

A Bit of Tender, Love & Care for Dogs

BARBARA KREMERS





A BIT OF TENDER LOVE AND CARE FOR DOGS

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To get educated in choosing the best food for your canine companion, you can subscribe to my free e-zine HoundBytes. Go to <http://www.best-dog-food-guide.com> and fill in the subscription form.



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Just a Bit of Tender, Love and Care for Dogs

By Barbara Kremers



We all benefit from a little bit of T.L.C. This is true for humans, for dogs and for every living creature on this planet. We all want to be safe, well fed, have clean drinking water, a good place to rest and good company (well, forget those solitary tigers and bears for the moment).

As dogs are domesticated they have become dependent on you. You have the position of the alpha dog in the pack and as such your pooch needs some basic things from you. When your tail-wagger feels confident that you're capable of fulfilling the alpha role, he can relax and he'll be a healthy happy dog.

So what do you need to take care of?

Provide guidance, fun and healthy exercise (play and training), nutritious dog food, medical attention when indicated and of course lots of love and attention.

As my website [Best Dog Food Guide](#) is all about dog food it cannot cover all the areas you need to take care of. As a service I have handpicked several articles about each subject that needs your attention as a good dog owner. Your canine will love you for it. I think he would want you to go directly to the article about dog treats or convince you to go and cook him a mouth-watering meal! Or if you have a diva-like dog, then start at the end of this book and create some stunning photographs of your best friend.

Producing this e-book has truly been a team effort. Twenty authors, all dog experts, have contributed to "A Bit of Tender, Love & Care for Dogs". Some wrote more than one article and contributed to several chapters. In the final chapter, the 'Acknowledgements', you'll find the complete list of all contributing authors.



Dog Biology

Introduction

By Barbara Kremers



What is a dog anyway? Is it a domesticated wolf? A four-pawed friend of the house? When your understanding of dog biology grows it becomes easier to coach and train your furry friend. You'll also respect some of your canine's odd behaviors as you learn the origin of these.

And as you can see in the picture above, some dogs are very interested in their roots as well 😊.

As your understanding grows the bond between you and your pooch will also grow and training will get easier and easier. So prepare yourself for some valuable theoretical background information.

The first three articles (two by DogWhisperWoman Rena Murray and one by Audrey Frederick) are about the behavior of wild dogs and how to translate your dog's language into English. It explains the defecation habits your dog may show, his getting to bed routine and his methods of getting your attention. Not all dogs will show these dog instinctive behaviors, perhaps it depends whether they are close to their roots but you can also teach them to stop doing it (after all... you are the alpha). The little guy watching TV in the picture sure is close to his roots as he displays most of the instinctive behaviors listed in this article. Or perhaps he was just paying real attention to the TV program and memorizing it thoroughly 😊.

A big difference between you and your canine companion is your sense of smell. The third article, again by Audrey Frederick, zooms in on your dog's nose. As you probably focus more on sight and what you hear, your furry friend relies more on what he smells. Dogs can tell a lot from a certain smell. To them it's like reading the local newspaper: who has been here, when, how long, what's he like etc. Just as you would like to read the newspaper, so does your dog! Of course you are the one in charge... but give him a break once in a while. It won't hurt either of you.

The last article in this chapter is written by UK's dog listener Stan Rawlinson and deals with canine communication. It highlights the importance of early socialization so your



dog can learn to speak doggie language fluently. This is important in his development and can prevent aggression problems later in life.



Playing dogs are often just determining who's boss

Wild Dog Behavior - What Is Going On?

By Rena Murray

Your domesticated animal is closer to being wild than you think! Yes, there are indeed some very curious, strange, or downright disgusting wild dog behaviors that are frequently displayed by our domestic dogs, but which are very misunderstood by people. How can we eliminate unwanted dog behaviors if we are unfamiliar with their origins in the wild, their true meanings and purposes? Let's expose a few.

After your pooch does his elimination job outside, he kicks his feet and covers his mess with dirt and leaves. That is purely dog instinctive behavior. What he is doing is applying a very intelligent and critical skill for survival in the wild. He is covering and removing his scent, which otherwise might cause him to be found by predators.

Mother wolves actually eat the feces of the young pups until they are old enough to run with the pack. As awful as this sounds, if the mother failed to do so, the very young pups would lie or sit in their own mess or that of a litter mate. Then they would be easily located by predators. Until the pups can walk away from their feces, they must be licked by the mother and stimulated to go to the bathroom under her supervision.

Another annoyance to people, most dogs will scratch the ground before lying down at night to sleep. Contrary to popular opinion, your dog's scratching the carpet or ground at most times is not a nesting instinct but, rather, is a signal that he is in his assigned place and content. Then he will turn to the left, to the right, and left one more time and lie down. You see, each pack member sleeps in the same spot every night, and your domestic dog still has this animal instinctive behavior firmly ingrained.



Several people have told me that their dog wants attention when he shows his belly to them. This is partially true, because many dogs do it so sweetly that no one can resist them, and they know it! You need to understand, though, that it is another instinctive behavior for dogs in the presence of their leader – It is a sign of submission and respect, but not of fear.

Higher ranking wolves posture over lower ranked wolves, especially the younger ones, to show displeasure or to put them in their place. The lower ranked animal then often shows his belly, or as the author of the popular children's book series, "Julie of the Wolves," put it: "flashes the white flag of surrender."

Another annoyance and possible tripping risk is that overly enthusiastic greeting you get from your favorite pooch. Wolf pups jump eagerly and lick the mouths and faces of the adults when they get back from hunting. The jumping is a welcome and a joyful greeting that comes to them quite naturally. After all, they cannot reach the faces of the adults without jumping.

Our puppies also seek to lick our faces, smelling the food we recently ate – because the adult wolves regurgitate for them. I go a long way for my dogs, but not that far!

Other licking? Chin licking is an animal instinctive behavior that is a great show of respect, so it is intended as an honor when your pooch wants to "kiss" yours. He recognizes you as his superior and wants to curry favor. If you are still having serious issues (e.g., humping), be encouraged. The chin licking is a sign that your dog is seriously seeking you as a leader. Be one!

Wolves and dogs also clean one another's eyes, ears, and genital areas to groom and clean each other and to keep the pack healthy. That is not being fresh. You may also have noticed wolves or dogs mouthing each other all over. This is actually a massage they do to build muscle.

Another unwanted but common dog instinct is stealing food from people and other animals. This one can get serious, for food is one of the power struggles among dogs. My Labrador Retriever puppy lost that power struggle after ONE time – when she dared to swipe a bite of my cheese eggs, which I took back!

Remember, for any of you who have pets who display these dog instinctive behaviors and you do not like them, there are ways to stop any and all of them. Dogs instinctively submit to their pack leader, and will stop a behavior when they know it is not wanted by you. You do NOT have to live with disgusting or annoying wild dog behavior! Just ask an expert for help.

Want to stop Pooch's Wild Dog Behaviors? Ask Dog Obedience Trainer - Platinum Expert Author Rena Murray, also known as DogWhisperWoman, at <http://www.pawpersuasion.com> - your source for Dog Behavior & Dog Training help with practical self-help Articles, free email Newsletter, PAW PERSUASION POINTERS, private consultations, and <http://www.pawpersuasion.com/blog> to help you select, train, understand, communicate with, and control your dog. Turn Wild Willy into Faithful Fido, restoring a right relationship with your dog and peace in your home!





Japanese Akita and Alaskan Malamute showing dominant behavior (left) and a play invitation.

Wolf Pack Ways – Alpha Pup, the Future Alpha Leader

By Rena Murray

We continue our exploration of wild wolf society and its implications for the behavior of your domestic dog with consideration of how the wild wolf pups achieve certain wolf pack rank, and how a pup develops into a new alpha leader of the pack. We have seen that wolf pups quickly learn and apply predatory skills of hunting and ripping open the carcass of the kill. They strengthen their necks by tossing around caribou hide, practice evasive manoeuvres and stealth in their play, and experience harsh lessons in the critical role of obedience for their very survival. They learn and practice the discipline, cooperation, and respect for wolf pack rank that pervade wild wolf society.

But who among them will be the next alpha leader of this wild wolf pack?

When the pups of a wolf pack are about three months old, their need to run with a pack really begins to show. The pups start forming a line and practicing running with each other while avoiding collision with one another. It is at this time that their individual personalities become increasingly evident, although it is not until around the end of the first year when they start striving for position in the pack. (It is generally around the second year that most have enough experience actually to gain pack position.)

Some bigger pups show aggression toward the smaller ones for accidental collisions with them during the puppy pack practice runs. These short-tempered ones are not going to be good wolf pack leaders. They are viewed as unstable, while the stability of the calmer pups leads to more self control, pack control, and influence.

It is the calmest and most alert pup who ends up leading the puppy pack. The size and strength of the pup does not determine his leadership. Frequently, the alpha pup in a wild wolf pack stands out and his position is guaranteed from early on.

The alpha pup will be followed by all of the others, who he directs with glances. Eye contact and subtle eye signals are vital communication modes in a wild wolf pack, especially for the hunt, and equally important among domestic dogs.



As the alpha pup grows, he will take some private outings with the male alpha leader of the pack. During these outings, he will be taught the deepest secrets of leading a wolf pack.

No other member of the wolf pack will disturb the alpha leader and alpha pup at this time. With a glare and forward ears, the alpha leader will have commanded them to stay. Nor will the wolf pack panic at this 'departure' of its alpha leader, for they know what their alpha is doing and where he is.

The alpha pup begins to follow the leader of the pack everywhere and to copy his behavior. If the alpha leader snarls and growls when eating, so does the pup. If the alpha leader looks at something, so does he. The alert pup does not miss a thing.

During this time, the other pups are growing into their roles, too, in this wolf pack society. For example, the alone pup who keeps to herself is a likely future omega ranked wolf. The wolf pup who is constantly beside the alpha pup whenever he can be is likely to become a beta.

All the roles are important to make a balanced wolf pack. As with an army, there is a need and use for each wolf pack rank. The alpha leader rules as commander in chief, and has the respect of all other pack members. He also receives constant scent mixing and grooming from his wolf pack members to keep him encouraged and to keep his stress down. It is his responsibility to ensure that his pack lives!

The beta is faithful to the alpha leader, more than all others. In human terms, he flies his right wing, or is his right-hand man. The beta wolf defends the alpha leader whenever needed.

The omega, at one time called the outcast, is actually the jester of the wild wolf pack. Slightly bullied by the others, nevertheless, he is a stress reliever for the wolf pack. He is apt to taunt higher ranked wolves and often is the last to eat.

We can liken the wild wolf pack to a corporation. Yes, the president (alpha leader) is important, but surely do not forget his right hand man (vice president) and all the vital functions and employees under him. The wolf pack has a very efficient training department, as the pups grow and are groomed for their future roles in this highly structured and disciplined wild wolf society.

Want to stop Pooch's Wild Dog Behaviors? Ask Dog Obedience Trainer - Platinum Expert Author Rena Murray, also known as DogWhisperWoman, at <http://www.pawpersuasion.com> - your source for Dog Behavior & Dog Training help with practical self-help Articles, free email Newsletter, PAW PERSUASION POINTERS, private consultations, and <http://www.pawpersuasion.com/blog> to help you select, train, understand, communicate with, and control your dog. Turn Wild Willy into Faithful Fido, restoring a right relationship with your dog and peace in your home!



Translating Dog Talk to English

By Audrey Frederick

Why is it we expect our dogs to understand everything we say to them and yet, we never take the time to understand what they are saying to us?

Here we are a larger than life overbearing human creature that goes about waving our hands and arms, sometimes yelling words our poor dogs do not understand and we expect perfect behavior from them.

When was the last time you took a moment or two to try and understand what your dog was trying to tell you?

Gotcha didn't I?

You cannot remember the last time, or even the first time, you listened to your dog.

Well, with a great deal of effort, I am going to try and translate some of your dog's actions into words, you will understand.

A wagging tail to most of us means a friendly dog, but not always. Sometimes a wagging tail can mean the dog is ready to attack, is frightened or is happy. Interpretation depends on the look on the dog's face, is it relaxed or tense and are its ears in a relaxed position or are they poised back ready to charge. Be aware of the circumstances before assuming the wagging tail is a sign of friendship.

A tail between its legs is a sign of submission. Sometimes when a dog is scolded, it will put its tail between its legs to say, "Hey I am sorry," and sometimes it means I am frightened and scared do not hurt me.

A tail straight up and stiff is showing you that your dog is confident and may be feeling a wee bit defiant and strong. Also some dogs have been bred to have their tails straight up at all times.

If your dog or any dog you are trying to pet shies away, when you pet its head, they are behaving naturally. If your hand is coming straight down to pet a dog's head it can be seen as a sign of dominance on your part and not a sign of a friendly person. Believe it or not a dog prefers a scratch under the chin or on the side of its face to pats, on the head.

Whining especially in a puppy can mean it is hungry, cold or lonely. Paying some attention will usually quiet the puppy. If an older dog whines be certain there are no medical problems causing it? They too, need food, warmth and love.

Barking at the mailman; what fun! Barking at someone who will leave almost as soon as you bark gives a feeling of dominance. Your dog feels very powerful and happy doing that.

The nose to the other dog's behind ordeal. Embarrassing, as it may seem to us, it is a necessary part of a dog's world. They can learn a zillion things about each other without a word being exchanged. We have to rely on words and actions, dogs only need a few seconds of scent to know it all.



Tail chasing looks like a game dog's play and in a way it is, but it can become a serious habit and can cause anxiety and stress that will need medical help. Dogs who have been bred as hunters tend to have this problem the most, if they are not allowed out to use their instincts to wander in the woods in search of "outdoor animal" scents. A tail becomes "the prey" as it keeps moving away. Some dogs can even injure themselves by biting and chewing on their tails.

Eating Grass! We think dogs eat grass to settle their stomach problems and they do eat it for that reason and some eat it because they like to eat grass. Some throw up and some dogs do not. Either way it is no big deal and should be no cause for concern.

Pawing the ground after going to the bathroom. This is a common habit for most dogs; I always thought it was their way of washing their paws after eliminating, like we do our hands. Not so! It is another means of leaving a stronger scent for the next dog to read. Odor is a dog's newspaper.

Kisses and more kisses, a dog's licks can be taken as a sign of affection from most dogs. They like the attention they get from it and it also remind them of days with mom.

A dog licking his lips on a constant basis can be a sign of stress and anxiety. It would be wise to see what is causing the problem.

Taking time to urinate. Nothing drives a dog's human crazier than waiting for the pup to decide to go to the bathroom. The sniffing seems to go on forever.

Did you ever wonder why?

No, it is not because your dog wants to drive you crazy it is because the urine scent is part of the newspaper network that a dog's scent creates. Some dog's want to read what information the other dog's have left before leaving its own, while some want to leave message in a new and clean spot.

Female dogs tend not to be so fussy; male dogs on the other hand are great news hounds.

Rolling in "yuck." Why do most dogs love to roll in things that are not acceptable to their humans? It seems the worse a thing smells the better a dog likes it.

For one thing it is a way to communicate to another dog of what a wonderful day it had and gives his friend an opportunity to enjoy it too.

In days of yore, dogs rolled in stinky stuff to hide the fact they were around and kept predators away.

Sticking their head out the moving car window. Dogs love the feeling of the wind on their faces, plus the fact dogs are scent oriented and the smells of the world as they pass by is very interesting to the dog.

The danger lies in the fact flying things can cause eye injuries. It is better to be safe than sorry and keep the windows closed and the air conditioner on.

People sniffing can cause a human embarrassment when done by a dog.

Dogs just seem to head right for the groin area of visiting humans.



Why? For the same reason they smell each other, they can tell a lot about you and what your reaction to them is. They can even tell the difference between identical twins by their smell...

Walking in circles before lying down is a habit that has been instilled in a dog down through the generations. Dogs in the wild flattened down the grasses and other material when they were ready to nap by walking around it.

Blinking is something a dog does when it is thinking hard about something. For instance if you want your dog to sit and he stands there blinking, he is wondering "do I have to?"

Last but not least in this little information about what is your dog saying is "yawning." We yawn when we are tired or bored and so does a dog.

Yawning is a way for a dog to also cope with stress. We may find something to do with our hands or minds when we are stressed, but a dog does not have that ability or mind set.

Yawning is a way to cope. If your dog is yawning a great deal and you know it is not tired or bored, think about what maybe stressing he/she out.

Have there been changes the household that may have upset your pet? Stress can cause all kinds of behavioral problems if not corrected.

I hope you enjoyed this little walk through what your dog is trying to tell you.

Dogs are such interesting and wonderful creatures and they deserve our time in trying to understand them as best as we can.

Being a pet parent takes patience, time and devotion. Understanding your pet is an art, developed over a period of time with a true feeling of bonding on your part. Our pets give us their devotion and yet, most of us find giving our pets our devotion a hard thing to do. Spend time with your pet and by doing so you will develop a true understanding of why your pet does certain things and the reason behind those actions.

If you enjoyed this article please visit Audrey's website and learn more <http://cats-and-dogs-on-the-web.com/>





This looks serious but again this is also social play.



Animal Noses - What Do They Do?

By Audrey Frederick

In our world sight and hearing are far more important to us than our sense of smell.

Granted the smell of fresh baked bread or a steak cooking on the grill can make us weak in the knees, but on the whole, smell is really not the most important thing in our lives.

In the lives of our cats and dogs smell is extremely important.

A blind or deaf cat or dog can lead a fairly normal life as long as its nose is in working order.



From the very moment a puppy or kitten is born, smell becomes the most important part of their lives. A newborn can find mommy and its favorite nursing nipple just by smelling.

Dogs have a “superman” sense of smell; they have 280 million receptors that help them smell. Cats come in a close second with 100 million receptors and the lowly human has only 20 million.

Cats and dogs use their sense of smell to “see” their world.

The ability to determine from a scent left by a visiting animal of when it was there, its state of health, sex and what kind of animal it was, is rather amazing.

To us a pile of feces on the lawn is a mess to clean up; to your dog, it is filled with information about the dog that left it.

Sidewalks, trees, fire hydrants and plants provide all kinds of information for our cats and dogs about friends or foe that have been there.

As hard as it is for us to realize that all those “nasty” moments of smelling, dogs do to each other, is a very important part of their communication.

We shake hand to size up a person; dogs use smell to do the same thing. Their behavior is perfectly acceptable in a dog’s world and we, as humans need to come to terms with it and not be embarrassed.

Actually, we should encourage it, as it helps to socialize your dog and it makes him/her happier.

Smell is so important in our pet’s life that nature gave them 2 organs to detect smell with. The first one of course, is the nose. Their noses are constructed in a similar fashion to ours. Once the air enters the nose it is warmed and moistened and then some air is funnelled into thin folds called the olfactory mucosa. This is where those millions of receptors are.

In order for you to understand the difference between our pets and we humans, when it comes to our smelling ability, let’s discuss receptor sizes. Our 20 million receptors take up about ½ square inch, our cat’s 100 million take up to 6 square inches and our friend the dog, depending on breed size can take up to 20 square inches.

That certainly explains the long noses some dogs have.

If you ever wondered why a dog’s nose is moist, it is because it makes smelling easier.

In addition to a nose, cats and dogs have another organ that helps them smell. It is called the Jacobson’s organ. This is an interesting organ, it is a tube located in the nasal septum that is paired with some nerve endings on the roof of the mouth.

The Jacobson’s organ has just one job to detect odors that are linked with food or sex. When those smells are detected, signals are sent to the part of the brain that controls appetite or the sex drive.

Cats have a unique behavior associated with the Jacobson’s organ: it is call flehmen. This behavior happens when a cat smells something really interesting, like a female in heat. It causes the cat to arch its neck, lift its head, curl back its top lip and open its mouth. The look apparently gives the cat an angry look or a look of someone quite out of it.



Having had cats for many years, I have yet to see this behavior, possibly because my cats have all been neutered or spayed.

This seems to be a tom cat trait more than any other. Smell to our pets is almost like reading the newspaper. Smell is an information source, they can tell who has passed through, what they have eaten or rolled in.

If they could talk, they could even tell you what someone is cooking 4 blocks away from the house. Believe it or not, if your neighbor was cooking fish, your dog (if it could talk) would be able to tell you what kind of fish it was, where it came from, what chemicals were in the water and how long it had lived there.

Your dog could tell that just from the smell. Wild isn't it?

A dog's sense of smell is at least 100,000 times better than our sense of smell. Not only that, dogs have the ability to remember smells, once the smell has registered in the "smell chamber" a dog will never forget it.

Wouldn't it be great if they could remember all the commands we teach them the same way?

That is why it is hard to lie to a dog, our body language and our smell when we are trying to convince our dog that going to the vet is fun, gives us away.

Why did I bother to write on "pet smelling?" One of the reasons is that we, as busy humans, often do not take the time to smell the roses growing in our own yards. We really don't even think about smelling, until we smell something that smells good or bad.

We take our dogs out for a walk and get annoyed when they stop every three feet to smell the grass or a tree.

It never dawns on us that they are gathering information for themselves, just as we do from the newspaper, radio or TV.

You might consider smelling a social exercise for pets. Let your dog smell other friendly dogs and do not be embarrassed by it. If they could talk and shake hands they would, but nature gave them noses to do the same thing.

So the next time you are out walking your dog remember these few pages and let your dog smell things.

There are many times that I would like to get inside the head of one of my cats, in order to figure out why it is doing, what it is doing. Since I can't, I find it interesting to learn what makes their world go round and smell is an important part of their world. If you have enjoyed this article please come and visit me at <http://www.cats-and-dogs-on-the-web.com/>.

Audrey



Canine Communication - the Early Years

By Stan Rawlinson

Canine Communication and Body Language

Critical Periods

If we separated a human baby from all contact with other humans until it was five years old then that child would never learn the ability to speak or to empathise and converse comfortably. In most cases, it would be fearful and introverted. 0 to 5 years old is a critical learning period for humans. The old saying “give me the child and I will show you the man” holds more truth than we could ever imagine. We learn more during this period than at any other time in our lives. In relative terms 0 to 16 weeks is the equivalent in canine age.

Forget the old wives tale that one year of a human equates to seven in a dog. A far more accurate measurement is fifteen for the first year, ten for the second and five for every year thereafter (though it depends on the breed and size) If you therefore calculate 16 weeks, it comes out as 5 years in human years. This coincides with Scott and Fullers 20-year observations on the critical periods of puppy’s psychological growth.

Socialisation

I cannot emphasise enough the need to socialise you puppy during this vitally important period. There is a vaccination now available where the full course can be administered by ten weeks rather than the normal twelve, thereby allowing two extra weeks of socialisation. The vaccine is by Intervet and is called Nobivac D.H.P.P.I/L.

Get your pups to socialisation classes, it is not enough to allow them just to mix with adult dogs they learn the all-important body language much quicker by being in the company of younger as well as older dogs. Nearly all the cases I deal with that involves interdog fear or aggression relates to lack of early socialisation during the critical 0 to 16 weeks.

The good news is that unlike humans, dogs can learn to communicate after this vital period though they will never be fluent; they can learn to cope given time and lots of patience.

Stress

All animals including humans suffer stress at some time in their life, to some extent it is part of the survival instinct, it floods the body with adrenalin pumping the muscles up allowing us to decide whether to fight freeze or flight.

Dogs have a powerful set of body postures that alleviate stress and diffuse potentially threatening situations, the shake, as if shedding water is one way of alleviating stress. We do not always see the signs such as dilated pupils, restless pacing, scratching, panting, loss of appetite, sudden dandruff and sweating. Most people think dogs sweat through their tongues by panting; this is a cooling system but has nothing to do with sweating. Dogs only sweat through their paws so damp footprints can also be a sign.

Aggression

When we approach a dog that is either fearful or control complex aggressive aka dominant, we can often tell by body language if they are likely to attack. Look for balance, if the weight and balance is on the front foot and it is leaning forward at the



shoulders and is making hard eye contact then it normally means business. If the balance however is on the back feet and the eyes are darting away and it is yawning or licking, then unless cornered or challenged it is unlikely to just attack out of the blue.

If we also put our weight on our back foot, we can often diffuse a potentially dangerous situation. Weight and balance are magnified in a dog's mind, they are always looking for the subtle nuances in our body language, and this is especially true of a nervous dog. I was at a clients recently, when I leaned slightly back putting the weight on my back foot the dog approached, when I transferred the weight to my front the dog moved away.

Many people believe that if the hackles are up this is a sign of aggression. This is not always the case, a dog that is excited can raise its hackles, its actual intentions will be apparent depending on the approach, if it curves round coming in from the side and sniffs the ground as it approaches than its intentions are normally peaceful. If it comes in face on stiff legged and circling then it could be a prequel to aggression.

Appeasement Gestures

Let's look at meeting and greeting, as one dog approaches another you will see a wide range of reactions. Some dogs will lie down almost flat to the ground we often see this in Border Collies. Some will lie and slightly roll over averting there eyes this is a submissive but friendly gesture The ones that lay down but in a Sphinx position head erect and body and tail upright are signalling to the other dog that they are confident and high ranking but are friendly and its ok to approach.

Others will yawn, circle slowly but not stiff legged, sniff the ground and allow eyes to constantly dart these look then look away again this is also a non-threatening approach. Others will stand off and await the other dog to approach so they can observe the approaching dogs intentions before deciding whether to greet. Just standing still can appease nervous dogs, lifting a paw up and down is another gesture I often see this signal to both dogs and humans, blinking eyes is a also diffuser of aggression that we can also use. Couple this with yawning averting our head and licking our lips and you can often calm a nervous or aggressive dog.

Clients often tell me that their aggressive dog dislikes black or dark dogs, and they cannot understand why? It is simple really; they cannot read the intent on a very black background therefore they are unable to react to the calming signals. I am occasionally told that some dogs are racist to coloured people; Dogs cannot be racist unlike humans they have no moral or racial preconceptions, this form of aggression is simply because they cannot distinguish features and intent on a darker background and may become fearful or aggressive because of that.

Rank

I am not of the school of thought that thinks there are no such things as dominant dogs. It appears that it now politically incorrect to use this word to describe a dog's position or state of mind. If we agree the fact that dogs have submissive tendencies then the antonym (exact opposite) of submission is dominance. If we accept that like many other creatures' dogs do have levels of status, then status brings in rank and therefore control and dominance. I am well aware that the word dominance is vastly overused and in many cases is blamed for almost all canine problems, but to suggest that there are no dominant tendencies in some dogs psyche is to my mind mistaken and an exercise in semantics.

Having said that I am constantly told that this or that dog is displaying dominant aggression. In fact quite the opposite is mainly the case. The confident and high-ranking dog has no need for aggression. Its body language and controlled air shows all who can read the signs that this is not a dog to mess with. The wolf pack rarely has a need for actual aggression it is mainly stylised posturing that allows the hierarchy to exist



peacefully. Generally, fear and lack of controlled early socialisation, causes most aggression based behavioural problems, that and our inability to read the clear signals that our pets are constantly beaming to us.

In conclusion, we need to watch and learn dog speak, write down the signals your pet gives and in what context it was used. With practice and given time, you should find yourself able to communicate and signal back, this will benefit both you and your dog and will result in a stronger bond and understanding of each other's needs resulting in a relaxed and pleasant relationship.

Stan Rawlinson Dip MTCBPT. PAACT

Dog Behaviourist and Obedience Trainer, who has owned and worked dogs for over 25 years, starting with gundogs then moving to the behavioural and obedience side of training companion dogs. He now has a successful practice covering Greater London, Surrey, and Middlesex.

Stan is recommended by numerous Vets, Rescue Centres, and Charities. He writes articles and comments on behavioural issues and techniques for dog magazines including Our Dogs, Dogs Monthly, K9 Magazine, Shooting Times, Pet Talk and Pet Owner Magazine. He is also a behavioural spokesman for Disney and has appeared on Television, Radio and in National Newspapers on many occasions

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A New Dog in the Family

Introduction

By Barbara Kremers

Ever since I was a little child I have loved animals. I was raised amongst dogs, cats, birds and horses. Today I have both a dog and a cat and they respect each other. But it wasn't like that from the very first beginning and it took me quite some months to get them to this point. And introducing a playful puppy to a 14-year old senior cat was not the only hurdle I had to take. I've spent more than a year preparing for the arrival of my Japanese Akita pup.



First I had to decide on the type of dog and I researched different dog breeds. Personally I wanted a dog that looks natural and the dog's temperament had to fit my life style. I chose the Japanese Akita breed and went to visit dog shows and several dog breeders to get more information. First hand information is not always the same as the breed description in text books.

I've visited multiple dog schools in my area to have a look at their training methods and I read about a meter of dog literature. When I finally decided to go for an Akita I was put on a waiting list. When at the end I took Kensho home, almost two years had passed since I first decided I wanted a dog in my life. To wait for Kensho was well worth it 😊.

When you take a puppy home you need to introduce the puppy to your family and his new surroundings. In this chapter you'll find articles about introducing a new dog to a cat, to another dog or to children.

The first article by Shannon Emmanuel is to evaluate whether your child is ready for a dog. Almost all kids love animals though not all families may be ready to take up the responsibility to take care of a dog. It's better to be informed before you make that decision as the dog will hopefully be with you for at least 10 years (if you're getting a puppy).



When you have made your decision and you want to add a furry friend to your family the second article by Rena Murray gives you more information about the dog-child interaction. But suppose you don't have a child, but you already have a dog or a cat that needs to be introduced to the new furry family member. Then skip to the next two articles by dog trainer Tyler Brown that gives you guidance.

These important first days and weeks are very important in order to get a healthy happy stable dog. Therefore I have included an article by Justine Kay about socialization.

Dogs need a lot of guidance and the big reward for you, if you do all this preparation and socialization the right way, can be found in the final article by Audrey Frederick.

Is Your Child Ready for a Dog?

By Shannon Emmanuel

Are you considering buying a dog for your child or children?

Before you do, take a moment to evaluate your family and determine if your children are ready for a dog. Here are some questions you might use to help you decide if buying a dog is right for your family.

Babies and Toddlers

Is this your first dog? Do you have older children as well? Why are you getting a dog now?

These three questions will help you to consider whether you have the knowledge concerning the time and effort required to care for a dog. Dogs are a big responsibility and if you have not been solely responsible for a dog previously you may find the work and time involved in training, feeding, grooming and playing to be more than you can handle while caring for a young baby or toddler.

Your young children may benefit from having a dog from a young age. They will certainly develop very strong attachments to the family pet. But young children are not very trustworthy to be left alone around a dog and they are not aware enough to desire a pet. Not only will they do just as well without a dog, but the extra caution needed while young children are present may cause you more stress and frustration than waiting until they are older.

If you are deciding to get a dog because you feel it is a normal part of family life and you want to 'complete' the package while your child is young, do not rush into purchasing a dog right away. For the various reasons above, a dog should be considered a major decision and waiting one year or more may be best for your situation.

If the dog is to be a companion to a mom who will now be home alone with her child for long periods of time, maybe an older dog will provide the needed company while avoiding the extra work of training a puppy.

Preschoolers and Young Children

If your family is established and you are not expecting to add a baby into the mix, you still need to consider a few things before getting a dog.



Are you aware of the time required? Can you afford a dog? Will your children be safe?

The work of training (especially house training) and caring for a puppy can easily take several hours of your day. Depending on your method of obedience and house training you should consider if you have the energy to deal with a puppy consistently and with urgency while implementing house rules at this crucial stage.

Young children and preschoolers may find it exciting to help you feed, wash and walk the dog. However, children this young are still likely to startle or maul a puppy which may lead to accidental injuries – harming both the puppy and the child.

The cost of owning a dog must also be considered. Vet fees, adoption or purchase costs, licensing, food and grooming should be accounted for before going to pick the dog out. Doing your homework now will avoid unpleasant disappointment in the future.

If you feel that your life is free enough of distractions that you will look forward to the temporary unsettling of bringing a puppy home, you may well find this a wonderful, curious age that will be delighted with a puppy. You will need diligence in watching both the puppy and children until training has been established. You will also need to give your children reminders about how they must treat the puppy to prevent accidents.

Older Children and Teens

Some families choose to wait until children are older before bringing a dog home. In many cases they feel this will be an aid in teaching their children responsibility. But what questions should parents of older children ask before getting a dog?

Who is responsible for the dog? How long will the dog be with you?

In all cases the parents must ultimately accept the responsibility of caring for the dog, both financially and physically. Although your pre-teen may insist on his or her desire to take full responsibility for walking, feeding and playing with the dog, you as a parent must be willing to take this on if your child fails to keep to his or her word.

It is a big responsibility to take on a pet like a dog. They are far more demanding on your attention than cats or other pets. They are social animals and you will be doing great harm if you leave your dog tied up outside for days at a time, ignored and unhappy.

If you still choose to get a dog as a family pet you should consider the future care of the dog. A dog generally has a life span of 10 – 15 years, depending on the breed. If you are getting a dog as a companion for an older child or a teenager who will ultimately care for the dog during the years to come when your child leaves home, goes to college or gets married?

While all of these questions should assist you in determining if your family should get a dog right now, it is also wise to find out more about the kind of dog that would best suit your family. All the work you do beforehand will help you make a choice that everyone will be able to enjoy!

Shannon Emmanuel is a freelancer writer and the author of "How to Select the Best Dog or Puppy for Your Children". Find out more about choosing a family dog at <http://best-dog-breed-for-children.com>



Children and Dogs – Preparing Toddler Tim for His Canine Friend

By Rena Murray

It is much easier to be pregnant and already have a dog who eagerly awaits the arrival of your baby as the "new pack member," than it is to bring in a dog later and to build a relationship between the dog and your toddler. If you and your spouse decide you want your young child to grow up with a dog, then start off on the right foot. You do not want to cause unnecessary jealousy, dog possessive behavior, dog dominance, or even dog attack! With these key steps, you can make the process a happy and rewarding one

Take your toddler and any other children around friends' dogs who are accustomed to little ones and patient with them. Instruct your child in advance how to treat the dog. Should he start pulling on the dog or jumping on him, correct him promptly. Children must be taught to understand that dogs are living creatures. Dogs can be hurt, they have feelings, and they deserve respect. It is not "puppy in my pocket."

Read to your child books about dogs and age appropriate stories which teach valuable lessons about respecting and caring for animals. You will want to have your child as involved in your dog's care as he can be. This will both teach the child responsibility, and further the respect the dog has for the child's position in the "family pack."

Teach your child not to mess with a dog's toys or to take his food. No dog should aggress toward the child for touching his things, but the child needs to respect what belongs to the dog.

What if a dog growls at your child? Do not discipline a dog for growling. That's a warning. If you do, the dog will learn to bite without warning, and then you have a real problem. If a dog growls at your child, tell the child "enough is enough" or the dog will teach him.

It is not acceptable for a dog to bite a child, and that could cause a child to have a lifelong fear of dogs. Early trauma is the hardest to conquer. However, if the child hurts or threatens a dog, the animal is going to respond with a corrective nip. He will treat the child like an obnoxious pup in the wild. It is quite understandable dog instinctive behavior, and can you really blame the dog?

In preparing your child for a pet, take him on walks with dogs, too. Let him learn to stay calm, and not to be too much of a distraction for the dog. Toddlers instinctively understand leadership, control, and authority, and your child will learn from your example to have a healthy relationship with a dog, while also learning the right and wrong ways to correct one.

Always supervise dogs and children, for the curious poking or other action that instigates a problem and even dog attack usually occurs behind adult backs. So do not be too quick to blame the dog if your child is nipped. If the dog is otherwise pretty tolerant, then understand that the child probably pushed him beyond his limits and, understandably, the dog said: "Enough is enough!"

If you are selecting a new dog for your household pet, do your homework. Know the breed's characteristics and requirements, and evaluate carefully the individual pup's temperament and background. For example, when picking a puppy for a child, you do not want the bouncy one. A hyperactive dog and a hyperactive three year old do not mix! You want the sweet, little pup who appears mellow and observant. That one has the potential to be a loving canine companion you for your child. Or choose a well-trained, gentle older dog, but select wisely.



It is always advisable to take a professional with you who really knows how to judge if any symptoms of problems are there. You should also take the child with you when you bring the dog home, but the dog's introduction into the household is beyond the scope of this article. Suffice it to say that every child deserves to grow up without fear of dogs and without pain of dog attack -- but with the rewarding relationship of a BEST CANINE FRIEND! Just take your time and do not rush things too fast or too hard.

GET HELP from Rena Murray, also known as DogWhisperWoman, at the Dog Obedience Training website. An accomplished Dog Behavior Modification expert, Dog Obedience Trainer, and Platinum Expert Author, Rena provides self-help Articles and free "Best eZines"-recognized newsletter: PAW PERSUASION POINTERS to help you better understand communication and control of your dogs, debunk dog training myths, explore right and wrong dog training techniques for specific situations, address destructive dog behavior, excessive and obsessive dog behavior, and other canine issues, from new puppy to old dog. Subscribe for free at PawPersuasion.com, visit Rena's BLOG - <http://www.pawpersuasion.com/blog/>, find the dog products, crates, and gifts you need at <http://www.PawPersuasion.com>, and Contact Rena for Coaching.



Introducing Two Dogs - Have a Safe Introduction

By Tyler Brown

Human beings are bound by certain social rules and etiquettes. Dogs are too, however, their rules are entirely different from our rules. For example, it is rare that one person meets another person and within seconds begins a violent fight. This behavior, however, is very common with our canine friends. Introducing two dogs in public is an art and an exercise in training and control. You must be prepared if you are going to avoid not only dog fights, but if you are to steer clear of dog illnesses and other problems when introducing two dogs.



When I have my dogs in public the first rule I live by is 'assume the worst'. What I mean by this is that I assume that most other dogs out there are ill-behaved and not dog friendly. I know this sounds extreme and perhaps rude but honestly, am I that far off? If you assume this position you will be correct a majority of the time. Most dogs in public are poorly trained and poorly socialized and shouldn't be counted on to automatically get along with your dog.

So how do you go about introducing two dogs with such assumptions? The short answer is, I don't. When I am in public, generally speaking, I keep my dogs separate from other dogs I encounter. Do I know if the approaching dog is current with his shots, do I know if the other dog is dog aggressive? The answer is no. Why would I introduce my dog into such an unknown situation where he could get injured from a fight or sick from an illness?

The next assumption I typically make is 'assume the other dog owner knows nothing about dogs'. When I approach another dog owner on the street or in a park I often find that they are eager to have their dog meet both my dog and me. I often hear comforting words such as, "Oh, he's fine with other dogs," or, "It's ok, he's friendly." Well the truth is that maybe their dog has been friendly with a few dogs but who is to say that their dog will be friendly with my dog? I was once walking with a client and their dog down a path in the woods when along came a beautiful Airedale Terrier. As we approached the owner of the terrier called out, "He's friendly!" following which the dog immediately proceeded to lunge at the leash while barking quite aggressively, obviously looking for a fight. Both I and my client's dog barely missed being bit as the other owner was nearly pulled over. Ever since this experience, and many similar ones, I have realized that I can't trust the judgment of other dog owners.

As a result of this style of thinking I religiously avoid dog parks. They are the bane of the dog world and should be avoided at all costs. They are a recipe for disease and fighting. You would be wise to avoid these settings.

Am I being too much of an extremist? No, I don't think so. In doing this I am almost guaranteeing a safe outing everywhere I go. You may be asking, "But what about socialization? Shouldn't my dog learn to get along with other dogs?" The answer is yes, but only under controlled settings.

I am very careful about the children that my young daughter meets. I try to avoid having her meet kids who are bullies or sick. Why wouldn't I do the same for my dog? Whenever I allow my dogs to meet new dogs I do so only when the situation is controlled.

So what is a controlled situation? It could be a variety of settings, but typically a controlled situation is one where I am familiar with the other dog owner, familiar with the other dog and feel that said owner can control said dog. A controlled situation finds both dogs on leash and under control. When introducing two dogs I am always confident that I can control my dog so I need to make sure I partner up with someone else who can also control their dog. With all of these ducks in a row I am ready to introduce my dog to the other dog.

As I said, both dogs are on leash so the first step is allowing the other dogs to be near each other to see initial reactions. I will have my dog about 10 feet from the other dog. If either of the two begins to show aggression I know that maybe this is not a potential friendship. If they are okay at this distance I proceed. One dog remains stationary, preferably in the 'sit' command, while the other dog is walked by at a distance of 5-6 feet. The moving dog is then asked to sit while the other walks 5-6 away. Everybody still okay? Good, let's keep going. Now I put my dog in the heel position on my left hand side while the other owner puts her dog on her left hand side. From here we walk past each other head on. By walking head on with our dogs on our left hand sides and under



control the dogs are still separated by our bodies and still haven't come in contact with each other. At this point, however, each dog has seen the other from a variety of angles and from a variety of potentially threatening and non-threatening positions. If they are still okay you can keep going. Obviously if they have shown aggression at any point you should stop the session.

The next step is the actual introduction. Each owner should approach the other, each dog should be preferably in the heel position. At about 3-4 feet from each other the owners should have their dogs sit by their sides. If everyone is still all right the owners should release the dogs from the sit position and slowly allow the dogs to start sniffing. After a few seconds each owner leads his or her dog away from each other and walks in the opposite direction. Do a U-turn and return to each others proximity. Come back to a halt again 3-4 feet away from each other and repeat the process. Do this several times, each time allowing the dogs to sniff each other for a bit longer period. At this stage it is important to look for tell-tale signs. If the hair on the back of one dog goes straight up lead that dog away and go even slower with the introductions. Watch for other signs such as the lips being lifted, growling, or other very tense behavior.

It is important to keep your dogs on leash. If a fight were to break out both owners could immediately drag each dog apart from each other. If when you introduce two dogs like this and everyone is still okay you can gradually give the dogs more and more freedom and allow them to play even more.

As with all dog training, use common sense. Watch for signs in your dog. Introducing two dogs can be fun, but you must always exercise caution.

Author Ty Brown is a renowned dog trainer whose training adventures and clients have taken him to 18 states and 5 countries to teach others how to properly train their dogs. Go to <http://www.dogbehavioronline.com> for more dog training articles, advice, tips, and answers from a professional dog trainer.



More about dog and cat interactions on the next page!



Dogs and Cats - Training Eternal Enemies to Co-Exist

By Tyler Brown

Dogs and cats. Eternal enemies, right? Through proper dog home obedience training you can teach your animals to live together.

The first mistake that most pet owners make when introducing their pet dogs and cats is to allow them to make their own introductions. This is a mistake! As I stated above, these two species are eternal enemies. You can't just set one down near the other and expect great results. (Ok, I know that can happen and does happen, but my job here is to teach you about dog home obedience training. My version of training calls for prevention with dogs and cats rather than creating a problem and then being forced to fix it. As Mom used to say, an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.) There is a good deal of prevention that should be used before allowing your dogs and cats to co-exist.

Whether you are introducing a new cat to a home with a dog or vice versa I want you to start out the same way. Start out by using your trusty dog crate. Put your dog in the crate and allow the cat to be in the same room. There are several possible outcomes to this action:

1. Your dog shows complete indifference. This is ideal. If your dog behaves like this you will have a quick transition.
2. Your dog shows fear. This is not ideal but it will make the transition easier than some other outcomes.
3. Your dog shows nervousness and anxiety. He whines, he paces in the crate, paws at the door of the crate, etc. This behavior tells you that he wants out. There is something about that cat that is exciting and he wants to know what it is.
4. Your dog shows overt aggression. He barks, claws at the door of the crate, and he knows exactly what he wants to do with that cat. This is going to be the toughest dog to train, but it can be done.

For the first few days don't let your dogs and cats near each other. Keep the dog in the crate. This doesn't mean you need to keep him in the crate 24/7. When you want him out of the crate just make sure that your cat is shut off in another bedroom to avoid contact. What you hope to accomplish with this action is to train your dog to be indifferent to the cat. You want your dog to view the cat as 'background noise'. The cat is inconsequential, the cat doesn't matter, there is nothing interesting or exciting about the cat. In other words, your dog is safely tucked away in the crate and casually observes the cat move around the house. For categories 1 and 2 this will be simple. It will take no more than a day or two for your dog to think of your cat as just another 'thing' in the house. Categories 3 and 4 will take more training and time.

For categories 3 and 4 you need to attach a negative association to showing cat aggression. To do this, get a spray bottle. Fill the bottle with either plain water, water mixed with lemon juice, or for very stubborn dogs, water with vinegar. At this point, your dog is still tucked away safely in the crate. The next part of training will be conducted while you are sitting near the crate, ready for action. The instant your dog shows aggression (barks at the cat, claws at the door, whines in frustration, etc.) toward the cat spray him in the face with your spray bottle. Every time he shows aggression spray him with the bottle. When he isn't showing aggression give him soft praise, "Good boy".

Make sure that your dog never gets a chance to show aggression toward the cat without having a bad experience. This means that you must always be ready with the spray bottle or make sure the cat isn't near the dog. If you aren't vigilant and your dog has the



chance to show aggression with no adverse consequence, you are training him to show cat aggression.

If you are consistent with this exercise you will soon notice that your dog will show less and less aggression while in the crate, it just isn't worth the squirt in the face for him. You are on your way to getting your dogs and cats to co-exist.

When you feel comfortable that your dog is indifferent to the cat move on to the next step. As I said, for categories 1 and 2 this is probably one or two days after beginning the crate training. For categories 3 and 4 get your dog to the point where he is indifferent and maintains that attitude for several days if not a week.

The next step is to get your dog out of the crate and get those dogs and cats together at last! You are going to move slowly, though. Put your dog training collar and leash on your dog and make sure that he is always wearing it around the house. Keep your dog near you and allow your cat to be in the room. If your dog makes any move whatsoever to chase the cat, bark at the cat, or perform any of the stereotypical behaviors that dogs and cats do, give him a very strong correction with the leash. You want this leash correction to be a very memorable one so it must be very strong. You want to form a very negative association toward cat aggression.

Be consistent with this training. If you do this properly you will notice that your dog has less and less of a desire to chase after or bark at the cat. As you notice your dog changing his behavior give him more and more freedom by allowing him to be closer to the cat and further away from you. Eventually you will phase out the use of the dog training collar and leash.

Even if your dog isn't showing aggressive tendencies, never let him chase after the cat in the house, even playfully.

Even some of the hardest to train dogs will respond to the above method. There exist, however, certain dogs that have such strong prey drive that only drastic measures will cure them of their desire to chase and kill cats. For these dogs I employ an electric dog training collar.

Read the instruction manual on proper fitting for your electric dog training collar. With a stubborn dog that needs an electric collar the method is simple. With the collar on his neck and turned on to a high level of stimulus you are going to correct your dog every time he even looks at the cat. As your dog even sneaks a glance at your cat press the button to deliver the correction. Don't say 'no', don't react in any way, just correct him for looking at the cat. Do this as many times as it takes. Let's examine this from your dog's point of view. He wants to get to the cat, wants to chase, wants to kill. But the very act of looking at the cat causes him pain. You don't tell him anything so he doesn't associate the correction with you. He soon will learn to believe that the cat is 'evil' and he had better not even look at it because it the act of looking causes pain.

As with all training, you must be very consistent. Your dog must never have a successful chance to even chase or want to chase the cat. Be consistent, though, and soon your dogs and cats will be able to co-exist.

Author Tyler Brown is a renowned dog trainer whose training adventures and clients have taken him to 18 states and 5 countries to teach others how to properly train their dogs. Go to <http://www.dogbehavioronline.com> for more dog training articles, advice, tips, and answers from a professional dog trainer.





Why Socialize Your Puppy? A Guide to Why and How

By Justine Kay

The importance of socializing a puppy can never be over-emphasised, but what exactly does it mean? And how does one go about it? This article will explain to you what socialization is and how to put it into practice to ensure your dog has few, if any behavioural problems later in life and is able to interact well with dogs and other species.

Socialization is the process whereby a puppy learns to recognise and interact with other individuals of its own species, with people of different ages, races and genders, and with other animals that she is likely to come into contact with, such as cats and horses. The dog will learn the skills necessary to communicate with and interpret the other animals' intentions, thus avoiding unnecessary hostilities. The dog will also learn to cope with stress and will suffer less as an adult in stressful situations. When talking of socialization, we often include habituation, that is, getting a puppy used to different places, sights and sounds so that she becomes confident in new situations and gets used to as many different stimuli as possible.

There are certain periods in a puppy's development that are more important than others. The most sensitive socialization period begins at around 3 weeks of age and begins to reduce by 12 weeks. Peak sensitivity is between 6 and 8 weeks of age. It is important to remember that many young dogs need continual social interaction to maintain their socialization and failure to do so will mean that they regress or become fearful again. The 6-8 month period is another sensitive time for socialization and owners and trainers can use this window to further habituate and socialize their puppy to different surroundings, people and animals.

So, now we know why and when socialization should be carried out, we must look at how to undertake this. It is recommended that your puppy be introduced to new stimuli and other people and pets in a systematic and controlled way. Remember that these formative experiences will shape the behaviour of your pet for the rest of her life, so the idea is that they should be pleasurable and fun. They may well also be challenging, but if done in the right way, the puppy will learn that there is no threat and that she is safe to explore and meet new friends and situations without being fearful. This ensures the best chance of her developing a sound temperament and capacity to cope in all circumstances.

Early socialization is, of course, in the hands of the breeder and if they are conscientious and responsible they will ensure that the puppies are handled frequently, as well being exposed to normal household stimuli such as the television, vacuum cleaner, washing machine, doorbell etc. Puppies who are raised in a quiet kennel or room will have trouble adapting to a normal family environment.

So once the puppy is at home with you, it is your job to continue carefully introducing her to different people, animals and stimuli. It is however important to introduce the puppy to new people, places, objects and situations only when you can completely



control the experience. A frightening experience will be detrimental – avoid unfriendly dogs and adults and children who do not understand how to be kind and gentle with animals. Invite friends to your house soon after you bring your puppy home to teach her that guests are friendly and welcome in her new home. Give your friends treats to give to the puppy so she is rewarded. Introduce her to one or two other friendly, healthy, fully-vaccinated dogs – she can join in with bigger groups once she has all her shots and has learned some dog social skills and has over-come any fear. Always be ready to intervene if your puppy is scared, threatened or being bullied by another dog.

When socializing your puppy, you must evaluate your lifestyle and environment and assess what situations are lacking. For instance, if you live in the country, take your puppy to town and gradually and carefully let her become accustomed to crowds of people, noise and traffic. If, however, you live in a town and these things are no problem, take your puppy to the countryside so she can see and smell farm animals and become accustomed to them too. Make sure your dog meets some cats who are dog-friendly. Don't let her chase them as this will start a life-long habit that will be difficult to change. If your household has no children, introduce your puppy to some children who can regularly play gently with her. Always supervise them to ensure the children are gentle and that your dog is responding well and not becoming nervous or aggressive.

Remember always to protect your puppy's health, before she is fully vaccinated. Don't put her down on the ground where there may be dog urine or faeces, and don't let her interact with other dogs that may carry disease. You can still socialize your puppy by carrying her into different situations and taking her in the car, allowing her to see many different things in a safe environment and she will get used to trips in the car at the same time. Use treats and praise to reinforce good behaviour. Do not comfort your puppy if she is fearful as this can be interpreted as praise for the wrong behaviour. Simply change the situation (i.e. ask an approaching person to step back or pick up your puppy to get her out of a difficult situation) until she feels safe and secure once more.

All interaction with your puppy at this age involves consistently rewarding desirable behaviour which will increase the likelihood the dog will repeat this behaviour. It will also help to prevent the development of undesirable behaviour.

Another helpful step would be to enrol in puppy socialization and training class. This provides a great opportunity for puppies to socialize with other dogs, for puppies to learn obedience training in a playful environment with plenty of distractions and also for owners to learn training and communication techniques.

Justine Kay is an experienced dog owner and trainer. She is the webmistress at <http://www.dogs-trainingtips.com> where she writes dog training articles and discusses the intricacies of dog psychology.



Love and Dogs

By Audrey Frederick

What is this thing called love?

Yes, we are told in that in spring a young man's fancy turns to love, but what about all of us adults that no matter if it is spring, fall or whatever the season, we continually fall in love with the big brown eyes found in puppies and dogs.

What is it that draws us to these four footed creatures that sometimes take over our lives?

Why are we, as intelligent individuals drawn into the circle of complete devotion by a pair of brown eyes and some fur?

This is a question that has been puzzling many people for many years. What is it about a dog that gets to us?

People from all walks of life, rich or poor, beggar or thief will risk their lives to save their dogs. Many have gone into burning buildings to save their dog. During Hurricane Katrina many people sacrificed their own lives to stay with their dog during the storm and its aftermath.

What is this magic hold?

Some say it is caused by an over supply of the hormone "Oxytocin" in some people. Oxytocin is the hormone of love and attachment that brings out the nurturing feelings in all of us.

Women have a larger supply than men do, but there are many men that express this hormone when it comes to family and their dogs.

It seems that social animals are blessed with this hormone while the more solitary animals have less.

Humans and dogs are part of that social animal group and that can possibly explain the reason for our affection for each other.

Dogs are very social animals. In bygone days they hunted, lived and raised their families in packs. They would fight together to protect their dens from predators. A dog would not leave its family if danger prevailed; it would fight to death to be the protector. Many other species would run away in order to protect themselves and leave the family to die at the hands of the predator.

Most dogs are by nature devoted to each other and to other species of their choosing. You have read stories of dogs befriending horses, cats and many other animals. A herding dog will give its life for its flock. A human can beat a dog almost to death and the dog will still give of its love.

Dogs are like us humans in many ways. Their facial expressions can mimic ours, they seem to know our feelings and they would wear their hearts on their sleeve, if they were wearing a shirt.



Some psychologists say that dogs have learned through the ages how to manipulate the emotions of humans. That with a whine, a sad look and a lick they can have us eating out of their hands.

Probably true, at least in my case, but I don't believe that to be the whole truth or the complete story.

Dogs from the very beginning of time have earned their keep. They have hunted with man, they have protected man and they have even managed to do some of the work of man. All this with unconditional love and devotion.

Then there are those that say that the words "unconditional love" cannot be true all the time. I am certain that that is probably so. There must be many times in a dog's life that it would love to tell its human to "shut up and go away." We are probably lucky our dogs cannot talk. When you think of the secrets they know, they know our vulnerabilities (they are very good at sensing our moods) and sometimes they can read our minds. We should be thankful for their support and their closed mouths.

The glory of the dog is its ability to be social, to accept people at face value and to allow us to love them with all our hearts.

Dogs in general do not ask much of us, of course, it is our responsibility to provide food, shelter and care for them. We took away their ability to hunt and live in packs as in the bygone days.

So we should take the responsibility for their care.

But, why are we so devoted? I think it is because we were designed to be loving and nurturing and dogs were designed to be cuddly, fuzzy and loving in return.

In my opinion, we are the lucky ones; because dogs allow us to love them.

The joy of being an adult offers the opportunity to make choices; we are in control of our lives and have the freedom to choose whether or not we have a pet. For some dogs are the perfect choice and for others cats or other pets make the top of the list. Whatever your choice is, make the choice of commitment. Do not get a pet unless you can commit to caring for it 100 percent. Pets do not ask to come home with you; you make the choice to bring them home. Think about it before you commit and then be true to your commitment.

Audrey Frederick has written many articles on dogs and cats.
Read more at <http://cats-and-dogs-on-the-web.com>



Dog Food

Introduction

By Barbara Kremers



A chapter about dog food of course had to be included in this book. You'll find an extensive load of information about dog food on my [website](#) and [blog](#) and I have chosen a selection of topics to include in this TLC book.

Choosing the right kind of dog food for your canine companion is not an easy job. You need to learn how to interpret dog food labels so you understand what's inside the bag. The first article tells you the highlights. If you want to read more then [BestDogFoodGuide](#) is good place to continue (the sections 'regulations' and 'labels' explains more about the statements you'll find on the bag or can of dog food).

An alternative to buying commercial dog food is to get educated in the art of canine cuisine. To prepare a healthy balanced meal every day requires discipline and knowledge. You can also choose to occasionally prepare a home made meal as a treat or supplement. Don't just start off without knowing which ingredients can be poisonous to your dog. The article by Audrey Frederick lists a few books that will help you in this.

I have also included an interview held by me about dog allergies. It's about a Labrador retriever that was suffering from multiple allergies and this article will help you recognizing the symptoms.

Some behavioral problems a dog may have relate to food. Dog food aggression is one of them and important to either avoid or cure. Possession aggression is responsible for a lot of bite incidents so take note of this in order to protect yourself, your children and to have a relaxed doggie in your home. Chris Smith tells you more about this in his article.



The chapter continues with an overview of the history of dog food and the future outlook and an article by David Amos about the best toys and treats for your pooch.



Having a new dog in the house is of course a fun event. And dog treats and dog toys just seem to add to the fun part. You'll have to use treats and toys wisely though. Dog treats can be used as training aid. Dog toys are used to create a better bond when playing together and special chewing toys are used to avoid your dog setting his teeth in your furniture or your new shoes. The final article in this chapter tells you more about toys and treats for dogs.

Interpreting Dog Food Labels

By Barbara Kremers

I'll tell you more about dog food labels. What's in dog food? How to interpret these lists?

You're in front of the dog food aisle in the shop. What to buy? The same as last time or are you a first time buyer? Are you perhaps feeling a little overwhelmed by the assortment? Different packages, different designs, eye-catching claims advertising all sorts of additives and health benefits, pictures of fine looking beef and vegetables, and other marketing gimmicks... it is just so much! Just bear in mind manufacturers market these products with YOU in mind (not your dog), since you are the one that decides. Your dog doesn't care about fancy names, colors, shapes and trends. Try to look at this from his side, though with your brain!

First thing you need to know is which ingredients are inside the bag and how much of them, to make a sound judgement. The quality of the ingredients is the second important point. The dog food label itself won't tell you anything about that. Can your dog digest what's in his dog food, so he will get the required nutrients in his bloodstream and it's not just passing through to become large you know what.

Pet foods must meet the AAFCO standard in order to be labelled 'complete and balanced'. Meeting the AAFCO standards is a minimum requirement since you would want to feed



you dog only types of dog food that contain all required nutrients according to this standard.

By law, ingredient lists on dog food labels must be declared in the proper order of predominance by weight. This is determined as they are added in the formulation, including their inherent water content. This means that ingredients which contain a lot of water end up higher on the list than they actually deserve! The food may contain far less animal derived proteins than claimed. Because of the variation in water content it is difficult to directly compare labels from different types. You need to convert the percentages to 'dry matter basis' first.

Example:

A product with 25% of fresh meat (not dried or dehydrated meat) according to the dog food label, lists meat as main ingredient. Meat typically consists of 75% water. A sample of 100 gram dog food does not contain 25 gram meat-derived protein but only 6 to 7 ($25 * (1 - 0.75)$). As rice and corn contain much less water, these second and third listed ingredients actually appear to be the predominant ones.

This mathematical conversion is very important especially when comparing the protein content of dry to canned dog food. You'd be surprised! A product that has meat as third ingredient can actually contain more animal-source protein than a product that has meat listed first.

What is the relevance of the different statements on dog food labels like 'salmon dog food', 'with chicken', 'beef flavor'? These claims are strictly regulated and you read them as follows:

- 'With beef flavor' means the flavor itself is detectable (from beef meal or beef by-products for example), there doesn't have to be any actual beef meat present in the product.
- 'With beef' means the product contains at least 3% of beef. Did you ever realize this? Buying a product that says 'now with real beef' and you get only 3%!
- 'Beef dinner' requires the product to contain at least 25% of beef.
- 'Beef for dogs' then at least 95% of the product must be beef (or 70% when counting the added water)

Other statements on dog food labels you may want to have a cautious look at:

- Premium dog food, Super Premium dog food, Ultra Premium, Mega Premium, Giga Premium, etc. Big statements but of little value as labelling products as 'premium' or 'gourmet' doesn't require anything else than just to comply with the nutritional standards for 'complete and balanced' dog food.
- Organic dog food. Official rules governing the labelling of products as 'organic' are currently being developed. At the time these are not regulated but this won't take very long I presume as I've already seen some initial reports.
- Natural dog food. There is no official definition for this claim. Usually the manufacturer uses this to describe the product is free of artificial flavours, artificial colors and artificial preservatives. The first one is rarely used and the second one has no value to your dog anyway.
- Artificial flavours. These are rarely added to the product with the exception of artificial smoke or bacon flavors in dog treats.



- Antioxidants. Naturally anti-oxidants are vitamin C and E. These are more expensive than artificial ones and reduce the shelf life of the product by about 50%. However, it is believed that artificial antioxidants, such as ethoxyquin, play a role in onset of cancer and other adverse effects. Ethoxyquin is already banned from use in dog food in Europe.
- Calorie content. Recently manufacturers are allowed to use calorie statements on dog food labels. This is done on a voluntary base. You can roughly calculate it yourself by multiplying the amount of carbohydrates by 4.2 kcal (kilocalories) per gram, the amount of protein by 5.65 and the amount of fat by 9.4 kcal per gram. To go from kilocalories to kilojoules, multiply the total with 4.184.
- Price per portion. Products can vary greatly in density. Comparing the price of one bag to another is difficult without doing some math again. Look at the energy values per 100 g or the prescribed amount of dog food per kg dog.
- Crude analysis. This statement (often found directly after the ingredient list) merely refers to product presence and doesn't say anything about the quality of the nutrients, the digestibility or the bio-availability.

Choosing the best dog food for your dog often is a matter of trial-and-error, unfortunately. But now you are aware and know how to read the dog food labels on the packages, you can make an informed decision and pick quality dog food. You don't have to try the complete assortment on your dog to find the perfect dog food for your canine companion. And remember, take notes when you change dog food and make the switch gradually.

Barbara Kremers writes for <http://www.best-dog-food-guide.com/> and <http://www.dog-food-blog.com>. For more information about dog food labels, dog food ingredients and changing dog food go and visit <http://www.best-dog-food-guide.com> and subscribe to the free e-zine 'HoundBytes'.

Change Dog Food – The Why's and the How's Explained

By Barbara Kremers

Why NOT to change dog food?

Change dog food when necessary and only then is the most commonly heard view (though other perspectives exist). Changing dog food is one of the most common causes of diarrhoea and gastro-intestinal upsets. The change should be gradually rather than sudden so the intestinal flora of your pooch can adapt to the new dog food and go live in harmony again.

When new ingredients and substances enter the intestines the harmonious composition in numbers and combinations of the local bacteria colonies is disturbed. Shifts occur as one bacteria type (fermentative bacteria) loves carbohydrates whereas others love meat (putrefactive bacteria). The latter type doesn't produce as much gas, so when your dog is farting a lot it could be the dog food you chose last time contains the wrong amount or types of carbohydrates for his intestines.



When and why should you think of altering your dog's diet?

- It is time, for example, for a puppy to junior/adult dog food transition.
- You suspect a dog food allergy (take a look at dog allergy symptoms).
- Your dog suffers weight loss (due to loss of appetite).
- You vet recommends a change.
- There is a dog food recall and the brand you're using now is affected.
- You want to give your dog variety. Not every one agrees on this point! Some experts claim it is best to not make any change as long as your dog is doing well. Others claim there is not a single dog food that 'has it all' and by switching every three months your dog's chances of having a nutrient deficiency lessen. For now, I prefer to go with the first category of experts that advocate: "If it ain't broke, don't fix it!".

Give your dog variety, if you like, by supplementing his daily menu with occasional treats, chicken necks, uncooked kitchen counter scraps, a home made dog dinner, a whole fish from the market, that smelly unwashed dirty paunch your sweet doggie just loves so much, etc.

In contrast, feeding a wide variety of different foods is said to help avoid the development of dog food induced allergies. Changing dog food every three months is an advice given by some nutritionists. When I come across evidence supporting this I will of course update this article.

How do you change your dog's diet?

Change Dog Food Cold Turkey or Big Bang?

There are several methods of doing this and Cold Turkey or Big Bang isn't one of them. But if there is no other choice (like when there is a dog food recall) then go for it! The risks of the big bang method are nothing compared to the risks when feeding alleged tainted dog food.

Not every dog is sensitive to food changes and for some dogs it actually seems as if they do have a cast iron stomach. What can happen though is your dog feeling quite uncomfortable for some days. He may be experiencing stomach cramps, indigestion, and diarrhoea or vomiting as his digestive system needs time to adapt.

When your dog is picky and just refuses to eat that unknown dog food brand, then just try another brand... tastes differ! Often you can get free dog food samples to test whether your dog likes this food. Don't just choose by price or buy whatever is on sale. Your faithful companion would want you to go for quality. So when you opt to change dog food, please make an educated guess after reading the dog food labels.

Change Dog Food via the 'Pension Method'

A commonly used method of switching dog food brands is the gradual method, sometimes known as the 'pension method' since this is often used by pet pensions to have their guests on the same menu during their stay.

Different production methods exist for dry dog food leading to different types: baked, pelleted and extruded dog food. When changing brands of the same type, method A is



advised but if you make a change from extruded to pelleted dog food then go for method B.

METHOD A: Change Dog Food Brands of the Same Production Type

If you can, take the time and make the alteration gradually within a week. You can choose to make the transition quicker if necessary but really... there is no need to test whether your dog's stomach is made of iron.

- Day 1-3: Mix and give two thirds of the current dog food with one third of the new dog food.
- Day 4-6: Mix and give one third of the current dog food with two third of the new dog food.
- Day 7: Your dog is on 100% of the new dog food.

METHOD B: Change Dog Food Production Types

Use this method when switching from expanded dog food to pelleted dog food. Your dog's stomach can adjust to the lesser volume and by making the switch gradual his intestinal flora can adjust.

- Day 1: Give a quarter of the new dog food (so only 25% of a regular portion suitable for your dog's size) together with a nice bone.
- Day 2: Give half of the new dog food.
- Day 3: Give three quarters of the new dog food.
- Day 4: Give your dog the full portion of the new dog food.

Change Dog Food via the 'Milestone Method'

This method is not often used but can be chosen when your dog's intestines are very sensitive. You can also use this to give your dog's intestinal flora a boost after he's been ill or has been on antibiotics.

- Day 1-5: Feed your dog only unwashed dirty paunch in multiple small portions a day. Thaw the paunch at room temperature so the useful good bacteria and nutrients stay intact (do not microwave!).
- Day 6: Mix dirty paunch with the new dog food.
- Day 7: Feed 100% of the new dog food.

Should your dog not want to eat this healthy smelly stuff (most dogs love it though) then try the following. After thawing you plunge the paunch into boiling water - just a quick dip to take the rawness of.

It may take several dog food changes before you find the perfect dog food for your furry friend. This all depends on why you had to change and how sensitive or picky your dog is. In this process it helps to keep a track record, take notes and perform a regular health check using the 10 step dog health checklist which you can find on my website.

For more information about dog food go and visit <http://www.best-dog-food-guide.com>. Did you receive this e-book from a friend then you're probably not familiar with 'HoundBytes', the free newsletter from BestDogFoodGuide. Visit my site to subscribe and get the news delivered to you mailbox once a month. More news is available at <http://www.dog-food-blog.com>.



Thinking of Home Cooking for Your Dog?

By Audrey Frederick

With the recent recall of many brands of pet food, pet owners are thinking twice about feeding their pets commercial pet foods.

Not only do we have to worry about what we are feeding our families; we now have the added worry about our cat or dog's diet.

What is a pet owner to do?

The first thing you don't do is "jump right in and start cooking."

Why, you ask?

Simply because there are many things to take into consideration. Feeding your pet means providing the proper nutrition in order to keep him/her healthy and fit.

The first suggestion is read a book or two on a proper diet for your pet be it cat or dog. I have listed a few titles at the end of this article that I feel will be beneficial to read.

Secondly, you need to find more than one recipe to feed your pet as variety is not only the spice of life, but necessary in order to get the right combination of nutrients into the pet's body.

Thirdly, you have to decide if you have the time and energy to devote to the task of cooking for one or two more members of your family.

What are the benefits?

The benefits are many; it has been proven that a homemade diet has helped many dogs with various conditions regain their health. Many pet foods are of poor quality, over processed, filled with artificial ingredients and many other chemicals, just read the labels.

Carbohydrates are often more than 50 percent of the main ingredient in most pet foods. For dogs, carbohydrates are harder to digest and can cause inflammation to the body. For cats, carbohydrates are not an essential ingredient for their diets, proteins are.

Thus a home cooked diet can provide less carbohydrates and more protein making the food easier to digest and keeps the body's immune system from becoming over reactive.

Feeding your pet, fresh or lightly cooked foods helps to supply nutrients in their natural form, which over processed pet foods does not.

There are several types of homemade diets, which include, raw and cooked foods, diets that contain little or no grains; diets mixed with commercial food, and diets that either include raw or cooked bones. There are many choices and variety is the important ingredient.

Dogs are known to eat most anything, whether it is good for them or not.

There is no "one" diet that is good for all dogs or cats.



Every pet is an individual and the diet is dependent on physical condition, size, activity level and age. What is perfect for one pet may not be good for another.

That is why variety is stressed so much. Constant feeding of one recipe may not supply all the necessary nutrients, but changing food groups and content can easily fulfil your entire pet's needs.

It is not known exactly what nutrients are needed in a dog's diet; the USDA Nutrient Database uses figures to determine only average nutritional values. Nutritional studies are going on all the time and there are still gaps in their determinations of proper nutritional values.

Even if you were to follow a diet determined by your vet or a pet nutritionist they would advise adding a vitamin/mineral supplement, as no one really knows exactly what your particular pet needs.

A homemade diet should provide the following: variety, balance over time, and calcium.

The variety can come from feeding such foods as chicken, turkey, beef, fish, eggs, cottage cheese, and some pork. Some vegetables, fruit (no grapes or raisins) and some grains can be added. Organ meats such as liver, kidneys or heart should be added at different times.

Raw meaty bones are very good for teeth and gums and provide calcium. When considering bones; do not feed cooked chicken bones. Raw chicken backs and leg quarters are considered acceptable; those bones will not splinter, along with lamb necks and breast and pork riblets and necks.

Chicken necks and turkey necks are considered okay also, but large dogs tend to choke on the turkey necks and little dogs on the chicken necks, so I would be very careful offering those items unless you were close by.

You can cook bones and grind them, if feeding raw bones makes you feel uncomfortable. Large meaty beef bones are good too,

If bacteria from raw foods scare you, don't be, a dog's insides were meant to handle bacteria. Unless your dog is stressed or ill, bacteria from raw meat or chicken will have little if any effect on your dog. The same goes for raw eggs, though you can lightly scramble or soft boil them if it makes you feel better.

There is no danger in feeding your puppy or older dog a high protein diet, as protein is beneficial to the immune system, the central nervous system and helps the your dog have healthy skin and coat. Dogs that are fed a high protein diet seem calmer and less hyper than those fed a high carbohydrate diet.

If you do not have the time or desire to prepare completely homemade meals for your dog there is no problem in adding fresh food to your dog's dry or canned food. However, the percentage of fresh versus commercial should be kept down to about 25 percent in order not to upset the nutritional balance.

When adding food to your pet's commercial diet try to stay with more protein than carbohydrates as the commercial food is already high in grains, Best bets are eggs, meat, fish (canned with bones like salmon, sardines or mackerel), yogurt, cottage cheese and small amounts of vegetables.

There are companies that sell a pre-mixed dry food that is ready for you to add fresh food to complete a balanced meal for your dog. Some companies such as



www.thehonestkitchen.com and www.solidgoldhealth.com offer great products you can add to your pet's food or feed directly.

The following books are some available as recommended reading:

- 'Barker's Grub' by Rudy Edalati
- 'Real Food for Dogs' by Arden Moore
- 'Feeding Your Dog for Life' by Diane Morgan
- 'The Whole Pet Diet' by Andi Brown

Should you decide in the light of the current pet food situation to start home cooking for your pet, please do yourself a favor and your pet, read and learn before you make the attempt.

If you do not feed your pet the correct amount of nutrients it needs for survival you are only not only defeating your purpose for doing it, but you are affecting your pet's health and your pocketbook with extra vet bills.

Keeping our pets healthy is very beneficial not only to the pet, but to our pocketbooks. If the only time you need to visit the veterinarian is for yearly check ups and necessary shots you are saving money. Nutrition is very important in keeping a dog healthy, proper quality food that contains all the necessary vitamins and minerals is a good way to start.

If this article has been of benefit, please visit my web site and blog at <http://www.cats-and-dogs-on-the-web.com>

Dog Food Allergy and Other Allergy Types Affect Happiness of Dog and Owner

By Barbara Kremers

A Case Study

How allergy signs can affect your life. This is the story of an otherwise very happy Labrador Retriever with concurrent allergies. It is based on an interview held with Nell Kremers.

This story will show you how dog allergies can enter your life when you have a dog, and how they can affect your life, your mood, your dog's temper, your dog's appearance, where you go for a walk, what kind of food you buy and the medical attention required in diagnosing and treating allergies. This can really be a big thing and I hope you and your dog will be much more fortunate than the case described here.





Scratching for Relief

Demi is a friendly Labby, she's always happy and playful... or at least she used to be up until one summer at 15 months of age. She then just started biting and scratching. As if the itching drove her mad she was literally rubbing and licking her skin away. The once beautiful chocolate-brown Labrador lost her shine. She showed bald spots in her arm-pits and below her tail plus self-inflicted wounds in her face. Scratching for relief of allergy symptoms does cost a lot of energy.

At first it just seemed as if she had developed a bad habit and the owners at first tried to correct her for overdoing the scratching thing as perhaps she was just seeking attention being in the puberty age. Demi, the docile dog she is, obeyed and stopped the scratching as long as one of her human family members was around. But as soon as they left the room, she would make up for lost scratching time and hit it like crazy. Also when she got aroused and her blood started flowing more quickly through her veins, it appeared the itching increased.

Change to Hypo-Allergen Dog Food

And so it happened she was taken to the vet (well, not for the first time of course). She showed self-inflicted wounds and around her eyes virtually no hair had survived the intense scratching. The vet checked her for parasites and teeth problems (as she was scratching around her jaws as well) but found no problems in that area. He then advised to change her dog food from high energy Eukanuba to Lamb & Rice, to rule out a dog food allergy. Lamb & Rice is a combination that is often prescribed as a low-allergen dog food and the rationale behind it is that dogs won't have eaten this before. However, nowadays Lamb & Rice is not such an exotic dog food anymore... and in this case this choice was not so fortunate for Demi.

Demi has a very loving owner who would sleep on the couch, during the heavy episodes, just to be in time to calm her down. No more scolding or shouting to try to stop her hurting herself, but instead remaining calm and trying to transfer tranquillity to her (as if giving Reiki to a dog). The owner would gently let her hands go over the itching spots, which gave Demi some relief. This was to avoid Demi mutilating herself as the self-inflicted wounds can progress and get infected (so called hot spots).



However, the symptoms did not disappear and she was taken to the veterinarian again. She received a medicine to relief the itching and, thank god, this worked so she could have some sleep again. Poor Demi had not enjoyed a good night of rest for quite some time and this was taking his toll as well, changing her behaviour and making her more nervous. She also got antibiotics and a skin sample was taken for further research. No parasites or scabies was detected.

Allergy Blood Test

Standard treatment in itching is to change dog food for about 3 to 4 months and to only give your dog that dog food, no treats, no snacks, no table scraps, nothing whatsoever. When symptoms remain, then a blood test is indicated. And Demi obviously qualified for this next step. Finally it all became clear. Just have a look at the results below.

Demi's allergy test revealed the following allergies:

- Food allergies: Rice, wheat, lamb, soy, carrots and nuts with highest score for rice and wheat.
- Contact allergies: Various mites and also flea bite allergy
- Inhalant allergies: Wheat (again), barley, corn, oats, stinging nettle and ribwort plantain.

Demi was suffering from multiple allergies such as grass allergy which explained the increase in allergy symptoms during summers (like the first episode) but also a **very** high score to rice and to a lesser extent to lamb as well, the main ingredients in her so-called hypoallergenic dog food. What an unfortunate choice this had been! With this new knowledge, she was immediately taken of Lamb & Rice and transferred to Duck & Potato Diet (Tovet's DPD).

Desensitization via Allergen Injections

To deal with the inhalant and contact allergies for grain and grasses, immunotherapy was indicated. It's pretty easy to 'cure' dog food allergies (the cure is to just eliminate the ingredients from the menu) compared to curing environmental allergies. It is often impractical to keep a dog away from offending allergens, so another solution than elimination is required. Based on the results of the allergy test a special mix was created in the laboratory to desensitize Demi to the identified culprits.

Since this involves weekly injections the owner had to learn how to inject Demi subcutaneously with these liquids. This kind of therapy thus requires a dedicated dog owner and it can be quite difficult to inject your own pet (well, that's my personal experience). The owner was given three kinds of fluids (red, green and blue caps) and the amount was set for a period of 6 months of therapy. There is a small risk of anaphylaxis, but still it's the safest long-term treatment available. About 70% of treated dogs respond well to immunotherapy and the others at least show some alleviation of the clinical symptoms.

Learning to Live With Dog Allergies

Demi is now four years old and most of the time she is a happy dog. She will receive desensitization injections (maintenance dosage) probably for the rest of her life. To relief any itching that remains here's a tip from Nell that works for Demi: dilute some tea-tree oil in water and spray this on the inflicted areas. It reliefs the itching, disinfects the skin and helps the healing process of hot spots.

Knowing what allergies she has, she can enjoy an occasional treat again (though never dog biscuits or any other kind of treat that contains wheat such as most dental sticks). Luckily Demi just adores fruit and cheese which is safe to eat for her! You can make Demi really happy by offering her pineapple, mango, strawberries, cucumber, apples and pears. But she also loves a piece of bread, though she's allergic to the ingredients.



People passing by on the street sometimes want to offer a dog biscuit to this happy furry lady, but of course this is strictly prohibited. And since everyone would get tired of explaining the ins and outs of this decision, some people don't understand why this Labrador isn't allowed to enjoy a tasteful treat. Also bread left on the grass for the ducks to eat is a risk for Demi. Especially when walking in the dark it's not always easy for the owner to intervene on time.

Should the allergy episodes worsen again, then there is one official remedy left: Prednisone injections. Antihistamines, though beneficial in allergic humans, give inconsistent results in dogs. So that leaves us with steroid treatment. Counter effects of prednisone are that it can damage the organs and as such may decrease life span. Though when all else fails it's like Demi's owner stated: "Better be happy for a few years, than a very long life of discomfort and unhappiness".

However, before turning to Prednisone as final resort it appears good results are booked with a holistic approach in similar cases. This is a non-traditional approach in veterinary medicine exploring alternative and complimentary areas of health care. Let's hope new therapies and treatments are discovered to prevent and cure diseases in our beloved pets.

So what can we learn from this story about allergy:

- Prescribing Lamb & Rice dog food to rule out dog food induced allergies is not a good choice in all cases.
- Dog food induced allergies, inhalant allergies and contact allergies can occur at the same time making a clear diagnosis very difficult.
- When your dog is suddenly scratching a lot, examine his coat for fleas or other parasites and take him to the vet if your investigation was negative.
- When your dog suffers an attack of heavy itching and is relentlessly scratching for relief, try to transfer calmness to your pooch. Diluted tea-tree oil can give some relief.
- When you meet a person who is walking a dog that looks like he has some kind of contagious disease, don't immediately assume it is scabies and treat them like pariahs. You can just ask. When the other dog is suffering from allergic symptoms you need not worry. Let dogs be dogs if they want to play together. There is nothing contagious about allergies.
- Allergies cause great discomfort to both dog and owner and it is pertinent to try and identify the allergens that are causing this as quickly as possible.
- Holistic veterinary medicine may shine new light on this subject when traditional therapies fail.

Barbara Kremers writes for <http://www.best-dog-food-guide.com> and <http://www.dog-food-blog.com>. For more information about dog food allergies, dog allergy types and allergy testing go and visit <http://www.best-dog-food-guide.com> and subscribe to the free e-zine 'HoundBytes'.





Dog Food Aggression or Canine Possession Aggression

By Chris Smith

Dog food aggression is one of those dog behavior problems that is difficult for us humans to fully understand. It just doesn't seem to make sense that your dog would consider you a threat to his/her food resource. I mean you gave him the food in the first place, and if you feed your dog's the same kinds of foods that I do, it's not all that appealing anyway!

But, what is your dog thinking?

If your dog glares at you, snarls, growls and positions himself between you and the food he is actually saying to you "this is mine, go away, find your own". He is basically telling you that he considers himself as the leader or alpha dog in your household. Dog food aggression (sometimes called canine possession aggression) is a dominance issue, it is serious and needs to be addressed immediately, and it won't just go away.

We've all made the mistake of laughing and even encouraging our feisty little dogs when they first display the "cute" signs of dog food aggression. Don't fall into this trap! Food or toy aggression in dogs should never be tolerated as you never know when it can escalate into something more dangerous for you or a family member.

Why Does Your Dog Display Dog Food Aggression?

Canine possession aggression can be triggered by any number of factors but in most cases it can be attributed to one of these common causes:

1. Your dog is desperate for this food, in his mind he doesn't know if or when he will get more food. Therefore he protects or guards his food, just like he would have done in a pack situation in the wild.



2. Your dog may begin to see you as someone who is always taking good stuff away. He comes to view you more as a threat than a provider (you've got to turn this thinking around).
3. Dog food aggression can be part of the general confusion regarding who the leader is in your owner - dog relationship. Often it is not an isolated incident; it's something you need to rectify.
4. It's possible that your dog doesn't even understand that his dog food aggression is unacceptable behavior. In such cases there is an obvious communication breakdown between human and dog.

General Rules for Correcting Food Aggression In Dogs

- If your dog is directing his aggression towards other dogs the best solution is to simply separate them at meal times. Feed them in different rooms or in their crates.
- Involve all of your family members in this dog food aggression training.
- Take control of feeding time. You control the time and place of dinner time - own the food!
- Make your dog earn any food. Just simple tasks like sit or a down stay is fine.
- Make it clear to your young puppies that it's good to have people around when they are eating. If you do this from day one you will almost certainly prevent dog food aggression problems.
- If you encounter dog food aggression it is a good idea to feed your dog after you and your family eat. This again is a throwback to your dogs pack mentality where the alpha dog or leader of the pack (which is you) eats first - your dog will understand this technique.
- Don't let your dog "win" the food through his growling, this would reward the very behavior you are trying to eradicate. Don't bully or intimidate your dog though, it's much better to make him actually like having you around at meal time (follow the tips below to achieve this).
- Never respond to canine possession aggression with aggression of your own. In essence what this does is to lock you and your dog into a battle of wills. Your dogs next move will most likely be to step up his level of aggression to counter your action.

Dog Food Aggression Training Techniques

Firstly, be careful. If you believe your dog poses any real physical threat to you or family members I'd advise getting professional help. Speak to a professional dog trainer or animal behaviorist.

Below is a list of training techniques which could help your dog overcome his dog food aggression. Remember all of these techniques are designed to work towards reconditioning your dog to enjoy having you around anytime. Mix it up, show your dog who is boss.



- Hand feed your dogs, even stick your hands into your dogs bowl while he is eating.
- Stroke and pet your dog while he is eating and at the same time talk to him in a calming tone. All you are doing at this point is showing your dog that it is a good thing for you to be around.
- Stand at a distance your dog is comfortable with, then gradually reduce this distance over time. You can flick a few treats in (or near) the bowl as you slowly reduce the distance.
- Put your dogs bowl down with nothing in it, your dog will look back at you as though you are crazy. He'll then literally beg you to come over and fill his bowl.
- Feed your dog as normal but hold back a few pieces of his meal. When he is finished licking the bowl, he'll look back up at you, then you can come over and give him the remaining food.
- Drop a few of your dogs very favorite treats into his bowl each time you walk past it. After a while of this your dog will welcome the sight of you approaching the bowl.
- When your dog is eating, call him over to you, when he gets to you reward him, make it worth his while then let him back to the food bowl.
- While you are preparing your dogs meal put him in a down-stay or sit position, only release him from your command once you have put his bowl down. By doing this you are controlling meal time and establishing (or re-establishing) your role as your dogs leader.
- Work with another family member on this technique. Put your dog in his collar and leash and have him sit with your helper while you prepare the food. When you are ready release your dog and allow him his food. Again you are controlling the situation.
- Try the "Trade Up Method". What you do is take away the food or toy your dog is guarding, and replace it with something better. You can use an obedience command such as "give" or "leave it" to encourage your dog to release the precious resource he is guarding. You then take this resource (the food or toy) and give the trade up item to your dog. Once your dog has finished with the new item, you can then give back the resource you took away. This technique proves to your dog that he will receive something great for giving something up, it will recondition his thinking.
- Every time you are with your dog have him in a pinch or prong collar with a leash attached. Whenever he displays any signs of dog food aggression you immediately administer a correction to your dog by snapping on the leash. What this does to your dog is build a negative association to the act of his food guarding antics.

Chris Smith is a dedicated dog owner and creator of <http://www.dog-obedience-training-review.com>

Discover how to train your dog the right way yourself at home - try these latest cutting edge dog training techniques.



Evolution and Trends in Dog Food

By Barbara Kremers

Nutritional Research Boosts Development of Dog Food

Evolution in dog food has come a long way and new dog food trends emerge every year. As knowledge about dog nutrition increases more and more specific dog foods hit the market place. Veterinary nutrition has become a mature science that strives at discovering the essential food nutrients and their optimum dosage.

It is believed that the life span of our beloved pets has increased due to the revolution in cat and dog food. Estimates are that the life expectancy of dogs has increased by 3 years in the last 15 years because of the developments in dog food.

Nowadays we have breed specific dog food, health stage specific dog food, prescription dog food and natural and holistic dog food. Dog food history shows us the evolution from table scraps to ultra-premium dog food based on the dog's personal DNA profile (the latest addition).

Objectives of Dog Food Change in Time

The very basic objective of dog food is to sustain and maintain your dog's body. Dog food should contain at least contain the minimum amounts of amino acids, minerals, vitamins and fats to comply with this objective. To also deliver energy to your dog so he can run and play there must be sufficient amounts of carbohydrates and fats present. The very first commercial dog food (beginning 19th century) did nothing more than that as it was high in sugar and starch.

In the nineties dog food was developed based on physiological differences between the different dog breeds. Also size, age and activity level was taken into account. In this century dog food has become more advanced. The dog genome has been sequenced and more knowledge is gained about the relation between food nutrients and disease or between calorie restriction and life span. More knowledge is gained about breed specific diseases and nutritional requirements. And as we also see in the human food business, health food is big business. Health and wellness is a dog food trend driver in itself. Nutraceuticals gain more attention and the development of these has not stopped. On top of the basic objectives (sustain the body + deliver energy) we want dog food nowadays to help prevent certain diseases. Manufacturers enrich dog food with supplements such as anti oxidants, prebiotics for dogs, probiotics for dogs, glucosamine, omega-3 and omega-6.

Marketing Tactics Come Into Play and Drive Dog Food Trends

As more and more different dog food products hit the market, competition grows and marketing becomes very important for a food manufacturer. Buzz words and health claims are printed on dog food bags, with beautiful pictures of healthy happy dogs running in the woods towards a bowl of dog food with fresh peas and risotto. Dog food has become big business. The millions of dollars are to be divided by the top dog food companies whereas niche players are trying to get a bite of this by delivering super premium dog food or specialized dog food for dogs with health problems.

The marketing department is greatly inspired by the trend of pet humanization or anthropomorphism. Dog owners start calling themselves pet parents and are treating their canine companion as little humans with fur. This is all fine of course as long as everybody's happy. Though there are risks involved. Amongst others: Dogs will be dogs and they have different nutritional needs than humans. That pizza that you love is certainly not the best meal for your furry friend. So ignore dog food names such as



'Chinese take out with vegetables and chicken' and turn around the bag to read the dog food label.

Dog Food Trends where Science is the Driver

The most recent step in dog food evolution is the approach to speed up recovery from specific illnesses. Certain nutrients are now added or removed from the dog food recipe. So with prescription dog food and curative dog food, the evolution of dog food has progressed one step further since we got from feeding to prevention.

Dog Food Trends where 'Back to Nature' is the Driver

Another recent trend in commercial dog food is the development of natural dog food and holistic dog food. A lot of emphasis is displayed for the human-grade ingredients that are used. Holistic dog food is about looking after the well-being of the whole animal and not just the individual parts.

Perhaps the biggest competitor for commercial dog food is home made diets. In emerging markets most dogs are still fed table scraps as their main diet. However, in developed markets the food penetration levels are between 50 and 75% when one looks at the proportion of calories that are coming from commercial dog food. This means that there is still growing potential for ready made dog food as convenience is also a big market driver. Home-cooked meals and leftovers will continue to compete against commercial dog food especially with the big recall of March 2007 in mind. A lot of concerned dog owners turned to the art of canine cuisine and even dog food cooking classes emerged.

And we will probably continue to see new dog food trends. Science continues, the market changes, new dog food ingredients are developed and dog food recalls and environmental awareness change the dog food landscape.

This article is written by Barbara Kremers and it is also published on Best Dog Food Guide. If you like this article and you want to read more then please visit <http://www.best-dog-food-guide.com>. This is a comprehensive unbiased website about the world of dog food. Subscribe to 'HoundBytes', the free newsletter, to stay tuned. For more dog food news and trends go to <http://www.dog-food-blog.com>.

What are the Best Toys and Treats for Your Dog?

By David Amos

Introduction

Keeping your dog entertained is important to his health and well being. Oh, and of course dogs love to play and play and play! Dog toys can help keep your dog fit, healthy and they can also be part of your dog's education when used with treats to help with training.

When Should I use Dog Treats?

Not all dog treats are created equal. While every dog enjoys treats you will find that your dog prefers some to others. With so many choices now on the market it's not a difficult task to find a dog treat that he prefers. Once you've found the ideal treat you can start to use it as a training tool. That doesn't preclude you giving him a treat because you love



him but by treating your dog for good behavior you are re-enforcing positive actions which will become a habit for your dog.

What is the Best Type of Dog Treat?

There is a wide variety of dog treats available. Some are sweet, some are hard, some are soft, or crunchy or savory or a combination of these. As with us, your dog will prefer a different type at different times. Some things to be aware of if you've chosen a hard or crunchy treat are that it's not too hard and that it won't hurt or break your dog's teeth. You may be surprised to find that some treats are designed to clean your dog's teeth and remove that bad dog breath! You will find that as your dog ages his preferences will change too and you should change the treats that you feed him to suit his age.

Be aware that not all dog treats are beneficial. A lot of them have sugar, preservatives or chemicals that are bad for your dog, so always check the label. If you have a dog with allergies you'll need to check the labels to find a treat that does not cause allergic reactions and that your dog likes. Your vet may be able to help you in this case.

If you don't locate the perfect dog treat you should think about creating your own. It's not as difficult as you may think, and whole companies have started from a kitchen table and a good recipe. Some ingredients to consider are chicken, rice, carrots and peas. It's fun to do and your dog will appreciate the effort! If you've any left over consider selling them to your local pet store. Many carry small lines of homemade treats. If you need some recipes try searching on the internet, or just invent your own. Once you've made your treats keep them in airtight containers. This not only helps keep them fresh, but also keeps them safe from your dog too!

What to Look For in a Dog Toy

One of a dog's favorite pastimes is chewing. Most dogs just love to chew! Oh, and chew 😊. So don't be surprised that a lot of the dog toys on the market today are focused on chewing. A dog toy that can be chewed provides a benefit for your dog's teeth and supports his natural tendency to chew. This not only helps dental health but is a non destructive and safe outlet for your dog's need to chew.

Before you go and buy a chew toy you need to think about how your dog likes to chew. A canine that chews hard and vigorously will need a stronger toy made out of hard rubber or nylon. Latex and vinyl toys are designed for canines who are lighter chewers. Whichever type your dog is, you will need to keep a watch when he's playing with the toy, especially squeaky toys, to make sure that you can take away the pieces as it falls apart. Some toys can be destroyed in a matter of minutes.

For the moderate or average chewer and for puppies there are dental or flavored chew toys made out of rawhide that can be eaten. These are great, just give it to your dog and let him have at it! Also for puppies there are the plush toys that he can carry around and snuggle up with. Make sure it's machine washable though otherwise it's going to get really dirty!

For fun you might like to try out a Tricky Treat Ball. This is an entertaining toy that gets filled with treats, usually dry like kibble. You can also try out cheese, carrots or meat cut into small cubes. Put the food into the ball and give it a shake. Then let your dog play with it and the food will fall through the holes in the ball. Your favorite friend will love it!!



You can go even further with this idea. There are gumball machines designed to use treats or dry food for your dog. Just add the food to the machine and let your dog play with the gumball machine.

It's important to keep your dog entertained with good dog toys and treats, and he in turn will keep you entertained for hours!

David Amos is a dog lover and long time dog owner. For more information about dog toys and treats visit <http://www.onlinedogcare.com/dogtoysandtreats>, and for more about dog health and keeping your dog and puppy happy visit <http://www.onlinedogcare.com>.



Kensho is a boy so he plays with car toys 😊



Dog Health

Introduction

By Barbara Kremers



As I write this introduction to dog health I of course start thinking about my own experiences. For the past weeks I have visited the vet quite regularly. It is difficult to see a beloved pet suffer and you cannot just ask what they are feeling. You need to carefully observe your dog in order to be alerted in time should there be any change in his looks or behavior. The article by Jennifer Bryant, about symptoms of pain and illness, can guide you. When you see any of the listed symptoms please visit a veterinarian.

It's a wise thing to always be prepared for any emergency and the next article by dr. Carol Osborne tells you which items should be present in your first aid kit.

Prevention is the other wise thing to do and therefore I have included an article from dr. David Brooks about vaccinations. There is some discussion on the internet about the frequency and risks of repeated vaccinations. This article gives you the guidelines issued by the American Animal Hospital Association, though when you are living outside of the US this information will still benefit you.

At a certain point in your dog's life you'll start thinking about neutering. The next article by dr. David Brooks lists in a very straight forward way the pros and cons so you can make up your mind. As for me, I haven't had Kensho neutered as he behaves like a good dog so he doesn't give me any reason to consider neutering.

We close the chapter with an article by Dave Eckholm about older dogs. Information about puppies is everywhere and we can easily forget to learn about the special care an aging dog needs.



Symptoms of Pain and Illness in Dogs

By Jennifer Bryant

Dog owners, who recognize the early signs and symptoms of illness or pain in their dogs, will not only relieve their loved one's suffering but may also be able to save themselves an expensive trip to the veterinarian. Not only is it important to recognize these signs early to relieve pain and suffering, but it is much more effective to treat an illness when it is detected early.

The dog owner should keep an accurate and detailed account of their dog's symptoms to help the veterinarian correctly diagnose and effectively treat the dog's illness or condition. Most canine illnesses are detected through a combination of various signs and symptoms:

Temperature, Respiratory Rate and Heart Rate

A newborn puppy will have a temperature of 94-97° F. which will eventually reach the normal adult body temperature of 101.5° F. at the age of 4 weeks old. Take care when trying to take your dog or puppies temperature as the thermometer can easily be broken off in the canine's rectum. Also any form of excitement can cause the temperature to rise by 2-3° when the dog is actually in normal health. If your dog's temperature reaches 105° or above OR 96° or below please take him/her to the emergency vet immediately!

An adult dog will have a respiratory rate of 15-20 breaths per minute (depending on such variables as size and weight) and a heart rate of 80-120 beats per minute. You can feel for your dog's heartbeat by placing your hand on his/her lower ribcage just behind the elbow. Don't be alarmed if the heartbeat seems irregular compared to a human's heartbeat, it is irregular in many dogs. Have your vet check it out and get used to how it feels when it is normal.

Behavior Changes

Any behavior changes that are not associated with a change in the household atmosphere, such as jealousy over a new pet or child may be an indication of an illness. Signs of behavioral changes may be:

- Depression
- Anxiety
- Fatigue
- Sleepiness
- Trembling
- Falling/Stumbling

If your dog shows any of these signs, he/she needs to be kept under close watch for a few hours, or even a few days, until positive signs develop or he/she has returned to normal. Do not try to exercise the dog or put him/her in any situation that may cause stress. Most veterinarians will want for you to keep track of when the symptoms first appeared, whether they are getting better or worse, and also whether the symptoms are intermittent, continuous, or increasing in frequency.



Pain

Dogs that are in pain will likely indicate that they are suffering by giving you clues as to where the area of discomfort is. For instance, a dog that has abdominal pain will continually glance toward their belly, bite or lick the area, and will not want to leave his/her bed. The dog may stand hunched over, or take the 'prayer position' which is when a dog gets down on it's forelegs with the hind legs still standing, because of the pain in her abdomen area.

Dogs can not tell you that they are hurting or cry real tears but a dog may vocalize their pain in a different way. A dog that is hurt suddenly (such as being stepped on) will cry out or whimper in pain. This also happens when an external injury or internal injury (such as an organ) is touched. Whining or vocalization that is unprovoked may be caused from an internal injury as well. Some breeds of dogs (such as the American Pit Bull Terrier) have a higher pain threshold and need to be watched more closely for signs of pain. Breeds with a high pain tolerance are more likely to endure the pain without vocalization.

Another clue to pain is a change in temperament. A dog that is in pain may show signs of aggression. Please take note of this before concluding that a dog has become vicious and let your veterinarian know so that the correct treatment can be administered. Also females in general (even humans!) have days when they are just in a bad mood for no obvious reason. Take note of days of times that these mood swings occur as well as any events that might have triggered them.

Other signs that your dog may be sick:

- Ears: discharge, debris, odor, scratching, crusted tips, twitching or shaking.
- Eyes: redness, swelling or discharge.
- Nose: runny, thickened or colored discharge, crusty.
- Coughing, sneezing, vomiting or gagging.
- Shortness of breath, irregular breathing or prolonged/heavy panting
- Evidence of parasites in the dog's stool, strange color, blood in the stool, or lack of a bowel movement (constipation).
- Loss of appetite or not drinking as much water as normally would.
- Weight Loss.
- Strange color of urine, small amount of urine, straining, dribbling, or not going as frequently as normal.
- Bad odor coming from mouth, ears, or skin.
- Hair loss, wounds, tumors, dander or change of the skin's color.
- Biting of the skin, parasites, scratching or licking the skin frequently.

The preceding article was meant to help educate you to the signs and symptoms of probable pain or sickness in your dog. If any of these symptoms occur over a prolonged period of time, please seek the help of a veterinarian. I hope that this article will help stress the importance of keeping watch over your dog's health patterns and the importance of keeping an accurate, detailed health record for your veterinarian's convenience.

Jennifer Bryant is a life-long lover of dogs. Jennifer loves and breeds American Pit Bull Terriers in her North Georgia home with her 2 young children. Her love of dogs has inspired her to create a website for herself (as well as other breeders) to advertise their occasional litter of puppies and to educate others with dog breed information and useful articles.

Bryant's Red Devils Red Nose American Pit Bull Terriers at

<http://www.bryantsreddevils.com/>

Puppies and Dogs for Sale.com at <http://www.puppiesanddogsforale.com/>



Pet First Aid Kit

©Dr. Carol Osborne, D.V.M.

First, know what is normal. It is important that you be able to assess your pet's physical condition in order to evaluate his needs, especially since many animals are stoic and will not show pain or discomfort. One of the MOST important factors in evaluating your pet's condition is to know what is normal for him or her. Take time BEFORE an emergency to check your pet's normal temperature, pulse, color and respiration.

To take your pet's temperature, use a rectal thermometer. Put a dab of lubricant on the tip (Vaseline, oil, etc.). Carefully insert the thermometer about 1 inch into the rectum. Keep the thermometer in place for 60 seconds, then remove it and read the temperature. Most dogs and cats have temperatures between 101 and 102 degrees F.

To check pulse, you can often feel the heartbeat by placing your hand on the chest behind the front legs, or by feeling for a pulse along the inside of the back upper leg. The animal's color can be assessed by looking at the gums or tongue, and the respiration rate can usually be observed by watching the chest.

Hemostat or tweezers -- (use to pull out thorns or as a clamp). Hemostats are like fine locking pliers or clamps. They are great for grabbing onto things like sticks, thorns, ticks, or anything else that may be caught in your pet's mouth or skin.

Thermometer -- (normal temp in dogs and cats is 101 to 102 degrees F). A low temperature can indicate a very sick animal or hypothermia. In either case it is very important to warm the animal. A high temperature can indicate infection or hyperthermia. Temperatures above 106 or 107 degrees can cause brain damage to your pet.

Styptic powder -- This is most useful for stopping bleeding caused by torn toenails.

Bandage material -- A variety of bandage materials can be used to cover wounds to keep them clean, to provide pressure to help stop bleeding, to cover an injured area so your pet doesn't lick or scratch at it, to act as a temporary tourniquet or muzzle (even docile animals will snap hard if in pain), or to stabilize or protect a body part.

- * 1 roll cast padding or soft bandage
- * 1 roll adhesive tape or "sticky" bandage
- * 1 roll "Vet Wrap"
- * Gauze Squares
- * 1 roll gauze (can be used for tourniquet, muzzle)

Syrup of Ipecac Use 1 teaspoon per 10 lb. dog to induce vomiting. If your dog does swallow something poisonous, the best treatment is to get it out of the stomach, UNLESS it is something irritating or caustic. Two of the most common poisons seen by veterinarians are rat poison and antifreeze. Ingestion of either of these is an emergency.

Artificial Tears (To soothe or flush eyes). You can carefully use your hemostats to remove sticks or other foreign objects that may get into your pet's eyes.

Buffered Aspirin (325mg) Use 1 tablet per 50 lbs for sore muscles and pain. This is very effective for reducing inflammation from sore muscles or joints. It can help alleviate your



pet's discomfort if injured. Not all dogs should take aspirin. Dogs may usually have aspirin every 8-12 hours. Cats are very sensitive to aspirin and should never be given aspirin more than once every 72 hours. Tylenol is poisonous to cats. Check with your veterinarian before giving any medications.

Diphenhydramine HCl (25mg) This works well in reducing allergic reactions to insect bites. These reactions can be serious if a pet is stung in the mouth, since swelling could block the windpipe. Check with your veterinarian before using this medication.

Whistle to signal for help if hiking. If you or your pet are injured, you may find this helpful to attract help.

Triple Antibiotic Ointment (for cuts and scrapes). This helps our pet avoid infection, as does bandaging.

Rescue Remedy Give 2 drops on tongue every 5-15 minutes in case of shock or trauma. This is a human homeopathic remedy used to treat stress or shock. This can be used any time an animal is stressed or injured.

Arnica (give 2 drops on tongue every 15 minutes for muscle injury and other trauma). A homeopathic remedy that is very safe for your pet.

Antiseptic Solution for flushing wounds (hydrogen peroxide, chlorhexidine. Use this to clean out wounds before applying antibiotic ointment and bandaging.

Scissors: Use to cut bandages. A knife is also very useful.

Blanket: Animals often go into shock when injured. A blanket will help keep them warm. It can also double as a stretcher.

Dr. Carol Osborne, world-renowned veterinarian and author, is a pioneer in anti-aging medicine and longevity research for pets. Dr. Carol is the creator of the original PAAWS, Pet Anti-Aging Wellness System, as seen on national TV. A frequent guest on The Today Show, Good Day L A., and Discovery's Animal Planet, Dr. Carol's also been featured in USA Today, The Los Angeles Times and the prestigious New York Daily News.

Get FREE pet advice from Dr. Carol at <http://CarolonPets.com>

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New Pet Dog Vaccination Guidelines in the USA

By David Brooks

Vaccinations are an essential preventive care for your dog. Through vaccination, dogs can now be protected from numerous disease risks, including rabies, distemper, hepatitis and several others. Some of these diseases are zoonotic (can be passed from dogs to people) and so vaccinating your pet benefits public health too.

Recently, several studies have shown that vaccines protect dogs for a longer period than previously believed. There have also been many improvements in the quality of the vaccines produced. Pet owners are now also aware and concerned that vaccination is not as harmless a procedure as once believed.

To assist veterinarians with making vaccine recommendations for their pet owners dogs, the **American Animal Hospital Association** has now issued a set of canine vaccine guidelines. These guidelines were developed by a group of experts and practicing veterinarians together.

A key recommendation is that all dogs are very different and therefore vaccine decisions should be tailored to the individual dog. Factors including age, breed, health status, environment, lifestyle, and travel habits of the dog should be always be considered. Infectious disease threats differ from place to place and so you should work with your veterinarian to tailor an immunization program that best protects your dog based on his / her risk and lifestyle factors.

Am I Putting My Dogs Health at Risk When Vaccinating?

All medical procedures, no matter how routine, carry some inherent risk and so it would be wrong to say that vaccinating your pet is risk free. As with any medical procedure the benefits of performing that procedure must be balanced against the risks. Veterinarians recommend that no needless vaccination risks should be taken and that the best way to go about this is to reduce the number and frequency of administration of unnecessary vaccines. These decisions should be made after considering your dog's age, lifestyle, and potential exposure to infectious disease.

What are the risks associated with vaccination?

Vaccine reactions are infrequent in my experience. In general, most vaccine reactions are mild and the side effects (local pain, itchiness and swelling) are self-limiting. Allergic reactions are much less common, but if untreated can actually be fatal. These can occur soon after vaccination, usually within a matter of minutes to hours. If you think this type of reaction is occurring, please contact your veterinarian as soon as possible.

Also, in a very small number of patients, vaccines can sometimes cause the patients immune system to attack their own cells, resulting in diseases that affect the blood, skin, joints or nervous system. Such reactions are very rare but can again be life threatening.

There is also a possible complication of tumor growth developing at the vaccination site, but this occurs most frequently in cats.

Please just remember, that if you have any reason to be concerned, just call your veterinarian for advice.



There are so many vaccines available - How do I know which vaccines my pet needs?

There are two general groups of vaccines: core and noncore vaccines.

Core vaccines are recommended for all dogs and protect against diseases that are more common and are more serious. These diseases are found in all areas of North America and are more easily transmitted than noncore diseases. The AAHA guidelines define core vaccines as: distemper, adenovirus, parvovirus and rabies.

Noncore vaccines are for patients at an increased risk for infection due to exposure or lifestyle. The AAHA guidelines define non-core vaccines as: kennel cough, Lyme disease and leptospirosis vaccines.

How often should my dog be vaccinated really?

It is essential that your dog has the complete initial series of puppy core vaccines, as well as booster shots at one year of age. The young dog is at high risk of contracting infectious disease and so every step should be taken to prevent illness. Following the one-year boosters, the AAHA Canine Vaccine Guidelines recommend that the distemper, adenovirus and parvovirus core vaccines be administered once every three years. Your state and local municipality govern how often rabies boosters are administered and so please contact them or your local veterinarian to get more information (some areas require an annual rabies booster whereas others only require a three-year-effective rabies booster every three years).

Noncore vaccinations should be administered whenever the risk of the disease is significant enough to override any risk of vaccination. For example, a kennel cough vaccine may need to be given every six months to a dog that is repeatedly kenneled or exposed to groups of dogs at grooming salons or dog shows.

If my pet doesn't need annual vaccines does this mean I only need to see my veterinarian every three years?

Regular health checks (once or twice a year) are a very important disease preventative for your dog. Vaccinations are just one component of a health check. Your veterinarian will thoroughly examine your pet to ensure that all is well. Your veterinarian has an opportunity, therefore, to detect and prevent problems at an early stage. Just think, dogs age more quickly than humans, so an annual exam equates to a human getting a physical every 5-7 years. Plus they don't always show signs of early disease, and they cant easily communicate discomfort to us.

Can my veterinarian do tests to see if my dog needs to be vaccinated?

The answer is yes. Tests that measure protective antibody levels for diseases are called titers. Reliable titer tests for canine distemper and parvovirus now exist. Your veterinarian can provide you with more information.

Dr David Brooks is part of the online veterinary team at <http://www.whyydoesmypet.com>. Veterinarians, Vet Technicians, Nurses, Trainers, Behaviorists, Breeders and Pet Enthusiasts are here to answer your pet questions and concerns... Our dedicated community of caring experts are waiting to offer you advice, second opinions and support.



Neutering Your Dog: Why, When and How

By David Brooks

As a dog owner it is sometimes difficult to make decisions about what is right for your pet, especially with many veterinarians and pet professionals having at times conflicting views on the pros and cons of neutering. This article aims to dispel some of the myths surrounding neutering and enable you to make an informed choice on this important issue.

Neutering a male is a procedure known as castration. It involves complete removal of the testes via a small surgical incision between the penis and the scrotum. Dogs do not have vasectomies like humans do as they are usually neutered for reasons other than birth control. There have been several occasions where owners have been unaware of this fact until the operation has been done, causing resentment in some cases. The pros and cons of castration will be discussed shortly.

Neutering a female is a procedure known as spaying. It usually involves an ovariohysterectomy, removal of the ovaries and uterus via a surgical incision over the belly button. Note how this differs with the equivalent human procedure, a hysterectomy, where only the uterus is removed. Again this is because female dogs are neutered for other reasons in addition to birth control where removal of the ovaries is beneficial.

Why should I neuter my dog?

For males, the reasons in favor of castration are:

1. Birth control. If you also own a bitch that has not been spayed, this will prevent unwanted pregnancies.
2. Stopping territorial behavior such as urine marking.
3. Stopping sexual behavior such as masturbation (humping cushions, teddies etc).
4. Reducing dominance aggression.
5. Eliminating the possibility of testicular cancer later in life.
6. Reducing the likelihood of prostate disease later in life.

The arguments against castration in male dogs are:

1. Weight gain. Castration usually leads to undesirable weight gain, which in itself can cause or exacerbate diabetes, heart disease and arthritis. Castrated dogs should have their food intake decreased by 20% to accommodate this change and prevent obesity.
2. The anesthetic risk. With every general anesthetic there is a risk, but in a young fit dog that risk is very, very low.
3. Other potential complications. These are very rare and usually easily resolved and include infection, bleeding into the scrotum and herniation.
4. The cost. This will vary hugely between clinics, and depend upon the size of the dog.

For females, the reasons in favor of spaying are:

1. Birth control. Unwanted pregnancies are a hassle, if they occur you have the responsibility of terminating the pregnancy (this can be done via a simple injection soon after mating), paying for any complications with the birth (Caesarian sections are expensive) or finding loving homes for the puppies.
2. Stopping the bitch from having seasons during which blood is dripped from the vulva over the floor in your home.



3. Stopping erratic behavior associated with being on heat.
4. Decreasing the likelihood of breast cancer later in life.
5. Eliminating the risk of developing a pyometra, a life threatening infection of the uterus.
6. Eliminating the risk of ovarian or uterine cancer.

The argument against spaying in females are:

1. Weight gain. Spaying usually leads to undesirable weight gain, which in itself can cause or exacerbate diabetes, heart disease and arthritis. Spayed dogs should have their food intake decreased by 20% to accommodate this change and prevent obesity.
2. The anesthetic risk. With every general anesthetic there is a risk, but in a young fit bitch that risk is very, very low.
3. Other potential complications. These include infection, breakdown of the abdominal wound and internal bleeding. These are very rare and usually easy to resolve.
4. Spayed bitches are more likely to suffer from urinary incontinence in old age. However, this type of incontinence is easily controlled by medication if it occurs.
5. The cost. This will vary hugely between clinics, and depend upon the size of the bitch.

When should I neuter my dog?

The answer is it varies with the breed. For male dogs, they should be approaching skeletal maturity, i.e. their bones should be almost fully grown. In small breed dogs such as terriers, this can be around 6 months of age but larger breeds mature more slowly, and should be castrated at nearer 1 year old. If the reason for castration is to alter the behavior of the dog, then it must be done at the earliest opportunity so that the behavior does not get engrained.

Bitches should be spayed just before or 3 months after their first season. Doing it early in this fashion minimizes the chances of the bitch getting mammary tumors later in life. Leaving it until the bitch has had 2 seasons means you are missing this window, and the advantage is lost. As with male dogs, small breed bitches mature more quickly than larger breed bitches and so will have their first season earlier, sometimes as early as 6-7 months old. There is no significant difference in before or after the season, but it must be the first season.

It is a bad idea to spay a bitch during a season as the uterus is swollen with a larger blood supply then, so the risk of bleeding is increased. Hence vets like to leave it until 3 months after the season, when the uterus has shrunk again and the surgery is easier and safer. It is also a false myth that it is healthier for a bitch to let her have a litter before spaying her. This simply means you miss your optimal spaying window and lose the ability to prevent breast cancer later in life.

How do I get my dog neutered?

Very easily. Both castration and spaying are routine operations performed by virtually all veterinary clinics, often on a daily basis. Before booking your dog in to be neutered your vet will need to do a quick clinical examination to check your dog is ready for the operation. This will usually involve just listening to the heart and lungs to confirm there is no underlying disease that might jeopardize an anesthetic. In male dogs, the testes are felt to make sure they have descended properly. If they have not, a more complex procedure might be necessary to remove them. In bitches, the mammary glands are often felt to check she is not lactating as this can complicate the surgery.



Once booked in, your vet will usually ask you to starve your dog from midnight the night before the operation, to ensure he/she has an empty stomach at the time of surgery. The dog is then dropped off at the clinic and usually collected later on that day. Dogs having routine neutering rarely have to stay at the clinic overnight, they usually go home with an Elizabethan collar to protect their stitches and a wagging tail!

Dr David Brooks is part of the online veterinary team at <http://www.whyydoesmypet.com>. Veterinarians, Vet Technicians, Nurses, Trainers, Behaviorists, Breeders and Pet Enthusiasts are here to answer your pet questions and concerns... Our dedicated community of caring experts are waiting to offer you advice, second opinions and support.

Keeping Your Older Dog Safe

By Dave Eckholm

Can you imagine letting a toddler run along the edge of a mountain? Would you leave your elderly grandparent who suffers from dementia alone on a bench in the hot sun? Would you let your mom whose eyesight is failing, walk around the edge of your pool? Of course not!

However, many loving pet owners make the same mistakes with their elderly dogs. As a dog ages his eyesight fails along with his mind and energy. Things that were easy for him to navigate such as the edge of a hill or a walk through the woods are now extremely difficult. He can't always see the edge of a pool or cliff and his joints won't allow him to recover from a misstep as easily as when he was a young pup. Older dogs, like elderly people, tend to be more susceptible to heat and need to be kept comfortable during extremely hot days.

Here are a few reminders of what are dangers to your older pet and some ideas on how to keep them safe.

Daily Walk Safety

Retractable leashes are a great way to let your dog run a bit without getting away from you. Many older dogs get a little "puppy" in them and they will take-off running only to get into trouble because they can no longer see you very well or hear your commands. Some older dogs also develop dementia and cannot sense danger. They need to be kept from wandering too far. A retractable leash will keep you in control but allow your dog the ability to roam.

Flashing safety collars or bright safety vests are also a great way to keep your dog visible to you and others. The collars can be seen up to one mile away and the vests are reflective. If your dog does wander off during his nighttime business, your dog will be less likely to be hit by a car and he will be easier for you to locate.

Water Safety

Accidental drowning is a major problem for older dogs. Many older dogs develop cataracts because they are no longer able to determine the edge of the pool. Once in the pool, they often do not have the energy to swim long enough to be noticed, nor the strength and agility to jump out. There are several options to keep your dog safe. There are pool alarms designed to float on the water and react to motion in the water. Another



alarm attaches to your dogs collar and sounds if they fall in to the water. There are also life vests for dogs which are great for boating or when your dog is around a lake or river.

Extreme Temperatures

No dog is comfortable in extremely hot or cold weather but again, just as elderly adults are more vulnerable to the excessive temperatures, it can also be deadly for your dog. Keep them in air conditioning as much as possible on extremely warm days. Make certain that they have access to plenty of water. Avoid taking your dog in the car with you if you cannot bring him inside at your destination. If your dog is long-haired or tends to be easily overheated, consider a cooling bed or collar.

In the extreme cold, make the outdoor visits as brief as possible. Remember, dogs can get frostbite on their paws and noses. Outdoor dogs need to be brought in from the cold when the temperatures are significantly below zero.

Car Rides

Your dog might still love to ride with you in the car but now his safety is more important than ever. Getting your beloved pooch into the car can be a challenge. Arthritis can mean his jumping-in-to-the-backseat days are over! Ramps are available to help your dog into his co-pilot chair. There is also a lifting aid that will wrap comfortably around his middle to give you a way to assist him into the car. Remember, his balance is not as good as when he was younger so consider a seat belt harness to keep him from falling off the seat.

Household Dangers

It is as important as ever to keep your dog away from any plants, foods, or poisons that are toxic to canines. As dogs age, their systems won't be able to tolerate the damage from the poison or the treatment.

ASPCA is warning dog owners the newly discovered danger posed by is grapes and raisins. These fruits have been used as a training treat for dogs, but have been recently found to cause renal failure if eaten in large doses. If your older pet was trained using grapes and raisins or you have used these fruits as treats for your dog, he may have developed a taste for them. You will need to store grapes and raisins where your dog cannot get into them. Of the 10 dogs that were reported poisoned by overeating grapes/raisins, only 5 survived. And that was with early, aggressive treatment. An older dog would not have much of a chance of survival from an accidental poisoning. Please visit the ASCPA Animal Poison Control Center Website, www.napcc.asPCA.org for addition information.

Dave Eckholm is the owner and creator of <http://www.olddogpaws.com>, a site dedicated to the care and comfort of our old friends. As our dog Tikki began to lose his eyesight and became grey around his muzzle, we were concerned for his quality of life. As a senior dog, he started to have special needs. We searched for new ideas, resources and products to enhance his life. Old Dog Paws shares this information, including a national pet sitter directory, with all dog lovers so your friend can enjoy wonderful senior years too!



Handling and Training a Dog

Introduction

By Barbara Kremers



For handling and training of a dog different dog collars can be used. For in house training exercises you don't really need one. When my dog is in the house he does not wear a collar, which I think is better for his coat. The first article by Andrew Strachan explains the different dog collars that can be purchased.

An excellent article, which is why I included it, though I want to comment on the last paragraphs. In my opinion choke collars should only be used by people that know what they are doing; it's not suitable for the inexperienced dog owner as it can be used in the wrong way. Just like Andrew I would also advice against shock collars as these address the symptom of the behavior and not the cause.

I have always just used a normal collar for training and to stop Kensho from pulling I have used a Halti for a couple of weeks only combined with patience. When your dog pulls you just stop and wait. Kensho has now learned he will get nowhere soon when he pulls.

The next article by Aidan Bindoff gives you some theoretical background information. You'll learn the mechanisms behind training methods and the difference between punishment and reinforcement. In the old days dogs were taught what was right and wrong by punishing them for the wrong action. The better and modern training methods use positive reinforcement and give rewards for the right action.

I chose to raise an Akita dog and this breed is known for its dominance. So I have to be very strict with my canine or he will challenge me. I think now things are more established than when he was younger as he is more relaxed and doesn't need to get on top anymore (though so it seems 😊). Read more about this in the article by DogWhisperWoman Rena Murray about dog dominance. You may or may not recognize



this in your dog. Not all dogs are the same. Should you run into problems with your dog then please consult a professional dog trainer to guide you.

In the picture above you see me and my dog on the beach. We spend a week together with the Dutch dog listener and our bond increased in a natural way. It started with making eye contact (though I was only in this position because of the photo, so no need to sit right before your dog).

Proceed to the top 35 (!) tips from dog behaviorist Stan Rawlinson that cover a wide range of subjects (not all related to handling or training, but very good to read).

Next is an article by Eric Letendre about his M.U.T.T. method followed by an article by M. Bruno on how to control dog whining. When you handle this the wrong way, soon your dog will be training you instead of the other way around 😊).

Behavioral problems can be caused by boredom and stress and the final articles show how to avoid or cure this behavior. Read Debbie Ray's tips for overcoming boredom and routine stress and no-fail solutions by James Lee Tuan to solve the top 5 dog behavioral problems. Though work at getting a solid foundation from the start so you hopefully won't run into any of those. Find a good dog school or private dog trainer in your area to help you with this.

Dog Collars – What You Need To Know

By Andrew Strachan

What's The Best Type Of Dog Collar?

Getting the right dog collar for your dog is one of the most important things you can do for your dog. Your dog will probably spend most of it's life with it's collar on, so getting a good comfortable hard wearing dog collar is essential. Luckily for the more style conscious amongst you, modern designer dog collars can be fashionable too! Finding the best type of dog collar for you, will depend on your dog and what the main use for the collar will be.

What is a dog collar for, and is it essential?

The main use for a dog collar is probably the most obvious - controlling your dog. Used in combination with a dog leash, a dog collar can provide you with a certain amount of control to prevent your dog wandering off or straying into road traffic when out walking. There are other uses for a dog collar such as dog or puppy training. Also, you can incorporate your dog's identity and your contact information within the dogs collar, in the event your dog gets lost.

Choosing the correct size of dog collar is important. Having a collar that is too small can cause your dog harm and at best will leave your dog feeling uncomfortable. Similarly, having a collar that is too big will enable your dog to easily slip out of it. Also, the width and material of the collar needs to match the size of your dog or puppy. A heavy duty leather collar will not be much good for a Chihuahua and neither will a lightweight nylon collar be any good on a Rotweiler.

A good rule of thumb, is to make sure that on a large dog, you can slip two fingers between the dogs throat and the collar. Also ensure the collar can rotate easily, but not



slip over the dogs ears. On smaller dogs, ensure the collar can rotate easily and does not cause any breathing problems. Make sure it cannot pull over the dog's ears. Remember that in the right situation, many dogs can become little Houdini's in their own right.

There are many different types of dog collar available. There are sporting collars, designer collars and personalized collars. We will be covering a few main types. These are as follows.

- Standard Dog Collar
- Dog Training Collars
- Electric Dog Collar or Dog Shock Collar
- Standard Dog Collar

The standard dog collar is what your dog would wear for everyday use and can come in a variety of materials. Most common these days is the Nylon collar. These come in all sorts of colors and sizes. The main advantage of a nylon collar is its price. These collars are very cheap yet provide a superb durability in that they don't tend to rot and when wet will dry out quickly. Alternative types such as leather collars tend to have a more aesthetic natural appeal. A good quality leather collar could easily last the lifetime of your dog. An extension to this are the designer dog collar or fashion collars. These can extend to anything from a simple fashionable pattern or designer name, to a rhinestone dog collar for more special occasions.

The dog collar that you will be using most should be comfortable for your dog and secure, although for lapdogs where the collar can be more of a fashion accessory being comfortable is the priority. For larger dogs, a strong hardwearing collar is a must.

Dog Training Collar

A dog training collar is - as the name suggests - used mainly during training. The type of training will dictate the type of collar.

For obedience training, a choke collar or 'choke chain' would be best suited. These collars comprise of a slip loop that tightens around the dog's neck if it pulls on a leash too much. When the dog stops pulling, the chain loosens off. Many people consider the use of a choke collar as unnecessary but used in the right circumstances, this type of collar can be an effective training aid. It is extremely important to only use a choke collar when training and when the dog is supervised. You must NEVER let your dog out alone with a choke collar on. If the dog becomes caught on something they may easily choke themselves.

Electric Dog Collar or Dog Shock Collar

Electric dog collars or as they are sometimes known 'dog shock collars' and 'anti bark collars' tend to be used to discourage a certain behaviour in a dog. More often than not these are used to control unnecessary barking. These collars consist of a sensor to detect the bark and a pair of electrodes or similar to administer a small harmless shock to the dog. More advanced devices can adjust the level of the shock depending upon how many shocks have been administered before. The main problem with these devices is that the dog is being consistently punished for its bad behaviour. This may seem ideal initially but it is far from this.

Training a dog involves much more than punishing the dog every time it is bad. In fact, using positive reinforcement and praise when the dog stops behaving badly can have a much more positive effect. Getting to the root of the behavioural problem is the best approach. Only then can a preventative training method be implemented. Consider the case of a dog that chews and barks because it misses its owner during the day. The



barking and chewing is a product of the dog feeling anxious. If the dog receives an electrical shock every few minutes, that anxious behaviour will be compounded. Read this article for further training information.

For cases where the owner is not present, a far more humane method of discouragement can be implemented. This involves a similar type of collar that detects a bark but the collar releases a natural spray of Citronella that discourages the dog's behaviour. These can be used as a complementary method to other training.

Article By Andrew Strachan. Find lots more information about dog collars and different types of dogs at <http://www.types-of-dogs.com>. Lots of help and advice too.

Secrets of Dog Training Professionals - Operant Conditioning

By Aidan Bindoff

Have you ever wondered how really good dog trainers come up with the techniques they use to solve behaviour problems in dogs such as excessive barking, destructive chewing, toileting in the house and jumping up on visitors? Or how top dog trainers come up with ways to train dogs in top obedience and working competitions? Apart from a few "naturals", most really good dog trainers have a very good understanding of how dogs learn. They have adapted theory from the world of behavioural science and turned that knowledge into real-life practical skills for training dogs. This article explains in plain English some of the science and theory behind dog training, these really are secrets of the dog training professionals!

Operant Conditioning is the term that scientists use to describe what dog trainers call "training with consequences". That is, any training that involves a consequence that either reinforces or punishes behavior. There are 4 possible consequence types used in Operant Conditioning, and 1 non-consequence. These are:

1. Positive Reinforcement: when we give a reward and the behaviour increases or is maintained as a result, we call this positive reinforcement (+R). e.g dog sits when asked, we give a treat. Dog learns to sit when asked in future.
2. Negative Reinforcement: when we take something unpleasant away and the behaviour increases or is maintained as a result, we call this negative reinforcement (-R). e.g we ask dog to sit, pulling up on collar, dog sits, we release pressure from the collar. Dog learns to sit when asked in future.
3. Positive Punishment: when we do something unpleasant and the behaviour is decreased or eliminated as a result, we call this positive punishment (+P). e.g dog goes to investigate kitchen bench for food, we make a sharp noise. Dog learns not to investigate kitchen benches for food in future.
4. Negative Punishment: when we take away something the dog wants or enjoys and the behaviour is decreased or eliminated as a result, we call this negative punishment (-P). e.g. dog plays too roughly with another more timid dog, we leash rough dog and remove the opportunity to play. Dog learns not to play too roughly in future.



5. Extinction: when behaviour is no longer reinforced and it eventually goes away, we call this extinction. e.g. dog is used to being allowed outside when he whines at the door, but is suddenly no longer allowed out when he whines. Dog learns not to whine at the door. Extinction sometimes makes the target behaviour worse before it gets better, sometimes significantly. This is known as an “extinction burst” and is usually a sign that the behaviour is about to diminish rapidly. In the current example, the dog might whine more often, more loudly, and for longer periods before learning that whining doesn’t work for him any more.

Let’s examine the terms more closely. Apart from extinction, you will notice four words that can be used in four different combinations. These are “positive”, “negative”, “reinforcement” and “punishment” and they are technical terms that scientists use when discussing Operant Conditioning.

“Positive” means to add something. We add the reward, or add the punisher. By contrast, “Negative” means to take something away. We take away the reward, or take away the unpleasant stimulus.

“Reinforcement” is when we increase or maintain behaviour. The behaviour happens more often, more intensely, for longer periods, or it continues to happen without reducing in frequency, intensity or duration. By contrast, “Punishment” is when we decrease or eliminate behaviour using consequence. We reduce the frequency, intensity or duration of the behaviour.

A common mistake is to assume that we have reinforced or punished behaviour when in fact in future we discover that the behaviour has not actually been changed! Many dog trainers believe that praise is an effective reinforcer. It may be, for some dogs in some circumstances. The truth is we don’t know unless we see the behaviour that earned the praise increase or keep occurring in the future. The same applies to punishment. Yelling at a dog might stop it from going through your rubbish bin while you are there, but does it stop your dog going through the rubbish bin while you’re not there? Probably not. A more effective approach is to use a more secure rubbish bin, or put the rubbish bin in a place which is inaccessible to the dog.

For more information, please visit www.groups.yahoo.com/group/traininglevels/ for a Free program and e-book that shows you how to train your own dog, step-by-step, with the help of thousands of others using the very same program to train their own dogs.

Aidan Bindoff is Editor of <http://www.PositivePetzine.com>, a free ezine for people training their own dogs. Each edition has easy to use training advice based on positive reinforcement methods. Subscribers have access to a large archive of back-issues they can consult for just about any behavior or behavior problem.

Control of Dog Dominance Behavior: Focus

By Rena Murray

Dominant Dogs require special training, but so do their Owners. Too often an exasperated Dog Owner will scream or strike out in sheer frustration as the dog pushes the Owner beyond bearable limits. Or the overwhelmed Owner will treat the dog the way Helen Keller’s parents treated her, turning her into “an animal” until Annie arrived on the scene. In the words of Captain Keller to Annie Sullivan: “...Give her everything she wants....” Backfire!



So let's start with You, the Dog Owner. Understand that Your own attitude and timing are critical for a successful outcome.

One of the most important things to remember when working with a dominant dog is to **keep your cool**. Yelling is counterproductive and only turns a difficult animal off. Yelling escalates the problem. You can't fight fire with fire.

Instead, remember that: **"Iron sharpens iron."**

Focus. It's up to You to be steady, firm, and consistent, and to make sure You are calm when you begin your daily work with your dog. This approach is not inconsistent with love, for those who love their children and dogs will teach them, lead them, and discipline them with a consistent, fair, and firm hand, so that they can be the best they can be. That's your goal with your dog.

Take control. To do this, it is very important for you to establish and maintain steady **eye contact** when taking authority over your Dominant Dog. While the submissive dog will look away, the dominant one will hold the stare.

Eye contact is also critical for you to hold the dog's attention and keep him in an obedient posture. In dog language, the first one to look away "loses" and submits. So let your eyes send the focused message of "control" and "authority."

Also, YOU must "claim" all things that the dominant dog considers "his possessions," whether toys, rugs, bones, or whatever. You must present yourself as the dominant one, and all things in the house as yours. Only then do you "invite him in" and "share" these things with him.

You cannot allow the dog to claim or take possession of anything. You do not want to encourage the development of more dominant behaviors, possessiveness, or aggression. Indeed, aggression dog dominance naturally evolves from uncorrected dominance posture. Instead, break the cycle.

Another key in breaking dog dominance behavior: Do NOT allow the dog to have what he wants "for free." Make him earn it!

Earn it, not own it!

For example, a Dominant Dog should have a good walk or strenuous exercise before he is fed, such as a 30-minute walk at a brisk pace, followed by a "cool down" time (or he will get sick). He should be required to abide by rules and to respond obediently to your leadership, so that he feels he is "working" with "purpose" and "worth."

It is exciting to watch a formerly out-of-control dog stand proudly with a happy gleam in his eye because he knows he has a job and boundaries, that he does not have the burden of controlling things and can trust in you, and that he has achieved something of perceived worth and pleased you! The dog then takes joy in obedience!

Then he's earned the right to something he wants . . . not as a training tool or bribe, but removed from the actual training time . . . not as something he owns, but a gift from you . . . an expression of your general pleasure and affection . . . and only when YOU choose to give it . . . only in YOUR timing. YOU possess the control. Don't relinquish it!

There is an explicit dog training technique to use on a Dominant Dog. It contains a little-known technique about YOUR FOCUS so that the dog actually SMELLS AND SENSES your authority and control!



It also applies the dog communication system of “silence, submission, and leadership” . . . the dog whisperer behavior approach, in familiar terms. After all, for effective communication with your dog, to command and control his attention and focus in a positive, constructive manner, you must speak HIS language.

. . . And that requires that YOU have a silent way to establish and maintain your OWN focus and sense of cool, calm, collected power and authority. Part B of this free article provides details of a little known secret, a dog training tip to help you do just that! (It is effective for commanding respect in the workplace, as well.)

Give dominance no place, and it will not escalate.
Give it an inch, and it will take a mile . . .

Rena Murray, also known as DogWhisperWoman, is a professional Dog Obedience Trainer and Dog Behaviorist with extensive Dog Behavior Modification experience, from Puppy Training to Teaching an Old Dog New Tricks to Aggression Dog Dominance issues. Committed to helping Dog Owners as well as Pets, Rena publishes self-help articles with real world examples and a free email newsletter to help you select, train, understand, communicate with, and control your dog. To learn how to turn your Dominant Dog into a lovable, obedient pet, and a little-known training tip for establishing and maintaining Your Focus and Authority as Master, visit <http://www.pawpersuasion.com>, the Dog Dominance Behavior website, today!



Socializing Kensho and teaching him basic commands in an area where there is a lot of distraction. Lesson 1 is teaching him to sit and lie down in the house, lesson 2 is teaching him this outside and lesson 3 is teaching him these basic commands outside in a crowded shopping mall.



Greatest Dog Tips Ever

By Stan Rawlinson

TOP TIPS FOR YOUR PET

1. Is Your Dog Regularly Getting the Runs?

Add bio yoghurt to their feed. Quite often this can be a bacterial imbalance. Especially if it is happening on a regular basis. The bio yoghurt normally sorts this sort of problem out fairly quickly.

2. Is Your Dog's Urine Burning the Lawn?

Yellow spots on the lawn are caused because your dog's digestive system is too rich in nitrogen therefore the high levels of nitrogen in the urine causes the lawn spots. Go outside and really look at those burn marks. Notice how the outside edge of the mark actually has really nice, green grass? That is because the nitrogen that burned the grass is too strong but the outer edges of the 'circle' of urine ended up with just enough nitrogen to help instead of hurt.

There are a few things you can do. If you are observant you can water over the spot where the dog has urinated this will dilute the nitrogen and will be beneficial to the lawn. set aside an area the dog can use as a bathroom where you don't care what happens. Fill it with shingle or just leave the grass there to get burned. Teach the dog to go in that one spot. This will take time and patience.

Alternatively a dose of one teaspoon to one tablespoon of apple cider vinegar (depending on the size of the dog) per day can correct the pH imbalance and could solve the problem. The apple cider vinegar can be added to the dog's water or put directly on his food. The natural type from a health food store, not the pasteurized version from the supermarket. Two tablespoons of tomato juice on the dog's food twice a day will have the same effect.

3. Insect Stings to Dogs or Cats

Slice a raw onion and apply to the sting as soon as possible. If the sting is inside the mouth - Keep "Antihistamine" capsules in your first aid kit. A rapid administration soon after the sting can prevent serious complications. You can also get antihistamine in liquid form which makes it easier to dispense. To administer liquids pull out the jawl near the back teeth it makes a sort of little cup, then just pour the measured liquid in, close mouth, tip head back and massage throat. Some dogs will actually swallow the insect live, which may continue stinging the dog internally and cause anaphylactic shock. In rare cases, death can result. This is caused from internal swelling of the trachea which cuts off the oxygen supply to the lungs. Quick administration of "Antihistamine" can reduce and even prevent serious complications.

SPECIAL NOTE - Dosage will vary depending on the size of the animal. Check with your vet for recommended dosage. Usually they will refer to the animal's weight as a guideline.



4. Sharp Object and Glass eating

What do you do if your dog eats glass or other sharp objects like staples or small nails etc? Dogs even eat ornaments, Xmas decorations, light bulbs and lots of other things that are sharp and therefore dangerous. Here's what to do.

Go to the chemist and buy some cotton balls make sure it is cotton balls and not the cosmetic puff things they are made of manmade fibres. Buy a carton of double cream and keep it in the freezer if in the eventuality of your dog eating something sharp. Defrost the cream and pour some in a bowl. Dip cotton balls into the cream and feed them to your dog.

Dogs less than 10 lbs should eat 2 balls which you have first torn into smaller pieces. Dogs 10-50 lbs should eat 3-5 balls and larger dogs should eat 5-7.

You may feed larger dogs an entire cotton ball at once. Dogs seem to really like these strange treats and eat them readily. As the cotton works its way through the digestive tract it will find all the glass and small sharp objects and wrap itself around them. Even the teeniest shards of glass will be caught and wrapped in the cotton fibres and the cotton will protect the intestines from damage. Your dog's stools will be a bit strange for a few days. You must be careful to check for fresh blood or a tarry appearance to the stool. If either of the latter symptoms appear you should rush your dog to the vet for a check-up, but in most cases, the dogs should be fine

5. Bonding

If you want to quickly bond with a new pup or rescue dog. Masticate a piece of white bread till it is a gooeey then feed this as a titbit to the pup/dog for the first 7 days. You only need to do this once a day; it mimics the regurgitation process when pups and cubs are being weaned in the wild, this really makes all the difference and helps them bond more quickly and therefore settle in much sooner.

6. Constipation

If your dog doesn't move his bowels for a day or two, or if he seems to have difficulty doing so, he may be constipated. Give him a teaspoonful of milk of magnesia first thing in the morning, before his breakfast if you feed him twice a day. If he is often constipated, add more vegetables to his diet and also mix a teaspoonful of mineral oil in his dinner. He won't taste it with the food. Do this until he is regular again. Also be sure that he gets plenty of exercise. Lack of running, walking, and jumping can make a dog constipated.

7. Car Sickness

Often Ginger helps with this problem either Ginger Biscuits or even better natural ginger fed before the journey. The biscuits can be fed as the dog gets in the car, which has an added incentive of the dog feeling that it being praised for just getting in the vehicle. Cocculus 6C a homeopathic remedy for travel sickness can also be help especially for a dog that has excessive drooling or has been sick. Give one dose then repeat every 30 minutes for a maximum of 4 doses. Sea Legs can also be helpful the human travel sickness but check with your Vet for how much to administer, though I would imagine if you bought a child's dose it would be fine

8. Grooming

Once a week put a really good shake of Olive Oil "the one you use for salads" into the dogs food, it gives the coat a brilliant shiny healthy look. In conjunction with the oil use a



rubber horse curry comb/ brush; you can purchase it cheaply from any tack shop, strips all the dead hair off and shines up the coat better than any other brush on the market. They also do a plastic one that gets all the seeds and bits of debris out. I use both to great affect.

9. Grooming 2

Irrespective of the dogs coat long or short groom daily. Even if it's only for a couple of minutes and make sure you groom over the withers. This helps in bonding and social status. In the wild the Alpha Male and Female will call over the other wolves or wild dogs individually and groom them in their pecking order. Grooming is an important social gesture. That is why some dominant dogs object to being groomed, they don't believe you have right or the position to initiate this action.

10. Tears Stains and Bacterial Infections

Wet areas on the face are a breeding ground for bacteria and yeast. Bacterial infections commonly occur in the tear ducts. "Pitirsporum", red yeast bacteria, is at the root of most yeast infections. Tear stains also often occur at the same time as a gum infection or ear infection. Staining can also occur on a dog's paws from licking and around his mouth from infected saliva.

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

Putting a teaspoon of apple cider vinegar per quart of water in your dog's water bowl or on food can clear up most active yeast infections and prevent future infections. Apple cider vinegar tablets can be used if your dog refuses to drink the treated water or eat the food.

11. Halitosis/Dog Breath

Halitosis, or unpleasant breath, can be caused by a stomach problem, bad teeth or tonsils, or something that is stuck in the dog's mouth or throat. Look your dog's teeth to see if any are decayed. If not, then give him 3/4 teaspoonful of bicarbonate of soda in his food twice a day for a few days. If his breath is still offensive, then take him to a vet to see if he needs his teeth cleaned or his tonsils treated.

12. Cuts

If your dog cuts himself slightly, put some boric acid solution or some peroxide on the cut and then leave it alone. You can also buy veterinarian wound powder, the best place to buy this is a horse tack shop it's much cheaper, Clean the cut or abrasion making sure no dirt or debris is left in the wound and puff the powder onto the area and leave it normally heals up fairly quickly. If the cut is deep, or if it doesn't stop bleeding, pack gauze or clean rags around it and take him to a vet. If the cut is on his leg or foot and bleeds a lot, tie a piece of cloth tightly around his leg, between the cut and his body, release the pressure every ten minutes, and take him to a vet at once.

13. Electric Shocks

Once in a while, a silly puppy will chew through an electric cord leading to a lamp or a radio or a toaster. Surprisingly the shock he gets is normally not serious (though in certain circumstances has proved fatal); however it can sometimes be strong enough to



knock him out. If this happens, put a little household ammonia on a wad of cotton and hold this under his nose. Don't touch the nose with it, as the ammonia will burn his skin. The sharp odour will bring him round. When he does come to, give him some cool, strong, black coffee to drink. If his mouth seems burned by the shock, wet a cloth in strong, cool tea and wash the burned place with this. Take him to the vet if he seems burned or injured in any way.

14. What if your dog swallows a dangerous object

It's a rare puppy that doesn't swallow at least one strange object which his stomach can't possibly digest. But a dog's stomach is so constructed that it can usually take care of most of the odd things that find their way into it. If you should see your dog swallow something you know is bad for him . . . a piece of rubber toy, a large nail, a splinter of bone or sharp metallic object . . . here's what to do right away.

Give him a large piece of soft bread to eat. Then toss about two teaspoonfuls of salt on the back of his tongue, close his mouth with your hand and keep it closed until he swallows the salt. Now put him on a newspaper or some other place where he can vomit without doing any damage. In a short time, the salt will cause him to throw up the bread and the strange object. If this doesn't come up the first time give him another dose of salt after about 5 minutes. Once the object is vomited, He should be fine. But if he begins to have diarrhoea, or if his stomach swells up and appears tender when you touch it, give him a tablespoonful of mineral oil. If he still seems to be in pain after a few hours, or if there is any blood in his urine or bowel movement, take him straight to a vet.

15. Eyes

If you want to clean out the "sleep bugs," you can dip a wad of cotton into a mixture of warm water and boric-acid solution 50/50. Squeeze a few drops of this in each eye. You can also use plain warm milk for this purpose. If your pet has got some mild conjunctivitis try warm used tea bags, if the infection is more than mild then purchase some Golden Eye from the chemist (cream not drops) and treat for three days this clears up most infections, however if he still has problems a visit to the Vet is in order. In case of a real injury to the eyes from a dogfight, or something poked into them, put a pad of gauze soaked in boric-acid solution 50/50 ie warm water and boric acid over the eye that's hurt. Then wrap a towel loosely around the dog's head and take him at once to a vet.

16. Commands

Avoid giving your dog commands that you know you cannot enforce. Every time you give a command that is neither complied with nor enforced your dog learns that commands are optional.

One command should equal one response, so give your dog only one command (twice max!), then gently enforce it. Repeating commands tunes your dog out (as does nagging) and teaches your dog that the first several commands are a "bluff." For instance, telling your dog to "Sit, sit, sit, sit!", is neither an efficient nor effective way to issue commands. Simply give your dog a single "Sit" command and gently place or lure your dog into the sit position, then praise/reward.

17. The Dog's Name

Whenever possible, use your dog's name positively, rather than using it in conjunction with a reprimand, warnings or punishment. Your dog should trust that when it hears its name or is called to you, good things happen. His name should always be positive and responded to with enthusiasm, never hesitancy or fear.



One of the best ways to make sure his name is viewed as a positive is to sit the dog between you and your partner or a friend and say the dog's name. If he doesn't look at you, give his ear a gentle tug to gain his attention so that he turns his head towards you. As soon as this happens praise and treat enthusiastically, cheese, puffed jerky or dried liver is ideal. Get your partner/friend to do the same and keep repeating back and forth for a few minutes, do this regularly and for the rest of the dog's life and he/she should always respond enthusiastically whenever his name is mentioned.

Some people including myself create a bad dog name so that the dog never hears its real name in any negative situation.

18. Pee Poles

These are very new in the pet shops and are made of hard plastic and look almost like a 1 foot high giant tack. The tack is impregnated with a Pheromone that causes the dogs and bitches to urinate on them. You hammer them in the area you want the dog to urinate and hey presto. Believe it or not it appears to work. These scientists are doing very well with their pheromones, what with the DAP diffuser and now this.

19. Puppy Teething

Most of the teething and chewing as apart from mouthing and nipping starts at about 4.5 months old. This is the time that the little piranha teeth, laughingly called puppy teeth start dropping out, as the new adult teeth start pushing through. It takes anything up to 8 months for these new teeth to set in the jaw, whilst this is happening the pup has a need to chew. To help soothe this and save your fixtures, fittings and furniture. Get the pup a plastic flower pot. Not the thin brittle ones but a fairly thick substantial one, this will help his gums and sooth the itching. Another great help is get a knotted rope you buy as a tug soak it in water and put it in the freezer. The ice that forms really helps hot and itchy gums. Also freeze carrots and whilst frozen give to teething pups a great and nutritious soother.

20. Games of Tug

I don't like games of tug at any time, except with a particularly timid or frightened dog then I will play and let the dog win to build up some confidence. However I never ever play tug with a puppy whilst it has its puppy/piranha teeth. It actually has little or no jaw muscles at this time therefore you can dislocate the jaw or even misalign the teeth by playing roughhouse tug games. You may also be setting the scene for aggressive confrontations later in the puppy's growth cycle by playing this type of game. It would be better playing games of find, hide little bits of treats in the house and garden and encourage the dog to search them out, or ball games these all help dispel some of the pup's energies and to stimulate the mind, rather than stimulate the aggression predatory side of the pup.

21. Fussy Eating

I am told by countless owners that their dog will not eat dry food or many other types of food and that they will only eat smoked salmon/steak/or best mince etc etc. This is because we actually teach our dogs to be fussy and picky eaters by free feeding. That is leaving down food all day. The dog then comes to the realisation that it can eat at any time and does not fall into a routine. Free feeding can also have an effect on, control complex behaviour also know as "dominant behaviour" though that term is vastly overused it can give the message to a socially mobile dog that he could be a pack leader as he has access to food at any time.



To overcome this, decide on how many times you will feed per day. If he is over 1 year then this will be either once or twice. Feed the food of your choice not the food of his choice "I am a firm believer in a quality all in one dry food" If you prefer the more natural diet that is fine as long as you cook the meat "Never Feed Raw" put this down for ten minutes only, if the dog has eaten it in that time fine, if not pick the food up and put it away.

When the next meal is due then only put out amount of food you would normally feed, do not double up. It may take a few days for the message to get home, but it will in the end. Remember the dog's dim and distant ancestor is the Wolf. Which is a feast and famine eater; they sometimes go many days or even longer between kills, so your dog will not starve, instinct and survival will take over and the dog will resume eating the food you choose not the food he chooses. Many people think that it must be boring feeding them the same thing every day. But do not realise that supplementing a quality dry food with tinned or pouch food is like putting tomato sauce on Lobster Thermidor.

I am sorry to say I am not a fan of most tinned or pouched meats and in some cases these are detrimental to the dog's behaviour. We also assume that taste is a factor. It isn't, dogs have only 17% of our taste capacity, lets face it if they can eat there own and other animals faeces which many do, then their choice of taste and quality must be questioned.

22. Recall Problems

How often do you see dogs coming back to about three foot from their owners then skipping away again, as if it's a game, the owners probably in a hurry get angrier and angrier and start shouting, which of course exacerbates the situation? Giving the dog even more reason not to return, as he is aware that he may get smacked.

All this is caused because the owner did not correctly lead train and stimulate the dog in the park in the first place. He/She actually taught the dog not to come back, by only putting the dog back on the lead at the end of the walk. It doesn't take long for the dog to click on that recall and lead mean end of fun and walk.

May I suggest the owners were probably on their mobile phone at the same time? Go to any park and see the dozens of people on mobiles walking their dogs, the poor dogs have to stimulate themselves somehow, and start running off to other dogs and people for the attention that they crave.

Give your dog's quality time and quality training. During the walk call your dog back to you at least three or four times. Place it on a lead and reward with a brief game or a real tasty titbit, and then let it off again. Your dog will then learn that coming back to you is good news and being placed on the lead does not mean the end of the walk and end of play!

Play hide and seek behind trees etc, especially important before the 16 week puppy mark, and as early as is humanly possible. . It doesn't think your hiding it thinks you are getting lost, and will tend to keep a beady eye on you, and by hiding especially at a young age sets up the recall and the need to keep you in sight for life. You can now get their injections so the dog can be fully covered and socialised at 10 weeks rather than 12 and I would strongly recommend this for every new puppy owner The vaccine is made by Intervet and is called Nobivac D.H.P.P./L. So switch off the mobiles and play games, stimulate your dog and he will have no need to wander off and not want to return.



23. Kennel Cough

On top of the Antibiotics from the Vet, Benylin Dry Cough mixture, twice a day will help to relieve the irritation. Also avoid any pressure from a collar, as this will exacerbate the condition. If you must go anywhere with your dog on a lead, use a body harness. Avoid areas where there are other dogs and if visiting your vet, make it the last appointment. Leave your dog in the car and go and tell the vet staff you are outside waiting to go in, or ask to be placed in an isolation room. This will help to reduce the spread of this highly contagious disease.

24. Timidity and Fears

How many times have you seen a dog shaking or cowering and the owner sympathising and reassuring it with petting and nurturing? This may appear to be perfectly logical behaviour, but is actually giving the dog all the wrong signals and rewarding it for being timid and nervous and confirming it has a reason to be fearful, therefore the very thing you are trying to cure is reinforced by your actions. The shy and timid dog should be exposed to as many different situations as possible. Take it along with you to the shops, the bar or the pub, and everywhere you can introduce it to new sights sounds and smells.

Don't push it into fearful situations but gently desensitise it to the things it fears praise for calmness never for fear Consistent treatment in this manner will begin to deliver the message to the dog that there is nothing to fear. Do NOT cuddle the dog, or hug it and tell it there is nothing to fear. Dogs do not understand most of the words we say -- they understand our actions. If the dog gets a hug, it assumes it has done the correct thing and will continue to be fearful.

25. Tag and Identification

It may surprise everyone to know that the maximum fine for not displaying a dog identification tag in the UK is £5000. (Where did they get that figure from?) Irrespective of whether your pet is already micro chipped. The law which is the Control of Dog Order 1992 states that "Every dog while in a highway or in a place of public resort, shall wear a collar with the name and address of the owner inscribed on the collar or on a plate or badge attached thereto". I would also recommend you put your mobile number on the disc in case you are away on holiday with the dog; the home number would be useless if your dog then goes missing. You could also add the Vets number in case you cannot be contacted and the vet can keep the dog until you can pick it up.

26. Shy Timid or Frightened Dogs

I am a firm believer that socialisation is so vitally important; it almost outweighs any other consideration including the risk of contracting disease. The fear of infections has led breeders and owners alike to make the tragic mistake of keeping their puppies isolated until they have completed their vaccinations.

By taking this stance they risk ending up with a fearful, timid dog that may become aggressive as an adult. "95% of all reported dog bites are fear related". Owners should strike a commonsense balance: puppies, especially from birth through to 14 weeks must be exposed to a variety of people and experiences. There are many activities and places to take dogs; without endangering their lives, it is vital that you take the time to expose your new pup to as many of these as possible.

This is especially true for one's second or third dog; it is too easy to keep the new pup in the company of the older dogs, depriving him of the opportunity to develop self-confidence of his own without relying totally on the older dog/s and their protection.



27. Herbal and Natural Treatments

I am a strong advocate of herbal medicines for dogs especially in areas of Timidity, Fear and Anxiety. The more common and easily obtainable are Dr Bach's Rescue Remedy, (chemist or health food shop, internet) D.A.P Diffuser (internet or vets) and Skullcap and Valerian (health stores chemists internet. These can be especially helpful in situations such as separation anxiety excessive barking and firework and thunder phobias.

28. The Lead

Your lead is the most vital piece of training equipment you can own, it has multiple uses, it is also an aerial to your dog. Tighten it at the wrong time and you can send messages that could spark aggression, fear, or anxiety, use it to drag your dog around and it could damage his neck and spine, especially if it connected to a choke chain which I abhor. Used correctly it can be a godsend almost the only training aid you will ever need.

All training including sit, stay, down, recall, sit stay, wait etc should initially be trained on a lead. Unfortunately most of the leads I see are far too short to be effective and are of a material that hurts and can burn and damage your hands.

The lead should be at least 5 foot long irrespective of the size of the dog, this will help all training and lead work in the future. It should be made of something like Cushion Web which is extremely strong yet very soft, (sounds a bit like a advert for toilet paper) NOT Nylon which is harsh as can burn and damage your hands.

The problem is that most lead manufacturers haven't a clue about dogs and what constitutes a good lead, they just produce what makes the most profit. Good quality leather leads are OK though I find them a bit hard on the hands at first. Shop around till you find what you want, don't be fobbed off with what the industry or pet shop wants you to buy. I have my own specialised Cushion Web leads made for me; you can now buy them direct from my site, it is worth shopping around until you get exactly what you want.

29. Counter Surfing

This is where dogs are constantly picking things up either from the floor tables or kitchen worktops, at best it can be frustrating and annoying, at worst it can be fatal if they eat something that is dangerous. The quickest way and most permanent resolution to this problem is to go to your local joke shop and buy a spring loaded cap banger. This is a little metal device that when you put a cap in it and set it by putting a suitable object on top, then anyone or in this case anything picking up the food/object will set off the banger takes about three/four bangs and the dog normally decides to call it a day. The beauty of this device is most dogs are crafty and only steal when you are not in the room therefore it is the perfect solution.

30. Dogs Ages in Human Terms

If I were to stop 100 people in the street and ask them how do you calculate a dogs age human in human terms 90% would say one dog year to every seven human years the others 9% would probably say they don't know and 15 may know the correct calculation.

This is one of many doggy old wives tales that are totally and utterly wrong. As a general rule of thumb it should be fifteen for the 1st year ten for the 2nd and then five for every year thereafter. This is only an approximation there is a chart that works on size and breed that gives it more accurately than this. If you calculated every seven years and the



dog is 16 years old then the dog in human terms would be 112 using my method the dog is a more realistic 95.

I also think we are all aware that a one-year-old dog does not act like a seven-year-old child; it is more like the rebellious teenager round the back of the bike shed having a quick fag. In addition, they are far more aware of the opposite sex than a seven year old would ever be.

31. Firework Aversion

For many dog owners the run up to November 5th is a nightmare. To help alleviate the problem purchase a sounds disc from places like Sounds Scary on the web or pet shops. Do this at least a six weeks before the main firework days for instant November the 5th in the UK or the 4th of July in the States. A DAP Diffuser also can help which is a chemical copy of the pheromone the nursing mother gives out to calm her litter along with herbal calmers such as Dr Bach's Rescue remedy. Using the pheromones and the herbal remedies and a calm base, start playing the disc very softly at first the build up of the volume should be over weeks not hours. Never try to rush this and if the dog shows concern go back a few steps. Never comfort or cuddle an anxious dog (see tip 24)

If initially the dog has just been frightened for the first time by fireworks, you should act very blasé and immediately go outside and play with toys such as balls or Frisbees, or even a training session where you can praise for actions other than the fear, this can be done whilst the noise is going on. You may therefore overcome a potential future problem immediately.

How this works is the same principal as for instance flying, the plane suddenly hits turbulence, watch everyone's first reactions, they look to the Stewards/Stewardesses to see if they are showing anxiety. If they are calm and acting perfectly normally then our anxiety and fear also dissipates. It is worth trying this tactic when your dog has any negative experience, even though it does not appear too affected, just in case of a potential phobia later on.

32. Dry and Crusty Nose

Adding a teaspoon of flax seed oil to the dog's food daily often helps. Dry noses and other dry skin complaints respond well to a multivitamin supplement (especially if they include vitamin B complex).

33. Fleas

If you want a natural method of flea control give the dog a clove of garlic in his food each day. You can also purchase granulated garlic from a horse tack shop at a very reasonable price. Fleas hate the taste, which come out in the dog's skin and will soon go looking for a more tasty meal.

34. Ear Mites

if your pet has contracted ear mites, then a simple remedy is to use corn oil to suffocate them place two or three drops of corn oil into its ears (you can use an eye dropper), massage the ear gently then clean out with a cotton ball. Repeat for 3 days. Regular ear bathing with oil is recommended by vets, to avoid a build-up of wax and irritants.



35. Urinary Tract Infections

Mix 30-40ml of cranberry juice into your pet's food. This will boost the acidity of its urine, reduce bacteria and help relieve the discomfort. To ease the pain in fact any pain you can add half a dissolved aspirin or children's liquid analgesic to your pet's food.

Stan Rawlinson is a Dog Behaviourist and Obedience Trainer, who has owned and worked dogs for over 25 years, starting with gundogs then moving to the behavioural and obedience side of training companion dogs. He now has a successful practice covering Greater London, Surrey, and Middlesex.

Stan is recommended by numerous Vets, Rescue Centres, and Charities. He writes articles and comments on behavioural issues and techniques for dog magazines including Our Dogs, Dogs Monthly and K9 Magazine and Shooting Times. He is also the founder member of PAACT; The Professional Association of Applied Canine Trainers.

You can reach Stan at enquiries@doglistener.co.uk or visit his website at <http://www.doglistener.co.uk>

How to Train Your Dog and Influence Behavior

By Eric Letendre

Get Your Dog to Do What You Want, When You Want

When she walked into my office I tried to keep the surprised look off my face. Her eyes were black and blue and her nose was swollen beyond belief. As she sat down she started to cry and had a difficult time talking. I got her a glass of water and let her know to take her time. Once she gained control, she informed me that her dog was responsible for her broken nose and black eyes.

She went on to tell me that her dog had injured her arm and wrist and her leg. She said that she loved her dog. She also added that her dog was a large black lab and in no way aggressive. Her dog had injured her by jumping, pulling, and in general not listening to her commands. She said that the latest incident had happened a few days before. She told me that she was getting ready to walk her dog. She had put her dog on leash and was about to go out the door. Just as she was about to exit the house through the front door, her dog saw a cat across the street and took off at full speed.

She hung on to the leash and tripped trying to go out the door. She went face first into the door and broke her nose. At this point she teared up again and said that she loved her dog but didn't know if she could keep him. She had no control. I told her not to worry, and that we would get her dog under control.

I taught her my system for dealing with behavior problems, what I call my M.U.T.T. Method. The M stands for Manage, U for Underlying, T for Training, and the last T is for Time.



M=Management – A big part of dog ownership is effectively managing your dog's behavior. Crates, kennels, baby gates, and leashes are some tools to help you manage your dog's behavior. In this case, we put a gentle leader head collar on her dog to help manage her dog's pulling problem.

A gentle leader works by controlling the dog's head. In principle, it works a lot like a horse bridle. It makes it much more difficult for the dog to pull and it gives you much better control over the dog on leash.

U=Underlying – Whenever you are dealing with a behavior problem you have to understand that there is an underlying problem. For instance, if a dog is digging there could be many different underlying reasons for the digging. It could be that the dog is bored, frustrated, hot, or it could be breed specific. Terriers love to dig.

In this situation, we figured that one of the big underlying reasons was lack of exercise. Her dog was loaded with energy. We came up with a plan to have her son bring the dog to the park three times a week on a long leash. He would spend about 45 minutes throwing a ball for her dog. In addition to the ball playing, she brought her dog to a dog daycare three times a week. By giving her dog some intensive, aerobic exercise her dog started to calm down.

T=Train – We put her dog on a training program that consisted of the basics (sit, down, stay, walk, and come). She or her son had to spend at least ten minutes each day doing a training session. We focused on teaching her dog to greet politely at the door and stop pulling. By using the gentle leader she was able to walk her dog past very distracting situations. She even expressed her amazement when she crossed other dogs and animals during their walks and was able to control him.

In addition to the obedience training she also learned how to teach her dog that she was the leader. She had her dog work for attention, food, and playing. By establishing some leadership she gained much better control.

T=Time – Any behavior program is going to require time. By following the steps that we outlined she started to see changes within a short period of time. By following the program for 21 days, those changes would become stronger and stronger.

Any time you're faced with a behavior problem, remember the acronym M.U.T.T. and apply each step. You'll be happy with the results.

About the Author: Eric Letendre started his dog training business in August of 1995. He has worked as an animal control officer, training director, and provided K-9 security consulting for such institutions as World Wide Plaza in Manhattan, and Hartford Hospital. He has also helped numerous animal shelters and has published two books. To learn more about his newest book, "The Amazing Dog Training Man," you can visit his website <http://www.AmazingDogTrainingMan.com>.



How to Control Dog Whining

By M. Bruno

Dogs whine for a number of reasons. By understanding the root cause of dog whining you can take some simple steps to control unwanted whining by your dog.

Why Do Dogs Whine?

When your dog whines, she is talking to you. She wants you to know that there is something that she needs for a variety of reasons. Your dog may not be feeling well. Your dog may feel lonely and want your companionship. Your dog may be afraid and is calling out for help.

How to Control or Stop Dog Whining

If your dog is whining because you are not home, she may be suffering from separation anxiety. This is a relatively easy dog behavior to correct. You should start conditioning your dog to your leaving the house and coming back after a short period of time, say 5 minutes.

Don't make a big deal out of your departure. No excited good byes and good girl farewells. When you return, don't pay attention to your dog when you walk in. Act as if you were just in the next room for a few minutes and that your re entry to where your dog is doesn't merit any fanfare.

If you do make a fuss upon departing or returning, you are in fact, telling you dog that what you are about to do or the fact that you have returned is very momentous. This will instil an even greater sense of urgency in your dog to whine as she now "knows" that your absence is something that causes you to get excited, therefore she needs to tell you that she noticed it and wants you there.

Start extending the periods of your absence to 15 minutes, then 30 minutes then an hour, then 3 hours, until your dog pays no attention to your departure or return. When you have accomplished this you will have defeated separation anxiety in your dog and the whining will have stopped.

Your dog may also display a whining behavior if she simply wants your attention. If she whines and you respond by giving her treats, playing with her or petting her, your dog will have been very successful in training you! She just became the master and the dominant member of the dog pack.

This is exactly the opposite of the appropriate pack pecking order. You have to reassert yourself as the leader of the dog pack

One way to control this type of dog whining is to simply ignore your dog. If she doesn't get the desired reaction, your immediate attention, when she whines, then she will soon get tired of this approach and you will have established control over your whining dog.

If your dog persists in whining, you should give her a firm command such as "No!". Let her know with your voice and never by physical punishment, that dog whining is unacceptable and must stop. Another approach is to rattle a can full of rocks that make a loud and unpleasant noise. This auditory interruption is very unpleasant; Your dog will associate her whining with the unpleasant noise and the whining will stop..



Dogs also whine if they want to come inside or go outside. If your dog whines to go outside to the doggy outhouse, this is O.K. In this instance your dog is telling you she needs to relieve herself. When this form of dog whining occurs, you should say “good dog” to let your dog know that you appreciate her alerting you to her need. Always use the exact same words and in the same tone. Your dog can’t understand your human language, but she will associate the sound of your voice and the words you speak in a way that reinforces what in this case is a desired action.

Another approach to control whining in your dog is to divert her attention from the cause of the whining to something more appropriate. If she whines, you could ask her to “come” to you or to “stay.” If she responds to your command you could then give her a reward.

Dogs as well as puppies whine if they are hungry or bored. Puppies want food as do adult dogs and both need and want exercise. Be certain to give your dog ample exercise daily before any whining has the opportunity to start. Your dog may be tired and happy and the prospect of kicking up a fuss with dog whining will lose its appeal.

As we mentioned above, never, never, never strike or physically punish your dog at anytime. Physical abuse of dogs is not only inhumane and punishable by law but is counterproductive. An abused dog will have accelerated and more intense displays of undesirable behavior than a dog who is worked with in a calm, loving, and appropriate training environment.

Finally, dogs that whine for no apparent reason may be signalling you that they are sick or hurt. Don’t ignore dog whining that is unexplainable. Take your dog to a veterinarian right away to determine if there is an injury or illness that needs treatment.

For more information on how to easily control dog whining and have well behaved dog today, visit Dogs 4 Life at <http://www.dogs-4life.com/disobedient-dog-help.html>



Tips for Overcoming Boredom and Routine Stress

By Debbie Ray

There are many ways in which you can prepare for, and participate in, your dogs overall health. Providing the necessary shots, diet and exercise are but a few of the ways in which we may meet their daily health demands. Still, there is one area which even many of the most well meaning owners, breeders, trainers, etc. overlook- the state of the animals mental health. Providing for this is just as important as is their physical well being.

Just what exactly can someone do to make sure their dog is mentally healthy and to detect and solve problems before they reach a critical stage? Many solutions are available to combat the stresses of kennel life, or of life indoors, for a dog(s) which remain alone a good bit of the time.

First, many problems often occur as the result of simple boredom. Just how long do you think you could go behaving "correctly" if you were deprived of social, physical and mental stimulation? The length of time would vary from person to person. The same holds true of your dog(s). Dogs are social creatures and rely heavily upon your contact with them. Again, some more-so than others.

Still, as we all know, you cannot maintain 24 hour contact with any animal - unless maybe you were stranded on an island somewhere with only it as your companion.

There are many other responsibilities we all share in other areas- family, career, etc.- which take up a great deal of our time and otherwise cut down on the amount we may spend in our kennels. It is for this reason that it is so important to plan things to keep your animal alert and stimulated mentally to cut down on problems which arise, most notably, from boredom.

Boredom is one thing kennel animals (and house dogs as well) face on a daily basis. Not only is this very bad for the dog, but it is highly preventable as well. Many of the most common problems or anti-social behaviors occur as the result of boredom. Excessive barking, fence running, digging and stool eating are all examples that may initially begin as acting out behaviors to overcome boredom.

Many of these problems could be solved with just a bit of forethought in the planning stages of kennel development. If your kennel or living area is already constructed, then there are many other ways you can provide for your animals mental health by overcoming or avoiding this problem.

First, where exactly does your dog spend most of its time? You can provide toys as a way to relieve the anxieties of kennel/inside life. Not only do toys provide stimulation and fun but they are the easiest place in which to start. Once you have made sure they are size appropriate for your dog you have a vast array of kinds and types from which to choose. If you are creative and good with your hands then you can create many things yourself. Who says "store bought" is always better? Most importantly, make sure that they are too large to swallow.

Providing a different toy each day or week on a rotating basis is one idea to prevent the dog from becoming bored with the object first introduced to relieve actual boredom. Moving the location of water and food dishes are another idea. The introduction of fruits or vegetable slices, such as carrots or apple slices, are another interesting item the dog doesn't get on a regular basis and also are good and safe supplements if the dog happens to eat them. Large marrow bones, Kongs, hard rubber balls (larger than your



dog can swallow), and stuffed animals are other choices. Remember, supervision of these toys is a must, especially in the initial stages.

If the dog's kennel area will allow, hanging toys are a lot of fun for your pet. If suspended by a spring, they will snap back when the dog turns it loose. If you use a rope to suspend a toy make sure it is single strand. NEVER suspend it low enough that an accident may occur. The addition of bells or other types of noise makers are also good choices provided they are attached in such a way that the animal can't get to them. Remember that you will need to check these additions frequently for signs of wear or needed repair.

If you allow your dogs out of their normal confinement, and you have an empty available space (large size is not required) in your fenced yard, then there are things you may add there as well to appease your dog. Obstacle courses can be set up in a minimum of space and with little or no monetary output. Being creative does help though it is not a necessity.

Tires partially buried, upright so that the dog may pass through them, are quite effective and fun once you teach the dog how to successfully navigate them. Even the larger wooden slides, ramps and walk-throughs as found in many children's playgrounds are very effective in working with your animals. While living in an apartment in the past, Cera and I frequently visited the playground of a local elementary school to play on their equipment when school was out. Needless to say, she loved it. Overall, the only limiting factor in overcoming boredom for your pets is you! Thinking creatively can easily modify your pet's environment so that it is safe, interesting and fun. Freedom from boredom is not only essential for you but for your pets as well. Mental stimulation is important!

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Debbie Ray, owner of <http://www.pedigreedpups.com> and <http://www.total-german-shepherd.com>, is a lifelong animal lover and dog enthusiast. Interested in more dog information? Training and health tips? Thinking about getting a purebred dog? Interested in the German Shepherd Dog in particular? Need to promote your dog-related website and get additional inbound links? Check out [pedigreedpups.com](http://www.pedigreedpups.com), [total-german-shepherd.com](http://www.total-german-shepherd.com) or <http://www.pedigreeddogs.com> (purebred dog breed directory) for more information.

No-Fail Solutions for Solving the Top 5 Dog Behavior Problems

By James Lee Tuan

How to Curb Excessive Barking In Your Dog:

Dog barks as its way of communication to the world. Your dog may bark to seek attention from you or as a warning when it senses non-pack members intruding its territory.

However excessive barking can irritate and cause both children and adults to shy away from your beloved canine. Therefore, training your dog not to bark is of utmost importance.



- Do ignore your dog when he/she goes into a barking fit for no apparent reason as any attention will reinforce the behavior. Praise your dog when he becomes quiet.
- Do use a squirt gun to spray water on your dog if excessive barking persists. This is to disrupt its behavior and your dog will associate barking as an unpleasant experience.
- Do praise and reward your dog immediately after it stops barking and not ten minutes after. Your dog will not understand the reason for the discipline.
- Do use an anti bark collar for further training whenever you are not around and your dog is not fully train yet so as to be thoughtful to thy neighbors.

How to Overcome Aggressive Behavior In Your Dog:

Dogs are social animals and not naturally aggressive. The cause for a dog that is aggressive is usually due to an ignorant or aggressive owner who cultivates this behavior through wrong training methods or abuse.

If your dog shows traits of aggressiveness, correction training must be implemented as soon as possible to prevent and curb your dog aggressive behavior.

- Do socialize your dog frequently with as many people as possible. Dogs that are constantly chained or enclosed will increase the fear and anxiety of your dog thereby leading to more aggressiveness.
- Do watch out for negative actions from other dogs (violent barking and physical attacks) that might further influence your dog.
- Do play and exercise your dog regularly as a happy and contented dog is less likely to be aggressive.
- Do use only firm voice command to correct any misbehavior and not physical correction.
- Do practice and establish alpha leadership training with your aggressive dog so that it can have the proper guidance and understanding who the head of the pack is.
- Do consult your vet if aggressive behavior is unusual. Your dog might have a health problem.

How to Discourage Your Dog Jumping Behavior:

Why do dogs jump? Jumping occurs mainly when the dog is excited by your homecoming, or visits by friends it considers as part of the family pack. It is their way of greeting.

Dogs also jump because they were never probably train before and it has always resulted in increased attention.

While small toy dogs will not pose too big a problem, bigger dogs may frighten and overpower a child or adult, causing injury. Therefore, a dog with a jumping habit should be discouraged and properly corrected.

- Do discourage your dog by not patting him when he jumps on you during homecoming. Instead fold both your arms and look away till he calms down.
- Do raise one of your knees and give a stern "Down" command if there is persistent jumping. As a reflex action, your dog will usually stop and back away.
- Do learn to teach your dog the basic "Sit", "Stay" and "Down" command to address the problem.
- Do be consistent, repeating the process and praising your dog when he no longer jumps.



How to Deal With Your Dog Chewing Fetish?

What can you do when your dog has an oral fixation and chew on things that he/she shouldn't be chewing on?

- Do use bitter spray and apply them to objects such as your shoe to deter your dog from chewing on things he shouldn't be chewing or biting on.
- Do crate train your dog if your dog has a habit to chew up items in the house while you are out.

How to Deal With Your Dog Biting and Nipping Behavior Problem:

Puppies and dogs bite and nip for a variety of reasons especially so during exploration and play. Puppy also tends to bite when they are teething. Adult dogs might nip when they are excited or bite when they are threatened.

- Do encourage and reward your dog when it bites the right object; discourage by simply saying a firm "No" and replace the object with the correct toy or training equipment.
- Do use the "Time Out" method to discourage your dog from nipping or biting; call out a "No" firmly and walk out of a room with the door close for 30 seconds to help your dog understand your expectances for undesirable bites.
- Do have your dog muzzled in crowded places if necessary and allowed for more human contact for further training. This also helps to subdue dogs that have a tendency to bite and nip frequently.

James Lee Tuan is a member of the Dog Training Classroom team (<http://www.dogtrainingclassroom.com>). Stay in touch with more interesting tips, news and updates on dog training by subscribing to Dog Training News.



Fun

Introduction

By Barbara Kremers



Why do we have dogs in our lives? We can have functional reasons such as the need for a guide-dog or watch-dog, though in most cases we choose to live with dogs because we like them.

Dogs can give so much pleasure and fun and so it's pretty obvious there are a lot of beautiful moments we want to capture on film. As you can tell already from this e-Book, I just love the combination of Kensho and my digital camera. In fact, I have created a dedicated website (<http://www.lilama.nl>) which has over 1000 pictures of this Japanese Akita dog at the moment that I'm writing this. It just started off with one page about my dog on an existing website. Read the next article by Dan Eitrem and learn how to create stunning portraits of your pooch (and start a website 😊, like I explain at <http://www.best-dog-food-guide.com/my-hobby-research-project.html>).

Dogs will also keep you fit as you get your regular portion of exercise by walking him. You can also choose to participate in dog sports or take long hikes in the woods or along the beach.

This chapter ends with an article by Audrey Frederick about dog vacations. Before taking off on holiday with your pooch please prepare yourself thoroughly. The article also gives a few suggestions for dog friendly vacations in the USA. This list will not be of relevance to you when you live in Europe as you probably won't take your dog with you on a vacation to the States. Long trips by airplane usually are not a pleasant experience for your dog, so in those cases you better arrange a dog friendly hotel or bring him to people he already knows and trusts. Alternatively, look for a pet friendly vacation in your area. There are plenty of possibilities and it seems these increase every year. Just Google and you will find them.

Just two examples in Europe:

- 'HomeAway' at <http://www.homeaway.com/index.cfm/tgt/pet-friendly-vacation-rentals-europe>
- 'PerfectPlaces' at http://www.perfectplaces.com/c_Pet_Friendly/Europe-Vacation-Rentals.htm



But you can find many more online!



How to Create Stunning Portraits of Your Dog!

By Dan Eitreim

Photographing your dog can be a terrific way to not only get amazing photos of a beloved family member - it's also good practice and will sharpen your over all photography skills!

Like any other portrait session, the first step is to mentally pre-visualize what you want the end result to be. Please don't skip this step. Hit or miss, shooting tons of pictures, hoping one will "turn out good" just doesn't cut it. It is SO much easier to get a good portrait if you have a clearly defined idea of what you want.

What type of dog is it? Is it a large "working dog" type? Or a frilly lap dog? These questions will help determine the best backdrop. An Irish Setter, posed at sunset in a field of wild grasses would be stunning. Stick your Chihuahua in there and you may never find it again! Conversely, a Chihuahua sitting on the brim of a large Mexican hat, would be adorable. The Irish Setter sitting there, would be ludicrous. (And crush the hat!)

Will your dog stay on command? It can be frustrating to get your dog positioned just right, and then every time you back up to take the shot - the dog (lovingly) follows you. If you're alone, you may have to take the dog back and reposition him several times before the idea sinks in. Don't get mad, they don't really understand what's going on. Yelling at your dog won't help, it will just make them feel bad and the hurt expression will ruin any shots you finally DO get.

By the way, don't give the dog treats as a way to make them stay in place. They will be looking down at, and chewing on, the food and you won't be able to get a good shot. Then, as soon as the treat is gone, they'll come over to you, hoping for more.



If you can, get someone to help pose the dog. That way, you are in position and ready to snap the shutter the instant you see a good shot. Use a long lens so the field of view is very narrow. This will allow your helper to stay near the dog - and they can grab it every time it starts to move. Sooner or later, the dog will get the idea and just sit there posing for you.

Speaking of long lenses, not only do they allow your posing helper to stay near the dog, but they allow you to fill the frame with your subject!

This is VITAL!

The number one thing that ruins pet portraits is making your pet too small in the frame. We see this beautiful scene, shoot it and when we look at the final print, our dog is nothing but a tiny blob, somewhere down in the corner. Fill the frame! If you end up totally eliminating the background - that's better than not being able to see your subject. (Same with people.)

Shoot at the dog's level. Unless you are VERY short and your dog is VERY tall, I can't imagine a session where you aren't down on one knee, or both, or prone on the ground.

Focus on the eyes! Sharp eyes are vital and can save many otherwise not so hot photos. Get back far enough so that the eyes can be sharp without blurring or distorting the nose. Be sure to get a catch light in the eyes. You may as well just toss any shots that don't have catch lights, they aren't worth keeping.

The dog has to look alert and attentive. This is accomplished by making sure the ears are UP. Here's how...without the dog knowing, have a squeaking dog toy. When the dog is positioned properly, squeak it. The dog will whip it's head around to you, it's ears will be at attention and it will have a fantastic, attentive expression.

Be ready and focused.

The instant the dog looks, snap the shot! Auto focus is best so the shutter button is already halfway depressed. You have to be fast! Reading the last sentence, (You have to be fast!) takes longer than the photo should take. A lot longer!

Take bunches of shots of each pose. It's amazing how fast a dog can lap it's tongue over it's nose.

Poses - You'll want to get at least one shot of them lying down at a 45 degree angle to the camera (both from the right side and from the left) and one straight on to the camera. Sitting, the same sequence. Then zoom in and get a full frame head shot, then back off a little for a head and shoulders view or if lying down get head and front paws - like the Sphinx. Have your posing helper get the dog's attention by gently talking to it while you get a few 3/4 and full profiles.

Try these ideas. I think you will be amazed. I KNOW the people viewing your photos will be amazed.

Dan Eitreim has been a professional photographer in southern California for over 16 years. His data base exceeds 6000 past clients, and he says that selling YOUR photography is easy - if you only know a couple tried and true marketing strategies. He's created a multimedia presentation that can teach ANYONE how to sell their own photography and generate freelance income in as little as two weeks. To learn more and enrol in a FREE photo marketing course, go to: <http://www.PartTimePhotography.com>





These pictures were taken when Kensho and I went on a hiking trip in France. He has his own tent though he likes mine better 😊

Pet Vacations

By Audrey Frederick

If you are thinking of popping your dog in the car and heading out on a vacation journey, stop for a moment, and back up.

Taking a vacation with your dog is do-able, however, it takes a little planning.

There are many places you can go with your dog and really have a great time, but first you need to start planning before your leave.

Take a moment to decide what you would like to do on your vacation, if its sight seeing, shopping, or visiting historic areas, leave your dog home.

But, if your idea of a vacation is hiking, walking through mountain trails or hitting the beach your dog can be a welcome companion, providing you do a little homework first.

In this article I will try to give you some information on places to go and some directions you can follow so you can do some research on your own.

If hiking and wandering in the midst of mountain beauty turns you on, there are some National Parks that welcome dogs with a few restrictions.

Vicious, noisy or unruly dogs are not allowed. Dogs need a current rabies certificate. Most parks require that dogs be kept on a 6-foot leash when in developed or wilderness areas.



If you are camping, dogs cannot be tied up and left alone and at night they need to be in an enclosed area such as a motor vehicle or a tent.

Unfortunately, dogs are not allowed to swim in developed swimming areas at most State and National Parks.

The five top dog friendly National Parks to visit with your pet are:

- Grand Canyon, AZ
- Acadia, ME
- Shenandoah, VA
- Yosemite, CA
- North Cascades, WA

For information on State or National Parks in your area just go on the Internet put in your state and the words state parks and you will find all kinds of information.

For national parks go to <http://www.nps.gov/>

Now if backpacking is your cup of tea and your dog is a suitable breed (not a lap dog) this can be great fun, too.

However, backpacking with your dog is not the same as backpacking alone or taking your dog for a walk. There are several things to keep in mind. First of all your dog needs a trip to the vet to get a thorough exam to make certain its bones and joints are healthy enough to make a long hike and to carry its own back pack.

After you get the go-ahead from the vet, you need to take some short trips to practice hiking.

That means you try carrying a partially loaded backpack while walking your dog on a leash and then try it with your dog carrying its own partially loaded backpack.

A dog can carry up to 25 percent of its body weight for fairly long periods of time.

There are several dog backpacking clubs you may want to contact.

They are:

- California Canine Hikers (<http://caninehikers.homestead.com>).
- Dog Scouts of America (<http://www.dogscouts.com/backpacking.shtml>)
- K9 Trailblazers (<http://www.k9trailblazers.org>)
- Trailhoundz (<http://www.caninebackpackers.org>).

Safety is a prime consideration, be certain to keep your safety and that of your pet in mind. Take along a first aid kit for you and your pet. Keep in mind that your pet is not wearing shoes so keep an eye out for sore or bruised pads.

If you and your dog's idea of summer fun is a day at the beach here are a few places to keep in mind:

- Cape San Blas, FL - 35 miles south of Panama City, FL
- Dog Beach, CA near San Diego – a doggie paradise
- St. George Island, FL plenty of room for man and dog
- Carmel City Beach, CA short walk from the city of Carmel
- Hunting Island, SC a state park near Beaufort, SC
- Grayton Beach State Park located between Destin and Seaside, FL. 400 acre oceanfront park



- Jekyll Island, Ga on the Georgia coast – loves dogs and their people
- Ft. Fisher State Park, NC outside Wilmington, NC
- First Landing State Park in Virginia Beach, VA on the Chesapeake Bay
- Guadalupe River State Park, Spring Branch, Texas 30 miles north of San Antonio, TX
- These are just a few of the fun places where you and your pet can vacation.

The important thing to remember is obey the park rules and clean up after yourself and your pet.

Most every park requires some sort of proof that your pet has a current rabies shot and that you bring a leash.

Take precautions to protect your pet and yourself from the sun and heat.

For more information on places to visit with your pet go on line to <http://www.PetVR.com>, It is a great site that has tons of great information on vacationing with your pet and “where” to go.

If you are a cat parent and are thinking of vacation plans, do not and I repeat do not think of taking your cat.

Kitty has already told me that you can take a trip, but please, oh pretty please, let kitty stay home.

Cats for the most part do not travel well and they totally prefer being in familiar surroundings.

They will be happy with a visit from a friendly neighbor or a family relative stopping in each day to attend to their needs.

Hiring a bonded pet sitter is another excellent way to go if you have a kitty or a dog that does not travel well.

Whatever you do and wherever you go be careful, obey the rules and most of all have fun.

For more information on travelling with your pet, please visit my website. I have several articles on travelling with your dog and/or cat plus information on flying with your pet and many more informative articles. Visit me at <http://www.cats-and-dogs-on-the-web.com>



Acknowledgements

By Barbara Kremers

You have now completed this TLC e-book and so this is a good time to thank all the contributing authors for sharing their knowledge and passion on the various subjects. In alphabetical order:

Aidan Bindoff	Eric Letendre
Andrew Strachan	James Lee Tuan
Audrey Frederick	Jennifer Bryant
Carol Osborne, D.V.M.	Justine Kay
Chris Smith	M. Bruno
Dan Eitreim	Rena Murray
Dave Eckholm	Shannon Emmanuel
David Amos	Stan Rawlinson
David Brooks	Tyler Brown
Debbie Ray	

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