a **dominance issue** than a housebreaking issue. A dog lifts his leg to spray his urine as high as possible, thereby "marking" his territory and saying, "I was here. I'm one big bad dude and I claim this territory!"

**Unneutered males are the worst offenders.**  
However, some neutered males do it, and some dominant females do it, too.

Some breeds are much worse than others in their compulsiveness to mark. **Male toy dogs can be obsessed with marking.** They may dash around like little wind-up toys, lifting their leg busily on every vertical object larger than a blade of grass.



**Male terriers**, with their scrappy, dominant personalities, can be compulsive markers, as well.

### **Here's what you should do about it:**

- **Neuter your dog.** Reproductive hormones make dominance problems worse. Neutering will lower your dog's hormonal levels **so he doesn't feel so compelled to be in charge.**
- **Absolutely do NOT breed your dog.** A male dog who has been bred is more likely to lift his leg everywhere.
- **Confine your dog.** Any dog who is marking in the house should NOT be allowed freedom of the house. **Put him in his crate or pen** and only take him out when you're interacting with him and training him.

- **Increase your Long Downs.** Several times during the day, put your dog on a 30-minute down-stay beside your chair while you're watching TV or reading or working on your computer. Long Downs tell your dog that YOU'RE the one in charge, while HE is the one who must hold the Down.



- **Leash your dog to your waist.** Whenever you're puttering around the house, take your dog out of his pen and attach his leash. Tie your end of the leash to your waist. **Now he must follow you around.** Both physically and psychologically, this helps establish **you as the leader** and **him as the follower.**
- **Practice obedience exercises.** For five minutes straight, several times a day, practice a quick succession of all the obedience exercises your dog has learned so far. "Heel." "Sit." "Stay." "Come." "Down." **Leader-Follower again.** YOU are giving commands. HE is following them.
- **Scrub all marked areas with an enzymatic cleaner.** Soap and detergents don't get out the microscopic odor particles that attract your dog back to the same area. My favorite is **Nature's Miracle.**
- **Continue with the teaching program in this eBook.** Go back through everything you've read and spend extra time studying it. When your dog is disrespectful toward you, it usually means that you're responding to his actions in one or more ways that isn't quite right.

**Thus, to change your dog's attitude, some of the actions and behaviors that need to change are YOURS.**

**Also make sure you're doing these things:**

- Your **tone of voice** must be low and firm when giving commands and corrections.
- Your **facial expression** must be serious when giving commands and corrections.
- Your **body language** must be erect and confident when giving commands and corrections.
- Your **rules** must be consistent and enforced. If you tell your dog to do something, you must make him do it. If you tell him he can't do something, you must make him stop. EVERY TIME
- Your **vocabulary words** must be consistent. The same word or phrase for the same action or behavior.
- To get hold of your dog when he's done something wrong, you must **track him down** methodically. Never call him; never chase him.







- You must put a stop to **small demanding behaviors** such as barking back at you, nudging you, or pawing at you. If minor infractions are allowed to continue, your dog will NEVER respect you.

So continue teaching your dog the words in this eBook. The teaching process itself will make a difference in his attitude toward you. You'll learn about more actions you can take to improve his respect for you -- and you'll learn about more things you should STOP doing.

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### **"My dog pees when he gets excited or when people pet him."**

Actually, this is not a housebreaking problem. It's a personality issue.

#### **Your dog may be excitable.**

An excitable dog isn't always able to maintain control of his bladder. If he is very happy to see someone, he may "leak" a little just from the excitement of it all.

#### **Your dog may be submissive.**

When two dogs meet, if one is very submissive, he may crouch and urinate a little to show the other dog that he means no harm and that he accepts the "superiority" of the other dog.



**Some submissive dogs do this with people, too.** Bending over a submissive dog, or reaching toward him, or raising your voice can trigger the submissive urination response.



Submissive urination is most common in **gentle soft-tempered dogs**. **Spaniels are especially prone to it.**

**Submissive or excitable urination must be ignored.** It is an instinctive behavior that your dog has absolutely no control over. Corrections will only make the dog **MORE** anxious and **MORE** submissive and will make the behavior **WORSE**.

### **Here's how to deal with excitable/submissive urination:**

- When you greet an excitable or submissive dog, **don't make eye contact.**
- **Don't approach him head-on** -- turn your body slightly to the side so you don't look so intimidating.
- **Don't lean over him** -- this is very threatening to an insecure dog.
- **Don't reach your hand toward him** -- let HIM come up to you and touch YOU when he is ready.

To sum up, **don't focus your attention** on an excitable or submissive dog. Look past him rather than AT him. Let your hand occasionally drape alongside his body when he isn't expecting it. It is the **anticipation** of being petted, or picked up, or stared at, that sets off the uncontrollable urination.

### **The good news is that...**

Submissive or excitable urination is most common in puppies and adolescents. If you don't punish him for it, and if you develop the puppy's confidence in his own abilities by teaching him vocabulary words and positive behaviors, **submissive or excitable urination usually goes away with maturity.**



### **In most cases, No. Your dog should not sleep with you.**

- A dog who sleeps in your bed may end up **viewing himself as equal to you** -- as though the two of you (or the three of you, if you're married!) are **littermates**.

- A dog who sleeps in your bed may discover that you take great pains not to disturb him. For example, if you start to roll over and your dog groans or opens one eye and you stop moving, he learns that **he can prevent you from "inconveniencing" him.** **Not a good lesson for a follower dog to learn!**
- Some dogs will begin **grumbling** or even **growling** if you accidentally bump them or disturb them while they're sleeping. Need I tell you how terrible that is?
- Finally, your dog **should never come between you and your spouse** -- **neither emotionally nor physically.** A dog in your bed may position his body, whether deliberately or accidentally, between the two of you. That's bad. And unless you're the kinky sort, his mere presence will be a **physical and psychological barrier** to romantic intimacy.

So unless you are single, with a large bed and a submissive dog with no behavior problems...

**you and your dog should sleep in separate beds.**

**In your bedroom is okay...**

**IF both you and your spouse agree.** You can place your dog's bed, rug, or crate on the **floor** beside your bed. If your dog keeps jumping up onto the bed, **close the crate door.** Or **tie him** to the leg of your bed with a short enough rope that he can shift around to sleep, but can't make it up onto the bed.



By the way, if you're looking for the perfect bed for a toy dog, I have a suggestion. Most toy dogs love the **pita pocket beds** and **cuddle sacks** made by Whitehouse Designs. The fluffy lambswool fleece is perfect for burrowing and snuggling. Visit <http://www.whitehousedesigns.com>

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When your dog is home alone...follow this routine

## WORD #50: "WAIT HERE!"

**story** "Jake, sweetie, Mummy and Daddy have to go out for awhile, okay? We're really sorry we have to leave you all by yourself. But we have to, Jake. Don't be mad. Don't be scared, we're coming back. Be a good boy, okay? We love you, sweetheart, it will be okay, we'll be home soon..."

**Don't do that! When you have to leave your dog home alone, don't make a big emotional scene.**

This type of exit actually **creates anxiety** in your dog, which he will probably try to relieve through chewing or digging or barking.

### Instead:

- Before you leave, **take him outside** to relieve himself.

- **Tire him out.** Get up early and take him for a good long walk. Let him run in the yard. Throw a ball or toy for him to retrieve. Practice some obedience exercises.



- **Provide soothing background sounds.** Put classical or easy-listening music or nature sounds on the radio or CD changer. Or tune the TV to the Weather Channel, or to a local public announcement station that runs elevator music in the background.
- If your dog will be in his crate while you're gone (**no more than four hours**), put him in now. Give him a **Nylabone** or **Kong toy** to chew on.



**Sit quietly** in a chair for a few minutes, reading the paper or watching TV.

When your dog is quiet and relaxed, say calmly, **"Wait here, Jake."** **Then leave.** No fondling, no emotional good-byes, no lingering looks. **Just leave matter-of-factly.**

Your dog already understands **"Wait"** to mean that he cannot cross a boundary, he cannot go with you, he must remain somewhere away from you. **"Wait here"** is a logical extension of that familiar word.

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## Similarly, when you come home...

**Don't burst in the door and overwhelm your dog with hugs and kisses and shrieks of glee.**



Such a **melodramatic entrance**, after many quiet hours alone, is too much for your dog's nervous system. Do this enough times, and he will begin to **anticipate** your homecoming **long before** you get home.

He will become restless and anxious as he awaits the **big emotional scene** that he knows is coming. And he will probably try to relieve his nervous tension in the meantime, through chewing or barking.

### Instead:

- Open the door and come in. Say calmly: "**Hi, Jake.**"
- Whether he is loose in the house and jumping all around you, or whether he is in his crate, **IGNORE HIM FOR ONE FULL MINUTE.**
- Hang up your jacket. Put your bags on the counter. Put away your pocketbook. **Don't pay any attention to your dog -- don't even look at him.** Correct any barking or whining or jumping with a matter-of-fact "**No!**" and perhaps a spray of water from a strategically-placed squirt gun.

- When the minute is up, he should be calmer and more settled. If he's in his crate, now is the time to open the crate door and say calmly, "**Okay**". Tell him what a good dog he is and how happy you are to see him. Ask him, "**Do you need to go OUT?**" and **take him outside to the bathroom**.

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Teach your dog to go to wherever you send him

Most dogs love to run. When you teach them that **they can run to a specific place and receive praise and treats**, they are happy to follow your directions! So far, your dog has learned to:



**"GO CAR!"**  
**"GO HOME!"**  
**"GO CRATE!"**  
**"GO OUTSIDE!"**

**There are many more places he can "Go!"**

**WORD #51: "GO STAIRS!"**

1. You and your dog will get some real exercise with this one! With your dog at your side and treats in your pocket, stand at the bottom of a staircase.





2. **Point your arm dramatically** up the stairs and tell your dog, in an excited voice, **"Go stairs!"** **RUN upstairs with him.** Give him a treat when you reach the top.
3. **Now reverse it.** Point dramatically down the stairs and say, **"Go stairs!"** **Run downstairs with him.** Give him a treat at the bottom.

If you want, you can say **"UPstairs** for going up. You used **"Up!"** to encourage your dog to jump into the back seat of your car. UP into the back seat. UP the stairs. In both cases, UP suggests an **upward bounding motion** to your dog.

**story** When my dog Buffy is lying on the sofa, I pretend to sneak toward the stairs. She raises her head, watching me intently. Her muscles tense. Suddenly I shout, **"I'm going UPstairs!"** and I make a mad dash for the stairs. She leaps off the sofa, barking, and chases me up the stairs. You can teach many vocabulary words to your dog when you make a game out of them!

**But don't say, "DOWNstairs.** As you know by now, **"Down!"** is a very important word that should mean only one thing to your dog -- to lie down in a prone position. Lying DOWN and

going DOWNstairs are **very different**. It will **confuse** your dog if you use "**Down**" in any way other than to lie down.

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## Play the "stairs" game



If your dog will retrieve, **place a favorite toy** at the top or bottom of the stairs and send him after it. "**Find your ball! Go stairs!**"

You will have to help him with this combination at first, by running up or down with him. But soon he will come to trust that when you combine "**ball**" and "**stairs**", there really IS a ball for him to find -- and the **STAIRS** will take him to it.

**Never lie to your dog!** Even accidentally. If you point him in the direction of the stairs and tell him his ball is that way, **IT HAD DARNED WELL BETTER BE THERE.**


Because if your dog bounds up the stairs, trusting what you say and eagerly anticipating finding his ball there... **and it ISN'T there...** he will begin to disregard you as unreliable. That is so damaging to your relationship!



**Make sure you KNOW his toy is upstairs and easily accessible before you send him for it.**

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## WORD #52: "GO INSIDE!"

1. When you're outside in the yard with your dog, get his attention: "**Jake!**"
2. With a **dramatic wave** of your arm, point toward the back door and hold your arm extended in that direction. "**Go INside! IN! INside!**"
3. **Run toward the door yourself**, encouraging your dog to accompany you. "**Good boy! Go INside!**" If you must, guide him by the collar.
4. When you both get to the door, open it and motion him through. "**INside! Good boy!**" Give him a treat once he's in.
5. It shouldn't be long before you can stand in the far corner of the yard, wave your arm toward the back door and call, "**Go INside!**" and your dog will make a beeline for the house!

"**Inside!**" can be used for any situation where you want your dog to go INTO some sort of enclosure. Into your house, into the vet's examining room, into a pen, into your car ("**Go car! INside! Up up!**"), into his crate ("**Go crate! IN IN!**")

As your dog's vocabulary grows, we're beginning to combine multiple words for similar actions. He can handle this now, and it gives you more opportunities to communicate what you want in different ways.

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**WORD #53: "GO COUCH!"**

**WORD #54: "GO CHAIR!"**

1. **Choose two pieces of furniture** that you don't mind your dog jumping on. Let's say a couch and an easy chair on opposite sides of the living room. (If you really don't want him on any furniture, you could choose to send him to a specific throw rug.)
2. Get your dog's attention: **"Jake!"** With a **dramatic wave** of your arm, point toward the couch and hold your arm extended toward it.  
**"Go couch! Couch!"**
3. **Run toward the couch yourself**, encouraging your dog to come with you. Motion for him to jump onto the couch. **"Up!"** may be helpful here. Hold a treat right over the couch if necessary. If you have to, take his collar and help him jump up. Give him the treat once he's up there.
4. **It's that simple.** Now it's only a matter of encouraging your dog to jump onto the couch **WITHOUT your having to run with**



**him.** You want to be able to stand across the room and send him onto the couch. Once he's up there, you can caution him to **"Wait!"** while you go to him and give him his treat.

5. For variety, once he has jumped onto the couch and turned to face you, **raise your arm in the Emergency Down signal** and tell him, **"Down!"** When he lies down, count silently to five. Walk over and give him a treat. Make sure he holds his Down! Walk back to your original position. Count to five again. Then release him with **"Okay!"**

6. Go through the same routine when teaching, **"Go chair!"**



7. Then, just as you did when you sent your dog **to fetch alternate toys**, send him to the couch, then to the chair, then back to the couch. Sometimes give him a treat, sometimes just praise and petting. Sometimes ask him to **"Down!"** on the couch or chair. Sometimes send him directly from the couch or chair to his crate, or upstairs to fetch a toy.

**Games! Variety! Dogs love it!**

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**Now let's get your dog OFF the furniture!**

## WORD #55: "OFF!"

Some owners allow their dog on all of their couches, chairs, and beds.



Some owners don't allow their dog on ANY piece of furniture. Needless to say, these owners probably didn't participate in the last couple of words we learned: **"Go couch!"** and **"Go chair!"**



Now, if you have a huge dog like a Saint Bernard, or a heavy-shedding dog like an Alaskan Malamute, I can understand why you might want to keep your dog off the furniture!



**But certain breeds, notably sighthounds and toy dogs, LOVE being on the furniture.** With their thin skin and bony joints, sighthounds are most comfortable when snuggled into soft cushions. And toy dogs like being up high where they can see the world. **In my opinion, if you choose one of these breeds, you're being unkind by keeping him off ALL the furniture.**

Most owners find a middle ground. They don't mind their dog on some furniture, but they do have one or two pieces **they would prefer their dog never jumped on** If you're in this camp, I suggest you use **"No!"** when you catch your dog on that forbidden piece of furniture. I'll tell you why.

**There are some things you want your dog NEVER to do.** That's what **"No!"** is for. If you NEVER want your dog on a particular piece of furniture, tell him, **"No!"** whenever he gets up there. And back it up with a physical correction.

**BUT...**

**What if your dog is USUALLY allowed on a piece of furniture, but you want him to stay off FOR THE MOMENT?**



For example, suppose you have a guest who isn't comfortable with your dog on the couch beside him. Or perhaps you're sitting on the couch with a plate of food on your lap. Or perhaps you're lying on the couch because you're sick. Or perhaps you have important papers strewn across the couch.

**During those times, you don't want your dog on the couch. But since he is usually allowed up there, it would be unfair to suddenly tell him "No!" He would be confused.**

**Instead, you need a different word that means, "The couch is off limits... FOR THE TIME BEING."**

That word is **"Off!"** Combine it with a natural shooing motion with your hand. Make sure he DOES get off, even if you have to guide him by the collar. And make sure he **STAYS off** until you tell him, **"Okay!"**

**example**

My dog Buffy lies on the couch with us when we're watching TV. But when food appears, she knows she is NOT allowed to remain on the couch.

We've been absolutely consistent in telling her **"Off!"** whenever food appears. So she knows the routine. In fact, she usually jumps off as soon as she sees the dinner plate, without waiting to be told.

But sometimes she edges to the far end of the couch, where she tries to lie surreptitiously, hoping we won't notice...

**"Off!"**

Oops! No such luck. She scrambles off and stays off until we're done eating.

If you teach this simple rule to your dog, I promise you that your guests will be impressed -- and appreciative!

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**WORD #56: "GET!" or "SHOO!" or "SCAT!"**

I doubt you'll find these words in any other dog training book! **Perhaps because they're so vague.** It's hard to describe exactly where they should be used. **But you WILL use them.** When they fit the circumstances, they come quickly to mind as the perfect word.



## Here's an example:

**example**

I use **"Get!"** when Buffy has wandered somewhere where I don't want her to be.

For example, in my bird room. I raise canaries and don't allow Buffy in the bird room. So she accompanies me down the hall, and the door to the bird room I remind her, **"Wait!"** She stops obediently and I continue into the room. She waits in the hall -- lying down, or peeking into the room, or wandering away for a drink of water, but always coming back to check on my whereabouts.

But occasionally...

she sneaks into the bird room, just a few steps. She stands there, watching. When I spot her, I wave my hand at her in a rapid, vigorous shooing motion. **"Get! Get!"** I say. And she scampers out.

## Other uses?

- Dog standing in the garden. Crushing flowers! **"Get!"**
- Dog wandering into the garage. Antifreeze in there! **"Get!"**
- Dog wandering into the basement. Sharp tools down there! **"Get!"**
- Dog poking his head into the bedroom. You and spouse are engaged in... um... **"Get!"**

I told you that when it fit the circumstances, **"Get!"** would come quickly to mind as the perfect word!

Almost every dog is eager for his meals. And anytime your dog is eager about anything, it's much easier to teach him the words and phrases attached to it!

**WORD #57: "ARE YOU HUNGRY?"**

**WORD #58: "WANT TO EAT?"**

**WORD #59: "WANT SOME FOOD?"**

Ah, that wonderful phrase: "**Do you want...?**" "**Want some...?**" "**Want...?**" Dogs quickly learn to associate this word with **GETTING SOMETHING** -- usually something GOOD!

**That is, they quickly learn this association IF...  
...you QUICKLY provide what you're promising!**

**example** "**Jake, are you hungry?**" Kathy Armstrong asked. She was stirring soup on the stove for herself and Roger.

Jake cocked his head with interest, and Roger picked up the dog's food bowl. Jake began dancing with excitement.

"He knows his food bowl," laughed Roger. "**You want to eat, huh, Jake?**" Jake leaped into the air trying to grab the bowl.

"Oops, wait a minute," Roger said. "I have to go down to the basement to bring up some more cans." He set the bowl on the kitchen counter and headed for the basement. Jake stood uncertainly in the middle of the kitchen, looking from the food bowl to the basement stairs, his tail beginning to droop.

The minutes ticked by. "Roger!" Karen called. Roger clumped up the basement steps, looking sheepish. "I got distracted," he said. "Saw that lamp I'd been trying to fix and thought I'd check the switch again."

Karen chuckled. "And I see you forgot the dog food. Well, our soup's ready, so Jake will have to wait until after we eat." She put Jake in the yard and they sat down to supper.

Poor Jake. **Dogs live in the current moment.** Don't get your dog excited about the possibility of food, **and then dilly-dally before giving it to him.**

The longer the delay between the time you say a word, and the time you provide the correct object or action, the harder it will be for your dog to grasp the connection. You have to say a word and then IMMEDIATELY provide the correct object or action. **A minute is too long!**



Ah, that's the topic of another eBook I've written, called **Longer Life For The Dog You Love**. This is a must-have eBook -- the feeding chapter alone may shock you. If you're online right now, [click here](#) to learn more about this eBook.

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## Here are two feeding tips to "whet your appetite":

- **Don't allow begging at the table.** If your dog begs (stares, whines, nudges), shoo him away with your hand and tell him, "**Get!**" (There's that useful word again!) If he persists, put him on a Long Down in the far corner of the room, or put him in his crate.



- **Don't coax your dog to eat.** Finicky eaters are finicky because of how you respond when they don't dive right into their food. Unless your dog is elderly or ill, don't tempt him to eat by adding extra yummys



when he turns up his nose at his meal. And heaven forbid you should ever sink so low that you would say anything like, **"Please, Jake, try this, it's really good, do it for Mummy..."**

Put your dog's food down for **20 minutes**. If he eats better in his crate, or in a quiet room, put him in there with his bowl and leave him alone for the 20 minutes. At that point, **pick up the food, whether eaten or not.**

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**WORD #60: "WANT YOUR BREAKFAST?"**

**WORD #61: "WANT YOUR SUPPER?"**

In my house, the two meals are different. Many dogs will learn the difference.

**story** Once, when I was out of breakfast fixings, I fixed a supper meal and offered it to Buffy for breakfast. She sniffed the dish with great suspicion, backed away from it, and looked at me inquiringly before finally deciding it was okay to eat for breakfast!

Using different words teaches your dog that **words have very specific meanings.**

Different words also help orient your dog to the order of the day. **Dogs love patterns and schedules.** Starting each day with, "**Want your breakfast?**" and ending each day with, "**Want your supper?**" can be very reassuring to a dog's preference for order and routine.



### **I recommend feeding twice (or even three times) a day...**

- **If your dog is young.** Puppies and adolescents have a higher metabolism that requires a source of energy (i.e. food!) spread throughout the day.



- **If your dog is old.** Elderly dogs often don't digest their food well. Providing fresh nutrients several times a day gives their aging digestive system more to work with.

- **If your dog has health problems.** If you feed several small meals, you have several opportunities to add supportive remedies such as vitamins, enzymes, herbs, and other immune system builders that help your dog heal.



**If your dog is energetic.** Active, bouncy dogs burn up calories quickly and need them replaced more often. A "wired" dog feels more relaxed when his stomach is full.

- **If your dog is moody or aggressive.** Just as with people, an empty stomach can make your dog feel grumpy and on-edge, and more inclined to vent his discomfort by acting out.
- **If your dog is prone to bloat.** Bloat is an emergency syndrome where the stomach swells up with food, air, and internal gases. It may even flip over and seal itself so the gases can't escape. Bloat usually occurs suddenly and without warning. It is a life-threatening condition.

I discuss bloat more completely in **Longer Life For The Dog You Love** -- including which breeds are most susceptible to it, and what other steps you can take to prevent it. Again, if you're online right now, [click here](#) to learn more about this eBook.

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## WORD #62: "WANT SOME WATER?"

Obviously you would use this phrase **whenever you fill your dog's water bowl. But also...**

- Lead him to his water bowl when it's empty. Tap the bowl so he leans down to sniff it. Ask him, "**Want some water?**" Try to **keep his attention** as you get the bottled water and pour it into his bowl. "**Water! Want some water? Good WATER!**"

I recommend giving your dog **bottled water or filtered water**. The stuff that comes from the tap, whether well water or "treated" city water, is usually full of stuff that does no good for your dog's immune system.



If you make it a point to give a name to this innocuous substance that your dog drinks, you may find that it takes on more importance in his eyes. Enough so that **he may be more inclined to paw at his water bowl when it's empty**, thereby letting you know it needs to be filled. He may even pick up the bowl and flip it around, or bring it to you.

You can almost hear him saying, "**Water! There's supposed to be WATER in here!**"



## Teach your dog to get along with other dogs

### WORD #63: "DOGGY"

When I'm speaking to my dog, and **referring** to my dog, I call him a "dog." As in:

**"Are you a good dog? What a funny dog you are!"**

But when I'm speaking to my dog, and referring to **OTHER** dogs, I call them "doggies." As in:

**"See that doggy? He's a good doggy!"**

In one sense, "doggy" is simply an object word, and you teach it like any other object word. When your dog sees or meets another dog, you say, **"That's a doggy. See the doggy? Good doggy!"**

However, unlike "biscuit" or "ball" (objects which most dogs have good feelings about), "doggy" is an object that produces **a variety of reactions!**

- Some dogs are **happy** to meet other dogs. They play well and are socially well-adjusted with other canines.



- Some dogs are fine ONLY with dogs **in their own family** or with a few selected "friends."
- Some dogs are fine ONLY with dogs of **the opposite sex**.
- Some dogs are fine with **puppies**, but not with other adult dogs.
- Some dogs have problems with a certain **SIZE of dog**. They may not like **large** dogs. Or they may not like **small** dogs.



Some dogs are **breed-specific**. They're fine with their own breed, but not with other breeds. Or else they're fine with **other** breeds, but not with their own!

- Some dogs are aggressive, or suspicious, or submissive, or timid **with virtually every other dog**.
- And some dogs **just ignore** other dogs. Their motto is: "Live and let live."

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**Your dog's attitude toward other dogs comes from...**

**His breed.**

Some breeds are strongly inclined to dominance, territoriality, or aggression toward other dogs, especially those of the same sex. Some examples:



**Fighting dogs** such as the Pit Bull, Staffordshire Terrier, and Bull Terrier.



**Northern "spitz" dogs** such as the Alaskan Malamute, Akita, Shiba Inu, and Finnish Spitz.



**Guardian dogs** such as the Rottweiler, Doberman Pinscher, German Shepherd, and Giant Schnauzer.



**Terriers** such as the Fox Terrier, Jack Russell Terrier, Kerry Blue Terrier, and Airedale.



**Flock guardians** such as the Great Pyrenees, Kuvasz, Komondor, and Anatolian Shepherd.



**Mastiff breeds** such as the Bullmastiff, Great Dane, Neapolitan Mastiff, Cane Corso, and Tosa Inu.



**Chow Chow**



**Shar-Pei**

**The moral?** Remember how hard it is to change behavior that is genetically "hardwired" into a breed.

**Some breeds must be considered potentially dangerous toward other animals. In this day and age, the legal liabilities of owning any breed that has a history as a fighting dog or guardian dog and might be a threat to other people's pets, should be seriously considered.**

In my opinion, **very few people** should own a breed, especially a large breed, who is inclined to act aggressively toward other dogs.

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## Your dog's attitude toward other dogs comes from...

### His parents.

If your puppy's parents and grandparents were good-natured with other dogs, **they may have passed along those genes**. But if one or more parents or grandparents was **aggressive or shy**, they may have passed along those genes instead.



**The moral?** Don't buy a puppy unless you have personally observed that the temperament of both parents is **perfect**. **Don't buy any puppy from a pet store -- you can't see his parents.**

---

## Your dog's attitude toward other dogs comes from...

### His early environment.



If your puppy was **frightened or hurt by another dog** when he was very young, he may end up aggressive or fearful. **Early imprinting can be difficult to change.**

**The moral?** Find out about your puppy's **early life**. Make sure he was not exposed to other dogs who might have acted inappropriately and thus taught him bad behavior. **Yet another reason why pet shop puppies should never be considered.**

---

**Your dog's attitude toward other dogs comes from...**

**How long he was left with his mother and siblings.**

**The first seven weeks of a puppy's life are critical** in determining how he will later act toward other dogs. This is because a puppy's mother and siblings teach him **bite inhibition**.

Bite inhibition means **controlling one's jaws** when playing. If a puppy bites too hard during play, mother or sibling will react immediately, pouncing on the puppy and giving him a good hard shake or a retaliatory bite. If the puppy responds properly, by becoming submissive, cringing abjectly, and pretty much shouting, "I'm sorry!", mother or sibling will be satisfied that they have gotten their message across.

In this practical way, a puppy learns **to restrain** his biting, **to respect** other dogs, and **to recognize and respond** to the canine social signals of dominance and submission.



**A puppy removed from his mother and siblings before 7 weeks VERY OFTEN ends up having**

**problems with other dogs as he matures, because he missed those early lessons.**

**The moral?** Don't bring home a puppy **before 7 weeks of age**. Don't bring home a puppy **AFTER 7 weeks of age**, either, if you know he was removed from his mother and siblings **BEFORE 7 weeks**.

**Now...for the flip side...**

**He shouldn't be left with his mother and siblings LONGER than 12 weeks of age.**

By then, a **pack order** (pecking order) will have developed. If a particular puppy is at the **TOP** of this ladder for too long, he may always be dominant or aggressive toward other dogs. Conversely, if a puppy is at the **BOTTOM** of the ladder for too long, he may always be submissive or timid toward other dogs.

**The moral?** Bring home your puppy **at 7-12 weeks old**. (Toy breeds should be brought home **at 10-12 weeks** -- they are more fragile). Older is fine, too...**IF the breeder separated the puppies by 12 weeks** so each could develop on its own. In other words, don't buy a 6-month-old puppy who has been living in a kennel run with his siblings.

---

**Your dog's attitude toward dogs comes from...**

**How he is handled during adolescence.**

Adolescence usually begins between **6 and 9 months** and ends between **1 and 3 years**. Larger breeds have the longer adolescent periods.

Just as in people, **adolescence in dogs can be an awkward time of change and upheaval**. A young dog's attitude toward other dogs may change from week to week, even from day to day! He may suddenly become skittish or spooky or suspicious. **This is especially common between 8 and 18 months.**



This is also a difficult time for owners! Because up until now, your puppy may have been getting along famously with the world. But during adolescence, **when the hormones kick in, your sweet puppy may change -- A LOT.**

**It may only be temporary, just a stage that will pass in a few months...**

**IF** your puppy comes from good-natured parents, was left with his mother and siblings for 7 to 12 weeks, and has had positive experiences with other dogs.

Just continue socializing (I'll explain how in a moment) and correct any signs of aggression or skittishness (I'll explain how in a moment).  
Neutering is highly recommended.

**Or... it may be permanent, as your puppy's bad genes or bad early environment catch up with him.**



**story**

Over the years, I've received many phone calls and emails from owners who say:

- They didn't see their puppy's parents.
- They know nothing about his early environment.
- They bought him at 5 or 6 weeks old.

Yet their puppy is perfect! Friendly, playful, obedient! They're thrilled!

**Until he's 8 to 18 months old.** Then everything changes. Their wonderful puppy becomes spooky around other dogs. He growls at strangers. He ignores what they say. He nips and bites.

**The moral? Some things can't be fixed.** You can't change your dog's breed. You can't change the genes he inherited. You can't go back and add positive experiences (or undo negative experiences) during the most critical early weeks of his life.

What you CAN do is continue socializing (I'll explain how in a moment!) and correct any signs of aggression or skittishness (I'll explain how in a moment!). And definitely neuter. Such a dog should never, ever be bred.

Your socializing and training at this stage may make a big difference. Or it may help somewhat. Or it may make no difference -- as I said, **unfortunately some things can't be fixed.**

---

## How to socialize your dog

1. **Take him out into the world.** Don't keep your puppy, adolescent, or adult dog sheltered at home. Take him to:



- parks
- ball games
- playgrounds
- along bike paths
- pet supply stores

2. **Point out other dogs.** If you spot another dog who looks good-natured, call your dog's attention to it. **"Look, Jake. A doggy! What a good doggy!"**

3. **Chat pleasantly to the other dog. Smile.** Your dog can hear a smile in your voice, and it will send the right message that you're happy about seeing this other dog.



**Your dog will draw conclusions from YOUR mood.** If you're calm and relaxed and confident, he will conclude that the situation is nothing to worry about. If you're tense and anxious, he will be, too.

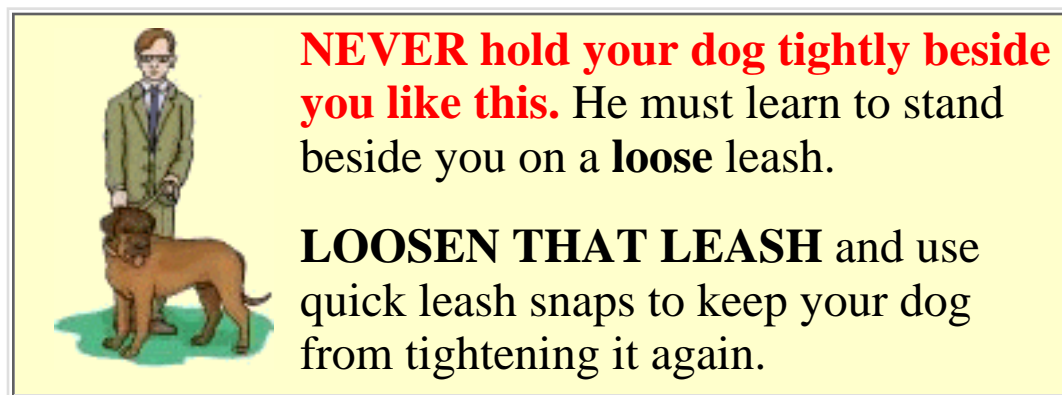
#### 4. Loosen your dog's leash near other dogs.

One of the **worst possible things** you can do when you're near another dog is to **tighten your dog's leash**. A taut leash makes some dogs **more aggressive** -- perhaps because he can "feel" your presence at the other end of the leash and he concludes that you're "backing him up." In other words, the leash is his umbilical cord and as long as he can feel the connection, he may act like **Attila the Hun**.



Conversely, a taut leash may make a timid dog **more nervous**. He feels trapped, restrained, unable to escape.

Finally, a taut leash communicates to your dog that **you're worried about something** -- which of course makes HIM worried.



**NEVER hold your dog tightly beside you like this.** He must learn to stand beside you on a **loose** leash.

**LOOSEN THAT LEASH** and use quick leash snaps to keep your dog from tightening it again.

- #### 5. Be cautious about letting your dog sniff noses with other dogs.
- Personally, I prefer to **KNOW** the other dog before I allow this. This is especially true when I'm socializing a **puppy** or **timid dog**, where any mistakes could have catastrophic results in his future attitude toward other dogs.

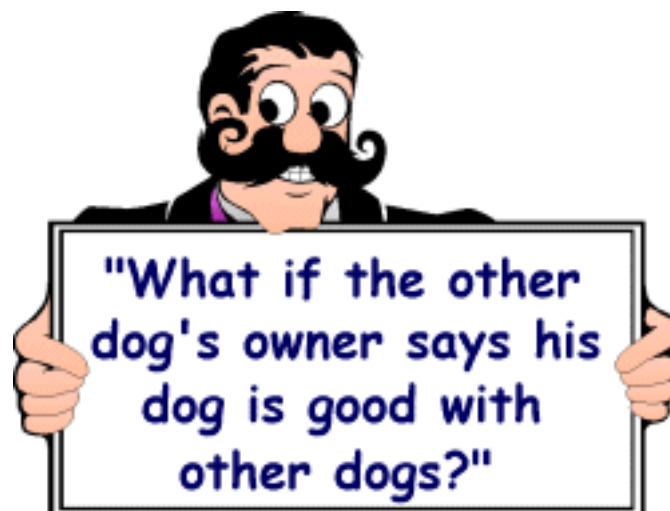


**Toy dogs are even more problematic.** I don't usually allow a toy dog to sniff noses **with any strange dog who is larger.** In fact, if a strange dog is bearing down on us, whether on- or off-leash, I often **pick up** a toy dog, just for safety.

**Don't underestimate the danger.** I have been the unhappy eyewitness to the horrifying spectacle of a large dog suddenly grabbing, shaking, and seriously injuring or killing a smaller one. **The speed with which it happens is unbelievable.**



The problem is that larger dogs often view toy dogs as **prey.** A sudden movement, such as your toy dog pouncing on a leaf, can trigger dormant chasing instincts **even in a nice dog who means well.** He can seize your little one **before he even thinks about what he is doing** -- before you have time to move or draw a breath. It has happened time and time again.





**Take it with a grain of salt.** Dog owners are always assuring people of their dog's "friendliness." Just ask any (bitten) vet, groomer, or mailman how many times he or she has been told, "Oh, my dog's friendly. He would never bite."

Many owners, sad to say, **know little or nothing about their own dog.** Even worse, they have little or no control over its behavior.

This is especially a problem **when two dogs are different sizes.** Owners of larger dogs are often blissfully unaware that even a friendly head butt, or playful pawing, can harm a smaller dog.

**For safety's sake, if you own a small dog, always assume that:**

- The other owner doesn't understand the **prey instinct.**
- That his reactions to his dog's behavior will be **too slow.**
- That his attempts to control his dog will be **weak and ineffective.**

---

## Letting two dogs interact

Now, suppose you decide to let your dog interact with another, **carefully-chosen** dog of similar size. If your dog acts friendly and playful, great!



But if he doesn't want to interact, that's okay, too. Many dogs, like many people, are **introverts**. If your dog hangs back a bit and isn't interested in interacting, **don't force the issue**.

### What you will NOT accept is:

- barking
- growling
- nervous or suspicious woofing
- raised hackles
- lifted lip
- hiding behind your legs, tail tucked
- standing up on his hind legs, pawing at you, begging to be picked up
- bolting fearfully to the end of the leash, trying to escape

---

## How to stop inappropriate behavior toward other dogs

If your dog is being aggressive or fearful, **your most important goal is to STOP it.**

It may surprise you to hear that **fearful behavior** is just as unacceptable -- and can be **just as dangerous** -- as aggressive behavior!

It's true. **A dog who is afraid may react defensively** -- by lashing out at whatever is frightening him. **MANY dogs have snapped and bitten because they were startled, or nervous.**

**So shyness is a big problem.** ESPECIALLY in large breeds who can do a lot of damage if they snap, whether out of aggressiveness or out of fear.

1. Tell your dog firmly that his aggressive or fearful behavior is **unwarranted and unacceptable. "No! Stop that."**
2. **Use quick snaps of the leash** to maneuver your dog into a "loose-leash" position beside you.
3. Some dogs benefit from being put into a **Sit-Stay.** A dog who is concentrating on **doing something positive** such as holding a sit-stay, can't be doing something **negative** such as trying to fight or run away.





**NEVER "reassure" an aggressive or fearful dog with soothing words or petting.**

**"It's okay, it's all right, sweetie, don't worry, he won't hurt you."**

This may seem like a perfectly natural thing to do, BUT... dogs interpret petting and soothing words:

- as **PRAISE** of their aggressive or fearful behavior
- or as **CONFIRMATION** that there IS something to be concerned about -- but that YOU'LL protect them from it!

**You don't want to send EITHER of these messages to your dog!**

Just focus on **STOPPING** the inappropriate behavior by correcting it as you would any other inappropriate behavior. Tell your dog, "**No!**" or "**Stop that!**" Back it up with a physical correction, if necessary.

Your dog doesn't have to LIKE other dogs. **But he must ACCEPT them.** He cannot **act out** his feelings through inappropriate BEHAVIOR.

Whatever corrections you have to make, **once your dog is behaving appropriately** say goodbye to the other dog and stroll away. Tell your dog what a good boy he was and give him a treat. Even if he never becomes friendly and outgoing with other dogs, he may come to enjoy meeting them because he gets praise and a treat!



---

## How to prevent fearful behavior...before it starts

If you're walking your puppy, and another dog starts barking at him, say from behind a fence, **distract your puppy** before he has time to focus on the barking and become fearful.

**Become all smiles and laughter.** Pick up a stick and **play** with your puppy. Wrestle with him. Speak cheerfully to him, "**Do you want to play? What a funny puppy you are! Yay!!**"

**IF HIS TAIL IS STILL UP AND WAGGING,** give him a treat and praise him. **Reward confident behavior.**

Don't reward fearful behavior! Don't touch him or pet him or give him a treat if he's looking fearfully around with his tail down.



Do the same thing if your dog is afraid of something like thunder. When the storm begins, put on cheerful music, break out the treats, and play with your dog. Encourage him to bounce around and play, and **give him treats whenever his tail comes up and wags.**

This is what trainers do when they raise puppies to be guide dogs, police dogs, or hunting dogs. You can't have any of these dogs frightened by thunderstorms! So, right from the beginning, savvy trainers turn Thunderstorm Time into **Happy Time!**



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## WORD #64: "PUPPY"

I like to teach adult dogs a **separate word** for puppies. I think a separate word **emphasizes their special status** as helpless BABY creatures **who are not to be harmed**.



Fortunately, most adult dogs are instinctively tolerant of puppies. Even adults who are aggressive toward other adults may grant lots of leeway to puppies. You should encourage this, and indeed, plant the seeds of it by emphasizing the word "**Puppy**" and combining it with cautionary words.

**"See the puppy? GOOD puppy. Easy! Don't touch! Easy with the puppy!"**

However, DO allow an adult dog to teach MANNERS to a puppy who is being annoying. Adults dogs are **supposed** to chastise puppies who pester them or who bite too hard. That's how puppies learn to be respectful and to control themselves.

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Teach your dog to get along with cats

**WORD #65: "CAT" (or "KITTY" or "KITTY CAT")**

- Some dogs **ignore** cats.
- Some dogs are **cautious** around cats. It may be an **instinctive** caution, where the dog just KNOWS from the cat's appearance or attitude that there is something about these creatures that he had better respect.

Or it may be a **learned** caution, where the dog has actually encountered feline claws and discovered that cats should be avoided!

- Some dogs **like** cats. They wag their tail and may even attempt to play. If the cat is willing, their play takes the form of wrestling and chase games, where the cat often chases the dog as much as the dog chases the cat!



- Some dogs are fine **with cats in their own family**, but not with strange cats.

- Some dogs will **chase every cat** in sight. But usually their pursuit is purely **for the fun of the chase**. Most dogs will put on the brakes and beat a hasty retreat if the cat stops running and turns to fight.



- And then there are the **true cat killers**. These dogs are **deadly serious** in their efforts to stalk and kill cats.

---

## Your dog's attitude toward cats comes from...

### His breed.



Some breeds have a **high prey drive**, which means they see other creatures, especially those that flutter or run, as **potential prey**. This includes cats, small dogs, squirrels, chipmunks, rats, hamsters, birds, ferrets, rabbits, and so on.

Dogs with a high prey drive **have strong instincts** to hunt for small critters, stalk them, chase them, grab them, shake them, and/or kill them. Some examples of breeds with a high prey drive:



**Terriers** such as the Fox Terrier, Border Terrier, Jack Russell Terrier, and Airedale.



**Sighthounds** such as the Borzoi, Greyhound, Afghan Hound, Scottish Deerhound, and Saluki.



**Scenthounds** such as the Foxhound, Coonhound, and Rhodesian Ridgeback.



**Northern "spitz" dogs** such as the Alaskan Malamute, Siberian Husky, Akita, Norwegian Elkhound, and Shiba Inu.



**Guardian dogs** such as the Rottweiler, Doberman Pinscher, German Shepherd, and Giant Schnauzer.



**Herding dogs** such as the Border Collie, Australian Cattle Dog, Belgian Sheepdog, and Bouvier des Flandres.



**German pointing dogs** such as the Weimaraner, German Shorthaired Pointer, and German Wirehaired Pointer.



**Fighting dogs** such as the Pit Bull, Staffordshire Terrier, and Bull Terrier.



**Mastiff breeds** such as the Bullmastiff, Great Dane, Neapolitan Mastiff, and Tosa Inu.



**Chow Chow**



**Shar-Pei**

**You may be dismayed at how long that list is!**

But remember -- most purebred dogs were developed as working dogs. They hunted, chased, guarded, fought. So it really isn't surprising that **many purebreds have a high prey drive.**

Also remember how hard it is to change behavior that is genetically "hardwired" into a breed. Because of their history, **some breeds must be considered potentially dangerous** toward other animals.

In this day and age, the legal liabilities of owning any breed that has a history as a fighting dog, or guarding dog, or big-game hunting dog, who might be a threat to other people's pets, **should be seriously considered.**

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## Your dog's attitude toward cats comes from...

### His first experiences with cats.

If your puppy was first introduced to a **carefully-chosen cat** who held her ground and showed warning claws when the puppy got too pushy, there's a good chance he will develop the **proper respect** for cats.



If, on the other hand, he saw his first cat and **it fled up a tree** his, **prey drive** will be reinforced.



Finally, if a big ol' tom cat **turned on him** and let him have both barrels, a puppy may be seriously hurt, not only physically, but also psychologically. He may end up **terrified** of cats -- or obsessed with **killing** them.

**The moral?** For first experiences, try to find a friend with a cat who is used to dogs and who knows how to put them in their place **WITHOUT** hurting them.

---

## Your dog's attitude toward cats comes from...

### How you encourage him to react to cats.

If you're like me, you're annoyed at cat owners who allow their cats to **roam free** -- to use your garden as a litterbox, to spray their urine against your house, to carry fleas into your yard, to ambush the birds who visit your feeders. **Why shouldn't your dog protect his own property by chasing trespassing cats?**



## Because...

**Once a dog has been encouraged to chase cats, he may become cat-driven.** He will look for cats everywhere, and when he spots one, he will be off and running.

- If the front door of your house is left open for a moment and he spies a cat outside, he may forget his boundary training, chase the cat across the street, and get hit by a car.
- If you take him for a walk or bike ride, and he sees a cat, he may lunge after it. If he's a **LARGE or STRONG cat-driven dog**, children can't safely walk him, because a cat may stroll out of the shadows at any time.
- If you park your car in the driveway, unsnap his harness in the back seat, tell him to **"Wait!"** and then step away from the car door for a moment... and he spots a cat on the sidewalk... **all bets are off.**



Dogs who have been encouraged to chase things often do so at the worst possible time.



Also consider that, with some dogs, being encouraged to chase "other people's cats" is a short hop to chasing their OWN family's cat sometime in the future. Or your mother's cat. Or a guest's cat.

**This is especially true with a prey-oriented breed. You shouldn't do ANYTHING to encourage their chasing and grabbing instincts.**



Finally, consider this. If you encourage your dog to "have fun" by chasing cats, you may end up being sued when your dog injures or kills your neighbor's pet. For all these reasons, **I recommend that you err on the side of caution and not allow your dog to chase cats.**

---

## How to handle cat chasing



Use **cautionary words** that your dog already knows.

**"Kitty cat. GOOD kitty. Easy! Don't touch! EASY with the kitty."**

Make it clear to your dog, by your strong tone of voice, that you are claiming the cat as **YOUR POSSESSION** -- and as such, it must be respected and unharmed.

If your dog persists in sniffing or pestering, **"Leave it!"** may jolt him away from his focus.

A **squirt gun or spray bottle** is often very effective in discouraging your dog from sniffing or pestering a cat.

ANY signs of aggression should be corrected with a VERY loud **"No!"** and a strong physical back-up.

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Teach your dog to get along with other animals

## **WORD #66: "SQUIRREL"**

What about squirrels? Should you encourage your dog to chase squirrels?



Again there is the "pro" side -- why shouldn't you send your dog after squirrels who dig holes in your garden, eat your flowers, and monopolize your bird feeders?

And again there is the "con" side -- **squirrel-driven dogs who forget their boundary training and self-control** in their lust to get that squirrel. They dash through open doors, pull their owners into the street, slip their collars, jump out of your car, and so on.

As I said earlier, dogs who have been encouraged to chase things often do so at the worst possible time.  
**And then they never chase anything again.**

Also consider that, with some dogs, being encouraged to chase squirrels leads to chasing OTHER creatures such as your neighbor's cat or small dog. And what if you decide to bring home a guinea pig for the kids?

I recommend that you teach your dog the WORD squirrel. But unless you own something small and harmless, like a Miniature Poodle or Chihuahua, **don't allow your dog to CHASE squirrels.**

### **WORD #67: "BIRDS" (or "BIRDIES!")**

My recommendation is the same:

**Teach your dog what a "birdie" IS, but don't encourage chasing and prey instincts.**

Also keep in mind that your dog can't distinguish between the annoying flocks of pigeons, grackles, and starlings who monopolize your feeders, and a beautiful cardinal.



If you encourage him to chase winged creatures, he will chase them all, and Murphy's Law says that when he finally catches his first bird, it will be the cardinal.

### **Another meaning for "Birdie!"**



**...is your own pet bird.** Perhaps you own a parrot, a parakeet, a canary, or finches. (Or perhaps you might get one in the future.) Now you DEFINITELY don't want him to associate birds with chasing behaviors!

Use **cautionary words** that your dog already knows.

**"Birdie. GOOD birdie. Easy! Don't touch! Easy with the birdie."**

Make it clear to your dog, by your strong tone of voice, that you are claiming the bird as **YOUR POSSESSION** -- and as such, it must not be trifled with.

If your dog persists in sniffing or pestering the cage, **"Leave it!"** may jolt him away from his focus.

A **squirt gun or spray bottle** is often very effective in discouraging your dog from sniffing or pestering.

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## **WORD #68: NAMES OF OTHER ANIMALS**



Rabbits may frequent your yard, or you may have a Holland Lop or New Zealand White as a pet. You may have a pet ferret. You may own a horse -- or horses may live across the road. You may keep chickens or goats. Deer may graze in a nearby meadow. Skunks or raccoons may wander through your back yard at dusk.

Expand your dog's vocabulary by teaching him the names of these animals.

**"Rabbit. GOOD rabbit. Easy! Don't touch! EASY with the rabbit."**

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## WORD #69: NAMES OF OTHER FAMILY PETS

If you own other dogs or cats, your dog should learn **the individual names of each pet**, for several reasons.

- **When you need to correct one pet**, using its name will reassure the others that they need not worry!

**"Buffy. This is bad!"**



- **When you're giving treats**, using each pet's name as you offer the treat **cautions the others to wait their turn**.

With both Luke and Buffy sitting in front of you, focus your gaze on Luke. Say his name and offer him a treat. If Buffy tries to grab it, correct her. **Ah-ah! Buffy, no.**" Give Luke a reassuring pat on the head and repeat the exercise. Buffy will soon get the message that "Luke" refers to the OTHER dog.

- Finally, if your dog has learned **"Find it!"**, **he may be able to search for a named pet**. **"Buffy, find Luke!"** could come in handy if Luke isn't responding to your calls.



Now, realistically speaking, most likely Luke is simply snoring under the bedcovers and won't appreciate it when Buffy jumps on him! But YOU'LL be relieved to know where he is. And if Luke really WAS lost or trapped somewhere, **Buffy might really be able to track him down**.

## Teach your dog ten fun tricks!



I once had a friend who thought that doing tricks "offended a dog's sense of dignity." I certainly don't think so!

**My dogs have always loved learning and doing tricks.**

They quickly discover that certain behaviors make their owners laugh and applaud and reward them. Dogs LIVE for that kind of attention!

### **Six Commandments For Teaching Tricks**

- Offer lots of **treats**.
- Practice for only **two or three minutes** at a time.
- Don't do the same trick more than **three times** in a row.
- Praise and encourage even the **barest beginnings** of a trick.
- Guide your dog **gently** with your hands.
- **No corrections** should be used when teaching tricks.

Why, then, do we use corrections for other vocabulary words such as **"Come"** and **"Stay"**?

**Because those are essential words.**  
**Every dog must know them.** Obeying these words is not optional.

But **"Roll over"** and **"Shake hands"** are not essential words. They're fun words. Bonus words.

- If you can guide and encourage your dog to do a particular trick and he enjoys doing it, great!
- If he doesn't seem to understand a particular trick, or can't seem to do it, or doesn't like doing it, then don't ask him to do that trick.

**So, without further ado,  
here are ten popular tricks  
you can start with!**

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### **WORD #70: "SHAKE HANDS!"**

This is the classic dog trick. Even people who have never owned a dog will stretch out their hand to someone else's dog. **"Hey, fella, want to shake hands? Give me your paw!"**



**Here's how to teach it:**

1. Have your dog **"Sit!"** in front of you, facing you. You may want to kneel down to be closer to his eye-level.
2. Say, **"Shake hands!"** Your tone should be cheerful, rather than commanding.
3. With the fingers of your right hand, tap (or tickle) the back of your dog's **right front leg** -- down near his ankle. When he lifts his paw, slide your right palm under his paw so his foot is resting on your palm. **Don't grab or squeeze.** Just let it rest on your hand. **"Good boy!"**
4. When he will lift his foot readily as you touch it, hold your hand NEAR his leg, but not touching it. Say, **"Shake hands."** If he lifts his paw without your needing to touch it, he has the idea.
5. Now hold your hand higher and higher -- until you can stand in front of him and hold out your palm, and he'll raise his paw high and slap it down on your hand! (At least, SOME dogs will!) At this point, some owners switch to the more modern phrase, **"Give me five!"**

An occasional dog is reluctant to shake. When you touch his paw, he'll pull it back. Or he'll raise his paw but quickly lower it again, not wanting to rest it on your hand. He may be afraid that you're going to grab or squeeze his paw. Don't push a dog who is reluctant to shake.



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## WORD #71: "ARE YOU SPEAKING TO ME?" ("WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?")

Your dog already knows how to "**Speak!**" ([Word #44](#)).

**story** But when my dog Buffy woofs at me, I add an amusing twist. I look at her and ask innocently, "**Are you SPEAKing to me?**"

She barks again, more enthusiastically.

"**What are you SAYing?**" I ask her. "**What are you SAYing to me?**"

"**BARK, BARK!**" she shouts happily.

Guests always get a kick out of this exchange!

At first you'll need to **emphasize** the key word: "**Are you SPEAKing to me?**" And along with "**What are you saying?**" you may need to prompt your dog with "**Speak! Speak!**" But soon he will learn the pattern of your phrases and won't need the prompting.

---

Dogs produce **very different sounds** in response to these phrases:

- Some dogs will offer a **single sharp bark**.
- Some will unleash a **series** of barks.
- Hound dogs such as Beagles may produce a **choppy bay**.

- Northern breeds such as Siberian Huskies may offer a **mournful howl**.
- My dog Buffy makes a rolling, musical grumble (RR-rr, RR-rr, rr-rr-rr), like she's trying to **converse** with me.



If your dog offers an especially unusual sound, such as a howl or a conversational grumble, you may be able to call it **singing**. Encourage your dog to reproduce it, and attach the word "**Sing!**" to it. Sometimes playing a musical instrument or certain recordings will bring out the songster in your dog!

As with all tricks, there are some dogs who just won't do this one. They stand there mutely, gazing blankly at you as you leap around and cajole them to "**Speak! Speak! Speak!**" until you feel like an idiot.

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## **WORD #72: "CRAWL!"**

If your dog can "**Lie Down!**" and "**Come!**", he may be able to "**Crawl!**"

What is required is that he **lie down and creep forward**, keeping his belly on the ground -- or pretty close to the ground -- while propelling himself toward you with his paws.

Many dogs will crawl. Police dogs crawl under fences. Search and rescue dogs crawl under obstacles. Terriers who dig tunnels in the dirt crawl to reach their prey. Movie dogs, such as Lassie, are masterful crawlers, often whimpering pitifully as they creep toward the camera.

## Here's how to teach it:

1. Have your dog **lie down**, either beside you in heel position, or in front of you, facing you. Experiment to find out which position works better with your dog.
2. Place your left hand on top of your dog's shoulders. Hold a treat in your right hand, **just in front of your dog's nose**.
3. Begin to draw the treat **AWAY** from your dog, **keeping it low to the ground** so he keeps his head down. Wiggle it in an enticing manner. Hold his shoulders down gently as you do so, so he can't stand up. Draw out the word, "**Cra-a-a-w-l?**" in a coaxing tone.
4. If he stands up, replace him gently. No harsh corrections. "**Down. Good boy! Cra-a-a-w-l?**"
5. If he wriggles forward, **even just a few inches**, praise him and give him the treat. In the beginning, you want to reward **even the slightest glimmer** of understanding and effort.

6. Gradually **extend the distance** he needs to crawl before you give him the treat. You can even teach him to crawl under someone's legs, or under a chair or low table!

One potential problem with this trick is that some dogs become **less reliable** doing a Down-Stay. Once they learn that crawling is sometimes acceptable, they're tempted to try it when they're supposed to be staying.

If this happens with YOUR dog, I would drop this trick from his repertoire. **A reliable Down-Stay is more valuable than being able to crawl.**

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## **WORD #73: "BANG!" (or "TAKE A NAP!")**

**Another classic trick, also known as Playing Dead.**

### **Here's how to teach it:**

1. Have your dog **"Sit"** and **"Stay."** Step in front of him, **facing him from a foot or two away.**
2. **Form a "gun" with your right hand** by pointing your right index finger at your dog, other three fingers curled into your palm, thumb sticking straight up. Say, **"Bang!"** as you **jerk your hand up** like you've just shot him.

3. Step forward quickly and repeat **"Bang!"** as you **gently guide your dog into a down position and then roll him flat onto his side.** Hold his head gently on the floor for just a couple of seconds, repeating, **"Bang! Good boy."**



4. Then say happily, **"You're alive!"** and encourage him to jump up and get his treat.

If you don't like the idea of "shooting" your dog, you can substitute the more peaceful **"Take a nap!"** and **"Wake up!"** For a hand signal, place your folded hands against the side of your face, like a child taking a nap (Nigh-night!).

**This trick has practical uses!** Lying flat on his side is a useful position if you need to examine your dog's stomach for fleas or burrs, or to groom tangled hair.

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## **WORD #74: "ROLL OVER!"**



**"Roll over"** is an extension of **"Play dead."** However, **many dogs can't do it.** Lying flat on their side is one thing, but giving that extra little "kick" to roll themselves completely over is not so easy.

To roll over, a dog needs to remain relaxed so that his spine remains supple and flexible. **If he tightens up,** he won't be able to flip over. So as you're teaching this trick, **make a special effort to keep it fun!**

## Here's how to teach it:

1. Have your dog "**Lie down**" either beside you, or in front of you, facing you. Experiment to find out which position works better with your dog.
2. Kneel beside him. Hold a treat **an inch in front of his nose**. Say, "**Roll over!**" and maneuver the treat back beside his head so that he must turn his head to follow it. Hold it **mostly concealed** in your fingers so he can nose at it, but can't grab it.
3. His body should now be tilted partway into a roll. Use your other hand on his shoulders to push him further over onto his back, and at the same time move your treat hand in such a way as to **lure him** into rolling over the rest of the way.

It's hard to describe the correct motion -- you'll have to try it yourself to get the knack of it!

4. Give him the treat as soon as he makes it over, **even if you have to roll him yourself**.
5. Only ask your dog to roll over **on soft surfaces** -- carpet or grass, or on your bed if he's small. Wood and vinyl floors are too slick and **too hard** on his back and spine.

Remember -- this is a difficult trick for many dogs, and an impossible trick for some. **If your dog can't do it, or doesn't like it, try something else.**

## WORD #75: "SIT HIGH!" or ("BEG!")



Yet another trick that some dogs seem to do naturally -- **but many dogs can't do at all.**

"Sitting up" requires holding the back and spine firmly erect, and a **good sense of balance.** This is **NOT** a natural position for most dogs.

## Here's how to teach it:

1. Have your dog **"Sit!"** facing you. Some owners find it helpful to put large dogs **in a corner** -- facing **OUT**, of course! -- so the walls provide some support.
2. Hold a treat **just above** your dog's head and say, **"Sit HIGH!"** Your dog will probably lift his front feet off the ground in an effort to reach the treat. As soon as he does so, **even just a little bit**, give him the treat and praise him.
3. You can help your dog by maneuvering your hand so you're holding the treat **at just the right spot over his nose** for him to sit firmly on his haunches and balance. You'll have to experiment to find the right spot for your dog.



4. Don't hold the treat too high or he'll stand up on his hind legs, rather than **rocking back onto his haunches**.
5. If you can't seem to lure your dog into lifting his front feet on his own, **try lifting his legs yourself**, rocking him slightly backward so that he settles onto his hindquarters. You can drape his feet lightly over your wrist or forearm (depending on your dog's size!) to help him balance. Or try your hand under his chin to help him balance.

**DON'T HOLD YOUR DOG IN THIS POSITION FOR MORE THAN A FEW SECONDS BEFORE GIVING HIM THE TREAT.**

Most dogs get tired very quickly in this position and can strain their back muscles.

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## **WORD #76: "DANCE!"**



Dancing is different from begging. Begging requires your dog to sit up on his hindquarters, waiting patiently for you to give him the treat. Dancing asks your dog **to stand up on his toes and dance around**, actively trying to solicit the treat.

**Here's how to teach it:**



1. Have your dog **"Sit!"** facing you. Hold a treat **just above his head** and say, **"Dance! Dance!"** Raise the treat higher, encouraging him to come up on his toes and reach for it. At first, **as soon as he extends himself**, give him the treat and praise him.
2. Gradually coax him to stay up longer and dance around, by maneuvering the treat above his head. Repeat, **"Dance!" Good boy! Dance!"** so he makes the connection between the word "dance" and sashaying around.
3. You need to hold the treat higher than you do when he's begging, because you want him to stand up taller on his toes. **But not TOO high, or he'll get frustrated and jump for it.** Keep your hand low enough so he stays on his feet.
4. As with begging, if the treat isn't enough to lure your dog into standing up on his own, **lift his legs yourself**. Hold his paws gently (don't squeeze!) or drape his front feet over your wrist and waltz around with him.

I sing "Waltzing Mathilda" when I do this with my dog. No, I don't feel silly at all. Well, okay, maybe a little silly.

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**WORD #77: "TURN AROUND!" (or "CIRCLE!")**



All your dog has to do is stand in one place and **turn around in a tight little circle** as though he's **chasing his tail**. Many dogs get so excited they really DO chase their tails.

## Here's how to teach it:

1. With your dog standing in front of you, show him a treat. Say, **"Turn 'round!"** or **"Circle!"** and **lead his nose with the treat** so that he turns in a tight circle. When he has made **one full revolution** (so he's facing you again), praise him and give him the treat.
2. When he will turn readily around being led by the treat, try **MOTIONING** him in a circle with your treat hand. **"Turn 'round! Round and round!"**
3. **HINT: Always turn your dog in the same direction, and make sure your hand motion is in that SAME direction.**



To teach your dog to "circle" when he's further away from you, some owners **hang a treat from the end of a stick** so they can "turn" their dog from a distance!

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## WORD #78: "KISS!"



Many dogs like this trick -- but some are definitely NOT lickers and are uncomfortable with it.

For those who like it, it's easy to teach. Whenever your dog licks your face on his own, say, "**Give me a kiss!**"

Encourage him by dabbing a little **peanut butter** on your cheek. Repeat, "**Give me a kiss! Kiss kiss!**"

Now, YOU might think a kissing dog is wonderful, **but many people do NOT like to be licked.**

If you share your home with people who are in this camp, I recommend that you don't encourage your dog to kiss. It's too hard for him to remember who he can kiss, and who he can't.

**Remember the importance of consistent rules.**

Also keep in mind that some people are **allergic** to **canine saliva**. Even a non-shedding "hypoallergenic" breed such as a Poodle can trigger an allergic reaction if he kisses someone who is allergic to saliva.



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## WORD #79: "BACK UP!" (or "BACK!")

One of the most practical "tricks." Sometimes you want your dog to **move backward** a few steps.

- For example, he may have followed you past a certain boundary, such as across your property line or through a gate.
- Or he may be too close to a delicate or dangerous project you're working on, or to a potentially dangerous object.
- Or he may be too close to something he might frighten, such as your new parakeet.

In all these cases, **moving backward a bit** would put him in a better or safer position.

## Here's how to teach it:

1. With your dog standing in front of you, show him this **hand signal**: Hold your hand about a foot in front of your waist, palm facing you and fingers pointing toward the ground. Now, keeping your wrist still, bend your hand and fingers away from you and then back toward you in a **SLOWLY repeated flicking motion**, as though shooing away a pesky critter.

Make this motion SLOWLY. A quick vigorous flicking motion goes with the "**Get!**" command.

2. As you motion him backwards, say, "**Back up! Back. Back.**" At the same time, **take a few small steps toward him**. You're trying to crowd him so he'll step back.

3. If he takes **even one step backward**, praise him and give him a treat.

If he knows how to "**Catch!**" you can **toss him the treat** instead of handing it to him. Then you don't have to walk toward him, and he won't be tempted to run toward you. He can stay wherever he backed up to, and still receive his treat!

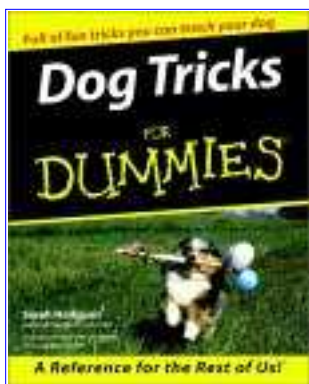
4. Most dogs learn this word easily, but if instead of backing up in a fairly straight line, he repeatedly **tries to sidestep you** or even run around behind you, practice it in a hallway or other narrow passageway where he doesn't have much room to maneuver.  
**The only direction he CAN go is back!**
5. Over time, you'll want him to keep backing up as long as you keep flicking your wrist at him. And you'll want to cut down on stepping toward him and rely more on your hand motion and your voice to back him up.

If time goes by, and he still won't respond without your stepping toward him, **hold a light stick or fly swatter** vertically beside your leg. As you give him your hand signal and tell him to "Back up!", **raise the lower tip of the stick to pop him lightly on his foot or leg**. That may do the trick!

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## If you want to teach more tricks...

I recommend the following books to help you. If you're online right now, you can click on these books to order them.



### [Dog Tricks for Dummies](#)

offers 384 pages of challenging tricks and unusual activities. Opening and closing doors, putting away toys, jumping through hoops, counting -- even fetching a soda from the fridge!



[Dog Tricks](#), written by one of my favorite authors, Carol Lea Benjamin, includes jumping rope, limping, saying prayers, pushing a carriage, climbing a ladder, spelling tricks, and the "telephone answering machine trick."

## How to groom your dog without getting into World War III

If you allow your dog to protest or grumble or struggle or make a fuss when you open his mouth, brush his teeth, clean his ears, clip his nails, brush him, or bathe him...

...you are allowing him to second-guess your decisions as to what is best for him.



**Fussing during grooming** is one of the most common signs **that a leadership problem exists in the household**. A dog who protests when being handled in some way that he doesn't like, is making a statement that he doesn't trust you to handle the leadership role.

At the beginning of this eBook, we talked about the fact that **our dogs are our dependents**.

They depend on us for their health and safety. There are times when we have to do things with them that they don't understand. You can't explain to your dog that you need to roll him onto his back so you can remove a tick from his belly. You can't explain to him that ticks are dangerous carriers of disease.



So the attitude you want your dog to have is that **whatever you do with him is okay** -- that he can trust you to make all the right decisions, **whether he understands them or not**.

In other words, if you and your dog have the proper leader/follower relationship, it won't matter to him WHY you are rolling him over. Whatever the reason is, **he trusts that it's justified**. This attitude is the best one your dog could possibly have for ensuring his health and safety.

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In my other eBook, **Longer Life For The Dog You Love**, I'll teach you how to actually groom your dog -- brushing and bathing, cleaning his teeth, clipping his nails. If you're online right now, [click here](#) to learn more about this eBook.

But **THIS** eBook -- the one you're reading now! -- is about training and respect. So we're going to focus on **using vocabulary words** so that your dog calmly accepts routine grooming.

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## Teach your dog to accept being handled

### WORD #80: "TIME FOR GROOMING!"

**example** I always let my dog know it's time for a grooming session. **"Buffy! Time for grooming! Let's go in the basement!"** Our grooming table is in the basement, you see. Try to have a specific place set aside for grooming your dog. I've guided Buffy



down to the basement so many times that she knows exactly where to go. She runs downstairs and waits beside the grooming table so I can boost her up.

### First, let's teach your dog to hold his position while being handled.

1. Have your dog **"Sit-Stay!"** on a surface **with good footing**, such as a carpet or bath mat. If he's very small, you can fold a towel onto a table and put him up there.



2. Run your hand over his body, and your fingers through his coat, **as though you're examining him**.



3. Put one hand under his chin, on his throat. Hold his head up **so you can look into his eyes**. Stroke the top of his head. Stroke around the base of his ears. Peer inside his ears. Rub the inside of his ears with your thumb, as though cleaning off dirt.

Your dog's ears can be quite sensitive, in a ticklish way. He may flick them back and forth, or shake his head. Caution him, **"Ah-ah! Stay!"**

4. You're still holding his head up with one hand under his throat or chin. Rub your index finger around **the inner corner of his eyes**, as though scraping off sleepy seeds.

5. **Cup your hand over the bridge of his nose** and stroke along the top of his muzzle.

Among dogs, this is a sign of dominance. A leader dog will rest his muzzle across the muzzle of a follower dog. It's good to remind your dog of the correct order of things!

6. If at any time your dog fusses or stands up, caution him, **"Ah-ah!"** and scoot him back into his Sit-Stay. He doesn't have to LIKE what you're doing, **but he has to ACCEPT it.**

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### **Let's move on to his mouth.**

This is a trouble spot with many dogs, though it shouldn't be. If your dog accepts the correct leader/follower relationship, he will need only a little practice at having his mouth opened and handled.

### **WORD #81: "OPEN!"**

1. Your dog should still be in his Sit-Stay. You have one hand under his chin or throat, holding his head up.

2. Say, "**Open!**" Use your thumb to lift up **one side of his lip**, so you can see his teeth. Do the same on the other side of his mouth, repeating, "**Open!**"



3. **Slide your fingers around his lips**, getting him used to the odd sensation of his lips being pulled away from his teeth.

4. **Touch his teeth.** Start with his "canine" teeth -- the four big pointy ones (two up and two down) at the front corners of his mouth. Move on to his incisors -- the row of small teeth across the front of his mouth. Finally, the back molars.

If your dog is doing well, **use your fingernail** to scrape at any plaque you see.

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**Let's move down to his feet.**

**WORD #82: "PAW!"**

1. With your dog still in his Sit-Stay, **touch the back of his right front foot** This will become a signal to him -- a gentle tap behind a foot means you'll be lifting it up.



2. Say, "**Paw!**" and close your hand lightly around his ankle. **Don't grasp the paw itself** -- you're too likely to squeeze it.
3. Raise his leg a few inches. Hold it there **for just a few seconds**. Praise him, "**Good boy. Good paw.**"

If he tries to pull his foot away, tell him, "**Ah-ah!**"

4. When he has been calm for a few seconds, let go. **Repeat** with his left front foot. Touch behind it. Say, "**Paw!**" and lift it up.



Gradually hold each foot a little longer. Stroke it gently. Spread his toes. Touch his toenails. Fold the paw backward so you can touch the pads.

---

## Now the back feet.

**First, we need to get your dog standing up.**



## **WORD #83: "STAND"**

1. He is still in his Sit-Stay. Hook your right hand in his collar, under his chin.

2. Place your left hand, **palm DOWN**, under his stomach, back in his groin area where his hindquarters are all bunched up as he sits there.
3. Draw out the word "**St-aa-aa-nd?**" in a coaxing tone, as you pull his collar gently forward with your right hand and press upward with the **BACK** of your left hand into your dog's lower stomach/groin area.

Don't turn your left hand palm UP! If you do that, it's tempting to grab your dog's stomach with your fingers as you lift him up -- and this may startle him. **Use the BACK of your hand.**

4. Once he's standing, say, "**Stay.**" Keep your left hand (palm down) under his stomach to keep him from sitting. Stroke his chest with the fingers of your right hand. Praise him, "**Good stand. Good stand.**"
5. **After 5-10 seconds**, tell him, "**Sit!**" and guide him into a sit.
6. Alternate "**Stand!**" and "**Sit!**" **five times**. Keep him in each position for only 5-10 seconds.

7. Gradually drop your hands so he is standing on his own.



If he tries to sit, say, "**Ah-ah!**" and lift him up with the **BACK** of your left hand.

If he tries to walk away, say, "**Ah-ah!**" and slide him or bounce him or push him back to his original position. Remember, this is a Stay exercise. **He must stay standing in the same spot!**

**When he is standing reliably without being held, you can move on to handling his rear feet.**

8. He is in a Stand-Stay. Signal him by touching the back of his right rear foot. Say, "**Paw!**" and close your hand lightly around his ankle. Raise his leg. When he has been calm for a couple of seconds, let it go. Repeat with his left rear foot.
9. As with the front paws, gradually hold each foot a little longer. Stroke it gently. Spread his toes. Touch his toenails. Fold the paw backward so you can touch the pads.



Your vet will love you for teaching your dog to pose quietly for examination! Practice this by having a helper run his hands over your dog's body, touching his head, ears, eyes, mouth, feet, etc.

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## The best positions for grooming your dog

### BRUSHING



I have my dog "**Sit!**" when I'm brushing her head, shoulders, chest, and front legs. I switch to "**Stand!**" when I'm brushing her back, sides, hindquarters, rear legs, and tail.

When I brush her belly, I have her lie flat on her side with "**Bang! You're dead!**" or "**Take a nap!**" Handy tricks!

### CLEANING EARS AND EYES

I have my dog "**Sit!**" or "**Down!**" while I clean her ears and wash tear stains and scrape "gunk" from the corners of her eyes.

### CLEANING TEETH

I use "**Sit!**" or "**Down!**" combined with "**Open!**" Some dogs are comfortable lying flat on their side with "**Take a nap!**" while you work on one side of their mouth.



Growling is a sign of disrespect. Your dog believes that he is higher in the pecking order than you are, and that you have no right to be handling him or making him do anything he doesn't want to do.



**This is an attitude problem, a relationship problem.** We talked about growling when you taught your dog **The Long Down**. Go back and re-read [What to do about your growling dog.](#)

## CLIPPING NAILS

If your dog fusses when you simply clean his teeth, he **may become positively theatrical** when you clip his nails! Now, if you feel inclined to support your vet's kids through college, you can head for the vet's office every couple of months to have your dog's nails clipped. But good gosh, would you bring your toddlers to the pediatrician because they threw a tantrum and wouldn't "let" you clip their fingernails?





Now, some common sense is in order here. If your dog is large or truly aggressive, you may need to turn to professionals to control him.

However, personally, I would never keep a dog who wouldn't "let" me clip his nails. What else might be decide I "can't" do? I would never trust him, and I would never feel confident of my ability to handle him in an emergency.

For most dogs, fortunately, all the work you're doing in this eBook **will be enough to settle them down** for nail clipping.

Tap each foot in turn, saying, "**Paw.**" If your dog is cooperative, praise him all the time you're clipping his nails, "**What a good boy you are. Good, good dog.**"

Remember, my other eBook on health care includes **HOW** to clean ears and eyes, brush teeth, and clip nails.

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**Let's move on to our final grooming word:**

**WORD #84: "BATH"**



Dogs tend to learn this word quickly, probably because it's associated with such a dramatic event -- being required to stand still in soapy, splashing water.

Like many children, many dogs dislike baths. So you might think that teaching them this word simply tips them off to the upcoming "unpleasantness."

**You're right...it does...**

**story**

...but I find it amusing to see my dog's reaction when I hold up the shampoo and towel and say,

**"Want a BATH? Time for a BATH!"**

Her eyes widen so that she looks like a deer caught in the headlights. She lowers her body almost to the ground and slinks toward her crate, hoping that perhaps I'll forget what I just said.

**I'm so mean!** 😁

To control my dog in the bath, I use **"Stand!"** rather than **"Sit!"** because many dogs, especially smaller ones, dislike sitting in water.

Fussing in the bath should be corrected with:

- "No!"
- "Ah-ah!"
- "Stop that!"



- "Shame on you!"

backed up by a physical correction, if necessary.

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## Poor grooming can equal poor behavior

If your dog has any behavior problems, **look seriously at how well he is groomed** before deciding that he is simply a "bad dog."

### Does he have hair across his eyes?



A dog with hair hanging across his eyes may be more timid, more spooky, or more aggressive -- **because he can barely see the world.**

He may see one-quarter of a person walking toward him, or a disembodied arm reaching for him. He may hear things, but when he peers around, he can't see well enough to locate the source.

He may appear to have a short attention span simply because he can't see you well enough to focus on what you're trying to show him. He may appear slow or clumsy when he's trying to Heel or Come, simply because he can't see clearly.

And as that hanging hair shifts and blows around, the world appears to change right in front of his eyes. No wonder he seems perplexed and/or startles easily!

## **SOLUTION:**

**Trim the hair short across his eyes.** Yes, even if your breed is "supposed" have shaggy facial hair. Such grooming requirements are silly for a companion dog. **He needs to SEE.**

## **Does his coat have mats or tangles?**

Mats and tangles **pull on your dog's skin**, making him feel grumpy or hypersensitive -- just as you would if you couldn't sit or lie down or walk in comfort.



## **SOLUTION:**

**Brush out mats and tangles every day or two.** Especially comb through his armpits, chest, and stomach, and up inside his groin (lower belly), where painful mats often go unnoticed.



If you can't spare the time for this much brushing, **trim his coat short**. Again, it doesn't matter if he is "supposed" to have long hair.

## **Is your dog's skin irritated or itchy?**

It's hard for an itchy dog to pay attention and learn. It's hard for him to do a Sit-Stay or Down-Stay. Itchy skin can be caused by:

- Bathing too frequently
- Bathing with the wrong shampoos
- Not rinsing thoroughly
- Fleas and other skin conditions
- **Feeding commercial dog food -- This is an often-missed but major cause of skin problems!** if you're online, visit [my website](#), find your breed, go to the Health section, and read the articles on feeding. If your dog has any skin problems, you'll find them very helpful!

**SOLUTION:**

In my eBook, **Longer Life For The Dog You Love**, I discuss how to control fleas and other skin problems. If you're online right now, [click here](#) to learn more about this eBook.

**Are your dog's toenails long?**

It's **hard to walk** with long toenails. Check dewclaws, too -- the extra 5th nail on the inside of your dog's ankles. Some dogs have them, and some don't. If left untrimmed, dewclaws can grow in a complete circle and pierce your dog's skin. Ouch!

**SOLUTION:**

Re-read [Clipping nails](#).

## Are your dog's teeth dirty or coated with plaque?

**Dirty teeth hurt!** They're also serious health hazards, because blood vessels in the gums lead straight to the heart. Minor infections in the gums can become major infections in the heart very quickly.

### **SOLUTION:**

Re-read [Cleaning teeth.](#)

## As you can see...

In all of these cases, your dog is not in an ideal frame of mind for learning.

**So keep him well-groomed.** If his hair and skin and ears and eyes and toenails and teeth feel clean and comfortable, he's one more step along the road to **a positive attitude and a bright, alert mind.**

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More advanced come when called

## **WORD #85: "COME FRONT!"**

What does "**Come!**" mean to your dog? Run toward you, right? Run all the way to you, in fact. **But what happens once your dog gets to you?**



In obedience competition, when you call your dog, he must run to you and **sit directly in front of you**, facing you.

This is a **CONTROLLED POSITION**. Sitting and facing you, your dog is **focused on YOU**, rather than on whatever distraction you called him away from. **Sometimes you NEED this kind of focus.**

So, "**Come Front!**" is going to mean:

"Come -- **AND sit in front of me, facing me.**"

### You should use "Come Front!"...

- When you're calling your dog **away from a distraction**. So that once he gets to you, he has to concentrate on doing a correct sit and looking up at YOU, not at the distraction.
- When you need him **close enough to put your hands on him** -- for example, to clip on his leash, or to pick him up.

### You may have already introduced "Come Front!"

Your **Free Bonus eBook** includes "**Come Front!**" as one of its IQ tests, to evaluate how fast your dog learns a new word. So you may have already started teaching this word.

**But let's start from the beginning:**

1. You will teach your dog to get up from the Heel Position (sitting beside you), take a couple of steps forward, turn to face you, and sit in front of you, facing your ankles, knees, or thighs (depending on how big he is).



2. With your dog on-leash and sitting at your left side, and with your pocket full of treats, say, "**Come FRONT!**" emphasizing the new word. With both hands, **pat your legs** just above your knees, as a hand signal.
  3. **Step forward with your right foot** and use the leash to encourage your dog to step forward with you.
  4. **When he is up and moving, step BACKWARD with your right foot** so you end up back where you started. As you do so, use the leash **to turn your dog clockwise toward you, so he ends up in front of you, facing you.** (If your dog is large, you may have to take an additional step back to give him room to turn and face you.)
  5. **Now use your hands** to sit your dog in front of your knees, facing you. **Don't SAY sit, just place him with your hands.** You want this routine to be one smooth motion of rise, step forward, turn, face you, sit -- all done with ONE phrase: "**Come Front.**"
  6. Praise your dog and reward him with a treat!
-



## More advanced "Come Front!"

1. Start the same way you taught **"Come!"** Stroll around the yard with your dog. If your yard is fenced, he really shouldn't need the leash by now, but if you think it will help, attach it.
2. When his attention is elsewhere, call, **"Jake, come FRONT!"** Again, emphasize the new part of the phrase.
3. **Start backing up -- TROT backwards.** Clap your hands and encourage him to come. As he comes toward you, repeat, **"Come FRONT! Come FRONT!"**
4. Stop just as he reaches you. Hold out a treat and show it to him. Just as you did when you were first teaching him to sit, move the treat out away from your body and up to a level just above your dog's head. You're basically moving it on a **45 degree angle** away from your body and upwards.
5. At the same time, say, **"Sit!"** The familiar word and motion should encourage your dog to drop his hind end into a sitting position so he can see the biscuit. If he doesn't do this on his own, guide him with your hands.



6. Once he is sitting, **observe his position.**

Is he close enough to you that when you extend your arm straight out, **your palm is directly over his head?** If he's even closer than that, fine! You just don't want him further away than that.



7. If he is sitting too far away or really crooked, **take a few more steps backward.** Repeat, "**Come FRONT!**" and use the treat again to entice him into a new sit -- only this time try to maneuver it so that he sits closer and straighter. If necessary, guide him with your free hand.
8. Once he's sitting close enough and straight enough, praise him and give him the treat. Then release him with **Okay!**
9. You can also practice "**Come Front!**" when your dog is holding a Sit-Stay. **Just don't do it every time.** Sometimes call him: "**Come Front!**" Sometimes return to his side and release him. **Keep him guessing!**

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Teach your dog to get along with people

## **WORD #86: "PEOPLE!"**

Much of what you'll read in this section will sound familiar. It is.

You read it before in the sections on socializing your dog with other dogs and cats.

I'm repeating much of it here because the basics of socialization are so similar, whether you're talking about how your dog gets along with other animals or with people.

In one sense, "people" is simply an object word, and you teach it like any other object word. When your dog sees or meets a person, you say, **"People! See the people? Good people!"**

However, unlike "biscuit" or "ball" (objects which most dogs have good feelings about), "people" are objects that produce **a variety of reactions!**

- Some dogs **ignore** people. They will glance at a person, then look away or go back to sleep. Their motto is: "Live and let live."
- Some dogs are **delighted** to meet everyone. My dog Buffy "never met a stranger." She treats everyone she meets like a long-lost friend.
- Some dogs are fine **ONLY** with people **in their own family** or with a few selected "friends."



- Some dogs are fine with people of **one sex** but not the other. ("Chipper loves women, but hates men...")
- Some dogs are fine with **adults** but not with children. (A few dogs are the opposite -- they love kids, but are not so keen on grown-ups.)
- Some dogs have problems with **certain physical features**. For example, they don't like people wearing hats, or sunglasses, or beards. Some dogs are so observant that they notice the skin color of a person. If it's different than what they're used to, they may or may not react to that difference.
- Some dogs are aggressive, or suspicious, or submissive, or timid **with virtually all strangers**.



---

## Your dog's attitude toward people comes from...

### His breed.

Some breeds are strongly inclined to dominance, territoriality, or suspiciousness toward strangers. Some examples:



**Chow Chow**



**Shar-Pei**



**Akita**



**Rottweiler**



**Boxer**



**Doberman**



**German Shepherd**



**Belgian Sheepdog**



**Giant Schnauzer**



**Flock guardians** such as the Great Pyrenees, Kuvasz, Komondor, and Anatolian Shepherd.



**Mastiff breeds** such as the Bullmastiff, Fila Brasileiro, Neapolitan Mastiff, Dogue de Bordeaux, Dogo Argentino, Tosa Inu, and Cane Corso.

**Remember how hard it is to change behavior that is genetically "hardwired" into a breed.**

**Some breeds must be considered potentially dangerous toward strangers.** If anything goes wrong in the breeding, socializing, training, handling, or management of these breeds, they are capable of seriously injuring another person.

**In this day and age, the legal liabilities of owning any breed that has a history as a fighting or guardian dog should be seriously considered.**

**In my opinion, very few people should own a breed, especially a large breed, who is inclined to act aggressively toward strangers.**

---

**Your dog's attitude toward people comes from...**

**His parents.**

If your puppy's parents and grandparents were good-natured with people, **they may have passed along those genes** But if one or more parents or grandparents was **aggressive or shy**, they may have passed along those genes instead.



**The moral?** Don't buy a puppy unless you have personally observed that the temperament of both parents is **perfect**. **Don't buy any puppy from a pet store -- you can't see his parents.**

---

**Your dog's attitude toward people comes from...**

**His early environment.**



If your puppy was **frightened or hurt by someone** when he was very young, he may end up aggressive or fearful. **Early imprinting can be difficult to change.**

**The moral?** Find out about your puppy's **early life**. Try to ascertain if he was handled kindly by many different people -- women, men, and children -- so that he has formed a good-natured attitude toward the world. **Yet another reason why pet shop puppies should never be considered.**

---

**Your dog's attitude toward people comes from...**

**How long he was left with his mother and siblings.**

The **first seven weeks** of a puppy's life are critical in determining how he will later act toward people. This is because a puppy's mother and siblings teach him **bite inhibition**.

Bite inhibition means **controlling one's jaws** when playing. If a puppy bites too hard during play, mother or sibling will react immediately, pouncing on the puppy and giving him a good hard shake or a retaliatory bite. If the puppy responds properly,

by becoming submissive, cringing abjectly, and pretty much shouting, "I'm sorry!", mother or sibling will be satisfied that they have gotten their message across.

In this practical way, a puppy learns **to restrain** his biting, **to respect** other dogs, and **to recognize and respond** to the canine social signals of dominance and submission.



**A puppy removed from his mother and siblings before 7 weeks VERY OFTEN ends up mouthy or nippy, because he missed those early lessons.**

**The moral? Don't bring home a puppy before 7 weeks of age. Don't bring home a puppy AFTER 7 weeks of age, either, if you know he was removed from his mother and siblings BEFORE 7 weeks.**

**Now...for the flip side...**

**He shouldn't be left with his mother and siblings LONGER than 12 weeks of age.**

By then, a **pack order** (pecking order) will have developed. If a particular puppy is at the TOP of this ladder for too long, he may always be dominant or aggressive. Sometimes this is confined to how he acts with other dogs, and sometimes it may "bleed over" into how he interacts with people, too. Conversely, if a puppy is at the BOTTOM of the ladder for too long, he may always be on the submissive or timid side.



**The moral?** Bring home your puppy **at 7-12 weeks old**. (Toy breeds should be brought home **at 10-12 weeks** -- they are more fragile). Older is fine, too...**IF the breeder separated the puppies by 12 weeks** so each could develop on its own. In other words, don't buy a 6-month-old puppy who has been living in a kennel run with his siblings.

---

**Your dog's attitude toward people comes from...**

**How he is handled during adolescence.**

Adolescence usually begins between **6 and 9 months** and ends between **1 and 3 years**. Larger breeds have the longer adolescent periods.

Just as in people, **adolescence in dogs can be an awkward time of change and upheaval**. A young dog's attitude toward strangers may change from week to week, even from day to day! He may suddenly become skittish or spooky or suspicious. **This is especially common between 8 and 18 months.**



This is also a difficult time for owners! Because up until now, your puppy may have been getting along famously with the world. But during adolescence, **when the hormones kick in, your sweet puppy may change -- A LOT.**

**It may only be temporary, just a stage that will pass in a few months...**

**IF** your puppy comes from good-natured parents, was left with his mother and siblings for 7 to 12 weeks, and has had positive experiences with strangers.

Just continue socializing (I'll explain how in a moment) and correct any signs of aggression or skittishness (I'll explain how in a moment).  
Neutering is highly recommended.

**Or... it may be permanent, as your puppy's bad genes or bad early environment begin to catch up with him.**

**story**

Over the years, I've received many phone calls and emails from owners who say:

- They didn't see their puppy's parents.
- They know nothing about his early environment.
- They bought him at 5 or 6 weeks old.

Yet their puppy is perfect! Friendly, playful, obedient! They're thrilled!

**Until he's 8 to 18 months old.** Then everything changes. Their wonderful puppy becomes spooky around other dogs. He growls at strangers. He ignores what they say. He nips and bites.

**The moral? Some things can't be fixed.** You can't change your dog's breed. You can't change the genes he inherited. You can't go back and add positive experiences (or undo negative experiences) during the most critical early weeks of his life.

What you CAN do is continue socializing (I'll explain how in a moment!) and correct any signs of aggression or skittishness (I'll explain how in a moment!). And definitely neuter. Such a dog should never, ever be bred.

Your socializing and training at this stage may make a big difference. Or it may help somewhat. Or it may make no difference -- as I said, **unfortunately some things can't be fixed.**

---

## How to socialize your dog

1. **Take him out into the world.** Don't keep your puppy, adolescent, or adult dog sheltered at home. Take him to:



- parks
- ball games
- playgrounds
- along bike paths
- pet supply stores

2. **Point out strangers. "Look, Jake. People! Good people!"**

3. **Interact with strangers.** Call "Hello!" Wave. Find an excuse to

chat. Ask the correct time. Comment on the weather. **Smile.** Your dog can hear a smile in your voice, and he can hear cheerfulness in your voice. You want to send him a clear message that you're happy to see other people.

**Your dog will draw conclusions from YOUR mood.** If you're calm and relaxed and confident, he will conclude that the situation is nothing to worry about. If you're tense and anxious, he will be, too.

#### 4. **Loosen your dog's leash around strangers.**

One of the **worst possible things** you can do around strangers is to **tighten your dog's leash**. A taut leash makes some dogs **more aggressive** -- perhaps because he can "feel" your presence at the other end of the leash and he concludes that you're "backing him up." In other words, the leash is his umbilical cord and as long as he can feel the connection, he may act like **Attila the Hun**.



Conversely, a taut leash may make a timid dog **more nervous**. He feels trapped, restrained, unable to escape.

Finally, a taut leash communicates to your dog that **you're worried about something** -- which of course makes HIM worried.

5. **Make sure the stranger acts appropriately.**

Before you walk up to a stranger, consider what to say. Remember, you want these interactions to go well!



- Have a **treat** ready. Ask them to give your dog the treat.
- If your dog is small, ask them to turn their hand so their palm is facing UP, and scratch their fingers against his throat and chest rather than patting his head. **Small dogs don't like giant hands descending from the sky onto their tiny heads!**
- **Don't force your dog to interact.** Many dogs, like many people, are **introverts**. If your dog hangs back a bit and isn't interested in interacting with people, don't push him.

**What you will NOT accept is:**

- barking
- growling
- nervous or suspicious woofing
- raised hackles
- lifted lip
- hiding behind your legs, tail tucked

- standing up on his hind legs, pawing at you, begging to be picked up
- bolting fearfully to the end of the leash, trying to escape

---

## How to stop inappropriate behavior toward strangers

If your dog is being aggressive or fearful, **your most important goal is to STOP it.**

It may surprise you to hear that **fearful behavior** is just as unacceptable -- and can be **just as dangerous** -- as aggressive behavior!

It's true. **A dog who is afraid may react defensively** -- by lashing out at whatever is frightening him. **MANY dogs have snapped and bitten because they were startled, or nervous.**

**So shyness is a big problem.** ESPECIALLY in large breeds who can do a lot of damage if they snap, whether out of aggressiveness or out of fear.

1. Tell your dog firmly that his aggressive or fearful behavior is **unwarranted and unacceptable. "No! Stop that."**
2. **Use quick snaps of the leash** to maneuver your dog into a "loose-leash" position beside you.

3. Some dogs benefit from being put into a **Sit-Stay**. A dog who is concentrating on **doing something positive** such as holding a sit-stay, can't be doing something **negative** such as trying to fight or run away.



**NEVER "reassure" an aggressive or fearful dog with soothing words or petting.**

**"It's okay, it's all right, sweetie, don't worry, he won't hurt you."**

This may seem like a perfectly natural thing to do, BUT... dogs interpret petting and soothing words:

- as **PRAISE** of their aggressive or fearful behavior
- or as **CONFIRMATION** that there IS something to be concerned about -- but that YOU'LL protect them from it!

**You don't want to send EITHER of these messages to your dog!**

Just focus on **STOPPING** the inappropriate behavior by correcting it as you would any other inappropriate behavior. Tell your dog, **"No!"** or **"Stop that!"** Back it up with a physical correction, if necessary.

Your dog doesn't have to LIKE strangers. **But he must ACCEPT them.** He cannot **act out** his feelings through inappropriate BEHAVIOR.

Whatever corrections you have to make, **once your dog is behaving appropriately**, say goodbye to the other person and stroll away. Tell your dog what a good boy he was and give him a treat. Even if he never becomes friendly and outgoing with people, he may come to enjoy meeting them because he gets praise and a treat!



Please take this section very seriously. Remember what I said earlier -- **some breeds are potentially dangerous** toward strangers.

If you own such a breed and you do anything that might be construed as **encouraging your dog to act aggressively**... well, just consider the legal and financial liabilities if you end up in civil or criminal court.

---

## How to prevent fearful behavior...before it starts

Take your dog for frequent walks where you're likely to see people. **ANTICIPATE.** Watch for other people. **Before** your dog has a chance to exhibit inappropriate behavior, get him to **focus on YOU.**

- **Become all smiles and laughter.** Pick up a stick and **play** with your puppy. Wrestle with him. Speak cheerfully to him, "**Do you want to play? What a funny puppy you are! Yay!!!**"



- If this isn't effective with your particular dog, **get tough**. Run him through a quick obedience routine -- "**Heel. Sit. Stand. Sit. Down. Stay. Come front. Good boy!**" Use your voice and the leash to **keep his attention focused on YOU**.

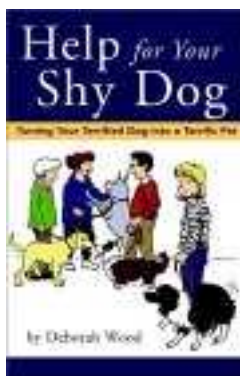
Whenever he focuses on you, give him a treat and praise him. **Reward confident behavior.**

Don't reward fearful behavior! Don't touch him or pet him or give him a treat if he's looking fearfully around with his tail down.



---

**Nervousness or suspiciousness** can lead to so many tragedies of growling, snapping, or biting that **I recommend the following book** to help you deal with any dog showing signs of timidity or anxiety.



### [Help for Your Shy Dog](#)

discusses all the problems that come with owning a shy dog, including submissive urination and fear-aggression. Many owners unknowingly "enable" their dog to be fearful, similar to the spouse and family of an alcoholic who "cover" for the dysfunctional person and by so doing, support the wrong habits.

If you're online right now,  
[click here](#) to order it.

---

**Remember, three things  
you DON'T want to do with  
a fearful or suspicious dog:**

- Reassuring him -- "It's okay, Skipper."
- Picking him up to "calm him down."
- Tightening his leash to keep him close to you.

All of these reactions may seem like perfectly  
natural responses to your dog's anxiety...

**but they actually encourage him  
to be even more nervous or suspicious.**

---



## **Dogs and children**

**Three myths about dogs and children:**

- All dogs love children.
- Dogs and children go together.
- A dog would never harm a child.

## The reality:

- Many dogs **DON'T LIKE** the loud voices, quick movements, and yo-yo emotions that are the natural characteristics of wee human beings.
- Sensitive dogs, such as toy dogs and sighthounds, are often **startled** by the unpredictability of children.
- Feisty dogs, such as terriers, **often won't put up with nonsense** from little life forms whom they view as below themselves in importance.

You can do everything right with your dog -- train him well, socialize the heck out of him -- and still, because of his breed or his genes or his individual personality or the arrangement of stars and planets in his horoscope -- **HE MAY NOT LIKE CHILDREN.**

What he DOES have to do is ACCEPT children.

On the one hand, socializing your dog with children is very much like socializing him with adults. I recommend giving babies and toddlers special status by referring to them as **possessions of yours** -- and thus, something to be respected and unharmed. **"Easy! Don't touch!"**

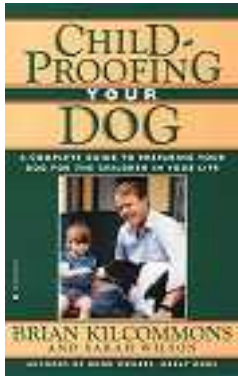


**The message should be:**

**"MY shoes. MY cat. MY baby.  
MINE. EASY! Don't touch!"**

On the other hand, socializing your dog with children is a specialized subject, because of the numerous ways in which children are different from adults.

So I'm going to recommend a specific book on the subject:



In [Childproofing Your Dog](#) (A Complete Guide to Preparing Your Dog for the Children in Your Life), you'll learn how to introduce your dog to a baby, how to avoid dog/toddler problems, and how to teach your dog to behave appropriately with children.

I especially love the chapter called "[Dogproofing your Child](#)", which focuses on teaching your **CHILD** to behave appropriately with your **DOG**. It goes both ways, you see!

**If you're online right now,  
[click here](#) to order it.**

---

**WORDS #87 to #90: People's names**



Your dog should learn the **individual names** of the people in your family.

Some owners refer to each other as Mommy and Daddy. Grandparents are often referred to as Grandma and Grandpa.



To teach people's names, refer to them by name **whenever your dog sees them** -- or is **ABOUT** to see them. **"There's Daddy! See Daddy? Here comes Daddy!"**

**Send your dog back and forth from one person to another.**

1. Start with just two people. Each person crouches or kneels down, facing each other about 15 feet apart.
2. One person holds the dog by his collar and says, in an excited voice, **"Go to Mommy! Go see Mommy!"** Whereupon Mommy calls, **"Jake, come!"** to let him know what is expected.

3. When Jake runs to Mommy, he is greeted with much praise and a treat. She takes hold of his collar, points him in Daddy's direction, and says, **"Go to Daddy!" Go see Daddy!"**



4. **Three times in each direction** is enough for one practice session.
5. If you have more family members, add them one at a time. Eventually you can form everyone into a circle and play round robin, sending your dog around the circle to various family members!

**Only the NAMED family member may give him a treat.**

---

### **Send your dog to find a hiding person, i.e. Hide and Seek!**

1. **"Where's Daddy? Find Daddy!"** Some dogs will immediately begin scouting around, while others will need a lot of help.
2. Motion with your hand to encourage your dog to look in different directions. Guide him toward likely hiding places. Peek behind doors and shower curtains, bend over to look behind chairs and couches. Make sure your dog looks, too. **"Where's Daddy? Is Daddy here? Find him!"**



3. When you come upon Daddy's true hiding place, celebrate with whoops and cheers -- "**Yay! It's DADDY!**" -- and of course a treat!

**Hide under a blanket!** Lie on the bed or couch, covered by a blanket. Have someone tell your dog, "**Find Mommy (or Daddy)!**" When he finds you, encourage him to nose or dig at the blanket to uncover you. Reward with a treat!

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## Create comfortable routines for your dog

### WORD #91: "BYE-BYE!"

**story** Each morning, as my husband walks down the porch steps on his way to work, I stand at the door holding our dog. "**Bye-bye, Daddy!**" I call, but it's for Buffy's benefit rather than my husband's. He is getting into his car by then, and can't hear me.



My consistent use of "**Bye-bye!**" has led to Buffy's understanding and acceptance that Daddy leaves in the morning, and comes back later. In her mind, "**Bye-bye**" has come to mean **temporary separation**. It is a familiar phrase that she now expects as part of her normal day.

**Routines are very important to your dog.**  
Our world is so fast-moving and complicated that you're being kind and helpful when you build routines for him **"to hang his hat on"**.

- Routines reassure him that, regardless of the confusion going on in the hectic world of human beings, **everything in HIS little world is predictable.**
- Routines reassure him that **he knows what comes next** -- that he knows what "this" means, that he knows what "that" means.
- Routines reassure him that **his world is the same** as it was yesterday, and will be the same tomorrow.
- Routines reassure him that **YOU are dependable**, that he can count on you to say and do things he understands.

Try to think of routines you can create for your dog -- little things you can do the same way each time.

**example** Each evening, at about the same time, I ask Buffy, **"Are you HUNGRY? Want your SUPPER?"**



I get her bowl from the SAME cupboard. I set it on the SAME countertop. She jumps onto the love seat and lies hanging over the edge, watching me closely.

When her supper is ready, I set the mixing spoon in the sink with an exaggerated clink. **"Want to EAT? Want some FOOD?"**

I place her bowl on the floor, right where I placed it last night. **"Here's your SUPPER!"**

While she eats, I clean up our own supper dishes. When she finishes, I ask, **"All done?"** I put her bowl in the dishwasher. She heads for the doggy door, listening for the question she knows comes next. **"Need to go OUT? Go outside!"**

**ROUTINES! Dogs love 'em.**

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Teach your dog to run an obstacle course

## What is agility?

Agility is a competitive canine event --- an obstacle course for dogs, made up of jumps, hurdles, tunnels, and catwalks.

**If you're online right now,  
[click here](#) to see a terrific Agility Animation!**

To compete in an agility trial, **your dog must run around the obstacle course** -- climbing on, over, and under the obstacles.

And what about you? Well, you may wish you could operate him from the sidelines by remote control, but alas, **you must run beside him, directing him toward the next obstacle.**

The obstacles are arranged in different patterns, which vary from trial to trial. Beginning dogs run on simple courses, while advanced dogs run on more challenging courses.



In an agility trial, **each owner/dog team goes one at a time** and competes only against other dogs of the same size. In each size division, the winner is the owner/dog team with **the fastest time and fewest "faults"** (penalties for knocking over a jump, refusing an obstacle, taking an obstacle out of turn, etc.)

When your dog has run the obstacle course successfully in several different competitions, he is awarded an **agility title**, such as NA (Novice Agility), AD (Agility Dog), or NAC (Novice Agility Class).



**Agility is the fastest-growing dog sport in the United States.** Spectators love watching the enthusiasm and athleticism of the dogs as they race against the clock!

---

## Who can compete in agility?

### Your dog can compete if...

- he is at least 12 months old (some clubs require 18 months old)
- he can negotiate all of the obstacles off-leash
- he can follow your directions. **Obedience to your commands is much more important than sheer speed!**

Unfortunately, the narrow-minded AKC allows only purebred dogs to compete in agility.  
**Fortunately, more generous organizations do allow mixed breed dogs to compete.**



The dogs who do best at agility are enthusiastic individuals who like to run and jump. "Sulky Sadie" and "Grumpy Gus" are not likely to shine. But if you insist that these party poopers perk up and live a little by at least TRYING, it may do wonders for their attitude!

---

## What's good about agility?

- **Agility makes you and your dog partners.** To teach him all the obstacles, you have to work closely with your dog, which creates a healthy bond.

- **Agility teaches you how to be a good sport.** You have to learn to smile and shrug when your dog goes UNDER or AROUND something that he should have gone OVER!
- **Agility is an active sport.** Your dog gets plenty of exercise and a constructive outlet for his high energy.

If you own an athletic, energetic dog such as a Border Collie, Australian Shepherd, Jack Russell Terrier, or Golden Retriever, you must get him involved in agility. He'll love you for it!

- **Agility builds your dog's self-confidence.** Learning to conquer challenging obstacles and perform in new environments and in front of strangers are valuable skills that will carry over to other areas of your dog's life.

If you own a timid dog, definitely try agility. This sport can help bring him out of his shell.

- **You'll make friends.** Agility people are usually very friendly and everyone roots for everyone else.
-

## Is there a downside?

- **Tiny dogs can't handle all the obstacles.** Sometimes even the lowest jumps are too high. Tiny dogs can break bones if they fall or jump from the higher obstacles. Finally, the show environment is a risk, since the sight of your wee one zooming around off-leash may make the mouths of larger dogs water.



- **YOU should be in decent shape.** It's embarrassing and looks terrible to be out of shape, huffing and puffing and left in the dust by your dashing dog.
- **Agility classes can be hard to find.** There are still no clubs or training classes in many areas of the country. You may have to drive some distance to find a good class.

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## How do I get involved in agility?

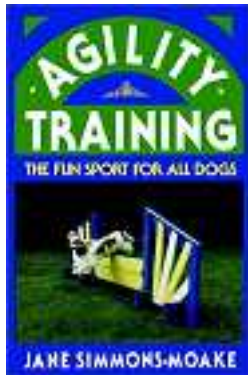
- To find classes, look under **Dogs** in your Yellow Pages. Call any kennel clubs or obedience trainers listed, and ask if they know of agility classes in your area. Vets are worth a call, too, and pet supply stores such as PetsMart.
- If you're online right now, visit [The Dog Agility Page](#) for a list of agility clubs and upcoming events.

- **Read agility books. I recommend...**



**Introduction to Dog Agility.** A clear, concise, easy to read, step-by-step manual laid out in full color. Hints and tips on all the obstacles, including how to make them and how to teach them. The perfect book for beginners. The color photos are terrific!

**[Click here](#) to order it.**



**Agility Training : The Fun Sport For All Dogs.** You'll learn how to get started in agility, all about the obstacles, easy ways to train them, and even how to build your own obstacles. This book is great for both beginners and experienced enthusiasts.

**[Click here](#) to order it.**

- **Join online discussion groups.** If you're online right now, visit [Yahoo Groups](#) and search for AGILITY. Two of the most popular discussion groups are:
  - **[The Agility Forum](#)**

- [The Mighty Mite Agility Forum](#) (for small dogs)
- 

## What are the requirements for joining an agility class?

### Obedience-wise...

- **Your dog must know basic obedience:** Sit, Lie Down, Stay, and most importantly, **COME**.

If your dog doesn't come when called, he is NOT READY for an agility class. Most of the training is done off-leash, and your wandering dog would be a disruptive nuisance.



### Personality-wise...

- **Your dog should not be "testy" toward strangers.** The instructor and assistants need to be able to handle your dog and help guide him on the obstacles.
- **Your dog should not aggressive toward other dogs.** In fact, if your dog is large, he should not even be rambunctious toward other dogs. Pawing or shoving at other dogs, even in play, can ruin the class for owners with smaller dogs.

## Health-wise...

- Dogs with **health problems** such as hip dysplasia, arthritis, or heart disease, may not be able to participate in agility. If the condition is mild, and you believe your dog will be okay, stick to low obstacles and watch closely for any discomfort or anxiety.
- **Overweight dogs** do not belong in agility. They don't have the muscle tone or coordination necessary for rapid starts and stops, and sudden changes of direction.



Like "weekend athletes," fat dogs suffer muscle strains, and aches and pains the day after agility practice. **Get your dog's weight down** through daily walking and diet, before you join an agility class.

- Dogs with **unnatural builds** are not recommended for agility.
  - Dogs with **short faces** (Bulldogs, Pugs) have trouble breathing when they're walking, let alone racing around an obstacle course.
  - Dogs with **long bodies and short legs** (Dachshunds, Bassets, Corgis) can injure the disks in their backs, and find it awkward to maneuver on some of the obstacles.
  - **Giant dogs** (Mastiffs, Newfoundlands) can barely fit on some obstacles. They're a danger to themselves and to anyone trying to help them when they're up on high obstacles trying to find a secure place for each massive foot.



Yes, I know that Bulldogs, Dachshunds, and Mastiffs are occasionally seen in agility -- **but in my opinion, this is unwise.** The structure of these breeds has been altered so much from the norm that climbing and jumping can endanger their health.

---

## What happens in an agility class?

First, you and your dog will be **introduced to the obstacles**, which will be **set very low**.

The goal is to build your dog's confidence by showing him that "obstacles" are a piece of cake!

Actually, **agility class resembles gymnastics class**, with the instructor and assistants standing beside the obstacles as "spotters" to make sure the feet of the beginner dogs land in just the right places so they don't wobble or fall.

**Most instructors want leashes to come off** as soon as possible, because pressure on your dog's collar actually throws off his balance and makes him **MORE** likely to fall.

**There should be very few corrections used in agility class.** Instead, you physically **guide** your dog on each obstacle, as well as **luring** him with food and praise, and **rewarding** him with food, praise, toys, and short play breaks for making a good effort.

Agility is taught with **positive reinforcement** and lots of encouragement. A dog's enthusiasm and willingness to try is always praised and rewarded.

You'll soon realize that **agility class is not endless activity**. There are long periods of standing around, listening to the instructor talk or watching him demonstrate a training technique. You have to **wait in line for each obstacle**, and the waits can be long and tedious, especially if some of the dogs are having difficulty with an obstacle and require extra attention.



**Use this waiting time to play with your dog** -- a game of tug or fetch, or a trick rewarded with a treat. The class should be kept fun for your dog, even if he doesn't get to run and play on the obstacles as much as you and he would prefer.

### **Once your dog learns the basic obstacles...**

1. The height or length of each obstacle will be **slowly increased**.
2. Obstacles will be set up in sequence, so your dog has to do two in a row, then three, then four. In competition, a course for novice dogs would include 13-16 obstacles.
3. You'll learn the **voice and body signals** necessary **to direct your dog around the course**.

The initial series of agility classes usually runs 8-12 weeks. Often it's called **Introductory or Beginner**. Then you move on to Intermediate and Advanced classes, and perhaps on to competition!

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**If I join an agility class, do I HAVE to compete in a trial?**

**Absolutely not!** You and your dog can simply take agility classes one right after another, and have fun with the training.

You can even skip the classes entirely, and **buy or build your own obstacles at home**.

I do want to emphasize that agility equipment can be dangerous if you don't build it solidly, or if you allow your dog to perform an obstacle incorrectly.

**Obstacles can collapse. Dogs can fall. Dogs can be injured in agility!**

**If you're going to build or buy your own obstacles and teach agility at home, I strongly recommend that you buy the two agility books I recommended earlier:**

**[Introduction to Dog Agility](#)**

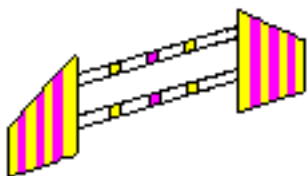
**[Agility Training : The Fun Sport For All Dogs](#)**

These books include step-by-step plans, including exact measurements, for building safe obstacles. You'll also learn how and where to buy obstacles. And you'll learn how to teach them correctly.

## Now let's look at eight basic obstacles!

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### WORD #92: "JUMP!" (or "OVER!" or "HUP!")



Jumps can be **solid hurdles**. Or they can be **bar jumps** -- two vertical posts holding one or more horizontal bars.

Many people build jumps out of **plastic PVC pipe**, which is lightweight and inexpensive. **Cut colored contact paper** into stripes and wrap them around the white PVC pipe so your dog can see it more easily when jumping.

Jumps are usually arranged in sequence -- your dog jumps several in succession. So build **at least three jumps**.



**Never set the height of a jump based on how high your dog CAN jump -- but on how high he SHOULD jump.**

You know the saying: "You crawl before you walk. You walk before you run." In the same way, your dog needs to **develop his muscles** for jumping, as well as learning **when and how to "take off"** and **how to land**. He also has to learn the **correct rhythmic stride** between jumps.

Jump heights should be set very low so your dog can concentrate on these more important skills. A good guideline is to set the jumps at:

- **6" for small dogs**
- **12" for large dogs**

Make sure he has **SOLID FOOTING** for take-off AND for landing. That means:

- soft grass
- rubber matting
- or secured carpeting that won't slip

on **BOTH** sides of **EVERY** jump.



## If your dog is young, be careful!

Until his "growth plates" have closed, a puppy should only jump **his height at the elbow or 12"** -- **whichever is LESS.**

Higher jumps can severely damage growing bones and joints. **It is the impact of LANDING after the jump that causes the most stress.**

When do the growth plates close? It varies by breed. For many breeds under 50 pounds, they close at 9-12 months. For many breeds over 50 pounds, they close at 10-14 months.

## Jump heights for competition

Depending on which organization is sponsoring the trial, your dog would jump:

Height of dog at shoulder	Height of bar
up to 10"	8"
10" to 14"	8-12"
14" to 18"	16-22"
18" to 22"	20-24"
over 22"	24-26"

But in practice, he should almost never jump this high. You'll wear out his joints. **Keep those jumps low!**

## Teaching jumping

1. Place a series of jumps about ten feet apart. **Set each jump only a few inches high.**
2. With your dog **on leash**, walk over the series of jumps with him. Reward with a treat when you've cleared the last jump.
3. Eventually trot. Then run. Finally, run toward the jump with him, **but YOU go AROUND the jumps** while he goes over.

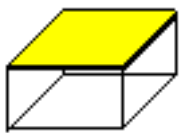
When you're first teaching jumping, don't say, "Jump!" Because if your dog is nervous, he will connect whatever word you say with his fearful feelings. Then whenever you say the word, his automatic response may be to become nervous!

Better to just walk your dog over the jumps again and again, with only praise and encouragement. **AFTER** he shows understanding and confidence, begin adding, **"Jump!"**

4. You can also put him in a **Sit-stay, on leash**, on one side of the jump. You go to the other side. Hold up a treat and tell him, **"Jump!"** Begin with just one jump and progress to him jumping the whole series to reach you at the far end, where he receives his treat.

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## WORD #93: "TABLE!"



The "pause table" is a control exercise. You tell your dog to run to the table and jump onto it. You tell him to "Sit!" or "Lie down!" He must stay there for 5 seconds. Then you send him to the next obstacle.



Don't do this obstacle with puppies. Puppies should be encouraged to run and play in agility. They don't need this degree of control yet.

Depending on which organization is sponsoring the agility trial, the height of the table should be:

Height of dog at shoulder	Height of table
up to 10"	8"
10" to 14"	8-16"
14" to 22"	16-24"
over 22"	24"

## Teaching the table

1. Pat the table with your hand and hold a treat above it. When your dog jumps up, place the treat on the table so he can eat it.



For secure footing, cover the table with non-slip carpet or rubber matting.

2. Once you've got him jumping eagerly onto the table for the treat, **place the treat ON the table**. Take your dog by the collar, lead him six feet away, turn him toward the table, and encourage him, **"Go TABLE!"**
3. Release his collar and **RUN to the table with him!** When you reach the table, pat it with your hand to encourage him to jump up and get the treat. **"Go TABLE! Up!"**
4. Once has eaten the treat, caution him, **"Wait....wait..."** while **you count silently to five**. (In competition, the judge will count silently to five and will signal you when time is up, so you can send your dog on to the next obstacle.) After five seconds, release him with **"Okay!"** and encourage him to jump off the table.
5. Each time you practice, try to hang further back so he is running to the table **without your needing to run with him**. Gradually extend your distance until you can send him from a good **20 or 30 feet away!**
6. Now put a **low jump** in his path. Tell him, **"Go table!"** and make sure he takes the jump on his way to the table. You may need to put him on leash, at first. Add a second jump. **You want him focused on the table, regardless of what is in his way!** Each



time he jumps onto the table, caution him, "**Wait...wait...**" until he has been up there for at least 5 seconds. Then release him.

7. **Next is the Down.** Stand beside the table (your dog is standing on the floor at this point). You're holding a treat tucked into your right closed fist. Tell your dog, "**Go table!**" When he jumps up, put your closed right fist **on the table between your dog's front feet.** He will probably lower his head and shoulders to nose at it.
  
8. At that point tell him, "**Down!**" and use your left hand to push on his shoulders so he lies down. **Keep your right fist on the table.** The moment he lies down, open your fingers so he can eat the treat. Make sure he remains down as he eats it. Then have him remain down **for 5 more seconds** before you release him.
  
9. When he will jump onto the table and quickly drop into a down position when you tell him to, you can move on the final step. Take your dog six feet away from the table. Send him to the table. **There is no treat there this time.** When he jumps on the table, do your **Emergency Down.** Remember that? Raise your right arm high in the air and say, "**Down!**" When your dog hits the deck, **RUN TO HIM,** place your fist on the table between his front feet, and let him eat his treat!

**Never reward your dog for jumping OFF the table.** If he jumps off before you reach him, say "**Ah-ah! Go table!**" Only give him his treat **ON THE TABLE** so that he learns to get up there and stay put.

## **WORD #94: "WALK IT!"**



The **dogwalk** is a wide balance beam with a ramp at each end. It is 10 inches wide, and 3 or 4 feet high. The two ramps and the central plank are **each** 12 feet long, so the whole obstacle stretches 36 feet in length. Your dog walks up one ramp, across the central plank, and down the far ramp.

Stepping on and off the ramps **at the very bottom** is mandatory. Your dog may NOT leap onto the "up" ramp so that he starts halfway up it, and he may NOT come only halfway down the "down" ramp and leap to the ground. **This is unsafe and absolutely not allowed.**



In fact, it is so important that your dog step on and off the ramp properly that the first 3 or 3-1/2 feet of the "up" ramp, and the last 3 or 3-1/2 feet of the "down" ramp, are painted a bright contrasting color (usually yellow). This is called the **contact zone**. Your dog must step on the contact zone on his way **UP** and on his way **DOWN**.

## Teaching the dogwalk

1. Lay the central plank **flat on the ground** and encourage your dog to walk its length. At first, keep his leash on to guide him.
2. Next, **rest the plank on supports a few inches high**. **Keep his leash nice and loose so he can balance himself** as he crosses the plank -- if the leash is tight, it will skew his head sideways and throw him off balance.

When you're first teaching the dogwalk, don't say, **"Walk it!"** Because if your dog is nervous, he will connect whatever word you say with his fearful feelings. Then whenever you say the word, his automatic response may be to become nervous!

Better to just walk your dog over the plank several times, with only praise and encouragement. **AFTER** he shows understanding and confidence, add, **"Walk it!"**

3. Now your dog will learn the **down ramp**. Prop one end of the ramp on your "pause" table. Set the other end of the ramp on the floor. Since the ramp is not affixed to anything, **you'll need a helper to hold it securely in place**. Granted, the ramp is very low, but **psychologically** it would be VERY BAD if it suddenly plunked to the ground while your dog was on it!

4. Place a **"target"** (a paper plate or the plastic lid from a margarine container) on the floor at the bottom of the ramp. **Place a treat on the target.** Position the target so that when your dog stops to eat the treat, his front feet will be on the floor while **his back feet are still on the ramp.** **This teaches him to stay on the ramp all the way to the bottom.**
  
5. Once your dog has mastered going down, have him go **UP the ramp** to a target on the table. Then put a ramp on each side of the table and **have him go up one ramp and down the other.**
  
6. Now you're ready to graduate to the real dogwalk. If your dog is small, pick him up and **place him halfway down the "down ramp"**. Have him simply walk down to the target (and treat!) at the bottom.

With larger dogs, **place the pause table beside the down ramp** at the point where the table is level with the ramp. Have your dog jump onto the table, then encourage him to step onto the down ramp and proceed down the ramp to the target at the bottom.

7. Once your dog sees that he can walk **DOWN** this "big" dogwalk, he will be more confident about going **UP** the ramp, across the central plank, and down the other side.



Puppies can do the dogwalk if they have enough physical coordination to balance on the plank.

But I recommend **focusing your puppy on the contact zones.**

- Use a **puppy-sized plank** -- 24 inches wide and only 6 feet long. Paint the first two feet and the last two feet bright yellow -- these are the contact zones. Leave the center of the plank unpainted.
- Rest the plank on some bricks so it's a couple of inches off the ground.
- **Now teach your puppy that the contact zones are where the treats are!** Lure him onto one contact and have him sit there while he eats a treat.
- Have someone else show him a treat at the other end of the plank. When he walks across, have him sit there and eat the treat. This teaches your puppy that **the start and finish of the dogwalk is where the action is!**

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## **WORD #95: "CLIMB IT!"**



The **A-frame** is a sloped climbing wall. Each incline is 3 feet wide, and 8 or 9 feet long. When hinged together and shaped into an "A", the peak is 5 or 5-1/2 feet off the ground. Your dog uses wooden slats on the inclines to help him scramble up, over the top, and down the other side.

As with the dogwalk, the real objective of the A-frame is NOT just to scale it -- **but to touch the contact zones on the inclines**. Your dog is not allowed to leap off halfway down the incline. **In the agility books I've recommended**, you'll find detailed instructions for teaching your dog to reliably "hit his contacts."



## Teaching the A-frame

1. Lower the A-frame until it is **nearly flat**, with only a very slight incline that your dog can literally walk over.
2. After several simple walk-overs, **boost the peak to two or three feet high and teach contacts**, just as you did with the **dogwalk**. Place your small or medium-sized dog halfway down the "down incline." Have him walk down to a target at the bottom. Remember to position the target so when your dog eats the treat, his front feet are on the ground while his rear feet are still on the incline.

With larger dogs, **place the pause table beside the down incline**. Have your dog jump onto the table, then encourage him to step onto the incline and proceed down the ramp to the target at the bottom.

3. Gradually place your dog further and further "up" the down incline so that he is coming down further each time. Soon he

will be near the top, coming all the way down. Then place him on the peak itself. Then on the **up incline** just over the peak, so he can clamber over the peak and down the familiar incline. Then further down the up incline, and so on.

4. **Finally, he will be ready for a "run by."** Put his leash on and lead him about ten feet from the A-frame. Take hold of his collar and **focus his attention** on the obstacle. **"Climb it!"**  
**RUN with him toward the A-frame.**
  
5. Make sure he "commits to it" (is clearly focused on the incline and heading up it) before you run around the side to meet him on his way down. **Keep that leash nice and loose so you don't throw him off-balance.**
  
6. The biggest problem with the A-frame is that people are in too much of a hurry to make it higher. For most practice sessions, **the peak should stay at 4 feet high.** At that height, your dog doesn't tire himself by having to fight gravity on a steep downslope. The more tired he gets, the more likely he is to start jumping off, thus developing bad habits.



**Puppies should only do the A-frame set at two feet high. They should be able to walk/run over it without needing to "climb" at all.**

As with the dogwalk, **focus on contacts** -- your puppy gets treats on the contact zones!



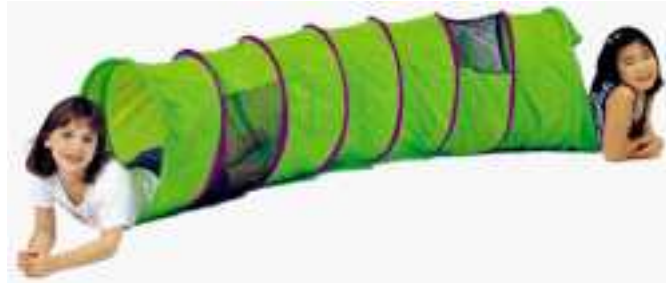
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## WORD #96: "TUNNEL!"



I recommend a **15-foot tunnel**. Much shorter, and you'll find it difficult to bend the tunnel into a challenging "U" or "S" shape.

15-foot tunnels can be bought from an agility equipment manufacturer, or you can make one yourself using hoops and fabric.



**Toys R Us®** sells an inexpensive children's play tunnel. It's only 6 feet long, but you can buy **two** of them and hook them together.

At only 18" wide, this tunnel is for **small and medium-sized dogs**. It's made of lightweight nylon, so it needs to be **securely braced** in the wind and should not be left outside in bad weather. It folds up into a compact hoop for easy storage. This nylon tunnel is a much better tunnel than the "vinyl" play tunnels sold by other stores.

[Click here](#) to order this tunnel  
from **Toys R Us®**  
on the Amazon website.

For variety, you can make short tunnels out of trash cans with the bottom knocked out, or out of open-ended cardboard boxes.

## Teaching the tunnel

1. Compress the tunnel until it's **only three feet long**.
2. Have a helper hold your dog by the collar **at one end of the tunnel**, while you crouch at the opposite end. Stick your head inside the tunnel and call, **"Jake, here I am, Jake!"** Wave a treat in the tunnel to get his attention. You want him to peer in and **make eye contact with you**. When he does, call him: **"Jake, come!"**

When you're first teaching the tunnel, don't say, **"Tunnel!"** Because if your dog is nervous, he will connect whatever word you say with his fearful feelings. Then whenever you say the word, his automatic response may be to become nervous!

Better to just encourage your dog through the tunnel using coaxing words and treats, until he becomes confident and enthusiastic. Then add, **"Go tunnel!"**

3. If your dog even sticks his head in, encourage him! **"Yay! Good boy!"** Once he's all the way in, your helper should **block the entrance** so your dog can't suddenly change his mind and try to back out. **He MUST come out the OTHER side.**

4. Once your dog is going through without hesitation, begin extending the length of the tunnel until finally it is 15 feet long. Be sure to **brace it securely** along both sides so it can't roll while your dog is inside it, which could really spook him.
  
5. **Finally, he will be ready for a "run by."** Put his leash on and lead him about ten feet from the tunnel. Take hold of his collar and **focus his attention** on the obstacle. **"See the tunnel? Go tunnel!" RUN with him toward the tunnel.**
  
6. Make sure he "commits to it" (has fully entered it at a good pace) before you run around the side to meet him on his way out. Your helper should **block the entrance** so your dog can't suddenly change his mind and try to come back out. One of the most common tunnel problems is backing out the entrance -- **ALWAYS USE A HELPER TO PREVENT THIS!**
  
7. When your dog is completely confident about a straight tunnel, curve it into a **"U" shape**. This is **psychologically difficult** for many dogs, because they can't see any light at the other end. They have to enter the dark end and trust that there **WILL** be an exit at the other end. **"S" shapes** are also fun to teach!

Tunnels are **perfect obstacles** for puppies, and also for older dogs with physical limitations who can't jump or climb very well.

## WORD #97: "CHUTE!"



The **chute** is simply a **collapsed tunnel**. One end is an open barrel, which then becomes a lightweight fabric material spread out on the ground. Your dog enters the barrel and dashes under the fabric, **lifting it up and making it ripple** as he runs under it and out the far end.

For some dogs, the chute can be **intimidating**. Because when they peer into the open end, the "tunnel" seems to peter out into the ground. They have to learn through experience that by **pushing their way** under the fabric **they will indeed emerge at the other end**.

Other dogs (like my dog Buffy) LOVE the sensation of running under the fabric. She prefers the chute over all other obstacles! These are often the same dogs who love burrowing under the bedcovers.

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## Making a chute

Like other obstacles, chutes can be bought, or made at home. For the barrel part, you can use a **heavy-duty plastic trash can** with the solid end sawed off.



- Sand or tape any **jagged edges**. Some people put **foam padding** all around the entrance for extra safety.

- Attach **non-skid rubber strips or matting** inside the bottom of the barrel for secure footing.
- The barrel needs to rest in a **sturdy cradle** for stability.
- For the chute fabric, you can sew sheets together, but the best material is **midweight nylon**. It's durable, water-resistant, and doesn't stretch or twist when dogs run through it. Don't use stretchy fabrics such as knit, or super-lightweight fabrics such as ripstop nylon.
- Secure the chute to the barrel with **wrap-around bungee cords**.

The barrel should be 20 inches wide and 2 feet long. The fabric is 12 feet long. Where it attaches to the barrel, it's 6 feet wide. The free end of the fabric flares out to 8 feet wide.

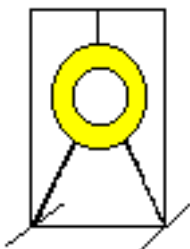
## Teaching the chute

1. Treat the chute like an **open tunnel**. Fold the fabric up around the barrel so your dog only has to run **through the barrel** at first. Have a helper hold your dog by the collar at one end of the barrel, while you call him through the other end. Encourage him with coaxing words and treats.

2. Once your dog is coming through the barrel without hesitation, extend the fabric a bit, **holding it up in the air and wide open** with your hands, so your dog can still see you at the other end. He simply has to run through the open fabric to reach you.
3. Continue to extend the chute until your dog is running through the full 12 feet. Now begin **lowering your end of the chute** when your dog is about **three-quarters of the way through**. He will feel it touch his shoulders and back as he runs through the last quarter.
4. As he gains confidence that this "thing" is not going to smother him, lower the chute when he is **halfway through**, then one-quarter of the way through, and so on.
5. Finally he will be ready for a **"run by"** from about ten feet away. Focus your dog on the chute. **"See chute? Go chute!"** Make sure he commits to the chute before you release his collar. As always, have a helper standing by **to block the entrance** to the barrel so your dog can't change his mind!

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## WORD #98: "TIRE!"



The **tire jump** is really a **combination jump and tunnel**. The opening is 20-24" wide, and the height is whatever height your dog has to jump for other jumps.

Any hoop can form the tire. If you use a real car tire, tape it closed all around so your dog can't catch his feet in the slit.

The trickiest part of **homemade tire construction** is making it **adjustable**. You need to set the tire low for teaching purposes, and raise it only an inch or two at a time until you reach full height.



To make the tire adjustable, people have used chains, airline cable, hooks, eyelets, and cleats. In the agility books I've recommended, **you'll find detailed instructions for making a tire jump**.

## Teaching the tire jump

1. First you need to persuade your dog **that he can indeed fit through this circle!** To do that, hang the tire **only a couple of inches off the ground**.
2. Have a helper hold your dog by the collar on one side of the tire, while you go to the other side. **Establish eye contact with your dog** THROUGH the opening of the tire. Pat the bottom of the tire and call your dog through. Don't say "Tire!" Just encourage him through with coaxing words and treats.
3. Once your dog is coming through without hesitation, try **"run bys"** from about ten feet away. Focus your dog on the tire first. **"See tire? Go tire!"** Make sure he commits to the tire before you release his collar.

## **DO NOT RAISE THE HEIGHT TOO QUICKLY.**

The tire is a **difficult obstacle that requires absolute precision**, especially for larger dogs who just barely fit through the opening.

If you rush your dog by raising the height too quickly, at some point **he will hesitate** -- doubting his ability to "**hit the bulls-eye**" that high up.

He will be tempted to take the easy route by **ducking under the tire or squeezing between the tire and the frame**. These are VERY bad habits that difficult to break.

So raise the height **only an inch or two** at a time, and work on that height for several practice sessions before raising it another inch or two.

### **4. Now, once you have the tire at full height, leave it there.**

**Yes, this is different advice than I've given for other obstacles!**

Usually I recommend keeping obstacles low even AFTER your dog has mastered the full height, so you don't put too much stress on his bones, joints, and muscles.

**But the tire jump requires such precision** that once your dog has learned the **correct take-off point and "arch" point** for the height that he needs to do in competition, he needs regular practice **at that same consistent height** so he doesn't forget where those precise points are.



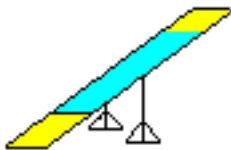
Of course, **if he's NOT going to compete** choose a **lower height** that will be easier on his bones and joints, and set it there all the time.



The tire jump is not for puppies. It requires mental and physical coordination that puppies should not be asked to develop at this age.

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### WORD #99: "TEETER!" (or "SEE-SAW!")



The **teeter-totter or see-saw** is another tough obstacle. It is essentially a **moving dogwalk** -- **and many dogs don't like the movement.**

The teeter is 10 inches wide and 12 feet long. Fortunately, it's only 2 feet off the ground. So this not a high obstacle -- its difficulty is in its **movement**. Your dog must walk up the ramp to the "pivot point" near the center of the board. There he should **stop and wait** for the board to tip down. Then he walks down the ramp to the bottom. Like the dogwalk and A-frame, the teeter has **contact zones** that must be touched.

**HINT:** To keep the teeter from banging and startling your dog as it hits the ground, attach a strip of foam or rubber to each end of the board, along the bottom edge.

## Teaching the teeter

1. You need **at least one helper** for this obstacle -- preferably two helpers. One helper stands on one side of your dog, ready to support him if necessary, and to keep him from jumping off the side of the teeter.
2. You will stand on the other side of your dog, holding his collar. Your other helper **holds the far end of the teeter firmly up in the air** so the ramp won't move when your dog makes his first trip up it. You don't want to scare him on his first trip!
3. Place a treat on the **pivot point** of the teeter, which is around the center of the plank where your dog's weight would normally begin to tip the board down.

**The pivot point is different for each dog.**  
The smaller the dog, the farther past center he will need to go before his weight is enough to begin tipping the board.

4. Lead your dog by the collar up the ramp. When you reach the pivot point, **stop so he can eat the treat.**
5. As he chews his treat, **your helper should slowly lower the other end of the teeter** to the ground. (Your other helper should be ready to steady your dog in case he tries to leap off

when the board begins to move.) Hopefully, eating the treat will hold your dog's attention so that he hardly notices the board moving. Make it a good-sized tasty treat!

6. When the ramp is resting firmly on the ground, **walk your dog calmly down the ramp** and off.
7. **Repeat this simple, confidence-building walk-over many times.** Don't use any commands other than encouraging words.

For many dogs, the teeter is the obstacle that becomes their nemesis -- because they have a scary initial experience and become very reluctant to try it again. So take this obstacle slowly and don't attach its name yet!

8. When your dog is comfortable walking up the pivot point and eating his treat, begin adding a cautionary word such as **"Wait."** Some trainers introduce a new phrase, **"Tip it!"** to cue their dog **that the plank will begin to tip** at this particular point.
9. Now it's time for your dog **to start tipping the board himself.** Have him take **one step** past the pivot point as your helper lowers the ramp **only a little bit** -- as though your dog's step had actually pushed it down that far. **Stop right at that point and give your dog a treat for his successful step.** Now another step -- another slight lowering of the board -- another treat. Step by step your dog should come down the ramp, with your helper simply guiding the end of the teeter **so it doesn't come down**

**too fast.** This way, your dog will get LOTS of treats on the teeter, which will build his confidence and enjoyment of the obstacle.

10. You still have work to do on this obstacle -- **I recommend getting help from agility books** -- but soon you will be able to progress to a **walk by** and then a run by. That's when you start attaching the word "**Teeter!**"

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## A real beginner's teeter

For dogs who are really intimidated by the big teeter, you can build a **beginner's teeter**. Instead of a plank set two feet off the ground and a pivot point that tips the teeter sharply, you set the plank about **six inches off the ground**, resting atop a circle of wood cut in half. This rounded fulcrum gently rocks the teeter toward the ground.



The teeter-totter requires too much balance and precision for puppies, but you CAN begin accustoming them to the concept of, as the old song goes: "I feel the earth -- move -- under my feet!"

**Place a three-foot-square board atop a tennis ball.**

Play with your puppy on this moving platform by luring him on and off with treats. His confidence will build as he discovers that the rocking board is fun and harmless. The **beginner's teeter** described above is also good for puppies.

---

# Use it or lose it!

Your agility words are perfect for building your dog's confidence in new places!

**Look for everyday obstacles.** A large rock he can jump onto. A fallen log he can walk across. Playground equipment at the park. The neighborhood kids on their hands and knees, bunched up next to each other, arching their backs and forming a "tunnel" your small dog can run through!

## Make sure your dog learns to traverse:

- stairs
- ramps
- foot bridges
- railroad tracks
- manhole covers
- vinyl/tile floors



**story** I saw a young Rottweiler arrive at his first agility trial. He was clearly happy to be there, ready to show off his abilities to **"Jump!"** and **"Climb it!"** and **"Walk it!"** and **"Go tunnel!"**

Except that he balked at the stairs leading up to the exhibition floor. His owner spent the next twenty minutes trying to coax her 120-pound dog up the stairs. "He hasn't seen stairs before," she said sheepishly.

**Get your dog out into the world.** He needs lots of experiences so he learns to trust that anything you ask him to do is both **possible and safe**.

A stimulated brain develops lots of interconnections between cells. **Such dogs think more quickly -- they're smarter!** A stimulated brain also has a greater ability to grow NEW cells -- which is especially helpful as your dog ages.

So help your dog develop a **healthy brain** by taking him out into the world and letting him USE the vocabulary words you're teaching him!

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## **WORD #100: YOU TELL ME!**

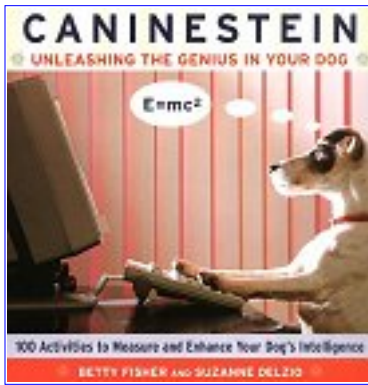
**Readers, it's your turn!** Is there a word you've taught your dog that you think belongs in my Top 100 List?

If you're online right now, e-mail me at  
[author@yourpurebredpuppy.com](mailto:author@yourpurebredpuppy.com)

**Tell me which word you recommend,  
how and when you use it,  
and how you taught it to your dog.  
And thank you!**

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Three great books for educating your dog



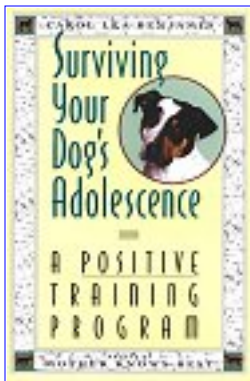
## [Caninestein](#)

(Unleashing the Genius in Your Dog)  
by Betty Fisher and Suzanne Delzio

**Jam-packed with games and activities** that will stimulate your dog's intellect and enrich his life. I highly recommend this little book!

If you're online right now,  
[click here](#) to order this book.

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## [Surviving Your Dog's Adolescence](#)

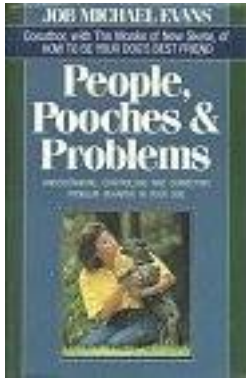
by Carol Lea Benjamin

It happens to all of us -- our puppy grows up and changes. We have to know how to redirect his exuberance and mischief into positive activities. **Carol Lea Benjamin is one of my favorite trainers.**

You'll especially love Carol's writing style. She writes conversationally, as though you're a friend having lunch with her. Her stories are easy to read and she uses hilarious illustrations and cartoons that perfectly depict teenage dogs!

If you're online right now,  
[click here](#) to order this book.

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In my 20+ years of training dogs, I've never found a better book for dealing with serious behavior problems than [People, Pooches, and Problems](#).

The author, Job Michael Evans, **pulls no punches**. He loves his dogs dearly -- but he brooks no nonsense from dogs who act up.

If your dog has a behavior problem that has developed into a bad habit, it may need to be changed by using **by using staged set-ups**, which means deliberately giving your dog chances to be naughty, then showing him the consequences of his naughtiness.

This book walks you, step-by-step, through staged set-ups that will really improve your dog's behavior problems.

If you're online right now, [click here](#) to order this book.

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15 canine sports that will make your dog smarter and happier

Dogs become smart, self-confident, and happy when they face a challenge -- and perform well.

30 minutes of participation in a challenging activity that develops and tests your dog's physical and mental skills will make him far smarter and happier than a 2-hour walk around the block. Dogs love mental exercise!



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## Agility

We've already talked plenty about agility! It is one of the best sports for increasing your dog's intelligence and physical coordination.

**The best books for getting started in Agility are:**



[Agility Training](#)



[Introduction to Dog Agility](#)

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## Advanced Obedience

We've touched on simple obedience exercises such as "Heel," "Sit," "Down," "Stay," "Stand", "Come." But there are many more obedience exercises your dog can learn: **scent discrimination, directed jumping, directed retrieving, and more!**

**The best books for getting started in Advanced Obedience are:**



[Beyond Basic Dog Training](#)



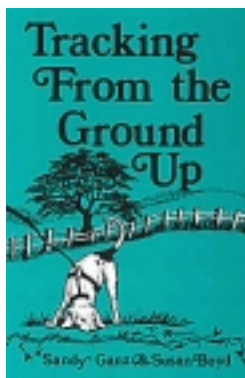
[Competitive Obedience for the Small Dog](#)

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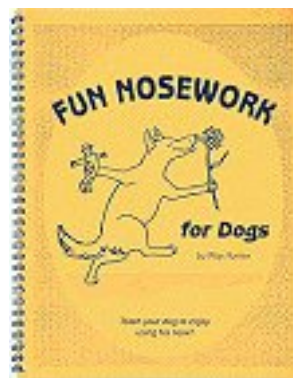
## Tracking

If you and your dog love the Great Outdoors, you might enjoy tracking. Your dog follows a scented trail through fields and hills and "over the river and through the woods", searching for a "lost" person or dropped objects.

**The best books for getting started in Tracking are:**



[Tracking From the Ground Up](#)



[Fun Nosework For Dogs](#)

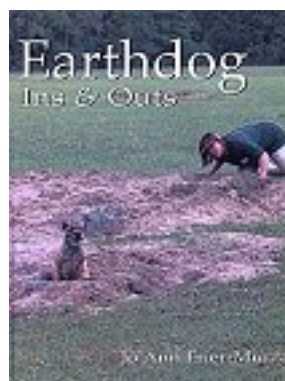


## Earthdog events

Terriers and Dachshunds have a great time navigating an underground trench or an aboveground maze. At the end, they must find and "confront" their prey -- a tame rat safely protected in a cage.

For small dogs who love to chase and dig, this is a productive way to vent energy!

**The best book for getting started in Earthdog is:**



[Earthdog  
Ins and Outs](#)

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## Carting

Newfoundlands, Great Pyrenees, Bernese Mountain Dogs, Greater Swiss Mountain Dogs, Bouvier des Flandres, and Rottweilers are examples of breeds who may enjoy pulling a two- or four-wheeled cart. Even medium-sized and small dogs can pull a cart sized especially for them. **There are even "Draft Dog" contests and titles your dog can win.**

**This 60-minute video will get you started in Carting:**



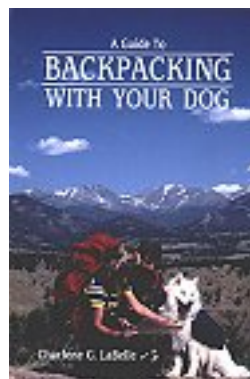
[Introduction to Canine Carting](#)

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## **Backpacking**

Another sport for outdoor lovers is backpacking. Most medium-sized dogs in good athletic shape can carry about one-third their body weight.

**The best book for getting started in Backpacking is:**



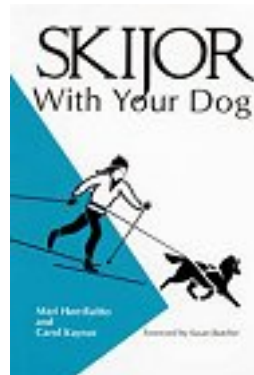
[Backpacking With Your Dog](#)

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## Skijoring

Skijoring is the Scandinavian sport of being pulled on cross-country skis by your dog in harness.

**The best book for getting started in Skijoring is:**



[Skijor With Your Dog](#)

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## Sledding

Siberian Huskies, Alaskan Malamutes, and Samoyeds are the classic sled dogs, but many dogs love to pull and run in the snow. **One medium-sized dog in good athletic condition is all it takes!** You don't have to compete in the Iditarod!

**The best book for getting started in Sledding is:**



Joy of Running  
Sled Dogs

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## Flyball

In this fast-moving sport, dogs on a relay team jump over a series of hurdles, at the end of which they must catch a tennis ball flung into the air from a mechanical catapult -- and rush the ball back to their owner. **This is a great sport for lively dogs who love to retrieve balls!**

**The best book for getting started in Flyball is:**



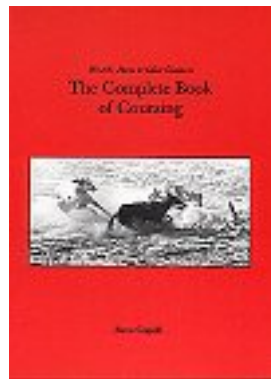
Flyball Racing

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## Lure Coursing

This is the sport for sighthounds, such as Greyhounds, Whippets, Afghan Hounds, and Basenjis. Sighthounds run like crazy across an open field, or around a track, trying to grab a "critter" (actually a harmless flapping sack) dragged just ahead of them by a mechanical pulley.

**The best book for getting started in Lure Coursing is:**



[Complete Book of Coursing](#)

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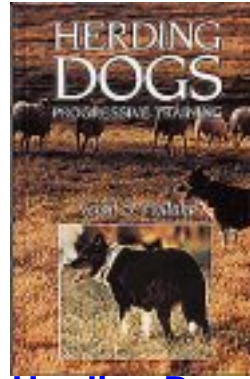
## Herding

If your dog likes to "gather" the kids, put him to work on real livestock. Border Collies, Australian Shepherds, Shelties, and a dozen other breeds have very strong instincts to "round up" sheep, cattle, or ducks. **Herding clubs will let you use their livestock so your dog can vent his energy doing what he was born to do.**

**The best resources for getting started in Herding are:**



[VIDEO -- Introduction to All Breed Herding](#)



[Herding Dogs Progressive Training](#)

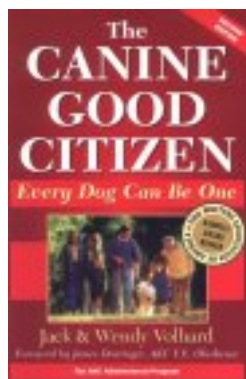
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## Canine Good Citizen Program

This official AKC test evaluates your dog's temperament and good manners. To pass, your dog must accept being handled by strangers, be polite around other dogs, walk nicely on a leash, sit and lie down on command, stay put while you walk away, and come when called, all with distractions.

If your dog passes this test, he gets an official CGC title. Mixed breeds are welcome!

**The best book for getting started with the CGC Program is:**



[Canine Good Citizen:  
Every Dog Can Be One](#)

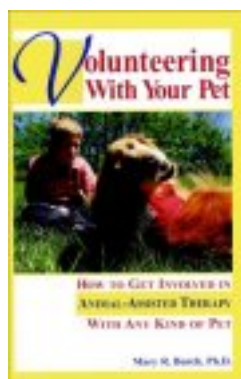


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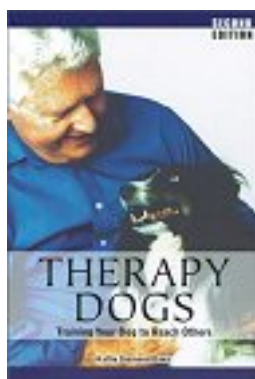
## Therapy Dog Program

If your dog has the right personality, he may be able to visit nursing homes and senior citizen centers to lift the spirits of their staff and patients. Folks who are elderly, lonely, disabled, or ill respond beautifully to dogs.

**The best books for getting started in Therapy Work are:**



[Volunteering With Your Pet](#)



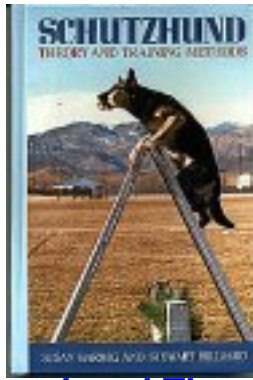
[Therapy Dogs: Training Your Dog to Reach Others](#)

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## Schutzhund

**This German sport combines obedience, tracking, and protection work.** The most successful breeds are German Shepherds, Rottweilers, Dobermans, and Belgian Malinois. Other breeds have also done well, including Giant Schnauzers, Boxers, Bouvier des Flandres, Beaucerons, and American Bulldogs.

**The best book for getting started with Schutzhund is:**



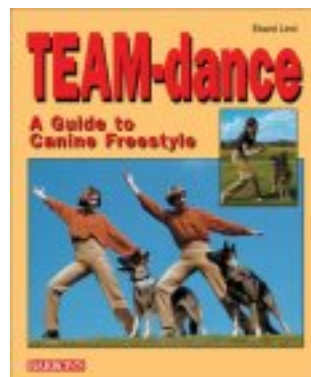
[Schutzhund Theory & Training Methods](#)

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## Musical Freestyle

Musical Freestyle means **dancing with your dog!** The two of you perform an individualized choreographed routine that includes obedience exercises and tricks -- all accompanied by music.

**The best book for getting started with Musical Freestyle is:**



[Team Dance: Guide to Canine Freestyle](#)

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## Can't decide which activity is right for you?



Then [Getting Active With Your Dog](#) might be the best book to buy.

You'll get an overview of obedience, agility, tracking, hunting tests, herding, earthdog, lure coursing, schutzhund, carting, weightpulling, skijoring, AND sledding.

[Click here](#) to order this book.

Whichever sport or activity you choose, dogs who participate in SOMETHING not only enjoy it, but become smarter, more confident, better-behaved, and happier! Help your dog be the best he can be. Have fun with him. **And thanks for reading!**



### **Longer Life For The Dog You Love**

My second eBook teaches you how to maximize your dog's health and lifespan! 14 steps you can take to reduce your dog's chances of developing health problems -- or if he does develop them, to greatly increase his odds of beating them. With the information in this eBook, you'll help your dog outlive other members of his breed -- and do so in greater health, safety, and comfort.

[You can purchase this eBook directly from my web site!](#)