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# Dog Owners Guide

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## Table of Contents

<b>INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>ARE YOU READY? .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>SELECTING A DOG .....</b>	<b>8</b>
Intelligent dogs.....	8
Dogs with little exercise.....	8
Good with kids.....	9
Good city dogs.....	9
Quiet dogs .....	9
Friendly dogs .....	9
<b>Decide what breed is best for your living environment.....</b>	<b>11</b>
• Evaluate your living space .....	11
• Evaluate your schedule. ....	11
• Anticipate future lifestyle changes. ....	11
• Evaluate your activity level.....	11
<b>MAKE SURE YOU CAN AFFORD IT! .....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>PICK A PLACE TO PICK A PUP .....</b>	<b>13</b>
Breeder .....	13
Animal shelter.....	13
Pet stores - Just say no!.....	14
<b>DOGS EXERCISES .....</b>	<b>15</b>
Different dogs, different exercise needs.....	15
Exercising the older dog.....	16
<b>BEWARE DANGEROUS DOG TOYS! .....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>PREPARE YOURSELF FOR TRAINING YOUR DOG .....</b>	<b>19</b>
Training.....	19

<b>Fixing.....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>NEUTERING.....</b>	<b>21</b>
What is Neutering? .....	21
What are the Health Benefits? .....	21
What are the Behavioral Benefits? .....	21
 <b>UNDERSTANDING DOG BEHAVIOR.....</b>	 <b>23</b>
<b>A Tired Dog Is A Good Dog .....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Your Reactions Affect Your Dog’s Actions.....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Dogs Do What Works.....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Be the alpha dog .....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Puppies .....</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Older dogs.....</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Abuse .....</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Reinforcement.....</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Housebreak your dog .....</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Teach your dog some basic commands.....</b>	<b>27</b>
Sit .....	27
Down .....	28
Come .....	28
<b>Teach your dog some fancy tricks.....</b>	<b>30</b>
Shake .....	30
Fetch .....	30
Door.....	31
 <b>OTHER DOG TRICKS .....</b>	 <b>32</b>
PLAY DEAD/BANG .....	32
CIRCLE.....	32
BOW.....	34
CRAWL.....	34
BACK UP.....	34
TOUCH/TARGET .....	34
TURN OUT LIGHT.....	35
JUMP OVER DOGS .....	35
WALK UNDER .....	35
SPEAK .....	36
WEAVE HEELING .....	36
CIRCLE ME.....	36
WAVE.....	36
HIDE YOUR EYES .....	37
BOOK ON HEAD.....	37
COOKIE ON NOSE.....	37
FIND IT.....	37

SNEEZE .....	38
GO THAT WAY .....	38
SAY PRAYERS .....	39

<b>OTHER TIPS .....</b>	<b>40</b>
The Crate As A Safe Den .....	40
Feeding your dog table scraps is not always healthy .....	41

# Introduction

Ah, the humble dog. Furry bearer of unconditional love, affection, companionship - and a rocket-powered babe magnet to boot. You can almost see your new dog right now . . . running in the sun, chasing Frisbees, doing adorable tricks, puking on the rug at 3 a.m., chewing up your entire porno collection, shedding on everything in sight . . . Still want a dog? Then step right up, you've come to the right place.

Rearing a dog is like rearing a kid. Some dog owners **PREFER** to rear dogs than kids. But rearing & caring a dog take up a lot of your time. That is why you got this e-book for more information about rearing a dog for the first time, or just wanted to get more information.

**Enjoy this e-book. Enjoy the journey.**

**Enjoy the times you have with your dog.**

No wonder people said that "**Dogs are man's best friend**"



# Are you ready?

**Here's the dog-owner's mantra, read it CAREFULLY:**

*A dog is a living thing.  
A dog is a living thing.  
A dog is a living thing.*

Got it? No? Here it goes:

***A dog is a living thing.  
A dog is a living thing.  
A dog is a living thing.***

If you want a dog because you think it'll look great in that new BMW you just bought at 12% interest, think how much fun it will be when it tears up the leather upholstery so thoroughly that even the repo man is impressed. This isn't like buying a new pair of shoes. It's closer to having a child: A child that doesn't speak English and occasionally eats poop. If that thought sends you screaming from the room, consider another kind of pet like maybe a fish or a plant or a pair of shoes.

Repeat the mantra a few more times.

***A dog is a living thing.  
A dog is a living thing.  
A dog is a living thing.***

If you work from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. six days a week, you're going to have a lonely, unhappy dog on your hands. And how do dogs show their unhappiness? In the absence of being able to say, "Pay attention to me, Poindexter," they'll do things like pee on your high school yearbook or methodically eat all your CDs. This isn't their fault.

All together now –

***A dog is a living thing.  
A dog is a living thing.  
A dog is a living thing.***

Here's a little "pup quiz" that will help determine if you are ready to add one more member to the family. Answer "yes" or "no" to the following questions:

- 1. Do you like dogs? I mean do you REALLY LIKE dogs?**
- 2. Does the health of your household allow for a pet dog? (Allergies, etc.)**
- 3. Does your building allow dogs?**
- 4. Are you financially secured?**
- 5. Are you OK with picking up dog poop, mopping up dog pee, or cleaning up dog vomit?**

If you answered "no" to anyone of these, then you're probably not ready to become a dog owner. That's OK though . . . you're still allowed to like them.

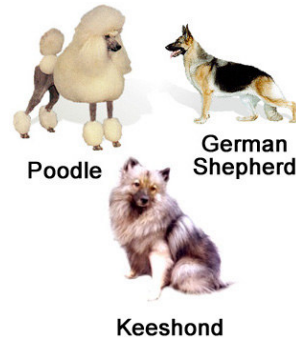
# Selecting a Dog

Decide on a breed that is suitable for your lifestyle or personality. Getting a pet dog is really a Zen process of self-discovery. You can't know the right dog for you until you know yourself. For example, a jock would prefer an active dog. A lazy slug would prefer a dog that doesn't require much exercise. A touchy-feely person would prefer a friendly dog. A tightly-wound person would probably prefer a dog that doesn't bark or shed too much. Think of picking a pup like choosing a mate; you have to find one that compliments your personality.

Here are some very general guidelines. Of course, we won't list every dog breed on the planet, but they'll get you thinking in the right direction:

## Intelligent dogs

- Poodle
- German Shepherd
- Australian Sheepdog
- Belgian Sheepdog



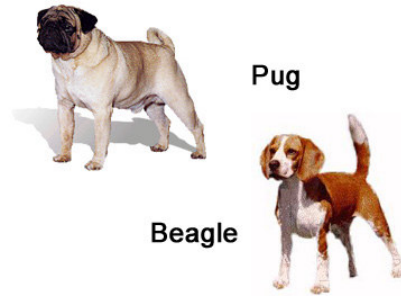
## Dogs with little exercise

- Dachshund
- Brussels Griffon
- French Bulldog
- Manchester Terrier
- toy breeds (such as a Chihuahua or Pekingese)



### Good with kids

- Pug
- English Cocker Spaniel
- Beagle
- Basset Hound
- Brittany Spaniel
- Old English Sheepdog



Pug

Beagle

### Good city dogs

- Pug
- Basenji
- Boston Terrier
- Bulldog
- Lhasa Apso
- Welsh Corgi
- Scottish Terrier

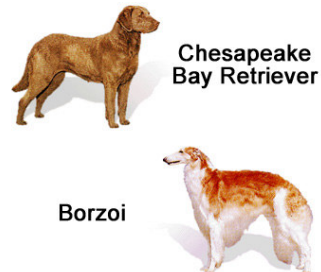


Basenji

Scottish Terrier

### Quiet dogs

- Basenji
- Borzoi
- Chesapeake Bay Retriever
- Greater Swiss Mountain Dog
- Whippet



Chesapeake Bay Retriever

Borzoi

### Friendly dogs

- Brittany Spaniel
- Bichon Frise
- Old English Sheepdog
- Bearded Collie
- Golden Retriever
- Labrador Retriever



Bichon Frise

Golden Retriever

There are dozens of breeds and dozens of traits to sort them by. You get the idea.

Again, these guidelines are EXTREMELY rough. Picking a dog based on these lists is like getting a phone number off a bathroom wall. There are no shortcuts. You can try going to a dog show or talking to a vet.

In our opinion, though, the absolutely best way to research is to **talk to friends who have dogs**. Believe us; they'll give you more information than you care to know: Sometimes even more than what we know.

In case you didn't realize it, all of the breeds we listed above are **purebreds**. This means that they are the product of parents of the same breed. To get a true purebred worthy of being in a dog show, you often have to pay thousands of dollars. Most people get mixes of some sort (the "cockapoo," a combo of a cocker spaniel and a poodle, is quite popular), because rumor has it that purebred dogs can have personality problems because the gene pool is so small (think of people who marry their cousins). As a result, many people choose to go with a **mutt**, a mish-mash of different breeds. Mutts can combine the best of two or more breeds in a one-of-a-kind dog. Having a mutt is like the canine equivalent of owning an original work of art. Benji was a mutt. And who doesn't like Benji?

Is this all sounding like too much work? Then go back again to chapter 1 and reread, because the work is just beginning. A dog is a living thing, but **millions of dogs die** every year because their masters didn't realize how much work caring for a dog really is. We're not trying to bum you out, but this is nothing compared to how bummed you'll be if you become one of those failed former dog owners.

## Decide what breed is best for your living environment

Now that you've got yourself figured out, it's time to figure out what kind of life you lead.

- **Evaluate your living space.** How much space do you have for a dog? Do you have a fenced yard? What kind of life do you lead? Do you want a great big dog, a little bitty dog or something in between? Sure, that Irish Wolfhound matches your eyes perfectly, but it's not gonna fit into your studio apartment. Conversely, that Chihuahua is never going to be able to navigate your 40-acre spread. It seems obvious, but no matter how well your personality fits a particular breed, you have to make sure that your living arrangements match it too. It would be cruel to keep a big dog locked up all day in a tiny apartment.
- **Evaluate your schedule.** How much are you home? How many times per day can you walk a dog? If you just thought "*per day?*" then go back to chapter 1 and reread it ten times. Some dogs are more independent than others, so if you're not around a lot, it won't do you much good to get a clingy dog. Always remember that dogs get lonely, and if you're gone for days on end (even if the neighbor pops in just to feed it), the dog'll still get depressed.
- **Anticipate future lifestyle changes.** Do you have kids? Will you ever have kids? *Are you sure?* You don't want to get into a situation where you have to put the kid up for adoption because he or she can't get along with the dog. Better to get a kid-friendly dog in the first place, just in case.
- **Evaluate your activity level.** Picture your idea of a fun time, and be sure that the right kind of dog fits within it. If you love to go hiking, a Yorkie's not going to be able to keep up. If you like sitting and knitting, a Border Collie's going to make your life a living hell.

Once again, do your homework. Talk to friends, vets, dog breeders, and trainers to find out which breed is best for you.

## Make sure you can afford it!

Whoever said that two can live as cheaply as one never had a dog? A dog isn't going to break you financially, but it is an investment. Over the life of the pet, you can expect to shell out as much money as you would on a decent used car (or a crappy new one). But really, which would you rather have - a Yugo or unconditional love? Be honest.

The actual dog isn't expensive (you can get one for **free** at your local animal shelter). Rather, most of the expense will be buying dog food. Ask your vet to recommend a brand.

Vet? What vet? The vet that you're going to take your dog to as soon as you get home from the shelter or breeder, Sherlock. Proper veterinary care is non-negotiable. Things like check-ups, shots, neutering or spaying, flea and tick control, and dental care will keep your dog in good running condition and win you a place in Good Dog Owner Heaven. Once a year is all it takes, assuming your pup isn't playing in the street or smoking a pack a day. But it's still an expense, and you should always have a little backup cash handy in case the dog accidentally swallows your eyelash curler.

Other doggie accoutrements that you'll need to purchase include (for starters):

- Big, sturdy, stable, unbreakable food dish and water dish
- Comfortable, strong collar or harness and matching leash
- Dog bed
- Grooming supplies
- Chew toys
- Current ID tag with address and phone number (really important!)
- Solid, roomy crate for transport (many dogs also use them as a safe sleeping place in the house)
- Warm, dry, wind-and-waterproof doghouse (but your dear little pup will be an indoor dog, we hope)
- Little knitted doggie sweaters are optional in cooler climates.

# Pick a place to pick a pup

## **Breeder**

Once you've determined the right breed for your lifestyle, one possibility is to go through a breeder. You can find breeders by looking in the classified ads in your newspaper (the prices are usually pretty steep, ranging from \$100 to \$3000, depending on the breed and the quality of the puppies). Alternatively, you can call the American Kennel Club at 1900-407-PUPS. The breeder reference person will put you in touch with reputable breeders in your area. Then call several breeders and talk with them; they're a valuable source of information about the breed you've chosen.

Breeders are a good route because you'll get someone who knows all about your breed of dog, so if you have any questions, you'll have a new friend to ask. Also, breeders generally take very good care of their dogs. So good, in fact, that they'll usually interview the prospective buyer to make sure that the dog is going to a loving home. The drawback about using a breeder is the price - you can get a puppy for free at a shelter. But if you're looking for a pretty puppy that you might eventually want to breed or take to dog shows, using a breeder is the way to go.

## **Animal shelter**

Also known as "the pound," shelters are connected with purebred rescue programs, giving you that purebred chic look combined with the warm, gooey, self-righteous satisfaction of rescuing a homeless dog. The benefit of a shelter is that 1) it's free (or really really cheap), and 2) you're saving a dog's life. The main drawback is that the dog could have some kind of personality or health problem (based on how it was treated before you got to the pound). That's a lot to deal with.

As long as you're at the shelter, consider strolling past the puppies and adopting an adult dog. Friendly, well-trained adult dogs will often wind up in the shelter through no fault of their own. Maybe their owner lost the appeal and got sent up the river for 20 to life . . .

...you never know. Actually, sometimes you *do* know. Many adult dogs come with a written history; some even come with the former owner's contact number so you can get a character reference. Adopt an adult dog and you can save yourself the heartbreak of housebreaking . . . and very probably save the dog's life.

### **Pet stores - Just say no!**

Here's a way **NOT** to get a dog. When you see those little puppies in mall pet stores, our advice is: run away. Many pet stores sell dogs from puppy mills. If you thought that the plight of veal calves was bad . . . well, you're right, it is. But puppy mills are right there with it when it comes to wholesale animal cruelty. They basically churn out puppies for pet stores, kill the ones that don't look like they'd sell well, and keep the live ones in awful living conditions. And pet store puppies that don't get bought are sent to the pound. You can get pet supplies from them, but NOT the puppies please!

Don't be fooled by the breeding papers they'll wave in your face. There's a special place in hell reserved for people who sell puppy mill puppies. It's just down the hall from the place reserved for people who buy puppy mill puppies. You're not rescuing the dog; you're perpetuating the puppy mill industry. Can you tell that we're against this yet?

# Dogs Exercises

## **Different dogs, different exercise needs**

All dogs need and usually love their daily exercise. The amount your dog needs will depend not only on his size, but also on his breed. Bear in mind that some smaller breeds, such as Jack Russells and Miniature Schnauzers, can have lots of energy, whereas some larger breeds, such as Newfoundlands and St. Bernards, are not always as energetic. While your dog is very young, he will get enough exercise by his natural playfulness, but as he grows up, take your dog for regular walks. However, do not allow your to come into contact with other dogs until he has completed his course of vaccinations and been given the "all clear" from your veterinary surgeon. However, it is important that your dog is socialized from an early age. Choose safe areas to take him where no other dogs go or where you know that dogs are vaccinated.

## **Guidelines for exercising your dog**

Whenever you are near a road, or wherever your dog is likely to cause a nuisance if he runs free, you should keep him on a lead. Both you and your dog will be much happier if he's well trained. Remember that not everyone is as fond of dogs as you are and you must respect their feelings. Keep your dog under control at all times. Part of your walk should take your dog over hard ground, as this will help to keep his nails short.

Don't make the mistake of over-exercising your dog if he's still growing, as his bones aren't yet strong enough to cope with the extra stress this puts on him. Little and often is the rule until your dog grows to full strength. Remember that large breeds mature later than small breeds. Ask the breeder or your vet for their advice.

Regular and varied walks are not just essential to keep your dog fit. They also give him the chance to explore and to experience new stimuli, including meeting other dogs. This will help him develop into a contented and well-adjusted dog, and avoid developing problem behavior.

Make sure you supervise all your dog's exercise. Do not allow him to stray and never put him outside for the day to fend for him while you're gone.

Remember that a good walk or run every day will keep your dog--and probably you, as well--in good shape, and will help stave off the problems of obesity. Medical and veterinary experts have observed that fat dogs often have overweight owners!

### **Exercising the older dog**

As your dog ages into a senior dog, he will tire more easily. His joints may stiffen and he'll become more susceptible to the same sort of muscular aches and pains that humans experience as we age. Fortunately, there are a number of drugs available that your veterinary surgeon can prescribe, if necessary, to improve your dog's mobility.

Older dogs often have deteriorating eyesight and their hearing, along with other senses (including smell) may also be impaired. They can easily become disoriented and lost if they get separated from their owner. So don't let your dog get too far away from you when you're out for exercise.

Although he may be less active, it's still good for your senior dog to maintain a moderate level of exercise. This helps to improve his circulation, keep his joints moving, and ensure he receives plenty of fresh air. It also gives him enough chances to relieve himself, avoiding accidents in the house, as he may not be able to control his bladder and bowels as efficiently as he could in his youth.

Take your dog for shorter, more frequent walks, but never force him to go beyond his capabilities. If the weather is wet, make sure you thoroughly dry him off when you get home. If the ground is icy or if there is salt or grit on the roads, make sure his paws are washed and dried well to avoid irritation that can lead to sores and infections.

When the weather is extremely hot or extremely cold, do not take your senior dog out for walks. His body may not be able to cope. Wait until conditions are more comfortable, and don't stay out too long.

## **Beware dangerous dog toys!**

Fluffy may love her ball of yarn, and Rover may chase after that darn stick all day, but pet owners must be cautious when offering toys to their pets. Many household items that become pet toys, either with or without your knowledge, can be dangerous-even fatal-to your furry friend. If not used in the appropriate manner, some store-bought pet toys, too, can cause problems.

### **Pet owners should take note of the following potential toy hazards:**

- Sticks and bones can splinter and cause choking or vomiting or they can perforate the mouth, throat or intestine. Hard bones can easily damage teeth. Instead, use hard, non-splintering chew toys to play fetch or to allow your pet to gnaw.
- A chewing pet can shred soft, latex toys. If the toy includes a squeaking mechanism, the squeaker can be easily swallowed or cause choking.
- A rambunctious pet, causing intestinal obstruction, can swallow towels, socks, underwear and other similar clothing or materials.
- Some dogs like to chew on or eat rocks-bad idea! Rocks can cause broken teeth and serious intestinal obstruction if swallowed.
- Be careful if you offer your pet rawhides, as these can also cause intestinal obstruction if swallowed, and some are preserved with arsenic, which is toxic to pets.
- Some cats enjoy hiding out in plastic bags, but if they get their head stuck in the handles and panic, choking or suffocating could occur.

- String, yarn, feathers and rubber bands often offer enticing play for cats, but these can be swallowed whole, possibly lodging in the intestinal tract and causing blockage. If only partially swallowed, this, too, can result in severe problems. For instance, one end of the string can wrap around the cat's tongue while the rest of the string is swallowed. If you ever see your kitty with string (or a similar object) caught in its mouth, NEVER try to pull it out. If the string is lodged internally, pulling it can cut the cat's intestines, killing him. Instead, see your veterinarian immediately.
- Be aware of sharp objects that can cut skin, feet, eyes or ears.
- For birds, bells can be problematic. Most medium-sized or larger parrots can take apart a bell and choke on the clapper.
- Leather, if not specially tanned, can be toxic to birds.
- Paint and wood preservatives can also be toxic to your feathered friend.

# Prepare Yourself for Training Your Dog

Yes, this article is about how to pick the perfect pet dog, but you should also know what you're in for once you get it. If you don't want to get a living hell it is important to train and "fix" your pup, and it's better to get this information sooner than later.

## Training

We assume you want a dog because you yearn for the companionship of an animal, not just because you want a new toy (unless it's a toy dog, which, by definition, absolves you). But getting the dog is only part of the equation. To create a wonderful companion and a happy, healthy dog, you have to put some time into obedience training. Just as time on the Stairmaster every day makes for a butt you can be proud of, so too will consistent daily obedience training make for a mutt you can be proud of. At the very least, you'll want to housebreak your pooch. Teaching commands like "sit" and "stay" will make your life a LOT easier. And if you go on to advanced obedience training, you too can have one of those superstar dogs that catches Frisbees and runs obstacle courses when it's not busy signing autographs.

The point: obedience training is how you get the best from your dog. It's also how you give the best to your dog: a well-trained dog is a happy dog. They're secure. They know that you're the boss and that you've got a plan. So keep training in mind when you get a pup.

## Fixing

Fix my dog? I didn't even know it was broken! But unless you're prepared to take care of 13 more puppies, you really should **spay** (for girl dogs) or **neuter** (for boy dogs) your dog immediately.

Millions of dogs die each year in shelters and on the streets, and much of it could be prevented if people had their pets fixed.

You might think that having your 'nads snipped off is a bad thing, but the world does not need more puppies. It needs people to take care of the ones that have already been born.

Next to getting married, having kids, buying a house or running a country, caring for a dog is the biggest commitment you'll ever make. You know why: *because a dog is a living thing*. Dogs feel pain, fear, loneliness, joy, love, and loyalty. It's all part of the dog-owning experience.

This ebook has focused almost entirely on the unglamorous responsible side of dog ownership. You already know all the reasons why you want a dog. We want to make sure you know what you're getting into. But if you take care of your dog properly and treat it with consistent love and affection, you'll be rewarded for your efforts more richly even than people who bought Microsoft at \$20 a share. Of course, your reward will be in companionship, not financial security. But who knows? If you train your pup well enough, maybe he'll be sniffing out hot stocks before it's over.

**Are you ready to train your dog?**

**If so, move on to the next chapter!**

## Training Your Dog

So you just got a new dog and want people to see that it can do more than lick itself (and others) in inappropriate places. Or maybe you've finally decided that it's time to show your old dog who's boss - the creature **wearing your expensive sneakers**, not the one pooping on them.

If you don't have a dog just yet but are planning to get one, keep in mind that while all dogs are trainable, certain dogs are more susceptible to certain types of training. Dobermans are predisposed to be guard dogs, while collies are herding dogs, and setters, pointers, and retrievers are hunting dogs.

### NEUTERING

#### **What is Neutering?**

Technically, neutering refers to the removal of the reproductive organs on both male and female animals. However, neutering, also known as orchidectomy, is most commonly referred as the de-sexing of male animals, removing the testicles. Neutering is best done before six months of age.

#### **What are the Health Benefits?**

There are a lot of healthy benefits to having your dog neutered. A neutered dog will not be susceptible to testicular or prostate cancer.

Neutering nearly eliminates the risk of perineal hernias, and penile tumors.

A neutered dog will not be as inclined to wander the streets and risk being hit by a car.

Neutered dogs are much happier when their hormone levels are not raging.

#### **What are the Behavioral Benefits?**

Behavioral benefits to neutering your male dog are many.

Neutered males will show a drastic decrease in the desire to mark territory. This includes inside the house.

Neutered males are less aggressive without the raging testosterone.

A dog who has been neutered young is much calmer in the house and outside. He is no longer driven to roam in search of a mate, reducing risk of being hit by a car. Neutered males are no longer subject to fits of escapism when a local female is in heat.

# Understanding dog behavior

## A Tired Dog Is A Good Dog

Give the dog the exercise he needs, and he will spend much of his day resting - not chewing, barking, digging, escaping, or destroying things.

## Your Reactions Affect Your Dog's Actions

If you allow your dog to be rewarded for some action, he's likely to repeat it. Consciously allow rewards to happen for actions you like, and prevent your dog from getting rewarded by you or the environment for actions you don't want to encourage.

## Dogs Do What Works

Dogs will act in ways that they've learned are successful, ways that gain them Good Things and help them avoid Bad Things. Behavior that is rewarded is going to be repeated.

## Be the alpha dog

To successfully train your dog, you must be the leader of your pack, or at least rank above him. **Always be firm and consistent with your dog**, as this will show him that he can't get away with everything, even if he really is the cutest thing alive. If you fear that you may already be underneath your dog in rank, don't concede to defeat and continue to let your dog hog the blankets at night - toss him off the bed. While it may seem mean, it's a good idea to show your dog who's boss by pulling rank on him occasionally. Make him get up from the couch so you could sit in his place, and eat your meal before feeding him his, even if he's drooling a lake by your feet. Don't act scared if your dog growls at you when you ask him to do things - just snarl back without touching him and stand your ground. Continue prodding him to obey you until he does.

## Puppies

If you have a puppy, make sure you begin training him as soon as he reaches the appropriate training age; this will reinforce his natural tendency to depend on others. It's also a good idea to start early because in no time at all, your tiny puppy will turn into a monstrous beast with paws the size of your face. You won't want to train "Clifford, the BIG RED DOG"

## Older dogs

As for the non-puppy owners, you've probably heard the saying "you can't teach an old dog new tricks." Well, whoever made up that line was either a very successful liar or someone who lacked the patience to really communicate with his/her dog. While it's true that old dogs don't come with clean slates, they *will* obey your foreign commands if you make it worth their while to do so. So don't fall for that fallacy.

## Abuse

You should **NEVER** yell at or hit your dog, no matter how frustrating training can get. Going ballistic only teaches your dog to be nervous around you and fear you, making it hard for him to concentrate on what it is you want him to learn. By the way, it's illegal to hit a dog, so if we catch you doing it, we'll throw your butt in jail.

## Reinforcement

Reinforcement through repetition and consistency is effective in training *anyone* - Lassie, a feral midget, even you. Habits, good and bad, are formed when an action is repeated over and over again with consistency. So during the process of training your pooch, don't give up the routine until he's got it. And even after your dog has mastered the following tricks, test him on them from time to time to make sure that he's still got it.

Remember Pavel's dog experiment? Though it shows human behavior in the experiment but it also shows a dog's behavior when you reinforce the same concept on a dog. This concept is important when you want to train your dog.

**Remember:** Repetition with rewards will reap the right actions/behavior.

## Housebreak your dog

The absolute first thing your puppy must learn is **housebreaking**: No, no, you don't teach your dog how to break into your house when you forget your keys. Housebreaking means he must learn where and when he may do his business. Besides being substantially advantageous to the hygiene of your household, dogs benefit from having rules and a routine - as pack animals, they look for duties issued by the pack leader and naturally enjoy keeping schedules. Here are the steps to housebreaking your dog:

1. The best age to begin housebreaking your puppy is **between 8 and 12 weeks old**.
2. Experts suggest incorporating a crate in a young dog's training process. (To housebreak an older dog, skip this section.) A crate usually resembles a cage, with a locking door and see-through bars, and should be big enough for the dog to move around in. While it sounds like a miniature jail cell, crates should not be used to punish your puppy. The idea is to make the crate into a doggy bedroom - someplace where your puppy can play and sleep. He should never be confined in his crate for more than two hours at a time.
3. Because dogs, thank goodness, don't believe in eliminating by their sleeping areas, your puppy will not relieve himself in the crate unless you've cruelly locked him in there for longer than he was able to hold it in. Three-month old puppies generally need to eliminate every three hours, so lead your puppy to a designated outdoor bathroom spot often.
4. Try to always leave the house through the same door - the door you'd like your dog to scratch at to signal his need to go out in the future.
5. Try to take your dog out at around the same times each day. A routine will eventually be established, and your dog will soon know to hold it in until you take him out.
6. If your not-yet-housebroken dog is used to roaming freely around the house, look for clues that tell you he needs to go. Your dog may suddenly put his nose down and sniff the ground intently. He may begin to circle an area. Or, he may stare at the door with an intense look on his face. Signs like these tell you to drop what you're doing and get that dog out of the house. If you catch your dog doing his business inside (and **only** if you **catch** him - not after you discover he's already committed the crime), rush over and stop him by grasping his collar, pulling up on it, and saying, "NO" in a deep, stern voice. Then take him outside to let him finish up and praise him with pats on the head or a pleasantly chirped, "Good Fido!" when he does. (Note: Don't say "Fido" if your dog's name is "Rex.")
7. Whenever your dog relieves outdoors, say "hurry up" and then praise him. "Hurry up" serves as the trigger words that will eventually make your dog go on command. That's right, if you consistently say "hurry up" as your dog is doing his business, those words will stick in his

mind as an indication to let it all loose, and soon he'll be doing just that whenever he hears the command. Those magical words will make a frigid winter walk much shorter for the future.

8. When issuing commands, use a deep, gruff voice. Even though most of your speech is just garbled psychobabble to your dog, he will notice tone and pitch differences in your voice. So if you normally sound like Angelina Jolie and you suddenly switch to a Tom Cruise intonation to deliver a command, he'll pay specific attention to what you're saying in the authoritative Cruise voice. Conversely, when you're praising your dog, use a high-pitched, happy voice and incorporate his name a lot. Throw in some excited squealing to really get the point across. You may think you sound ridiculous (and you probably do to other humans), but your dog will eat it up. Encouragement is really important, so ALWAYS praise your dog when he does you proud.
9. One final thing on housebreaking your dog - maintain your patience. We know that when the stakes are as high as cleaning dog waste off carpets on an hourly basis and having your entire house smell like a public bathroom, you want him to be housebroken as soon as possible, if not sooner. But losing your temper or giving up on your dog will only set back the rewarding moment when things suddenly click in his head: "I'm being housebroken! Well, why didn't you just say so?"
10. Your dog **WILL have accidents at first**, so don't complain about mopping up dog pee. To stop persistent accidents, just use common sense. If your dog tends to pee during the night, don't give him water before bedtime. If he tends to poop a lot during the night, take him out one last time right before bed, and wake up early to take him again. First cater to his schedule, and then slowly change it to yours.

## Teach your dog some basic commands

Around **12 weeks of age**, your dog is ready for some command training.

Pre-training tips:

1. You should hold training sessions with your dog at least twice a day and each session should be approximately 10-15 minutes long (shorter if either you or your dog get impatient or distracted easily).
2. When you first begin training, keep within a quiet, confined location without any distractions, then slowly work your way out to public areas.
3. The first step in training is to figure out what your dog likes so that you can reward him with a desired prize. If your dog is of the food-motivated type, prepare some small treats that don't crumble. The scent of a dirt-size crumb can drive your dog insane and distract him from the task at hand. You want to keep the treats small because you want to be able to give him a lot of them, yet you don't want the training session to be ended by uncontrollable barfing. If your dog loses interest in the treats, switch the type of treat. You may also want to try scheduling training sessions around mealtimes.
4. If your dog is more driven by petting or a chance to play games with you (as many small-sized dogs are), haul out the squeaky ball. Don't get caught up in the petting and playing during a training session, though. Just reward your pooch with less than half a minute of playtime and then get back to work.
5. For the following commands, you'll need your dog to be collared and leashed. Collars come in a variety of designs and materials, but a simple nylon one is fine, as long as it isn't slipping off or causing your dog's face to turn blue. If you use a choke chain, make sure it isn't made of chain link, as they can catch accidentally and choke your dog.

### **Sit**

The sit command is possibly the easiest command of them all:

1. Start by facing your dog with treat in hand.
2. **Show** him the treat and as he trots over, **raise** it up and over his head. In a desperate attempt to keep his eyes on the food, your dog will be forced to sit down.
3. **Say**, "SIT" (remember - Connery voice) as soon as your dog starts to do so.
4. Then **reward** him with the treat.
5. If your dog won't sit for the food, **kneel** down next to him, **hold** his collar in one hand, and **push** his rear end gently but firmly down until

his rump touches the ground while saying, "SIT." Then **reward** your dog with pats, ecstatic cheering, a party, or whatever else gets your dog's tail thumping.

6. **Repeat** this exercise until your dog sits following the verbal command alone.
7. Always use the same **motion** of raising your hand way over your dog's head while saying "sit." This will teach your dog to also associate the hand movement with the command.
8. Start doing without the treat occasionally (but still the praise) until he no longer needs the treat.

### **Down**

To get your dog to lie down, he must first have mastered the sit command:

1. After telling him to sit, **hold** your dog by his collar, **stick** the treat right in front of his nose, and **move** it downward slowly.
2. Your dog's accursed love of food will leave him no choice but to **follow** the treat down into submission as his restrained collar keeps him from frantically lunging at the treat.
3. **Say**, "DOWN" as he begins his descent and reward him only when he is lying fully on the ground.
4. If your dog's willpower is stronger than his appetite, **kneel** down next to your sitting dog, gently **pick up** his forelegs with both hands and arms, and **lower** him into a lying position while saying, "DOWN." By pulling his forelegs out, he'll be forced to slide down.
5. Then reward him.
6. Start doing without the treat occasionally (but still the praise) until he no longer needs the treat.

### **Come**

This useful command will get your dog to stop doing just about anything and come to you:

1. In the early stages of training, **never** tell your dog to come over to you for an unpleasant reason (he will associate "come" with negativity and be hesitant to do so).
2. Start by **standing** a short distance away from your dog with food or a favorite toy in hand.
3. **Call** out your dog's name and as his eyes zero in on the treat and he starts to walk towards you, **say**, "COME."

4. When your dog reaches you, **respond** by doing a jig in celebration of his sheer genius and giving him a treat.
5. As always, repeat this command until he is willing to come to you even if all you have to offer are your arms and the jig.

During the weeks when you're training your dog to do any of these tricks, if he does an action without your prompting (like if he just happens to walk over to you and sit down), go nuts over his great accomplishment, even though you didn't ask him to do it. Make a big fuss and gush, "GOOD SPARKY! SIT, SIT! *Good boy!*" At first, your bewildering actions will confuse your dog and possibly make him fret over your mental state. But because his major goal in life is to please you, he will soon plant his furry butt on the ground (or whatever it is you want them to do), just to get that wonderfully exciting reaction out of you again.

Any time a training session isn't going well switch to repeating a trick that your dog has already mastered, reward him for following your command properly, and end the session.

## Teach your dog some fancy tricks

Let's face it: with commands like "sit" and "come" under your dog's belt, you can take him out in public, but dog food commercial directors aren't pounding down your door. You want a dog that raises eyebrows, attracts comely (human) members of the opposite sex, and pays your bills. While all of these things may not actually happen, we can help you teach your dog a few more fun little tricks.

### **Shake**

1. **Get** your dog to sit first and hold his attention with a treat.
2. Then **pick up** one of his front paws and hold it very loosely in your hand as you say, "SHAKE."
3. **Don't grab** his paw or he'll get freaked out by the pressure and withdraw.
4. **Reward** him immediately and repeat the exercise several times before giving him a chance to place his paw onto your open palm by himself.
5. If he doesn't do it after a couple of seconds, **pick up** his paw for him, while saying, "SHAKE," and guide it into your hand.
6. Eventually, he'll get the idea.

### **Fetch**

You'll need your dog on a long leash or clothesline for this trick:

1. **Catch** his attention with his favorite toy and get him excited by **waving it** around before throwing it a short distance away from you.
2. As he inevitably starts to run towards it, **yell**, "FETCH!"
3. Once your dog picks up the object, don't walk towards him; **wait** until he comes to you.
4. If he starts to wander off elsewhere, **pick up** the leash and gently pull him towards you.
5. **Pet** him on his back and wait for him to drop the toy on his own. (If you try to grab it out of his mouth, he'll interpret it as a tug-of-war game.)
6. If a couple of hours have gone by and you're still waiting for the toy to hit the ground, **present him** with a tasty treat or another toy as an incentive.
7. Then as soon as your dog drops the toy, pick it up and do it all over again.

## Door

This is a great trick to teach your dog how to shut doors on his own:

1. **Situate** your dog and yourself in a room where the door closes when pushed towards the doorjamb. (Make sure it isn't a swinging door.)
2. **Position** the door to be only three inches open.
3. **Hold** a treat up against the door, at the height of your dog's nose.
4. **Tell** your dog to come.
5. As he rushes over to claim his reward, **lift** the treat up and away just before he reaches it, so his nose bumps against the door and it gets pushed forward a little.
6. As he comes in contact with the door, **say**, "DOOR," then praise him.
7. **If he doesn't touch the door**, don't reward him; just repeat the exercise until he accidentally does.
8. Have him push the door further and further, until it actually shuts. With consistent practice and patience, he'll soon be slamming doors shut right and left.

# Other Dog Tricks

This section covers other dog tricks that you can train when your dog has mastered the basics. Note that PATIENCE is the key to successful dog tricks. Remember Pavel's dog: Repetition with rewards will reap the right actions/behavior.

Most of the actions you see dogs doing in movies are just a bunch of simple tricks. If you learn these tricks, maybe you can be in a movie too. ☺

By teaching your dog to do each trick, you can have him/her capable of being a movie dog (or just a fun pet).

Some of these tricks help the dog in other sports such as agility and in obedience. Likewise, agility work can be incorporated into movie work. For example, dogs that can jump obstacles can be taught to jump in and out of moving cars, leap over people or other dogs, or jump in and out of windows. A-frame work can be used to teach the dog to go over fences or other high obstacles and dog walk training can be used to teach dog to walk along narrow walls, etc. The circle obstacle with the hole covered with saran wrap can be used to teach the dogs to jump through a window.

This list doesn't include tricks such as retrievals which are used often in movies or bite work. Bite work should only be done by a trained handler as you must do it properly to be effective. None of these tricks require special equipment. They are meant to be fun for you and your dog. This list includes some instructions on how to do them but there are many ways to teach the same trick. Use the one that works for you and your dog.

## **PLAY DEAD/BANG**

Agility Use: to get dog to down on table if you are having problems with this obstacle

How: With dog in sit or stand stay, point finger and pull hand up while saying bang. This action is similar to the down hand signal. Dog must lie down on side with head down. You may have to do in stages - down and side.

## **CIRCLE**

Agility Use: to improve corners and turns and weaving - helps increase flexibility

How: With dog in stand stay in front of you, give "circle" command and entice dog with food treat or toy to turn in circle. Don't encourage to "chase tail". Give reward when dog turns fully. Gradually give command from greater distances. For distance, it helps to put reward on end of pole and use to get dog to turn in circle.



## **BOW**

Agility Use: before doing agility, this is a good stretching exercise. Can also help on down contacts

How: With dog in stand stay, handler in front of dog, with reward (food treat) in hand. Move both hands in towards dogs front paws (above paws) while saying "bow". As dog extends head down for treat in a bow position, reward. This trick is eventually down at a distance and can be down from the side with a single hand command.

## **CRAWL**

Agility Use: Helps dogs who will not go through tunnel

How: Dog in down stay. Hold treat in right hand with left hand on dog's withers (farther back on large dogs). Move hand with treat up and down (short movements) while saying crawl. As dog moves forward, hold him/her down with hand on back. Move treat hand away from dog so dog has to follow to get treat. Reward initially after any movement and then require longer distances. If dog has trouble crawling, this can be down under someone's legs or under a solid chair or low agility table.

## **BACK UP**

Agility Use: positioning dog at start, repositioning if dog slightly overruns weave poles, general control

How: Handler in front of dog. Step into the dog, move hands towards dog in a pushing motion (palms up facing dog). Dog will have to move backwards as you move into it. Reward with "good back" as soon as dog takes one step. Best way to reward is to toss treat into dogs mouth. If you let him take it from your hand it is hard to get distance on this one. Leash can be used to move dog back if he has trouble. Wall keeps dog straight. Gradually stop moving towards dog as you give the verbal command and hand signal. When learned properly, the dog will back away from you in a straight line for extensive distance (depending on comfort zone of your dog).

## **TOUCH/TARGET**

Agility use: use to send your dog to an obstacle or to encourage touching contact

How: Train this one by first having dog touch a piece of paper stuck to the wall. Take dog to wall, command "touch" or "target" and touch the paper. When dog jumps up and touches the paper, reward her. Then place an object

on floor and send dog to "touch or target. Reward when dog moves to object and touches it.

### **TURN OUT LIGHT**

Agility Use: same as target - a fun trick to do that helps dog learn to go away from handler and touch or manipulate an object

How: Hold treat at light switch (make sure dog can reach the switch when on back legs. For short dogs, place on sturdy table at light switch). Give command "turn out light" or "light off". When dog jumps up to get treat make sure her paws hit the switch. Reward with "good light off/out", or whatever your command was. Gradually start to stand away from switch and send dog. Toss treat when dog jumps up and paws at light. You can also teach this by placing the treat on the switch so dog has to knock it off. This method may, however cause the dog to use the mouth to hit the switch more than the paw so it is preferable to hold the treat in the hand.

### **JUMP OVER DOGS**

Agility use: Practicing jumping obstacles, socializing with other dogs, being handled on obstacles from both sides

How: This is an interesting trick to do once you have a group of dogs that meet certain qualifications:

- Get along (i.e., non aggressive with each other)
- Keep a still down stay
- Good at jumping low obstacles

If you have this combination, this trick can look very impressive. First start with pairs. Have one dog in a down stay with the handler holding the leash short and a treat in hand if required. The other handler gives the "over" command and while on leash has the dog jump the one who is down. Repeat in opposite direction to get dog used to jumping on both sides of handler. Then switch dogs. When the pairs are reliable, put up to 6 dogs in down stays about 3 feet apart (depending on size of jumper). One dog (on leash to begin) jumps all of the other dogs. This is repeated several times for each dog and then they change places until all dogs have had a turn jumping.

### **WALK UNDER**

Agility Use: apart from teaching a long stretch exercise which is good for warming up, there isn't too much related to agility in this one but its fun and looks good.

How: Same qualifications for dogs as Jumping Dogs. Once all of the dogs can bow and hold it, line up dogs very close together and give the "bow" command at same time. Tell dogs to "stay" - handler holds treat close to keep attention. You need to use a very small dog such as a terrier for the next part. While the larger dogs are in bow position, the small one starts at one

end and walks under their rear legs. Trick is to keep the large dogs from lying down. This takes great concentration and muscle control by the large dogs.

### **SPEAK**

Agility use: none

How: This is usually a simple one to teach if your dog likes to bark at you. Trick is to get her to do it on command and from distances. First decide on a hand signal that is not similar to any other. You can use a motion of opening and closing thumb and fingers (facing the dog). Some handlers think this looks more like a mouth opening and closing. Other handlers use a closed fist, twisting motion. Tell your dog to "speak" at the same time. When she does, reward with treat immediately and say "good speak". If your dog doesn't bark readily, continue to give command until she gets really fed up with you and barks. Then quickly reward. She won't know why but if done enough, she'll get the message. Gradually give the command verbally only and then hand signal only. Increase distance to the maximum comfort zone.

### **WEAVE HEELING**

Agility use: improves flexibility

How: Start heeling off leash. Have a treat in both hands. As you step with right foot exaggerate the step and bait dog under your leg while saying "weave". Dog is to walk under your leg to your right side. Then as you take the left foot step, repeat to left side. Continue as you move forward. This trick takes time to learn and if you have a large dog it can be more difficult. The trick is to keep the dog weaving in and out under your legs. Once you have this one, you can combine it with the next trick (circle me) into a complete heeling pattern.

### **CIRCLE ME**

Agility use: circles improve turns and keeps dog focussed on handler. May help in direction changes

How: Start heeling with treat in hand. Bait dog while saying "circle me" and draw the dog around your body so dog is completing a circle around you. Remember to continue to move forward while doing this. Make it lots of fun and get dog to skip around you. This is a fun trick - not an obedience exercise. Change direction until dog can circle you in both directions. When you've got this down to a fine art, do two circle me's, 2 weaves, repeat, repeat. Then make up different combinations. For example: circle me, circle me, weave, weave, circle me, circle me, bow (and then reward). Note that this can take several weeks to get or your dog may pick it up very fast.

### **WAVE**

Agility use: none

How: Place dog in sit stay. Decide on a hand signal. It can be a circular movement of your hand like a wave or hold hand palm up and wave fingers in and out (as in making a fist). It is not recommended doing a real wave with palm facing down. It looks too much like the speak command and can confuse the dog. Sitting close to your dog give the command and hand signal. If dog doesn't do anything nudge her paw until she lifts it up. Reward. Eventually require her to lift paw higher. Always reward every time she does it. Eventually start to give command from farther back.

### **HIDE YOUR EYES**

Agility use: none

How: The dog can be in a sit or down for this one. The idea is to get her to cover her eyes with one paw on command. It will take some practice to find out the best method for your dog as we find they all respond to different signals. You may prefer to do it in a down. Then with treat in hand, tell the dog to "cover your eyes". Physically lift her paw over her muzzle and reward. If you blow gently on her nose, she may be inclined to swipe at her face. When she does this, reward. You have to just repeat the command and movement until the dog realizes what is needed to get the treat.

### **BOOK ON HEAD**

Agility use: balance

How: Find a book that is suitable to the size of your dog. Balance book either on head between ears, on withers or on muzzle. This depends on your dog's body shape. Hold the dog still with left hand and place book with right. Hold book while saying "stay". Eventually remove both hands (slowly) until dog is balancing book. Count to 3 and remove and release and reward. Idea is to increase time the dog holds the book. The ultimate is to have the dog come while balancing the book. This is a hard one so don't expect instant success.

### **COOKIE ON NOSE**

Agility use: none

How: Hold dogs muzzle and give "stay" or "leave it" command. Place a cookie on top of nose and continue to say "stay" or "leave it". Let go of muzzle. Dog must hold the cookie until you give a release command - "take it". Then she must catch the cookie in her mouth. This is a fun way to give treats and looks cute.

### **FIND IT**

Agility use: none

How: The idea is to have the dog use her nose to find a hidden object. This is good practice for tracking or utility work. First start with simple exercises.

Show the dog a treat (strong smelling ones work best). Then let the dog see you place it under the edge of a towel about 6 feet away. Let the dog smell the scent of the treat on your hand. Send dog and say "find it". Reward with praise when she finds the treat. The reward is the treat. Start to move farther back from the hiding place and move the location of the treat - put it further under the towel so it is harder to get out. Then leaving towel in same place, put the treat a few feet away from the towel and send the dog. The dog will have to sniff out the location. Eventually, you will place the dog with her back to the location and have someone make sure she cant see where you put the treat. Then when that level has been achieved, move the dog to another room, hide the treat, let dog sniff your hand and send to "find it". Give lots of praise. You can eventually move from food to solid obstacles such as keys, toys, etc. This makes the exercise into a retrieval.

### **SNEEZE**

Agility use: none

How: The object is to make your dog sneeze on command. The signal will be the handler cupping her hands around her nose and mouth and saying "sneeze". With the handler seated in a chair, have your dog in a sit/stay in front of you. Cup your hands around her muzzle, say sneeze and blow gently into her nostrils. Continue until she either snuffles, sneezes or makes any such motion. Reward "good sneeze" and treat. Repeat. This may take a long time depending on the dog. Some will sneeze immediately, and others will take a lot of work to respond.

### **GO THAT WAY**

Agility use: sending dog to a location

How: The object is to tell the dog to go in a certain direction and she will move wherever you point. First use a bait (can be food or toy). Place three baits - one directly in front of you about 10 feet away, one along the same line (10 feet away) to the right and one to the left. Dog is in sit or stand beside you on long line (or flexi). On command "go that way", point to the treat you want the dog to go to. If dog has trouble, toss a treat in that direction to get her started. Reward when she moves correctly. If the dog goes wrong way, stop her with the long line and direct again. Continue to give the command until there is success. Once dog picks up first treat point to the next one and say "go that way", and so on. The dog must pay attention and move in the direction you are pointing to. Eventually you will start to give commands when the dog is in a position away from you. For example, send your dog to the left (may have to toss a treat.) When she gets there tell her to "down" or "sit". If she does it, walk in and reward. Alternate commands until your dog will obey from longer distances.

## **SAY PRAYERS**

Agility use: none

How: The object is to have your dog put his head down between his paws on the command "say prayers" and to end the exercise on the command "amen". Start with handler seated on a chair, dog in sit/stay in front. Put a treat on chair between your legs. Tell dog to "say prayers" and encourage or lift both front paws on to the chair (NOTE: dog must remain seated). The action is similar to a beg with the paws resting on the chair. Tell dog to "leave it" so he doesn't eat treat and repeat "say prayers". Dog should stick nose down to the treat between paws. Then give release "amen" and reward with the treat. You may find this easier to do on a low table. While standing behind dog, guide paws on to table and encourage him to lower muzzle between paws towards the treat.

# Other Tips

Here are some other tips in caring and training your dog.

## **The Crate As A Safe Den**

People use crates for lots of reasons, like to help with housetraining or traveling. Our dogs use theirs to sleep in at night. But, the crates are also a great place of escape when a dog's world seems scary. When there is a big thunderstorm, the crate is the perfect size and shape to crawl into and feel protected from the noise and lights. Even a socialized dog that is used to having three or four people come over to visit can be overwhelmed when all the relatives arrive for a holiday - crates come to the rescue.

Crates not only give your dog a place to feel extra safe, they come in handy to actually keep them out of danger. When there are workmen in the backyard, the dogs feel secure in their crates, but they also won't accidentally be allowed to run in the street or get hurt by nails or power tools.

For thousands of years, dogs have had the instinct to den - so providing them with a safe den seems like the least we owners can do. The crate is cleaner than a hole in the ground, and it has the added benefit of being portable and lockable. Dogs are less likely to bark when they can see less, and they feel more protected when "danger" can't see them. What can make a wire crate feel as safe and cozy as a den includes a soft pad to sleep on and a tie-on cover. We prefer the carrier because it is solid (with ventilation holes). With either one, you just need it to be large enough for the dog to be able to change position. A larger one feels less like a safe den and adds the risk of it being used as a bathroom.

## **Act like a Dog When Puppy Bites ☺**

Puppies bite everything when they are getting new teeth, which helps the teeth come in. But, you do have to stop him from biting people. The best discipline is the kind that his mom would use.

If puppy bites, grab his muzzle with your hand and say no in a mean voice - "in his face." Then leave. Playtime is over.

If puppy doesn't get the message with this, pick him up by the scruff of his neck and shake his body while you tell him no in a mean voice. And, again, playtime is over.

For the really stubborn puppy, put him on his back and hold him down until he calms down and gets the message that you are top dog. If he is little, you can do this in your arms. For the larger puppy, do this on the floor.

Playing tug of war with a puppy encourages him to use his teeth in play. So can wrestling. Instead of these trouble-causing games, you must show him in the beginning that you are top dog. And that goes for everyone in your family. Your family is in danger of future aggression and real biting from a

dog that thinks that he is equal to or above any of you.

### **Emergency Remedy for Swallowed Objects**

What do you do if your puppy (or mischievous older dog) gets into your holiday decorations and eats some of the glass ornaments? This potentially lethal mishap can darken even the brightest holiday season.

THE PROCEDURE: BEFORE the holiday go to a pharmacy and buy a box of cotton balls. Be sure that you get COTTON balls...not the cosmetic puffs that are made from man-made fibers. Also, buy a quart of half-and-half coffee cream and put it in the freezer. Should your dog eat glass ornaments. Defrost the half-and-half and pour some in a bowl. Dip cotton balls into the cream and feed them to your dog.

Dogs less than 10 lbs should eat 2 balls which you have first torn into smaller pieces. Dogs 10-50 lbs should eat 3-5 balls and larger dogs should eat 5-7. You may feed larger dogs an entire cotton ball at once. Dogs seem to really like these strange treats and eat them readily. As the cotton works its way through the digestive tract it will find all the glass pieces and wrap itself around them. Even the teeniest shards of glass will be caught and wrapped in the cotton fibers and the cotton will protect the intestines from damage by the glass. Your dog's stools will be really weird for a few days and you will have to be careful to check for fresh blood or a tarry appearance to the stool. If either of the latter symptoms appear you should rush your dog to the vet for a checkup but, in most cases, the dogs will be just fine.

### **Some dogs get pretty scared in the bathtub**

They jump around, slip and fall, shiver and shake, and are simply miserable. In the process, you can get even wetter than they do. You spend most of the bathtime pushing and pulling just to keep him from jumping out of the tub and within your reach.

Instead of a bath, give him a shower. This is especially good if you have a hand-held shower head. Your dog should feel much more relaxed and less scared standing on firm ground than in a tub of water. You will probably stay much drier and may even get less of a backache. Your dog can get just as clean and get a more thorough rinse, and the wetting and rinsing process is so much quicker. Dry him off in the shower also so, when he shakes, most of this water will stay inside the shower instead of all over your bathroom.

### **Feeding your dog table scraps is not always healthy**

Some people food is not good for dogs (especially chocolate!), some people food is too fattening, and any amount of people food he eats lessens the amount of dog food he will eat - lessening his intake of the nutrients he needs.

**If you run out of dog food, cat food will do in a pinch. And, it contains even more vitamins and minerals than dog food. ☺**

**Does your dog really have doggy odor?** That is, even after a bath? What is causing the strong odor just might be an infection in his ears!

**If your dog doesn't like his nails clipped or the trip to the vet to get his shots, do your very best not to call him to you just before these things happen.**

Instead, just walk over and pick him up (or connect the leash to his collar if he is too large) and go. This way, he won't connect coming to you when you call him with the things he doesn't like - which could stop him from coming to you at all.

By the same token, if you call your dog and he runs through the entire house before coming, don't scold him when he does finally get to you. You don't want him to think he'll get a scolding every time he comes when you call him. In fact, start praising him as soon as he starts to come, which should encourage him instead.

**Some dogs have trouble coping when they are left alone.**

You'll know if yours does if he was destructive while you were gone or if your neighbors tell you he barked all day. You can teach him to cope, while reassuring him that you will come back - both leading to much better behavior and a much happier dog.

Just like with his first "stay," make the session so short that he is able to succeed. Then, make each session a little longer. He will relate your keys, coat or purse with your long absences, so be sure to take them as you normally would. When your dog is calm and relaxed, leave the room. Give no good-byes, and don't make a fuss. Take your keys and go into the bathroom for two minutes. When you return, ignore him, put the keys down, and go back to your quiet time together. Don't make it a big deal before or after, and he may not either. Also, the time was short enough for him to put together your leaving and returning. Later, make your bathroom stay last about five minutes, and eventually get up to at least ten minutes. Next time, leave the house and stay out for about two minutes. Then, continue these sessions until you are gone longer and longer. After each session, he should feel less panic when you leave, less anxiety while he is alone, and more confidence that you will return. Your coming and going will eventually become just a normal occurrence. It is also helpful to have a few of his toys in the room in case he feels the need to chew on something.

**A dog's excess tears can be caused by many things, including blocked tear ducts, abnormal eyelashes, corneal ulcers, a tumor or cyst on the lids or eyes, a foreign object lodged behind the eyelids, dyes in dog food, or dyes in dog bowls.**

A wet area on the face, no matter what the underlying cause of the wetness, can be a breeding ground for bacteria and yeast. And, bacterial infections commonly occur at the tear ducts, causing excess tears. Ptirsporium, a red yeast bacteria, is at the root of most yeast infections, and a yeast infection is the most common cause of tear stains. Tear stains also often occur at the same time as a gum infection or ear infection. Staining can also occur on a dog's paws from licking and around his mouth from infected saliva.

You could continually wash away your dog's tear stains, but that affects only the result not the cause. Putting a teaspoon of Natural Apple Cider Vinegar per quart of water in your dog's water bowl can clear up most active yeast infections and prevent future infections. Apple cider vinegar tablets can be used if your dog refuses to drink the treated water. A dog's (and human's) system should be PH balanced (between acid and alkaline), and apple cider vinegar adds the acid that many of us are lacking.

Apple cider vinegar (in its natural form from a health food store, not the pasteurized version from the grocery store) is a natural antibiotic, antiseptic, and deodorant; helps digestion and to remove tooth tartar; prevents tooth decay and hair loss (even mange), prevents and heals gum disease and skin problems; and will discourage fleas.

**Puppies are not too smart. After all, they soon think of you as their mother and of themselves as human.**

Well, maybe that is smart after all since both draw you two closer. But, they simply don't know the difference between that great rope with knots that pet stores sell for tug of war and your favorite shoe. This is where you need to show your superior intellect. You need to never, ever let anyone play tug of war with the puppy or you need to teach him to let go on command right from the very beginning. Otherwise, he will dig his teeth into your favorite shoe deeper and deeper as you try to grab it away from him. Tug of war can also cause him to become possessive enough to snap someday when someone tries to take a toy from him.

To get a dog let go of one item simply offer him another, which can be a toy or treat, while you give him a command ("drop it" or "let go" or "out"). Praise him the second he lets the item drop. If you don't pick up the item, you eliminate his desire to guard it. Let him pick it back up, you offer something else while saying the command, and praise him when he lets go.

Learning to let go on command could even save his life someday if he were to pick up something poisonous or sharp. You may even need to have him release his bite on a person someday.

**You will know when your dog's digestive system is too alkaline by the yellow spots on your lawn.**

A dose of one teaspoon to one tablespoon of apple cider vinegar (depending on the size of the dog) per day will correct the pH imbalance and should solve the problem. The apple cider vinegar can be added to the dog's water or put directly on his food. Two tablespoons of tomato juice on the dog's food twice a day will have the same effect.

Adding apple cider vinegar to your dog's diet has many other health benefits. And, you can use any vinegar to remove skunk odor by rubbing it full strength into his fur. As you may have guessed, tomato juice will also work.

**Chasing bicycles can be dangerous for your dog and the cyclist. He starts because it looks like fun. He continues because he wins. So, set him up to lose.**

Arrange for a friend to ride past your house while you are outside with your dog. When your dog starts chasing the bicycle, your friend should stop suddenly and yell "No!" as he squirts him in the face with a water gun. If your dog loves water, your friend can use an air horn instead. A third choice is for your friend to drop a sealed can containing lots of coins right in front of the dog. Your dog won't be expecting any of these things, and he won't like any of the sudden "shocks." Most importantly, he loses!

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