



PUPPY POWER BASIC TRAINING MANUAL



Dog Training & Behaviour Therapy Certification Courses

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Norma Jeanne shapes Rain to wave at 10 weeks of age



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Disclaimer

The Puppy Power Basic Training Manual is intended as a reference guide only. The information herein is designed to present you with a variety of training techniques to be used for basic dog training. Experience, your ability to apply the information, timing and consistency are required for successful application of these techniques. It's recommended that you learn how to read subtle canine communication and body language to better understand and safely socialize your dog. For educational opportunities contact Norma Jeanne – contact information on page 94.

Using any tool or technique incorrectly or with the wrong temperament of dog can have detrimental or ruinous effects on the dog's temperament and/or can be potentially dangerous. The results of any training or behaviour modification program will vary due to the behaviour of the handler, other animals and people in the environment including aspects of the environment and numerous other factors. Because these factors are out of our control, we offer no guarantees with this program.

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If you have questions please contact Norma Jeanne @ 519-954-2101 email @ 2puppypower@rogers.com.



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Spay/Neuter

Dogs with health or behavioural problems must not reproduce – they must be spayed or neutered because, along with health and appearance, temperament can be genetically passed on to the pups. Unless you plan to show or breed your dog it should be spayed or neutered to prevent the reproduction of unwanted pups or pups with genetic health or behavioural flaws. Following is a list of reasons to spay or neuter your dog according to the American Humane Association:

- They live happier, healthier, longer lives.
- It eliminates the constant cleaning necessary with a female dog in heat.
- It prevents undesirable sexual behaviours such as: marking, mounting, male aggression, escaping and roaming.
- Spayed and neutered pets tend to get along better with one another.
- Spaying females before their first heat greatly reduces the risk of breast cancer and completely prevents uterine infections and uterine cancer.
- Neutering males prevents testicular cancer and enlarged prostate and greatly reduces the risk for perianal tumors.

Over the years I've noticed numerous problems common with intact male dogs:

- marking territory both inside and out
- escaping to expand territory and mate
- mounting people/dogs
- inability to focus
- recall and training problems



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- more likely to be attacked by other dogs due to increased levels of testosterone
- more likely to challenge people
- more likely to fight with other dogs
- higher risk for resource control aggression
- acidic urine that can burn grass and has a strong odour

Gender

Please note that when referring to a dog I use the word “it” as a singular, neutral pronoun to respectfully refer to any dog whether male or female. This in no way indicates that I believe a dog to be a thing or object. It’s simply a way to avoid implying a preference to a male or female dog.

Three Goals

There are three goals I intend to achieve by the end of the basic training program.

1. Socialization – I want to nurture dogs that like new dogs and new people because dogs that like dogs and people are unlikely to bite them and dogs that bite are unlikely to survive. To accomplish this we’ll begin every class with off-leash play time.
2. Problem Solving – I want to help you solve any behaviour problems you may be experiencing because more dogs are euthanized for behaviour problems than health issues. Because we have limited time in class, please call or email me if you are experiencing behaviour problems and I’ll give you solutions.
3. Training – I want to open the lines of communication between you and your dog. This involves teaching you your dog’s language so that you can understand how dogs communicate with one another along with teaching your dog your language so that when you give an instruction your dog understands and happily complies.



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I Am Your Dog

I am your dog
I behave like a dog because that's all I know
Please accept, love and respect me for who I am
Teach me, so I do not annoy, frighten or hurt others
and protect me from those who would annoy, frighten or hurt me
Socialize me so I do not live in fear
Teach me independence because I am a social animal
and do not want to suffer when alone
Show benevolent leadership so we are never in conflict
Teach me manners so I can go with you
and meet all my needs when you are home or away
And when my time is through
please let me die with respect in your arms
so I may leave this world in peace
I am your dog, whatever you give to me
I will give back ten fold

Author: Norma Jeanne Laurette



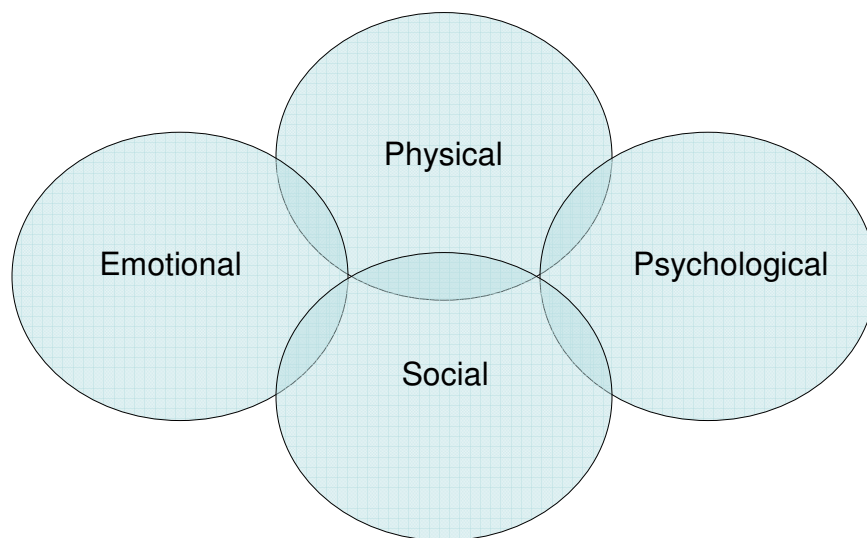
Kimo M'Daewin with Chris Johnstone-Laurette



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Introduction

Meeting Your Dogs Basic Needs



Physical	Emotional	Social	Psychological
Natural & Nutritious Diet	Stable Social Group	Stable Social Group	Mental Stimulation
Fresh Clean Water	Companionship - Human	Companionship – Human	Socialization
Sleep	Companionship - Canine	Companionship – Canine	R+ Training
Comfort	Acceptance	Acceptance	Consistency
Shelter	Love & Affection	Play – Human	Benevolent Leadership
Sufficient Exercise	Quality Time	Play – Canine	Games
Healthy Body Weight	Mutual Respect	Off-Leash Interactions	Safe Toys & Bones
Grooming - coat/nails/teeth	Personal Space	Personal Space	Exploration
Vet – Conventional	A Feeling of Safety	Self Control	Stable Environment
Vet – Holistic	Freedom to be a Dog	Communication Skills	Freedom to be a Dog

According to theorist Abraham Maslow, aggression is caused by the frustration of one's basic needs not being met. It can be argued that it's the same for our dogs. When a dog's needs are not met, it leads to emotional distress that can result in a myriad of health and behavioural problems.



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Dogs Need to Chew

Dogs need to chew and if you don't provide appropriate and enticing options for your dog, it will find something else to chew on. By putting away items you don't want your dog to chew and supervising and re-directing inappropriate chewing to the options you've provided, you can effectively fixate your dog on its own chew toys and save yourself a lot of damage and frustration. By providing your dog with its own toy box, your dog will know where to go when it wants something to chew.

Anytime you have to leave your dog alone, puppy-proof its space. This means putting away everything you think your dog may chew on, and spray with a dog repellent anything that can't be removed. After spraying your belongings, put some of the repellent on your finger and offer it to your dog. Dogs are curious and most will lick your finger when offered. Once your dog has tasted the repellent it will be less likely to chew anything with that aroma.

By leaving your dog with no options other than its toy box full of wonderful surprises, over time it will become fixated with its own toys and safe bones.



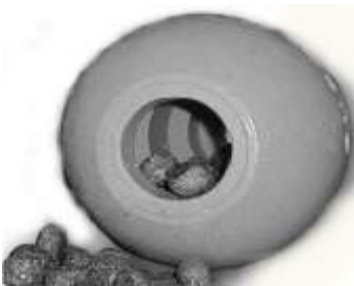


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Chew-Options

- Thick and safe smoked bones
- Thick and safe frozen beef marrow bones
- Stuffed thick and safe hollow marrow bones
- Stuffed Kongs
- Treat balls

Smoked and cooked bones can splinter, raw bones do not. Supervision is recommended when feeding marrow or smoked bones. The safest bones are raw marrow bones that are equally thick at both ends. When an end is wider than the rest of the bone it becomes thin and can easily be snapped off and swallowed.





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Norma Jeanne's Kong Stuffing Recipe

Soak your dog's kibble in water until it turns to mush then mash it up. You can stuff a hollow bone or Kong with the mush and freeze it as is or you can add small amounts of any of the following ingredients;

- fat free white yogurt
- pieces of lean meat or organ meat
- pieces of your dogs favourite all natural cookies
- pinch of minced garlic
- pumpkin puree
- mashed beets (could stain carpets and/or furniture – serve outside or on a blanket)
- pineapple
- sardines
- salmon or tuna

Mix the ingredients, stuff the Kong/bones and freeze.

Serve frozen

Dogs Need Sufficient Daily Exercise

Many of the behavioural problems addressed by dog trainers are caused at least in part by a lack of sufficient exercise. Although some dogs need more exercise than others, all dogs need sufficient exercise daily to meet their physical, emotional, social and psychological needs. Off-leash play and exploration in a safe environment is the most effective way to exercise a dog.



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Dogs Need Socialization

A dog that's not thoroughly socialized before sixteen weeks of age is more likely to experience a fear reaction to anything new after the socialization period is over. This dog is more likely to become overwhelmed and feel the need to defend itself, resulting in reactivity or fear aggression – the cause of most dog bites.

Socialization means exposing your dog to everything it may come in contact with throughout its life before its brain is fully developed, which occurs at around sixteen weeks of age. This includes, but is not limited to: adults, children, men and women of different sizes, shapes and colors, different sizes, breeds and colours of friendly and healthy dogs, accessories, glasses, beards, canes, wheel chairs, sights, sounds, smells, new environments, etc.

Remember, the window of opportunity is small and you can't afford to ignore it. Once your dog is well socialized, it will be better equipped to deal with all of life's changes and challenges with confidence and grace, and will have a quicker recovery if something startles it. Socialization is the foundation of a good temperament, and needs to continue throughout the dog's life to keep its social skills polished. If you fail to continue socializing a dog, its social skills and ability to communicate can decline, resulting in reactivity, anti-social behaviour and/or aggression when it meets a new dog or person.





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Benevolent Leadership versus Dominance

The first thing I want to ask is that you forget everything you've been taught about dominating your dog. The most educated and respected canine behaviourists in the field no longer buy into this theory. We're aware that we need to be benevolent leaders in order to teach our dogs and keep them safe, but we're now aware that dogs do not attempt to dominate people in order to rise in rank and lead the pack and that dominating a dog is counter-productive at the very least.

Intelligent and assertive dogs do their best to control resources, as this is a survival instinct. A dog that is good at controlling territory, food, water, shelter, etc. is more likely to survive should the need arise than one that is not. So the truth is – if we can control the resources, we can control the dog with no need for domination. With the understanding that the concept of domination involves intimidation, implied threat and forcing your dog into submission, we realize there are better ways.

The following two rules are the corner stones of benevolent leadership:

Rule # One – Ignore all Demands (with the exception of your dog communicating health issues or that it needs to go outside)

If you don't follow, your dog can't lead. So if your dog demands attention, touch, food, etc. pretend you don't notice. I'm not saying don't give your dog any attention – to the contrary, you can give your dog all the attention you want – just not when it's demanding it. This leads to rule # two.

Rule # Two – Everything must be Earned

Require your dog to earn everything it values by performing a trick or cue you've taught such as sit or down. What does your dog value? Most value real life rewards such as: off leash play and exploration, meals, walks, car rides, games, toys, safe bones, cuddle time and attention. There's nothing my dogs' value more than a run in the woods so, I use that to my advantage by requiring them to earn every "go play" in the woods.



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If your dog is required to earn everything it values you'll accomplish the following:

- You're always in control of the resources making it clear that you are the leader.
- Your dog is offering behaviours you like in order to earn what it wants without having to be asked.
- Your dog is responding to cues and signals without the use of intimidation, fear, force or negativity.
- You'll be training your dog numerous times per day without effort as part of your daily routine.
- Because your dog is earning real life rewards instead of food, fading the treats in training will not be an issue.

As you can see, used consistently, these two rules work to your advantage in many ways.

Following these rules will earn you the control and respect that you want while maintaining the trust that's crucial to your dog's emotional well-being, a strong human/canine bond and a friendly temperament.

Aggression Prevention

Assertive Challenges – Resource Control

- Ignore Demands – If you don't follow, your dog can't lead.
- Everything must be Earned – Control the resources by requiring your dog to earn everything of value.



Chili Morris - Photo Courtesy of TTL Photo



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- “Leave It”

Your dog learns to happily remove itself from whatever it’s focused on when it hears the “leave it” cue preventing possessive aggression.

- “Drop It” and “Take It”

Your dog learns to happily drop any item on cue preventing possessive aggression.

- Putting special treats in your dog’s food bowl while it’s eating

Putting special treats in your dog’s food bowl while it’s eating teaches your dog that people approaching its food bowl are giving instead of taking away. Because of this your dog prefers you in, instead of out of its food bowl, preventing food bowl aggression.



Cartoon by Chris Johnstone-Laurette



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Fear Aggression

- Socialization – If your dog likes new dogs and people, it's unlikely to bite them.



Cartoon by Margaret Ann Frank

- Protect your Dog – Protect your dog from those who may tease, frighten or hurt it.
- Handling Exercises – Teach your dog to enjoy being handled.
- Positive Reinforcement Training – Positive reinforcement training prevents punishment that causes fear, stress, anxiety and aggression.

Remember, every canine-behaviour, no matter how annoying, is normal and natural!

Don't punish – teach!



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Rules for Games *Dr. Ian Dunbar*

Games such as chasing, rough housing, tug-o-war and retrieval can be used to teach your dog to respect human flesh, if the games are played with rules. Games with rules teach your dog self control and increase your control over your dog. Games without rules increase your dog's control over you.

Rule # One

Use one cue to start the game, such as "let's play" and one cue to end it, such as "finished." It doesn't matter which cue you choose as long as it always means the same thing. You should always be in control by deciding when the game starts and ends. No exceptions! The game **MUST** end the moment you say so. If your dog doesn't stop playing on cue simply leave the room and close the door. Remembering Rule # One of benevolent leadership – Ignore all Demands, it's important to never begin the game when your dog is demanding it.

Rule # Two

Keep your games short to avoid getting your dog too excited. The longer you play, the higher your dog's energy rises making it more difficult to control. Thirty seconds at a time is plenty to start, followed by a "settle down" or self-control exercise. When your dog is calm, the game can resume. As your dog learns to control itself while playing, you can increase the length of your play sessions.

Rule # Three

When playing "tug-o-war" use one toy only, so your dog does not attempt to play the game at inappropriate times or with inappropriate objects. Keep your tug toy out of reach until you bring it out and invite your dog to play. When your game is finished, put the toy away.

Rule # Four

This is the **MOST IMPORTANT RULE** and must be followed consistently. If so much as one tooth touches your clothing or flesh, gentle or hard, accidental or on purpose, the game must end immediately. When your dog is biting clothing, you won't know how hard it's biting and if it accidentally grabs flesh as well, it could hurt. This rule will teach your dog to actively avoid using its teeth to keep you playing the game. A dog that's proactively trying to avoid human contact with its mouth is a lot less likely to bite someone.



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Begin by playing outside a bedroom or bathroom door. Sit on the floor and give your “let’s play” cue as this will entice your dog to jump on you and begin playing. The second you feel a tooth or your dog ignores a cue stand up, slip through the door and close it. When you open the door and your dog sits calmly for you, sit back down and begin playing again. If it doesn’t sit calmly, close the door and try again.

About Our Training

Although training your dog is easy, there are benefits to classroom training that you can’t get by training at home. Not only will you have access to expert help when you experience problems, every class includes off leash play time that will help socialize your dog to both dogs and people in a safe environment. Only through off-leash interactions will your dog learn the subtle communication skills needed to get along with other dogs and people, and as we know, dogs that like dogs and people are unlikely to bite them. If you’re unable to attend training classes you’ll need to find other opportunities to safely socialize your dog. Ask about Puppy Power’s Socialization Classes on Saturday afternoons.

Another benefit of classroom training is the opportunity to teach your dog to focus on you and respond reliably to cues in a distracting environment. If training on your own, it will be important to train your dog in numerous environments, gradually building the type and intensity of distraction in order to create a dog that will respond to you, no matter where you are or what’s going on around you. Make it easy for your dog to succeed by working with little or no distractions at the beginning then gradually build on your success.





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Effective training opens the lines of communication between you and your dog without the use of intimidation, fear or pain. You'll learn to understand your dog's language (body language) while it learns to understand yours (the English language.) When you ask your dog to do something it will listen, think and happily choose the correct response. Because positive training works, there's no need for negativity of any kind in dog training.

These techniques are designed to teach your dog to think for itself and choose the correct behaviour. By doing this you'll create a dog that's more intelligent, confident and resilient, and more reliable when you're not around.

Basic training isn't just for puppies – it's for any dog in need of learning self control, cues and signals. For puppies, training isn't just about teaching your dog to sit and come when called – you have but one opportunity to create your dog's personality for life.

This window of opportunity is the strongest learning curve in your dog's life. It ends when your pup's brain is finished forming at around four months of age. What your dog experiences during this time will be imprinted for life. Dogs can learn throughout their lives but after the socialization period is over, learning slows down and changing behaviour becomes more difficult and time consuming.

If a dog has not had pleasant interactions with a lot of people and played off-leash with a variety of friendly and healthy dogs before the socialization period is over, it can become anti-social, reactive and/or fear aggressive. And anything your dog has not experienced during this time can cause a fear reaction later in life. Because fear accounts for over 90% of dog bites, a safe and thorough socialization to a variety of dogs, people, environments, sights, sounds, smells etc. before four months of age is critical to survival.



Rain, Sylvia Gottschalk's Breeze & Mishka, Wile E.



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Cause and Effect Learning

Dogs don't know right from wrong and when we're upset with them they have no idea why. What they do understand is what's safe and unsafe, pleasant and unpleasant and they quickly learn what works to get them what they want.

Dogs learn by cause and effect and our complicated thought patterns do not apply. They don't do anything with the intention of harming another or upsetting us and they don't do anything out of spite as that motivation is unique to humans. They simply do what they are naturally driven to do, which is to obtain and hold on to valued resources such as food, attention, freedom and comfort. One thing we do have in common with our dogs is we both want to be happy and valued resources make a dog happy.

If a dog's behaviour achieves the desired outcome it will be repeated, if it doesn't or something unpleasant occurs, the behaviour is less likely to reoccur. If a dog's barking gets attention the barking will increase. If jumping up on the counter is rewarded with food it will continue to look for opportunities. If jumping on people gets attention it will continue to jump.

What you need to remember is that all it takes is the occasional reward to strengthen any behaviour, so if you only feed the dog from the table occasionally, the begging will still increase. Slot machines were programmed by psychologists to pay off only often enough to keep the person pulling the lever. This concept of intermittent reinforcement works the same with our dogs and because of this, consistency in your behaviour is crucial to successful dog training. If an unwanted behaviour continues or increases, it means the behaviour is somehow being rewarded. Are you rewarding the behaviour with attention? Even if you're attempting to stop the behaviour or are asking the dog to do something else, you're giving it attention – and attention is one of the most potent rewards you can give your dog.

Is the behaviour self rewarding such as taking food from the counter, barking or running off when you call it? One of the biggest secrets to solving behaviour problems is controlling the environment to remove the reward that results from unwanted behaviour.



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Positive Reinforcement verses Positive Punishment

There are three ways to train a dog. One is to motivate the dog, to teach and reinforce the behaviour you want, causing the dog to repeat the behaviour – this is called positive reinforcement training. Another way is to punish the dog for choosing incorrect behaviour, causing the dog to avoid the behaviour that caused the fear or pain. This is called compulsive or aversive training. The other is a combination of the two and is called balanced training.

Punishment teaches the dog to avoid the behaviour that caused the punishment, but it does not teach the dog what you want it to do. It also teaches the dog that the person it's supposed to trust is scary and unpredictable. That's not the relationship I want with my dog.

Punishment causes confusion, frustration, stress, fear and anxiety in dogs, just as it does in people. It's been scientifically proven that punishment makes it difficult to think, learn, remember, problem solve or make choices. Not only is punishment scientifically proven to be counter-productive to the learning process, it also damages the human/canine bond, is harmful to the dog's or person's emotional and psychological well-being and can harm a dog's temperament. The fact is that over 90% of dog bites are caused by fear and we should not be contributing to the problem through dog training.

On the other hand, positive reinforcement training makes training fun, easy and stress free. If you were in a classroom setting how would you prefer to learn? Would you rather learning be fun and rewarding or scary and stressful? I think we can all agree that our goal is to nurture mutual respect based on trust – not fear. The great news is that positive training works so there's no need for negativity. Fun training is effective training!

Dog's Name

Saying your dog's name should mean "do what I say next" which tells the dog that something good is about to happen. If you call your dog's name when it's in trouble, it associates its name with something unpleasant happening and may hesitate when you call it. To ensure a quick and reliable recall you should only call your dog's name when something pleasant is about to follow. If you call your dog's name repeatedly, waiting for it to pay attention to you before giving your cue, the dog will pay less attention when you call it. Its effect will become diluted causing a delayed response. Therefore, it's important to call your dog's name *only once* before giving any cue.



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Training Cues

Humans are creatures of habit and as humans we tend to repeat ourselves until we get a response. If we want our dogs to respond to our cues the first time we have to stop repeating ourselves. To avoid repeating yourself, don't ask your dog to do anything it's not capable of doing under the circumstances due to distraction etc. Set your dog up to succeed and always finish what you started, but remember, give your cues only once and only when you're sure your dog will respond.

Feeding Schedule

Your dog will be easier to train with training treats if it has an appetite and easier to housebreak if on a feeding schedule. This means that food must be picked up after each meal. If food is available all the time it becomes less valuable and may not work to get your dog's attention when you need it to. Remember, the more distracted the dog, the more aromatic the treat needs to be to get its attention. It will also be easier to predict when your dog will need to eliminate if it's on a feeding schedule.

Training Treats

Training treats are a temporary training tool to be used properly then put away. Remember, any tool is only as good as the person using it. We'll use treats to create and polish behaviours and put behaviours on cue, then fade the training treats away replacing them with other valued rewards such as attention, praise, walks, car rides, games, etc. Imagine you're building a table using screws and a drill. If you put the drill away before the last leg is secure your table will fall over. However, once your table is stable you'll no longer need your drill. If a leg comes loose, you'll bring the tool back to tighten the leg then put it away once again.

Some dog owners want their dogs to respond to their cues without any type of motivation but that type of response only comes from intimidation and fear. The truth is that anything with a brain – animal or human – requires motivation. Ask yourself, would you continue to go to work if they stopped paying you? Also ask yourself what type of relationship you want with your dog. Do you want respect based on fear or trust? There are many ways to motivate and reward your dog and food is just one of them. Once your dog is trained you'll not require food to get a response but can instead motivate and reward your dog with other things it values.



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Used properly, food rewards, also called training treats, serve the following purposes:

- to motivate your dog to think and make choices
- to lure your dog's body preventing the need for physical manipulation
- to reinforce the desired behaviour making it more likely your dog will repeat the behaviour and understand the meaning of the cue

Once your dog understands each cue and signal we'll take the following steps to fade the treats/rewards;

1. First we'll begin by asking for more responses for each treat reward, requiring the dog to work harder for its rewards. We'll reinforce the behaviour intermittently meaning the dog knows the treat is coming – it just doesn't know when. The dog keeps offering the behaviour in anticipation of the eventual reward. Like the slot machine, the secret to rewarding intermittently is to only reward the dog often enough to keep it playing your game.
2. Next, we'll remove the treats from our body so our dog's response doesn't depend on the presence of food.
3. Then we'll gradually replace the food with other real life rewards that are valuable to your dog, things it will receive daily anyway such as meals, walks, car rides, games, toys, safe bones, cuddle time, attention, off leash play and play with doggy friends.

Training with treats is simply the quickest, easiest, most positive and effective way to teach a new behaviour, strengthen a weak one, or shape behaviour into a polished product.





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Reward Marker

We'll also be using a verbal reward marker to mark the moment our dog gives us the behaviour we want. This is important because a dog can do so many things within a short period of time. If you give the treat at the wrong time, not only will you confuse your dog, the very behaviour you may wish to fade could be accidentally rewarded. For example, if you ask your dog to sit and it complies, then it pops up as you give it the treat, you've just rewarded the dog for jumping up instead of sitting.

The verbal reward marker we use is the word "YES." We'll use this word to mark the moment the dog gives us a correct response. This will speed up the learning process because your dog will know exactly which behaviour earned the reward and which behaviour will work in the future. Remember, it's all about cause and effect.

It's Just a Game

From your dog's perspective training is just a game. The name of the game is "what the heck do they want now?" Once your dog figures out which behaviour earns the reward, it'll be happy to comply.

Timing of Reinforcement

Because your dog lives in the moment, the timing of your reward marker must be perfect. Your dog can perform numerous behaviours in a short period of time so if the timing of your reward marker is off you'll confuse your dog.

Many people think taking a dog to the scene of the crime (soiled carpet, chewed shoes, etc.) and punishing it will teach the dog not to pee on the carpet or chew shoes when in fact the dog doesn't have a clue what you're upset about. If you catch it in the act, quickly re-direct the dog to something more suitable, then set it up for success next time by taking it out more often and only leaving out acceptable chew toys.



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Length of Sessions and Number of Repetitions

It's best to train your dog three to four times a day for five to ten minutes at a time. You can train more often if you wish, but keep the lessons short making sure you don't work beyond your dog's attention span. Remember, good trainers quit before the dog does. Choose your goals and proceed with patience and consistency. If you break up your training sessions with play time, not only will your dog view training as part of the game instead of the end of the fun, you'll have installed a reliable on/off switch for your dog's attention, excitement and energy.

Another easy way to polish your basic training exercises is to follow the "Everything Must Be Earned" rule, which requires your dog to earn everything of value each day by asking it to first perform a cue it knows. By doing this you'll be training numerous times per day as part of your daily routine.

Create the Behaviour before Adding the Cue

When teaching any new behaviour, our rule of thumb is to create the behaviour first, then add the word cue and signal because if you ask your dog to do something it doesn't understand you'll simply confuse your dog. Understand that our words are a different language for your dog. Until it's been taught what each cue means, it won't understand what you want or how to respond.

Ask for the Cue before Adding the Hand Signal

Because your dog's language is body language, and because you'll be using body language to lure your dog into the sit, down and stand positions, it will respond to your body cues (its language) instead of attempting to figure out what the word means (our language) because it's easier. In order to learn the meaning of a word cue we must give the cue first, give the dog a couple of seconds to think and choose the correct response – then give the hand signal to show it what that word means. When the dog hears the cue, then sees the hand signal, it associates the word cue with the language it already understands, in turn, learning the meaning of the word. This will prevent your dog from defaulting to its language and allow it to learn yours.



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Fading Treats

Fading treats as soon as your dog understands the cue and signal is important to prevent creating a dog that only responds when it sees food. When this happens the treat is no longer a reward, it becomes a bribe. We'll use two techniques to fade the treats:

- Intermittent Reinforcement – Intermittent reinforcement means your dog can't predict when the next treat is coming and keeps working to earn the eventual reward. For intermittent reinforcement to be effective you must reward the dog often enough to keep it trying.
- Real Life Rewards – If your dog earns a variety of valued resources it will learn that good things happen when it responds to your cues but it doesn't have to be food. For more information see "Rewards" on page 30.

Thirteen Rules for Successful Training

1. Sufficient Exercise

One of the biggest contributors to behaviour problems is a failure to meet the dog's basic needs and one of the biggest culprits is non-existent or insufficient exercise. Imagine a bucket of energy that symbolizes your dog's exercise needs, this bucket must be emptied one way or another each and every day. If energy remains unspent it causes stress and anxiety for the dog that will be released through a variety of behavioural problems such as but not limited to; barking, chewing, digging, reactivity and attention-getting behaviours. A short walk around the block isn't going to cut it. Your dog needs to run, it needs mental stimulation and safe and suitable socialization. Remember, happy, tired and satisfied dogs get in less trouble.

2. A Natural and Nutritious Diet

A quality, natural and nutritious diet is crucial to your dog's health, performance, behaviour, and over-all well being.



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3. Live in the Moment

Since your dog lives in the moment, you must be focused and centered when training and reward the desired behaviours the millisecond they occur. If you or your dog is not feeling well, postpone your training for another time because it's better to do nothing than the wrong thing.

4. A Positive Attitude

A positive attitude is crucial to effective training. You must be patient and never lose your temper, as trust is the key to reliable responses and a good relationship with your dog. Keep all your training lessons short and fun, and be generous with your praise and encouragement. If your dog enjoys training, it will learn faster and will respond because it enjoys working with you, not because it's afraid of you.

5. Mix Up Your Rewards

Use a variety of rewards such as attention, praise, touch, food, toys, games, walks, "go play" with a doggy friend etc. to reinforce correct responses and desired behaviours. Anything of value to your dog is a good motivator and reward. By mixing up your rewards you can prevent your dog from becoming reliant upon food or expecting any particular reward.



Harley sits – Margaret Ann throws the ball



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6. Work as a Team

Every member of your household needs to establish mutual respect, trust and control if they are ever to be left alone with your dog. By working as a team, not only are you sharing the responsibilities, you'll make learning easy for your dog by being consistent.

7. Ignore Unwanted Behaviour

Ignore all unwanted behaviours that can be ignored such as demanding attention, barking at you, jumping on you, puppy biting etc. With the understanding that attention is one of the most potent rewards you can give a dog, punishing the dog may inadvertently reward the unwanted behaviour. Punishment can also cause fear, stress, anxiety and distrust which could harm your bond with your dog, your dog's emotional and psychological well-being and your dog's temperament.

8. Praise Desired Behaviour

Human nature tends to focus on what we don't like and ignore the things we do like. Since touch and attention are two of the most potent rewards we can give our dogs, along with ignoring the behaviour we don't want, it's also important to look for opportunities to reinforce behaviours we like such as sitting, chewing appropriate items, controlling their barking, etc.

9. Eliminate the Stress

Stress is a known cause of physical and mental illness, therefore it's important to keeping day-to-day life as stress free as possible. The biggest gift you can give your dog, yourself, and in fact everyone you meet – is to be happy. If you have problems solve them, because until you are truly happy your dog can never be.

10. Take it on the Road

If you only train your dog in your living room that's the only place you'll have control. When you take your dog for a walk there's a world full of opportunities to work the distractions that may otherwise work against you. In order to set your dog up for success, begin with no distractions with a simple exercise such as "watch me." As you practice your exercises, your dog's



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responses will become quicker and stronger. Then you can begin to raise the criteria by asking for a response when there are distractions at a distance, then a bit closer, etc. Let your dog set the pace and remember – a good trainer always quits before the dog does. If your dog's not responding, you've set the bar too high.

11. Consistency

Consistency is essential to successful training. Inconsistency will confuse your dog and slow down the learning process.

12. Physical Causes for Lack of Compliance

On more than one occasion I've had dogs in class that hesitated to sit, lie down, or respond to cues, it appeared to be difficult for them. I recommended a vet check up and chiropractic assessment. After addressing a health concern or an adjustment or two from a reputable chiropractor these dogs moved easily and responded to cues. Keep in mind that non-compliance is not always behavioural – some times there are physical causes.

13. Don't Punish – Teach!

Let your dog know what you expect, set it up to succeed and reward the behaviour you want. Don't punish your dog for something you've not yet taught or for normal canine behaviours. Instead, control the environment so your dog can't get in trouble in the first place (as you would raising a toddler), then teach it what you want it to do. If your dog is doing something you don't want, instead of saying "no" or punishing it for the unwanted behaviour, show it what you want and reward that behaviour. Never be afraid to ask for help!



Brenda Divita and Norma Jeanne train Skye for four live performances of "Annie"



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Week One – Exercise One – Rewards & Reward Marker

Rewards

Anything of value to a dog can be used as a reward. Training treats are only one option. Use real life rewards as often as possible when practicing at home, such as: attention, meals, walks, car rides, cuddle time, games, toys, bones, off leash play, play with doggy friends, etc. If you do this, eliminating training treats will not be an issue because your dog will have learned to work for rewards other than food. If your dog's favorite toy is a potent reward, feel free to bring it to class.

If you're using food treats as your reward, it's important to make sure they're soft and have a lot of aroma to keep your dog's attention. They need to be small enough to prevent your dog from filling up too quickly and they need to be healthy for obvious reasons. Avoid treats that are difficult to break into small pieces and those with food colourings, preservatives or meat byproducts. We'll use a lot of treats at the beginning then will fade them as your dog learns the meaning of each cue and signal. This will ensure your training treats do not become bribes and that you maintain reliable responses without them.

Use real life rewards during playtime by rewarding your recall with another "go play." This will teach your dog that coming when called is part of the game and not the end of the fun. The most valuable reward to most dogs in any social setting is play time. If we call our dogs to us and reward them for coming with another play session, we'll be turning their biggest distraction into their biggest reward. Instead of sabotaging your recall, this distraction will work to your advantage.

Positive reinforcement training enables us to train our dogs without the use of intimidation, pushing or punishing by teaching our dogs to think and make the correct choices for themselves. Eliminating negativity from dog training makes training more enjoyable for both you and your dog. It creates a better trained dog of higher intelligence while building trust, confidence and a strong human/canine bond. This is important because even a well-trained dog with a bad temperament is unlikely to survive.





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Some clients comment that they don't want to use treats in training because they won't always be handy and they're afraid their dog will become dependent on the treats in order to respond to their cues. The truth is, used properly, training treats are the quickest way to teach new behaviour and they're only temporary.

Reward Marker

Because a dog can perform numerous behaviours within a few seconds, timing the reward can be tricky. If you ask the dog to sit and it complies – then stands up as you give the treat, you'll be rewarding the wrong behaviour and confusing the dog. To prevent this problem we will use a verbal reward marker to mark the moment the dog gives us the desired behaviour. Our reward marker will be the word "YES."

You're welcome to choose a different reward marker as long as you're consistent, however I suggest you avoid using reward markers such as "good-dog" as we use these words on a regular basis and the reward marker must have only one meaning to the dog.

Purpose

The purpose of this exercise is to teach your dog that your reward marker means it has made the correct choice and has earned its reward.

Procedure

1. Allow your dog to sniff a training treat, give your reward marker "YES" and reward your dog.
2. Repeat five times.

Be careful to avoid rewarding any unwanted behaviour such as barking or jumping up. Only use your reward marker when your dog is quiet, standing with all four paws on the ground, sitting or lying down.



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Week One – Exercise Two – Offering Sits

Purpose

The purpose of this exercise is to teach your dog that sitting makes good things happen and that it doesn't get anything it wants until it is sitting.

Don't use the cue to sit for this exercise as this exercise requires your dog to choose to sit without being asked. This way, the dog learns to sit when it wants anything and creates good manners.

Procedure

1. Allow your dog to sniff the training treat then stand up and wait. The moment your dog's butt hits the ground give your reward marker "YES" and reward your dog with a treat.
2. Step away from your dog so it stands to follow you and repeat.

With a few repetitions your dog will realize that sitting makes good things happen.



Margaret Ann ignores Harley when he jumps up and rewards him when he sits



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Week One – Exercise Three – Targeting

Purpose

The purpose of this exercise is to teach your dog to focus on the treat.

This will allow you to move your dog's body by luring the dog into each position avoiding the need for any type of physical force or manipulation.

Procedure

1. Allow your dog to sniff the treat then move it from side to side allowing your dog to follow with its nose.
2. Reward your dog for following the treat.



Greg moves the treat from side to side allowing Leia to follow (target) the treat

Note

If your dog will not target the treat:

- Put your dog on a feeding schedule to make food more valuable.
- Hand feed your dog every piece of food for a week or two to teach your dog to focus on your hands.
- Choose a treat that's more enticing (aromatic) to your dog.

It's not uncommon for dogs to ignore food when distracted or afraid. If this is the case, allow time for your dog to adjust to the environment before attempting this exercise. Once your dog is targeting the treat you can begin training. Never force your dog if it's not complying. Always let your dog set its own pace.



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Week One – Exercise Four – Luring into Sit, Down & Stand

Purpose

The purpose of this exercise is to create the positions of "sit," "down," and "stand" without any physical force or manipulation.

Avoid the use of any cues at this time.

Procedure

1. Choose the hand you prefer to use when giving your hand signals. By using only one hand to signal, your dog will learn to focus on the signaling hand making learning easier.
2. Hold three treats in your signal hand.
3. If your dog is moving around excitedly, hold its collar with your other hand to prevent excess movement.
4. Hold the treat in front of your dog's nose and move it from side-to-side to ensure targeting. If you can move your dog's nose you can move its entire body.

Luring Into Sit

5. Place a treat in front of your dog's nose. Move it slowly between your dog's eyes, then ears, then over its head. Your dog's head will go up as it follows the treat. The loss of balance this creates causes most dogs to sit.
6. The moment your dog's rear end hits the ground give your reward marker "YES" and reward your dog with a treat.





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Alternatives

- Offering Sits – Not all dogs will sit when lured. For some dogs it's better to show them the treat and wait for the sit. (See Week One – Exercise Two – Offering Sits on page 34)
- Hold the Treat out of Reach – Other dogs respond better if you show them the treat then hold it out of reach above their heads because it's easier to see the treat when sitting.



Note

- If your dog is jumping for the treat, you'll need to either move it closer to its nose for luring (page 34) or further out of reach as shown above.

Luring Into Down

1. To move your dog from the sit to the down position, keeping your momentum from the sit position, immediately place another treat in front of your dog's nose with your palm facing the floor. Slowly move the treat down your dog's chest to the floor until it lies down.
2. The moment your dog lies down, give your reward marker "YES" and reward your dog with a treat.





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Alternatives

Some dogs will not follow the lure into the down position. This is a common problem with small breeds and fearful dogs.

- Leg Bridge with a Lure – Sit on the floor with one knee raised just enough to allow your dog to fit under your leg. Lure your dog under your leg with a treat causing it to lie down as it crawls through the small opening. The moment it lies down give your reward marker and reward your dog with a treat.



Once your dog is lying down quickly you can switch back to the lure. Switching back is necessary because your lure movement will soon become a hand signal.

- Leg Bridge with a Trail of Treats - For dogs that will not follow a lure under your leg, your other option is to create a trail of treats for your dog to follow. The moment your dog lies down give your reward marker “YES” and reward your dog with a bigger treat.





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- Arm Bridge – You may choose to use your arm instead of your leg as a bridge and can choose between the trail of treats and the lure. Remember, when using an arm or leg bridge, you are not pushing down on the dog – you are simply providing an opening that requires the dog to lie down in order to crawl through it.



- Capturing – It's not uncommon for timid or fearful dogs to avoid lying down in what they perceive to be a threatening environment. If your dog won't respond to the above techniques even at home, you can capture the behaviour at home by having your treats handy. When you notice your dog circling or preparing to lie down, quietly give your "down" cue. The moment it lies down give your reward marker "YES" and reward your dog with a treat.

When this is going well, try one of the above techniques. When your dog is responding at home, practice in other locations with low distraction. As your dog's confidence increases at the training facility and in new environments, your dog will perform there as well.

Note

- It's easier for a dog to lie down from a sit than it is from a stand position, so if your dog stands up, lure it back into the sit position and try again.
- If your dog stands up instead of lying down, avoid moving the treat away from your dog's chest or it may stand up to walk to the treat. Because every dog is different, some respond better if the treat *is* moved down its chest then across the floor away from it.
- If you lose your dog's attention, get your dog focused on the treat and try again, this time moving the treat more slowly so it stays on your dog's nose as you lure into the down position.



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- With a few repetitions this position change will become easy for your dog.
- If you're having difficulty achieving the down position, don't reward the dog for sitting, only for lying down. This way it learns that lying down is the only way to get the treat and it speeds up the learning process.
- When luring your dog into a down position, hold your treats in the palm of your hand with the palm of your hand facing the ground. This causes a "bridge" effect giving your dog the illusion that it must get under your "bridge" in order to get the treat.



Luring Into Stand

1. Lure your dog from the down into a stand position by keeping the treat at nose level and moving it away from your dog.
2. The moment your dog stands, slip your free hand under its belly to help it hold its position.
3. Give your reward marker "YES" and reward your dog with a treat.





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Alternatives

If your dog will not follow the lure into a stand position you can try the following options:

- Treat out of Reach – Place a treat on the floor just out of your dog's reach. Most dogs will stand up to walk to the treat. The moment your dog stands give your reward marker "YES" and reward your dog with a treat.
- Pretend to Leave – Stand up as though you intend to walk away. The moment your dog stands to come with you, give your reward marker "YES" and reward your dog with a treat.

Putting Sit, Down and Stand Together

Lure your dog sequentially into the sit, down and stand positions, giving your reward marker "YES" and a treat after each position change.

Sit



Down



Stand





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Week One – Exercise Five – Mix Up Your Positions

Purpose

By mixing up the order of the three positions we teach our dogs to think before choosing their response. This creates a thinking dog and prevents pattern training.

If you always give your cues in the same order your dog will quickly learn to predict the order and will not listen to your instructions. If your dog never knows what you're going to ask for next it must pay attention to your cues, think and make choices. This makes it easier for the dog to learn the meaning of each cue. It speeds up the learning process and mentally stimulates your dog to create a higher level of intelligence.

Procedure

Instead of practicing the "sit, down, stand" pattern, change the order each time so your dog never knows which cue to expect.

Example: "down, stand, sit" or "stand, sit, down."

More Cues for Each Reward

When your dog is responding correctly to each new order of cues, it's time to ask your dog to work harder for each reward. You can accomplish this by asking for:

1. two cues in *any* order for one treat – then...
2. two cues in a *new* order for one treat – then...
3. three cues in *any* order for one treat – then...
4. three cues in a *new* order for one treat – then...
5. four, five, six, etc.



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Week One – Exercise Six – Leave It

Purpose

The purpose of this exercise is to teach your dog to remove itself from whatever it's focused on.

Dogs use their mouths the way children use their hands, to investigate, explore and play. They use their mouths without intentional thought. A dog that's aware of what its mouth is doing is less likely to bite someone, has better bite inhibition and is less likely to bite hard if it feels the need to defend itself.

This cue can be used when the dog is pestering the children, sniffing around your food, chasing the cat, eating garbage on your walk, etc. This is a cue we commonly use when dealing with reactive and aggressive dogs, to instruct the aggressor to ignore the dog or person it's reacting to.

Procedure

1. Crouch in front of your dog with a treat in your hand. Hold the treat in a closed fist right in front of your dog's nose with the palm of your hand facing the dog.
2. Hold the treat steady and ignore everything your dog does until it removes its nose from your hand. Do not use your "leave it" cue yet.
3. The moment your dog removes its nose, turn your hand over and open it allowing your dog to take the treat from the palm of your hand.
4. After a few repetitions, your dog will target your hand and immediately pull back realizing this is the only behaviour that works to get the treat. As soon as this realization occurs you can add the "leave it" cue as you present the treat in your closed fist.

You'll notice your dog becoming gentler and more controlled as it takes the treat from the palm of your hand.



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“Leave It” Cue



1. Harley sniffs the treat



2. Harley removes his nose



3. Margaret Ann rewards him with a treat



4. “Leave it” - Harley learns that “leave it” means to remove his nose to earn the treat

Note

- Open your hand immediately when your dog removes its nose, whether it's sniffing the floor to see if you dropped the treat or is distracted by something. Correct timing is important for your dog to learn that pulling back from your hand is the way to earn the treat.
- The reward marker is not necessary for this exercise because the timing of your reward is already perfect if you open your hand the moment the dog removes its nose.



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Week One – Exercise Seven – Watch Me

Purpose

The purpose of the “watch me” exercise is to teach your dog to focus on you, on cue.

When a dog begins training it usually has no attention span and can become distracted at the worst possible times. When a dog becomes distracted in public, owners often lose control as the dog lunges and barks at the distracting dog, person, etc. Not only is this embarrassing for the owner, it causes fear in the approaching dog or person and creates behavioural habits that can escalate into aggression. Punishing the dog creates an unpleasant association with the approaching dog or person; therefore, punishment will make the problem worse. Teaching impulse control and alternative behaviours is a great way to prevent and solve this problem.

Focus, concentration and self control must be taught and strengthened as you would strengthen any muscle in weight training. If you can't get your dog's attention, you can't teach it anything, nor can you ask it to do something it's already been taught. Teaching your dog to watch you on cue is taking a big step toward being able to control your dog in public.

Procedure

1. Hold a treat in front of your dog's nose allowing it to sniff the treat.
2. Move the treat from the dog's nose to your eyes.
3. The moment your dog's eyes connect with yours give your “YES” reward marker and reward your dog with a treat.





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4. Feel free to crouch in front of your dog to start and hold onto its collar at the beginning if it's jumping around excitedly.
5. When your dog makes eye contact with you every time you move the treat from its nose to your eyes, add the "watch me" cue before moving the treat.
6. When your dog makes eye contact every time you give the "watch me" cue, require your dog to hold the eye contact for the count of two before saying "YES" and giving the treat.
7. When you're successful with the count of two, require your dog to hold eye contact for the count of four, then six, eight etc. gradually increasing its focus and ability to concentrate.
8. Take this exercise on the road by asking your dog to "watch me" at different locations on your walk, beginning with short eye contact when there are no distractions and gradually increasing the length of contact and intensity of distraction as your dog is successful.

Note

- If your dog breaks eye contact when you expand the length of time, shorten your time requirement to ensure success. When your dog is successful with your last goal, you can once again ask for more.
- Remember to give your dog a play break after three repetitions.
- The body movement of luring your hand toward your eyes will eventually become your hand-signal for "watch me."
- When asking your dog to do anything when distracted, begin with mild distractions at a distance then gradually increase the intensity by shortening your distance or increasing the volume. If your dog is unable to focus on you, the intensity of the distraction is too high. When this occurs, go back to your last point of success and proceed more slowly. Let your dog tell you by its success when it's ready to take the next step.



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Week Two – Exercise One – Add the Cue & Signal to Sit, Down & Stand

Purpose

The purpose of this exercise is to turn the lure movements for sit, down and stand into hand signals and to add the word cue to each position.

Asking your dog to respond to a cue it doesn't understand confuses it. If on the other hand, you label a behaviour your dog is already performing with a word cue, the dog will begin to associate that word with the behaviour. After a few repetitions, when the dog hears the cue it will understand what it means and that something good will happen if it chooses the correct response.

Pairing up something with no meaning to the dog with something that has meaning, in order to create an association between the two is called "Classical Conditioning."

Hand Signal for Sit

You've been luring your dog into a "sit" position by placing the treat in front of your dog's nose and moving it up between its eyes, ears and over its head. This lure movement will now become a hand signal.

Creating the hand signal for sit:

Position your signal hand, straight down in front of your body with your palm facing out. Now bend your elbow bringing the palm of your hand up to your shoulder.

Procedure

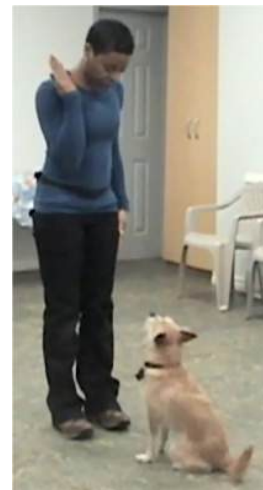
1. Give your cue to sit and lure your dog into the sit position. When your dog's rear end hits the ground give your reward marker "YES" and reward your dog with a treat.
2. Give your cue to sit followed by your hand signal with both the palm of your hand and the treat *facing your dog*. When your dog's rear end hits the ground, give your reward marker "YES" and reward your dog with a treat.



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3. Now give your official cue to sit followed by your hand signal with both the palm of your hand and the treat *facing your shoulder*. When your dog's rear end hits the ground give your reward marker "YES" and reward your dog with a treat.

Sit Signal



Hand Signal for Down

You've been luring your dog into a "down" position by placing the treat in front of your dog's nose with your palm facing the floor, then slowly moving the treat down your dog's chest to the floor until it lies down. This lure movement will now become a hand signal.

Down Signal





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Creating the hand signal for down: (See page 46)

1. Begin this exercise crouched in front of your dog while it's in a sit position.
2. Your hand signal is the opposite of the "sit" signal. Begin with your hand at your shoulder with the palm facing out.
3. Using a quick, smooth movement, bring the palm of your hand from your shoulder down to the floor.
4. The moment your dog lies down give your reward marker "YES" and reward your dog with a treat.

Hand Signal for Stand

You've been luring your dog into a "stand" position by keeping the treat at nose level and moving it away from your dog. This lure movement will now become a hand signal.

Stand Signal





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Creating the hand signal for stand: (See page 47)

1. While your dog is still in the “down” position, place another treat in front of its nose and sweep your arm away from your dog at nose level.
2. The moment your dog stands up, give your reward marker “YES” and reward your dog with a treat.
3. Now give your signal with a quick fluid movement, moving the palm of your hand from your chest, away from your body until it’s fully extended away from your body.
4. The moment your dog stands up give your reward marker “YES” and reward your dog with a treat.

Putting Sit, Down and Stand Together

Give your cue followed by your signal sequentially for each of the sit, down and stand positions, giving your reward marker “YES” and a treat after each position change. Give your “sit” cue and signal. The moment your dog sits, give your reward marker “YES” and reward your dog with a treat. Immediately give your cue and signal for “down.” The moment your dog lies down, give your reward marker “YES” and reward your dog with a treat. Immediately give your cue and signal to “stand.” The moment your dog stands up, slip your left hand under its tummy, give your reward marker “YES” and reward your dog with a treat.



Sit



Down



Stand



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Week Two – Exercise Two – Basic Sit Stay

Purpose

The purpose of this exercise is to teach your dog that the “stay” cue means to hold its position until you ask for something else or release it.

We’re going to make your first stay exercise easy to achieve to set your dog up for success.

Hand Signal for Stay

Your hand signal for stay is like the policeman’s stop signal, with the palm of your hand facing the dog.



Stay Hand Signal

Release Cue

Your stay is only as reliable as your dog’s ability to hold its position until released. For this we need to create a release cue to let your dog know that it’s ok to get up.

I use “all done” as my release cue. Feel free to use “relax,” “at ease,” “go play,” something in another language, etc. Avoid release cues such as “ok” or “good dog” as these are words too often used during regular conversation. This has a diluting effect on the cue and can result in unintentionally releasing your dog. Choose a release cue that’s unique so that when your dog hears it, it’s clearly identified as permission to move out of the stay position.



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Perform the following procedure in a quick, fluid sequence to avoid giving your dog enough time to think about getting up before it's rewarded and released.

Procedure

1. Standing in front of your dog, ask it to sit followed by your "stay" cue and signal.



Sit



Stay

2. Without waiting, immediately reward your dog.
3. Release your dog using your release cue.

Note

- This exercise is the foundation of your dog's stay for the rest of its life. If you succeed now, your stay will become longer and stronger, and something you'll be able to use in real life situations. If your dog now gets in the habit of breaking the stay before it's released, it'll be more difficult to create a reliable stay later. Remember, if you build a house on a weak foundation it will not stand.
- Always remember to reward your dog while it's holding the stay, before releasing it – never after. If you reward your dog after the release it'll continue to get up thinking that's the behaviour that earned the reward.



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- Set your dog up for success. Only ask your dog to perform a stay it's capable of achieving. If you set your dog up to succeed it will. If you set it up to fail it will. For example, although you may have achieved a ten second stay during your previous session, if your dog is not feeling well or is highly distracted during your next training session, this may not be a reasonable request. Like us, dogs have good days and bad days, and times when they're more distracted than others.
- Be aware of your environment, how your dog is feeling, and adjust your expectations accordingly.

If your dog is not feeling well, is experiencing physical discomfort, is in pain, stressed, anxious or fearful your expectations should be limited to only what's necessary at the time and what the dog can successfully achieve. Under these circumstances I tend to avoid training unless absolutely necessary. For example; when my dog is not well she may require a visit to the vet clinic – these visits are always used as opportunities to train; but, if my dog is not up to it we simply avoid other dogs and people. In cases such as these, treating the illness problem is your first concern.

If your dog is exposed to a new distraction or the distraction is more intense due to volume or proximity – it becomes increasingly difficult for your dog to concentrate on you and respond to your requests.

When choosing your goals take the following into consideration:

- how your dog is feeling
- your dog's ability to focus and concentrate at that particular time
- your location

New locations – even choosing to work on the opposite side of the room must be viewed as a new distraction. Just walking out your front door adds a myriad of new and potent distractions for your dog to process in the form of sights, sounds and smells. Keep in mind that your dog has four times your hearing and can smell things you don't



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a. always allow your dog to set the pace

Only take the next step when the previous step is easy for your dog. Make sure your next step increases only one of the following criteria at a time and is a small increase to once again insure success.

- ✓ length of your stay
- ✓ distance from your dog
- ✓ distance from the distraction
- ✓ volume of the distraction

b. new distractions in the environment

Once your dog is able to focus with a particular distraction at a distance, you can gradually increase the intensity of the distraction by shortening your distance or increasing the volume.

- If your dog breaks the stay, go back further than your last point of success and progress more slowly to ensure success.
- When working on short stays, always take a play break after three repetitions of the exercise. Once your stays are thirty seconds or longer, take a short play break after each release to help your dog clear its mind.





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Week Two – Exercise Three – Three Second Sit, Down & Stand Stay

Purpose

The purpose of this exercise is to practice the sit-stay, down-stay and stand-stay in one fluid exercise.

Procedure

Hold onto your dog's collar until it's successfully holding the stay in each position.

1. Give your sit-stay cue and signal and count to three.
2. While your dog is holding the sit-stay give your down-stay cue and signal and count to three.
3. While your dog is holding the down-stay give your stand-stay cue and signal slipping your left hand under its belly to prevent it from sitting, lying down or walking away. Count to three.
4. Give your reward marker "YES" and reward your dog with a treat.
5. Release your dog.
6. Mix up the order of the sit-stay, down-stay, and stand-stay.

For example; stand stay, sit stay, down stay
or sit stay, stand stay, down stay

7. Count to five before switching positions or releasing your dog. When you're successful with five seconds count to seven, ten, etc.



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Week Two – Exercise Four – Loose Leash Walking

Purpose

The purpose of this exercise is to teach your dog that you will never walk when the leash is tight.

Procedure

Red Light – Green Light

The rule for this exercise is very simple – never walk when the leash is tight. If the leash is loose you may proceed. If the leash is tight you can choose from the following:

- Stop and wait for your dog to come back to you or loosen the leash on its own.





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- Call or otherwise entice your dog to come back to you before moving forward on the loose leash.



Change Direction

Change direction causing your dog to approach from behind you. You'll notice that Cordelia does not pull or correct her dog with the leash. Instead she uses her voice and treats.





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Back Up

Stop and begin to back up causing the dog to turn and approach you. At no time are you to use the leash to jerk, steer, pull or punish the dog.





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Creating a Basic Heel

1. If you plan on competing in obedience trials you'll need to heel your dog on the left. If you walk your dog on your left, hold your leash in your right hand. If you walk your dog on the right, hold your leash in your left hand.



2. Hold your training treats in the other hand – this will be the hand closest to your dog.





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3. Using your treat, lure your dog behind you.



4. Turn the dog around and lure it into a basic heel position.



5. Ask your dog to sit, reward and release.

Basic Heel Position





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Step & Sit

When competing in obedience trials, heel is a very specific position and any deviation from that position will cost you points. With pet dog training, most dog owners aren't concerned about obedience trial standards. They aren't concerned about forging, lagging, crowding, heeling-wide or a crooked sit. All they want is for their dog to walk on one side without pulling and sit when they stop. So when I refer to a "basic" heel position I am referring to your dog on one side without pulling.

4. Begin with your dog sitting in a basic heel position. (See page 58)
5. Allow your dog to sniff a treat then move it toward your eyes, luring your dog's attention to your face. (See page 43)
6. Take one step then lure your dog into a sit beside you.
7. Reward your dog.
8. When your dog is moving with you and remaining in a basic heel position, take two steps before stopping and rewarding your dog, then three, four, etc.



Cordelia is using her treat to lure Scruffy's attention to her face as she performs the Step & Sit



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Note

- In positive reinforcement training the leash is not used to jerk, steer, pull or punish the dog. Our dogs are learning through cause and effect and repetition that pulling does not work to get us moving, only a loose leash does. This will speed up the learning process for your dog as it requires it to think and make choices, and leaves you no option other than to apply your techniques. We use the loose leash exercises to shape our dog's on-leash behaviour with patience and consistency. The leash should only be used for safety because when you use techniques, you don't need tools.
- Make sure you save your rewards for when your dog is walking beside you and the leash is loose. If you lure your dog back beside you and give it a treat for returning to you, it may learn to pull on leash in order to get treats.

Walking in Heel

3. Begin with your dog sitting in a basic heel position. (See page 58)
4. Use your "watch me" cue to get your dog focusing on you. (See page 43)
5. Give your cue of choice – I use "let's go" and start walking forward at a brisk walk while using your treat to lure your dog's attention back when it wanders.
6. When your dog is walking quietly beside you on a loose leash without jumping up, especially if it makes eye contact, give your reward marker "YES" and reward your dog with a treat.
7. Every time you stop, ask your dog to sit and reward your dog with a treat.

Note

- Don't wait too long to reward the loose leash behaviour. If your dog's walking on a loose leash for a few seconds, reward it. Then you can require your dog to walk on a loose leash for a bit longer before rewarding it. Gradually require your dog to walk nicely for longer periods of time before earning a treat or stopping for a sit.



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- If you lose your dog's attention, use your treat to lure it back.
- Make sure your dog is quiet, not jumping up and the leash is loose before giving your reward marker to avoid unintentionally rewarding unwanted behaviour such as barking or jumping up.

Other Options

For your dog to maintain a loose leash it needs to be aware of where you are at all times and adjust to your turns and speed changes. To regain your dog's attention when it's pulling on leash you can choose from the following:

1. Back Up – Quickly back up until your dog walks toward you and the leash is loose then continue forward again. (See page 55)
2. Change Direction – If your dog is walking on your left – turn to your right and proceed at a brisk walk in the opposite direction. If your dog is walking on your right – turn to your left. By turning in the opposite direction your dog will remain on the outside allowing you to avoid tripping over your dog or leash as you turn. (See page 56)

Loose Leash Walking





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Week Three – Exercise One – Recall or “Come” Cue

Purpose

The purpose of this exercise is to teach your dog that coming when called is not an option, but it is always pleasant.

It's not a bad dog that doesn't come when called, it's a normal dog. And it's not a good dog that comes when called, it's a trained dog.

The only way to create a reliable recall is to eliminate the choice and practice the pattern again and again, in new environments with new distractions, always keeping it pleasant and successfully completing your pattern. By eliminating the choice you can create a habit of coming when called and good habits are just as hard to break as bad habits.

Procedure

1. Call your dog's name once.
2. Give your cue and signal to come.
3. Encourage your dog to come to you as quickly as possible.

Using an animated voice, jumping up and down, clapping your hands, squeaking a squeaker, etc, but not repeating your dog's name or the cue, encourage your dog to come to you as quickly as possible.

4. As soon as your dog gets to you grab its collar.

Grabbing your dog's collar is essential to teaching your dog that the recall includes self control and/or restraint. It's also the only way to know for sure that your dog is safe. Many dogs will turn the recall into a chase game and if you're in a dangerous environment this can cost the dog its life. By grabbing your dog's collar before giving the treat you'll know your dog is safe.



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Many dogs learn to associate a collar grab with a reprimand since they're often grabbed as puppies when they get into trouble. This creates an unpleasant association with the collar being grabbed and can cause a defensive reaction and hand shyness leading to dog bites. If you grab the collar every time before dispensing the treat, you'll create a pleasant association with being grabbed instead of an unpleasant one and can prevent an aggressive reaction if there's ever a need to quickly grab hold of your dog.

5. Reward your dog with treats and affection, making a big fuss over your dog as though it's done something very special. Make this reward a little party for your dog.
6. Reward your dog again with a "go play."

Hand Signal

Your hand signal for the recall begins with holding your right arm straight out to the side, away from your body. To call your dog, simply bend your elbow bringing your hand to your chest. The "come" hand signal is the opposite of the "stand" hand signal.

Come Hand Signal





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Common Mistakes

Unpleasant Associations – Calling the dog to you to punish it or calling it when something the dog perceives as unpleasant is about to happen creates an unpleasant association with the recall. Once your dog thinks something unpleasant may happen if it comes to you, it's going to make a choice, and that choice could cost your dog its life. If you have to trim your dog's nails, give it a bath or anything else your dog doesn't like, do not call your dog, instead, go and get it and do what you can to make the experience as pleasant as possible.

Ending the Fun – If your dog is playing with its friends and you call it to end the play session, have a very special treat in your pocket to create a pleasant association with the end of the fun. While it's playing, call your dog to you on a regular basis to reward the recall with not only a treat but also another "go play."

Punishment or Being "Firm" – Trust is essential to a successful recall. For this and many other reasons it must be maintained and nurtured at all costs making punishment or negativity of any kind counter-productive to a reliable recall.

Repeating Your Dog's Name – Because your dog's name should mean "follow the next instruction," repeating your dog's name until it pays attention to you dilutes its effect and makes it less likely that your dog will pay attention when you call it. If you want your dog to pay attention the first time you give any cue you need to give your cues only once.

- Name Check In Exercise

To teach your dog to pay attention when it hears its name, call your dog's name only once. The moment it looks at you, give your reward marker "YES" and give it a treat. With repetition your dog will learn to immediately focus on you when ever it hears its name.

Repeating Your Recall Cue – Give your "come" cue only once then encourage your dog to come to you as quickly as possible without repeating its name or the cue. If you want your dog to respond the first time you call it, you can't repeat your cue.



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Note

- If you've been using the "come" cue and your dog has not been coming when called, feel free to choose a new cue and start fresh.
- If your dog ignores your recall it will quickly realize it has a choice and making a choice can be dangerous for your dog. To prevent this, only use your recall cue when you're one hundred percent sure you'll be able to successfully complete the pattern.

For example:

- ✓ When you come home and your dog runs to greet you
- ✓ When there are no distractions
- ✓ When your dog's on a life line
- If you call your dog and it chooses not to come to you, go to your dog, show it a treat. Lure it back to the exact spot you called it from to complete your pattern then reward your dog.
- Begin recall training in the house where there are few distractions. If you call your dog to you on a regular basis to give it a treat, most dogs will come quickly when you call in order to get the treat. Repetition creates a habit of coming when called. When your dog is coming every time you call it, the training treats can be replaced with real life rewards. (See page 30)
- The moment you and your dog walk out the door of your house there are a myriad of distractions that will interfere with your recall. Begin practicing in your enclosed yard when things are calm. When in a secured environment such as a fenced yard or park, allow your dog to drag a life line (long leash or rope) behind it because your dog doesn't realize you have it when you're twenty, thirty or forty feet away. Simply pick up the end of the life line before calling your dog to prevent it from running off or turning the recall into a chase game.



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- Until your recall is reliable, your dog must never have the opportunity to choose when given the come cue. It's normal for your dog to be attracted to the most exciting thing in its environment at any given time. If it's not you, your recall will fail. Every time you call your dog and are unable to successfully complete the recall pattern you're back to square one of your training program. Dogs remember, and once they realize they have a choice they'll make one. If you set yourself up to succeed, you will. If you set yourself up to fail, you will.
- In order to eliminate the choice you'll need to take safety precautions to prevent your dog from getting into trouble in the first place. If your dog tends to escape through the front door, lock that door and render it off limits. Use another door to break the habit and be careful that the habit doesn't simply move to the other door. If your other entrance opens onto a fenced yard, that would be the ideal door to use because if your dog does escape, at least it's safe in a fenced yard and not loose on the street.

If your young children are accidentally letting the dog out, put a hook-and-eye lock out of reach making your assistance necessary when coming or going.

It's not difficult to prevent your dog from escaping from the house, it just takes planning, consistency and a little imagination. Preventing the problem is a lot easier than solving it once it's become habit and the dog has been rewarded for the behaviour.

- If your dog won't come when called, leave the leash, a long line or rope attached to its collar and make sure you always pick it up before calling your dog, and eliminate the option of coming or not coming.

If your dog chooses not to come to you when on its life line, it's important to become more exciting as opposed to being firm or angry with your dog. If need be, go to your dog, show it a treat and lure it back to where you called it from to successfully complete the pattern before giving it a treat. If you become angry, your dog will be more likely to hesitate or move away from you. Remember, no one wants to approach a stressed or angry person. Trust is crucial to effective training and it's not fair to punish your dog for doing what comes naturally. If you want something other than normal dog behaviour, you have to teach it.



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The bottom line is that you're not going to give your dog a choice until the recall is reliable. At that point you can start cutting off pieces of the life line, approximately three inches at a time until it disappears altogether because your dog will know when the line is on and when it's off. If you give your dog off-leash play time and it decides not to come when called, go back to the beginning and start your training program again.

When your dog is coming when called reliably you can begin to replace your training treats with other real-life rewards. (See page 30)

Remember, it can take a year or more of working your recall in various environments with a variety of distractions for your dog to get in the habit of choosing to come to you no matter what's going on around it. Although the recall is an easy exercise to teach, it takes time, repetition and consistency to create a really reliable recall.





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Week Three – Exercise Two – Stand Up on the Down Stay

Purpose

The purpose of this exercise is to teach your dog to hold the down stay position as you stand and move away from it.

Procedure

1. Crouched in front of your dog, using your cue and signal, put your dog into the down position.



2. Practice your “leave it” cue to teach your dog to keep its nose off the treat while in the down position.



3. Give your cue to stay and either signal with an empty hand or quickly remove the treat from in front of your dog’s nose to avoid luring your dog up with the treat.



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4. If your dog reaches toward your hand go back to your “leave it” cue. When your dog relaxes into the down position, give your reward marker “YES” and give it the treat.



5. Repeat this until your dog is relaxed in the down position.
6. Gradually change your body position until you are standing in front of your dog, reward and release your dog using the release cue you chose for the sit stay exercise. With each small change in body position, reward your dog for not standing up with you.



Norma Jeanne's holding her hand signal higher requiring Scruffy to look up without getting up



She rewards Scruffy each time she makes a change and he holds his position



She is now holding her hand signal even higher requiring Scruffy to look up while holding his down position

Note

Norma Jeanne is not holding Scruffy down by the collar – she's simply using one finger to prevent any forward movement toward the treat.



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Because Scruffy is relaxed into the down position, Norma Jeanne releases his collar



She rewards him for holding his position



She now rises slightly from the crouched position and Scruffy holds his stay



Norma Jeanne rewards Scruffy for holding his position



She stands a bit taller



Norma Jeanne is now standing while Scruffy remains in a down position



She rewards him again...



then releases him from the stay



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7. When your dog is relaxed in the down position with you standing in front of it, move one foot back and forth and reward your dog for not getting up.
8. When this is successful, take one step away from your dog and immediately return as though you were a rubber band, reward and release your dog.
9. When this is successful you can take one step back and hold your position for the count of three.
10. When your dog is successful you can expand one of the two criteria for any "stay:"
 - a. length of time
 - b. distance from your dog



Cordelia gives her stay cue and signal, takes one step back from Scruffy then immediately returns to him



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Now she takes one step back and holds her position for the count of three before returning



This time she takes two steps back and holds her position

Note

- Follow the list of rules noted for the sit stay exercise. (See page 49)
- When expanding time or distance, only expand one criterion per exercise. Make sure time or distance is expanded in small increments such as one step each time or a few seconds longer to set your dog up for success. Only take the next step when your dog is successful with the last – let your dog set the pace.
- Always reward your dog then release it at the end of each repetition.



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Week Three – Exercise Three – Excite & Settle

Purpose

The purpose of this exercise is to teach your dog to calm itself on cue. Dogs tend to get wired at the worst possible times, but if you can teach your dog to calm its own nervous system on cue you'll be able to control its energy whenever necessary.

Procedure

1. Begin by getting your dog excited, that's the easy part. Become animated, make high pitch noises, jump up and down, squeak a squeaker or clap your hands together, whatever works.
2. Take a deep breath, let it out slowly and calm yourself as your dog will feed off your energy.
3. Give your down stay cue and signal. Using basic relaxation massage techniques, send calm vibrations through your hands and calm messages through your voice with the quiet cue "settle down, good dog" – as you gently stroke your dog. Feel free to slowly feed your dog treats with one hand to help hold its position for the first repetitions.
4. Excite your dog again then settle it down. With practice your dog will learn to calm itself quickly when necessary.



Excite



Settle



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Week Three – Exercise Four – Handling

Purpose

The purpose of this exercise is to teach your dog to enjoy being handled while preventing aggression caused by fear or intolerance.

Your dog will need to be handled by veterinarians, some by groomers and most by strangers – some of them children, and dogs that do not enjoy being handled are likely to bite. By doing simple handling exercises on a regular basis, not only will you prevent biting when handled, you'll also be aware of any changes in your dog's skin or coat that may require veterinary care. If your dog is showing signs of fear or aggression consult a positive dog trainer/behaviour therapist before attempting this exercise.

The light muscle massage aspect teaches the owner to calm him or herself as well as their dog whenever necessary. Besides, dogs like massage just as much as we do and this turns handling into a more enjoyable experience.

Procedure

1. Sit on the floor beside your dog and using your cue and signal, put it into a down position.
2. Begin by lifting the lip and looking at the dog's teeth on one side, then the other.
3. Open your dog's mouth and look inside. Keep this part of the exercise very short.
4. Lift one ear. Inspect and handle it gently, then repeat the process with the other ear.
5. Take a light hold on the scruff of the neck and give it a gentle shake.
6. Move to one front shoulder and handle the dog's leg down to the foot.
7. Handle the toes, between the toes and the nail, as those nails will need to be trimmed.



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8. Move to the other front leg and repeat, as well as both of the back legs, knees and ankles.
9. Handle your dog's back, give a little tug on the tail (if it has one), move up the inside of the back legs, up the tummy, then the chest and back to its head.

Note

- If your dog does not enjoy being handled, or is puppy biting you can begin by having one family member hold its collar and slowly feed it treats while another member does the handling exercises.
- If there's a particular part of the dog's body that it dislikes being handled, the treats should get bigger and better when you handle this area to create a positive association.





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Week Four – Graduation – Games

Because games are more fun than tests, for graduation we'll play four games using skills you've learned over the past few weeks.

Points will be given for each game and the dog with the most points at the end will receive a first place ribbon on their level one certificate. Everyone will receive a level one certificate of attendance.

Game One – Recall

Game One is the recall and we have two options for this game. We may time each dog individually (recall competition) or race them against one another (recall race).

Instructions – Recall Race

Up to three dogs will race at one time. Two handlers will be required for each dog.

Begin with each team lined up side-by-side at one end of the room. The first handler will hold the dog by its collar while the second handler shows the dog a treat or toy to keep its focus as he/she backs up to the opposite end of the room.

When everyone is in place the instructor will say "ready, get set, go." On "go," the second handler will call the dog, using as much encouragement and animation as possible to entice a quick recall without repeating the dog's name or the cue. The first dog to sit in front of its handler will move on to the second heat. When all competing dogs have raced, the winners of each heat will race against one another to determine first, second and third place.

Scoring

Scoring is in accordance to the number of competitors. For example, if there are three competitors in the final race, the slowest recall and sit will earn 2 points, the next will earn three and quickest will earn 4. The dogs eliminated in each heat will each earn 1 point.



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Instructions – Recall Competition

Begin with the first handler holding its dog by the collar while the second handler shows the dog a treat or toy to keep its focus as he/she backs up to the opposite end of the room.

The second handler will call the dog, using as much encouragement and animation as possible to entice a quick recall without repeating the dog's name or the cue.

The instructor will start the stop watch when the second handler gives the come cue and stop it when the dog sits in front of the first handler.

The instructor will record the time of each recall with sit.

Scoring

Scoring is in accordance to the number of competitors. For example, if there are five competitors, the slowest recall and sit will earn 1 point, the quickest will earn 5.

Game Two – Speed Cue Competition

All dogs will compete at the same time. One handler will be required for each dog.

Instructions

Make sure you have plenty of training treats ready because if you have to stop to get more treats it'll slow you down making it less likely to win the game.

Only reward your dog enough to keep it playing your game. This game is based on speed and feeding your dog after every position change will slow you down. By this point in your training your dog should be working harder for each treat and should be earning real life rewards instead of food most of the time.

Your instructor will call out the sit, down, and stand position cues. He or she will mix up the order and will gradually get faster.



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Your job is to keep up as best you can. When you hear a cue, position your dog and listen for the next cue. When you hear the next cue, position your dog and listen for the next.

If you fall behind, finish the cue you started then take a seat. Remember, to be taken seriously by your dog, you must always finish what you started.

Scoring

Scoring is in accordance to the number of competitors. For example, if there are five competitors, the first contestant to fall behind will earn 1 point. The last is the quickest and will earn 5.

Game Three – Stay Competition

Game three is a one minute stay competition. You can choose the sit stay or down stay – choose the one you feel will be easiest for your dog. In many cases small breeds are better at sit stay and larger breeds at the down stay, but there are always exceptions.

All the dogs will compete at the same time. One handler will be required for each dog.

Instructions

Make sure you have plenty of training treats ready. If you have to stop to get more treats your dog may break its stay.

Your instructor will ask you to “position your dogs” at which time you will give your cue and signal to place your dog into a sit stay or down stay. When all the dogs are in position your instructor will start the stop watch.

Feel free to give extra cues and signals and reward your dog while it's holding the stay, however, you can't hold a treat on the dog's nose for the entire minute. If your dog breaks, reposition it but don't give it a treat or it will keep getting up in order to get the food. Wait until your dog has held its stay for a few seconds then reward it. If your dog breaks you've gone too long in between rewards and should reward more often.



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You have two options for rewarding your dog:

Reward your dog often enough to keep it playing your game

If your dog appears distracted, it moves or its attention wanders, reward your dog then remind it to stay.

Gradually fade your rewards

Your other option is to gradually fade your rewards throughout the exercise. Using your cues and signals, position your dog then ask it to stay. Count out loud to two then give your dog a treat followed by the stay cue and signal. Count to four then give your dog a treat followed by the stay cue and signal. Then count to six, eight, ten, etc. If your dog appears restless or distracted, shorten your count and progress more slowly. Counting out loud helps you track your progress and helps your dog to focus on you.

When the minute is up, your instructor will ask you to “release your dogs.” At this point you will release your dog using the release cue you chose for your stay exercises.

Scoring

Scoring is in accordance to the number of competitors. For example, if there are five competitors, the first dog to break its stay will earn 1 point, the last will earn 5. Every dog that holds its stay for the full minute will receive full points.

Game Four – Behaviour Game

All dogs will compete at the same time. One or more handlers will be required for each dog and you may switch handlers any time you choose.

Instructions

Your instructor will spread a number of behaviour cards across the floor. Each card contains a behaviour or series of behaviours for your dog to perform.

Pick up a card and read the instructions. If you believe you can get your dog to perform the behaviour or series of behaviours on the card you may precede. If you don't feel this particular card is suitable for your dog, put it back and pick up another card.



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Use your imagination as you entice your dog to perform the behaviours on the cards. You can lure or capture a behaviour your dog offers naturally etc. All we ask is that you avoid using any negativity, force or reprimands. If your dog successfully performs the behaviour(s) on the card, put it in your pocket. If your dog is unable to perform the behaviour grab another card and try again.

Scoring

Every card in your pocket at the end of the allotted time is worth one point. The person holding the most cards wins the game.

Game Cards

1. Using hand signals only, put your dog through the following sequence; sit, down, sit, stand, down, stand.
2. Beginning with your dog sitting in heel position, take two steps then sit your dog. Make a quarter turn to your left, take two steps then sit your dog. Repeat this pattern four times completing a square heeling pattern with a sit at each corner.
3. Position your dog in a down stay, take four steps away from your dog in any direction then return to your dog. The dog must remain in a down position until you return and release.
4. Place your dog in a down stay position. Walk to the end of the leash then walk a full circle around your dog. The dog must remain in the down stay until released.
5. Place a treat on the floor in front of your dog giving your cue to "leave it." Count to ten then release your dog to take the treat.
6. Take a bow. Place your dog in a stand stay position. Using one hand to hold its tummy up, use the other to lure its front end down until its elbows touch the floor. The dog's elbows must be touching the floor with the rear end in the air to complete this exercise.
7. Your dog must speak five times in order to complete this exercise.
8. Lure your dog in a complete circle for one spin. Your dog must spin three times to complete this exercise.



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9. Your dog must jump with all four paws off the ground at the same time to complete this exercise.
10. Place your dog in a sit stay position. Walk to the closest wall, touch the wall and return to your dog, reward and release.
11. Stick 'em up! Both of your dog's front paws must leave the floor at the same time to complete this exercise. (like "sitting pretty")
12. Spread 'em! Both of your dog's front paws must be resting on a chair or wall to complete this exercise.
13. Position your dog in a sit or down stay. Sit in front of your dog, then lie down, then stand up and release your dog. Your dog must remain in the down stay position until released.
14. Place your dog in a sit or down stay position approximately six feet from your chair. Go to your chair, sit down then return to your dog. The dog must remain in the stay until you return and release it.
15. Hugs! Crouch down in front of your dog. To complete this exercise, one of your dog's paws must be resting on your left shoulder with the other on your right or both on one shoulder.
16. Place your dog in a sit or down stay position. Hop ten times then release your dog. Your dog must remain in the stay position to complete this exercise.
17. Place your dog in a sit or down stay position. Skip a complete circle around your dog. Your dog must remain in a stay to complete this exercise.
18. Beginning with your dog sitting in heel, take one step then sit your dog, take one step then down your dog. Repeat five times to include five sits and five downs.
19. Place a treat on your dog's nose. Your dog must balance the treat for the count of five to complete this exercise.
20. Your dog must roll over twice to complete this exercise.



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Extra Exercises – Exercise One – Family Recall

Purpose

The purpose of the Family Recall is to create a reliable recall for every member of your family or household.

Procedure at Home

1. Practice the recall you learned in week one, but this time call your dog back and forth from one family member to the next.
2. If more than one person is performing the exercise, to avoid confusing the dog, designate one person as team leader to decide who calls the dog first, second and so on.
3. Grab your dog's collar and put it into a sit position using your sit cue and signal as soon as it reaches you. When your dog is under control, the next person can call your dog.

Classroom Procedure

1. Each team will line up with at least one family member on opposite sides of the room. One at a time, your instructor will ask you to call your dog.
2. The one calling the dog will cross the room to his or her dog, allow it to sniff the training treat then go back across the room keeping its attention while doing so.
3. Now that your dog's attention is on you (setting your dog up to succeed) you will call your dog as you did when practicing your recall. (See page 62)
4. You'll call your dogs one at a time as instructed to keep the level of distraction low and set you up to succeed.
5. When all the dogs are responding to the recall, your instructor will ask two of you to call your dogs at the same time, then three or four, gradually increasing the level of distraction. If your dog becomes distracted, the person calling the dog will become more animated and exciting, and if



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necessary will run to his or her dog, allow it to sniff the treat and lure it back to the place from where they called.

Extra Exercises – Exercise Two – Greeting People

Purpose

The purpose of this exercise is to teach your dog to automatically sit for greetings when meeting new people.

It's not a bad dog that jumps up on people it's a normal, confident and friendly dog. It's not a good dog that sits to greet new people, it's a trained dog. Because punishing a friendly dog for jumping up can cause fear and distrust in people, jeopardizing its temperament and emotional well being, we'll use cause and effect instead to teach your dog that good things happen only when it sits.

Dogs do what ever works to get what they want. A confident and friendly dog wants attention and possibly food when meeting new people. When dogs jump up on people, they tend to touch them, push them off or tell them to get off or to sit. Some even hug or stroke the dog. All of the above is giving the dog the attention it wants and as a result, the unwanted behaviour increases. All it takes is one stranger saying, "Oh that's ok, I don't mind," and cuddling your dog when it jumps up or talking to your dog, to undo all your hard work.

When greeting new people, let the new person know that your dog is in training and they can help by giving your dog a treat or attention only when it sits. If they refuse to cooperate they lose the privilege of enjoying your dog. To create the habit of sitting for greetings as opposed to jumping up, consistency is extremely important. Think of the slot machine. Slot machines are programmed by psychologists to only pay off often enough to keep the player pulling the lever. By intermittently reinforcing any behaviour, you strengthen the behaviour.

Procedure

1. Instruct the new person with the requirements of greeting your dog.
2. Approach with your dog on leash, stopping at a distance that will not allow the dog to touch the person should it attempt to jump up.
3. Both you and the new person will ignore all behaviour until the dog sits.



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4. When the dog sits ask the new person to give your dog a treat and greet your dog.
5. If your dog gets up or jumps ask the new person to back up and ignore all behaviour until it sits again.
6. In class we'll ask the trainers and everyone with their hands free to move around the class and reward each dog for sitting. If you make it impossible for your dog to make a mistake the new habit will quickly eclipse the old one.

Note

Remember that we're not asking the dogs to sit – we're simply waiting until they make the correct choice to turn the behaviour of sitting for greetings into good manners and a habit.





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Extra Exercises – Exercise Three – Greeting Dogs

Purpose

The purpose of this exercise is to teach you – the owner how to set up successful leash greetings.

When dogs greet other dogs on leash, handler errors often cause reactivity and dog fights. Because of this, it's important to not only practice these greetings so you can control each situation and prevent problems, it's also important to learn how to read canine body language so that at a glance, you'll know which dogs are safe to approach and which are not. You'll also know when your dog or the dog you're approaching is telling you it's uncomfortable with a greeting at which time you'll give the other dog plenty of space to pass. Remember to never force a greeting when either dog is uncomfortable with the situation.

When dogs are held away from each other on tight leashes when they wish to greet one another it causes frustration that often turns into reactivity and sometimes aggression when the dogs are finally close enough to touch.

The tight leash pulls both dogs back into what appears to the other dog as a threatening body posture. If you pair up the frustration of restraint with the apparent threat from the other dog, you have a potentially volatile situation.

When a dog feels the need to tell another dog that it needs its space, many dog owners misunderstand the communication and punish the dog. This adds negativity to an already unpleasant situation and makes the dog afraid to communicate. When this happens, not only does the dog expect bad things to happen when another dog approaches, it expects its owner to become unpleasant as well and has no other option than to forego the communication and go right to the physical correction.

When all these factors come together we have a snow ball effect of negativity that cause stress, anxiety, fear of the approaching dog and/or person, frustration, distrust and fear of the owner – all of which contribute to reactivity, aggressive behaviour, emotional distress, damage to the dog's emotional well being, temperament and the human/canine bond.



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Even the most reliable dog has a limit and if attacked can be forced to defend itself. A dog that has been attacked is going to be more wary next time it sees a dog and more easily triggered. Be aware that many people are unaware of how their dogs are feeling and will tell you their dog is friendly when it's not.

For the record, although my dogs greet numerous dogs every day while on our morning hike, I do not allow leash greetings as many dogs on leash are not under control or comfortable with the situation.

Procedure

1. Decide whether or not the dog is safe to approach.
 - Is the approaching dog's body loose and wiggly?
 - Is its leash loose?
 - Is the approaching dog under control by its owner?

 - Is your dog's body loose and wiggly?
 - Is your leash loose?
 - Is your dog under control and responding to your cues?

If all of the above is in place you may choose to allow a greeting but be aware of both dogs at all times.

For more information about understanding canine communication and body language visit www.ACTT.ca.

2. Ask the other dog's owner if it's ok for your dogs to say hello. Let the other dog's owner know your plan.
3. Begin with both dogs controlling themselves in a sit position (earning the greeting). At the same time, give a "say hi" cue allowing your dogs to approach on a loose leash.
4. Keep your leash loose at all times while the dogs investigate one another as dogs cannot behave or communicate naturally when on a tight leash and this in itself can lead to fights.
5. Never allow the leashes to become entangled. When this happens each dog can feel trapped and feel the need to defend itself, and if a scuffle breaks out it will be difficult to separate your dogs.



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6. If either dog stiffens, it's making a choice whether to greet or correct the other dog. The moment one dog stiffens – both owners should give the cue “let’s go” and quickly walk their dogs in opposite directions.
7. Quit while you’re ahead. If either dog does not appear totally relaxed and happy with the presence of the other dog, cut your greeting short and continue on your way. And remember – no reprimands of any kind.



These two pups are relaxed and greeting on a loose leash

Defensive Body Language

Because over 90% of dog bites are fear bites, recognizing the signs of stress, anxiety and fear is crucial to preventing bites.

Signs of a defensive dog begin with the dog trying to hide or escape. If escape is not possible, it will try to make itself appear smaller by crouching, tucking its tail and pinning its ears back against its head. The eyes will be wide and frightened in appearance and the dog may be turning its head to avoid eye contact. The dog may bark, whiskers may flare and a snarl will show gums and teeth. The legs will bend and the dog may roll over into submission. The hackles may be up and the dog may release its glands and/or urinate or defecate. The dog may shake with fear and may have diarrhea. If the dog can't escape and the intimidator does not back off, the dog may attack in self defense. A fearful dog is more likely to attack when the victim's back is turned and try to escape when faced by its opponent.





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Offensive Body Language

An offensive dog looking for conflict will challenge and threaten other dogs. Signs of a threat begin with forward and stiff body movements instead of retreat. This dog will try to make itself appear larger with the body held high and forward and its hackles may be up. The tail will be held high, may curl over the back, and may wag slowly or twitch. The ears will be held stiff, either forward or flat against the head while the eyes will stare directly at the opponent with constricting pupils. The dog may bark, whiskers will flare forward, only the front teeth will show in the snarl and the lips may be rigid. The front legs will be stiff and the dog may appear to be sexually aroused.

Effective Communication

Confident dogs will correct other dogs if their communication telling the other dog they don't want to be bothered is not respected. Others can become bullies and look for opportunities to pick on other dogs.

Confident dogs with good social skills will not bother or bully other dogs. They may wish to be left alone or they may invite the other dog to play. Confident dogs with good communication skills will respect other dogs calming signals and when they feel the need to correct another dog, will stop as soon as the other dog backs off.



This dog is threatening Greg from behind a barrier



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Extra Exercises – Exercise Four – Pass the Puppy

For safety reasons this exercise is for puppies only

Purpose

The purpose of this exercise is to allow each puppy to socialize with numerous people.

Dogs that like new people are unlikely to bite them. This exercise offers your pup the opportunity to interact with a variety of people from adults to children, men, women, various races, people with various clothing and accessories, etc.

A good way to add to your pup's dog/human socialization is to host a party where all your guests are instructed to ignore your pup until it sits then reward sitting with treats, love and affection. You can also pass your pup from person to person for handling. Take your puppy to places such as outdoor markets where they will be exposed to a variety of people, sights, sounds, smells, etc. and do the same thing.

Remember, it's your responsibility to protect your puppy or dog from anyone who may cause physical or emotional harm. Protect your dog the way you would protect a child because one bad experience could have lifelong effects.

Procedure

1. Ask your guests to sit on the floor or in chairs in a circle.
2. Pass your puppy to your first guest.
3. Your guest will ignore your puppy until it sits.
4. When your puppy sits your guest can give it a treat, pick it up, gently cuddle and handle it.
5. When you say "pass the puppy" your guest is to pass the puppy on to your next guest.
6. If there is more than one pup in the group, when you say "pass the puppy" everyone passes the pup they have onto the next person.



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CCS Course References

The concepts, exercises, tools and techniques in this course were shaped by influences from over one hundred conferences, lectures, seminars, symposiums, workshops, books, videos and over twenty years of hands on experience. Having taught over 1000 classes and worked with hundreds of private clients, Norma Jeanne has changed and molded the information over the years to suit each individual situation, environment, dog and owner and will continue to do so as she evolves as a person and a dog trainer.

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Other Influences

Please note, being listed as an "other influence" does not mean Norma Jeanne necessarily endorses the individual, their methods or ideas.



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Professional Certification Career Courses

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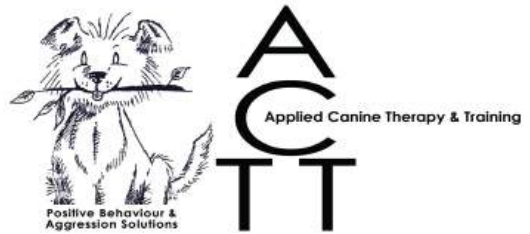
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www.IPDTA.org



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