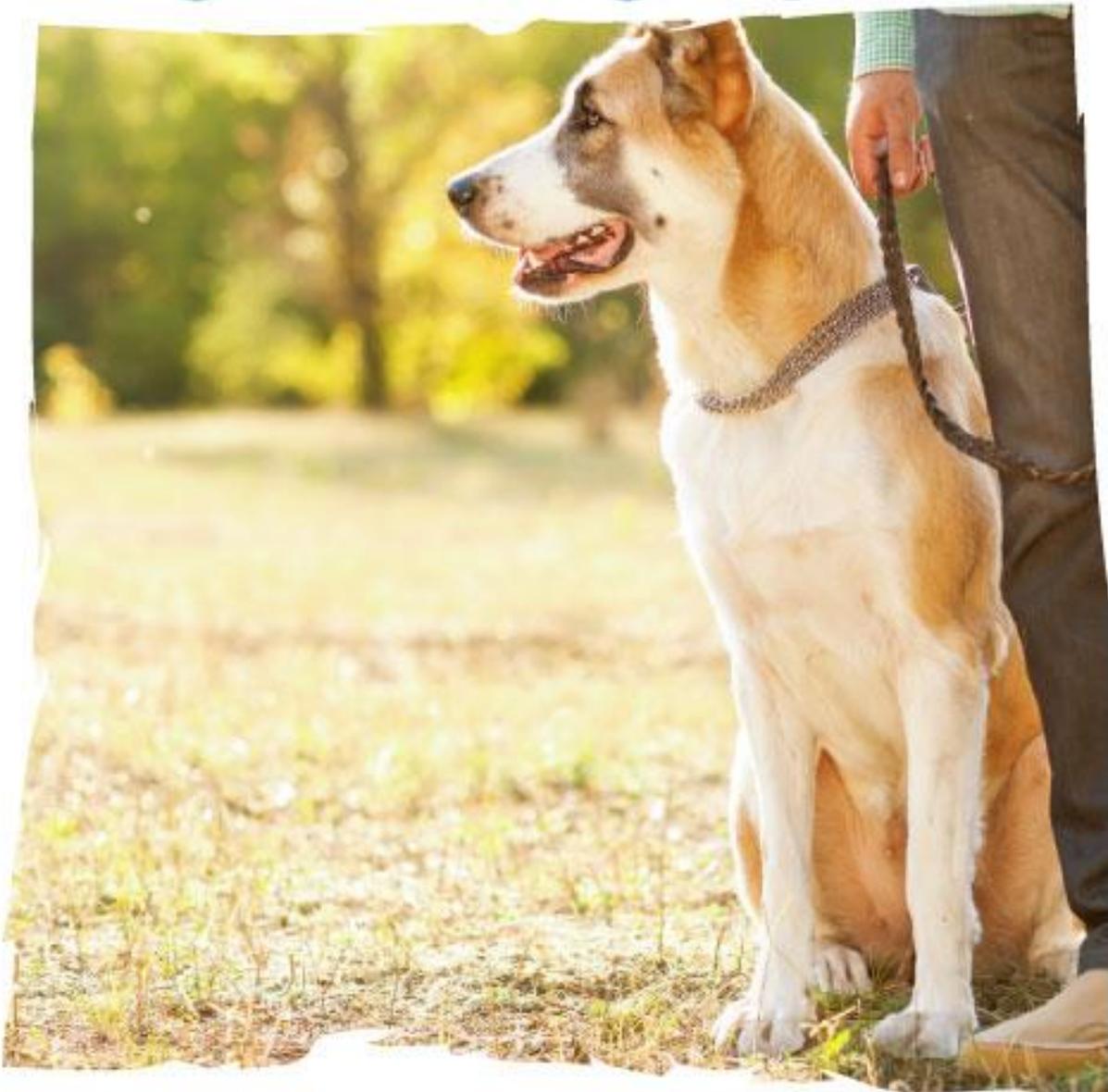


TOP 50

Dog Training Tips



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HOUSEBREAKING

1. **Have feeding take place only at scheduled times.** No matter the age of the dog or puppy, or how many times a day they are fed, a bowl of food should never be left down for more than 10-20 minutes. Housebreaking is heavily dependent on a schedule so, once time is up, remove the bowl and take them out in under 10 minutes, then again half an hour later. Be wary of breeds prone to bloating by making sure they do not have the option to run around directly after meal time.
2. **Don't go straight back inside.** Once your dog has gone potty, don't go straight back inside. Instead, play a game! Give them lots of praise and whatever they enjoy most, whether that be a nice calm cuddle, a game of chase, or simply the chance to have freedom. If this is not done, they may get into the habit of playing first while they have the chance as they will quickly learn that once they go potty, the fun is over and they're straight back inside.

3. **Be aware of your dog's behavior.** Dogs are consistent animals and will show subtle signs before they relieve themselves such as walking in a circle, sniffing the ground constantly, or needing to go a certain amount of time after eating and drinking. Learn these behavior patterns to make it easier on yourself and the dog and to prevent any accidents.



4. **Crate train.** Crate training makes it much easier for dogs to quickly pick up potty training as they will do their best to avoid messing the area in which they sleep. Give the dog a positive association with their crate by giving them something they enjoy in the crate such as food, treats, or toys. If they do cry, it is important to ignore them so as not to accidentally reinforce that behavior. Begin by keeping them on a schedule. For example, try letting them out every 2-3 hours to potty, praise them and have a game with them before returning to the crate. In the initial phases, it is important to make sure they are in their crate and not given free reign of the house when you are not paying full attention to them so there are no accidents. However, after a while, you will be able to decrease crate time and see less accidents.

HANDY DOG TRAINING TIPS

1. **Commands – use the 3 C's.** The 3 C's are: Clear, Concise, and Consistent. Delivering a clear command means saying it like you mean it while not confusing the dog. For example, if you want your dog to sit, say the command 'SIT' every single time. By saying 'SIT DOWN' you will create conflict in your dog's mind if the lay down command is 'DOWN'. This conflict will make your dog so confused they may stop paying attention to your commands. Concise means to give the command once, and don't repeat yourself. If you say 'SIT' and the dog ignores you, gently lure them into a sit. If you just continue repeating the command, the dog learns that it is either irrelevant or they can simply do it whenever they feel like it and not right away. You must be consistent with the commands. Do not let the dog get away with not doing them and make sure that the dog

is always reinforced, particularly in the learning phase.

2. **Dogs are experts at reading body language.** Dogs can't speak, so you may notice that dogs communicate to each other through sometimes very subtle body language, and they are fantastic at reading human body language too. So if you are having trouble with your dog with certain commands, pay attention to your posture, tone of voice, and attitude as the dog may be picking up on something that you are doing, causing them to understand you differently and do the wrong thing.
3. **Consistency is key.** Dogs understand always and never, not sometimes and maybe. Therefore, it is important to be careful when training your dog that you are always consistent with your commands so that they don't become confused and frustrated.

4. **Determine ground rules in advance.**

Some people get a new puppy or dog and will allow them to jump because it's cute, or sleep on furniture and then they change their mind. It is much easier on both the dog and the person if ground rules are set in advance eliminating the need to reverse an ingrained behavior. So give it some thought. Do you really want your dog on the furniture or will the hair eventually become too much? If so, do not allow them on the couch from the very beginning. Be clear about your expectations.



5. **Keep expectations reasonable.** If your dog is still in the learning phases of a command, don't expect them to be able to do it straight away in any new situation with distractions and at a distance. Slowly build behaviors up, reinforcing at each step of distraction, duration, and distance. If your dog will not come back to you while in the house, don't expect him to do so outside. Set the dog up for success always.
6. **Reward the good, try to prevent the bad.** Dogs will continue behaviors that get them what they want so always reinforce good behavior. That could be a calm reassuring voice and pet for them being calm inside, or a treat during a training session. However, if you know your dog likes to chew, remove all shoes when you are not around so they don't have the opportunity to self-reward with this 'bad' behavior.
7. **Always keep the dog's welfare in mind.** People may get agitated and act out if they are not given their basic needs such as food, water, adequate shelter, socialization and exercise. Such is the same with dogs, so make sure all their basic needs are met every day.
8. **Be a calm team leader.** Dogs pick up on our energy and will respond much better to a person who is calm and relaxed as opposed to a person in a bad mood. While working as part of a team with your dog, make sure you deliver commands in an authoritative voice and never lash out.
9. **Each dog is an individual.** So find out what works for each individual dog to motivate them. As a general rule, if your method of motivation or reward still isn't working after a

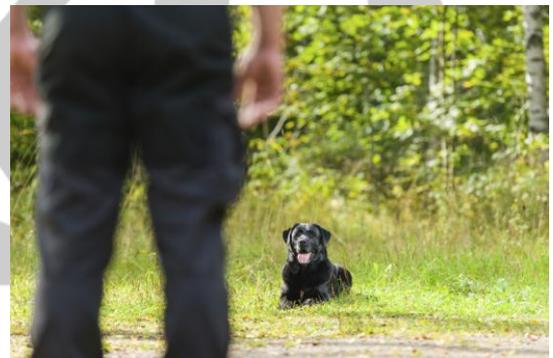
week, move on to something different.

10. **Timing is important!** Whether it be the delivery of reinforcement, a correction, or even the time of training sessions, it is all relevant in a dog's world. Training sessions should be kept to 5-10 minutes per session to prevent them from becoming bored and not enjoying their training sessions with you. When delivering reinforcement or correcting bad behavior, the timing of the reward or correction is critical – dogs live in the moment and will not understand if the timing is minutes off. It is important to have reinforcement or a correction delivered while the dog is in the act of the behavior.
11. **Know your goals.** To make your training efforts with your dog a success, it is important to have goals for your dog. Do you want them to be trained for competition or just as a calm family pet? Everyone has different expectations for their dog so work out yours and then work towards that goal.
12. **Try clicker training.** Clicker training is known as a behavior marker, and you may or may not have heard of it before but this little device has taken off in the animal training industry. Clickers are used to 'mark' the desired behavior and the dog then receives its reward. The positive feedback delivered by the clicker during this critical timeframe will increase the probability of the dog repeating the behavior.
13. **Aim for mutual respect between you and your dog.** This means that you must build a relationship where there is no fear or frustration from either side. Work to find techniques that both you and your dog are comfortable with and stay upbeat. Hitting or screaming at the dog does not foster respect, rather fear, which is not the light that we want our beloved companion to view us in. A common mistake people make is practicing the recall, their dog takes a very long time to come back, and when a dog eventually comes back, we get mad. This is a big no-no as the dog learns that coming back to you is not a good thing.
14. **Consider taking group training classes.** Training classes will not only help to increase the bond between you and your dog, but will help your dog to quickly overcome working in distracting environments. This also gives you access to professional trainers for advice and hands on help. This can be an excellent resource to have in your own training program.
15. **Don't be scared to hire a professional.** If you are having difficulties with your dog around the home or out in public, there is no shame in hiring a dog trainer. A professional trainer with the appropriate credentials will be able to utilize their profound knowledge to customize a training program to optimize results for you and your dog.
16. **Make sure pack structure has been established as early as possible.** By setting up boundaries from the beginning such as using a protocol of Nothing In Life Is Free (known as NILIF in the dog training world), your dog will understand that you are in



control and that he can trust you because you provide all the resources that they value.

17. **Exercise is of utmost importance.** Not only does exercise provide physical stimulation, but also by getting the dog out of the confines of their 'territory' we allow their nose to explore all the new sights and smells, providing mental stimulation. This means that they are less likely to become bored or destructive at home and allows them to release energy that may otherwise turn into frustration and anxiety.
18. **If possible, try to meet your dog's parents.** While this is often not possible, it is a great advantage if you are thinking of buying a puppy. Certain behavioral traits are genetic, so while seeing the parents will not guarantee how your puppy will end up, it can give you a good insight.
19. **Familiarize yourself with your dog's breed.** With over 400 breeds of dog across the globe, many are bred for different purposes and split into different groups. It is useful to get to know your dog's breed as many will respond better to different types of training. For example, hounds like to use their nose, and terriers like to dig and chase. Incorporating things your dog loves into your training program will help foster the bond between you and your dog.
20. **Train for life.** Begin training as soon as possible and continue well into adulthood. The more it is reinforced, the more chance the good behavior has of staying in the dog's mind. Never stop enforcing rules and your dog will be happy knowing exactly where it stands.
21. **Remember distance, duration, and distraction.** These are 3 things that need to be worked on separately with each command for training to be more effective. This will set your dog up for success, and therefore make them more confident in following your directions. Slowly build up each, and then combine. For example, if your dog has a great down-stay at home, take them to the park to increase the distraction. Once they do it under distraction, take them to the park again and this time increase the time they have to down-stay under distraction. Then again have them down-stay for a certain amount of time and increase your distance from them, reinforcing successful behaviors at every step.
22. **Have patience and be persistent.** By having the patience and persistency from the beginning, training on your part will be a lot easier. Dogs may not pick up what you are teaching as quickly as you had hoped, but as long as you have the patience to let them learn in their own time, and the persistency to not give up, they will get there.
23. **Desensitize your dog.** Dogs can have certain fears just like people, so it is important to try your best to make a multitude of things irrelevant to them, such as thunderstorms or cars. It is important to not reinforce anxiety by trying to reassure the dog when they are scared. This merely encourages that behavior.
24. **Try shorter leashes.** Many people find handling a dog with a 6 foot leash difficult, so it may be a lot easier to use a much shorter leash to give you more control and have more



time spent enjoying the walk as opposed to spending time trying to straighten out a longer leash.

25. **Is your dog really stubborn?** Many people will attribute their dog's slow learning to stubbornness, however it is important to reassess how we are training before jumping to this conclusion. Perhaps the method you are currently using will work for other dogs, but is not motivating enough for your dog. Or maybe they won't lie down because they have painful joints. Simply re-evaluate and try something new or seek professional help if you believe the problem is medical in nature..
26. **Boredom is not separation anxiety.** Many dogs will act destructive out of boredom around the home when left alone but are misdiagnosed with separation anxiety. It is important to find out which of the two is the case in your dog's situation, as both are fixed differently. Boredom is fixed simply by providing mental and physical stimulation through exercise and more training, as well as leaving toys around the home for them. On the other hand, separation anxiety is much more complex and requires learning ways to desensitize your dog when you're not home, as well as formulating a 'preparing to leave' plan.
27. **Practice makes perfect.** Make sure to continue your training for at least 5-10 minutes every day, practicing one new skill at a time until it's mastered before moving onto a new one. Practice different things throughout the day, on walks and in the home. Training can be incorporated easily into everyday life and will make your dog a much more pleasant companion.

FUNDAMENTAL COMMANDS

1. **Sit.** Sit is a simple command that many people use to teach their dog first. It can be used in many situations such as waiting in a sit before they get their food, before going in and out of doorways, before having the leash clipped on, etc. To lure the dog into a sit, have a treat in one hand, putting it into contact with their nose. Slowly raise your hand over their head high enough until their rear end makes contact with the ground. Immediately click and treat, and add the command "sit".
2. **Down.** Like sit, down is another useful command that can be utilized to instil control into a variety of situations. The most effective way of teaching down is to lure the dog with treat close to their nose, beginning in a stand position. Slowly guide the treat to the ground, with their nose following, then very slowly move the treat backwards. This motion should have the dog's elbows and back legs bend, causing them to lay down. Once the dog hits the ground, say "down", click, and treat.
3. **Stay.** Stay means that the dog must stay put in their current position, normally a sit or down, until you release them, with a word such as "ok". To begin, place your dog in a sit or a down, stand up straight, and reward. Once they are doing this consistently without breaking position, take half a step away from the dog, if the dog maintains the position, give a reward. During your training sessions, slowly increase the distance you can step



away from your dog. If the dog moves from the position, place the dog back in the original position and try again. It will take a few weeks until their stay is solid in a variety of situations, but as long as you stay consistent and set them up for success by taking it slowly, they will have a great stay.

4. **Heel.** The heel is one of the most difficult behaviors for a dog to master as it is very unnatural for them to not pull forwards to get places as quickly as possible. Many people will yank on the leash to try and pull them back, however not only will this trigger an opposition reflex, causing them to want to move forward more, it will also desensitize them. Therefore it is more effective to use a treat. Have your dog by your side and place the treat in front of their nose. Say “heel” and take a few steps forward, and give them the treat. Once they clearly understand this, you can begin removing the treat for a couple of seconds at a time. Continue this process, removing the treat for longer amounts of time before rewarding.
5. **Recall.** This command could save your dog’s life one day. It is very important that it is always reinforcing for your dog and that they are never reprimanded for coming back. Begin by running backwards away from your dog, and when they are making a beeline for you, say the word “come” and give them a treat and lots of vocal praise.
6. **Leave it.** This command is another that is paramount to the safety of your dog. It should divert the attention of your dog from what they are interested in, and while it will take a lot of practice under many different scenarios, the end result is worth it. Leave it can be done by walking your dog by something on the ground that they won’t be too interested in, let them glance at it, then say “leave it” and give them a reward and a big game as soon as their attention is diverted. Repeat this step by step once they understand the command, slowly increasing the value of the object that they must leave alone.
7. **Settle down.** Some dogs get very easily wound up, even when there seems to be no external stimulation. The best thing to do is teach them a ‘place’ command, so that they have their own area where they can just relax. The place should be a mat or dog bed that is comfortable and easily distinguishable from the flooring. For example, if you have slick wooden floors, a fluffy blue striped mat will be much easier for the dog to separate from the floor. With the dog on a leash and plenty of treats in your pocket, lead the dog to the mat and say “place”. Once all 4 feet are on give them a treat. They are allowed to sit, stand, or lay down on place, as long as no paws come off of it. Place has an implied stay, so work this command as you would with stay by increasing your distance from the place slowly over many training sessions..



UNWANTED BEHAVIOURS

1. **Encouraging good habits.** What many people tend to forget is to not only correct the undesirable behavior, such as jumping up on visitors, but also reinforce desirable behaviors. Set them up for success by giving them something else to do, such as sit, to gain their reinforcement. Even when not asked, make sure they are being praised

simply for choosing not to engage in the unwanted behaviour.

2. **Dogs live in the moment.** Which means there is no purpose in punishing a dog for something that they did minutes or hours before, as they will associate the punishment with what they are currently doing. This is why it is so important to catch your dog in the act and redirect them to a more desirable behavior.
3. **Dogs are not nannies.** All too often, dogs are expected to tolerate all types of unpleasant demeanors from children and not react. However, this is how dog bites occur – the dog often gives off signals that they are uncomfortable for a long time, and when these signals are being ignored, it could take just one more pull on the ear until the dog decides to bite. No matter how great with children your dog is, there should always be adult supervision and the child should be taught how to act with the dog in an appropriate manner that is also fair to the dog.
4. **Begging at the dinner table.** To instil in the dog's mind that they will never benefit from begging at the table, it is important that they are never fed from the table. Teach them place, and have them sit on place with a treat of their own, or simply by their self with no treat. If they break position, they must be put back every time so that they learn it is better for them to stay on place.
5. **Food stealing.** This is a much more frustrating problem than begging at the dinner table, so it will take more time to correct. However, the results are well worth it. It's vital to not leave food out where your dog will be able to steal it when you are unable to be there to correct them, as this is a self-reinforcing behavior. This means that because they automatically get reinforcement from it, it can be very hard to break once they realize how great it can be. Set food on a bench or coffee table. If your dog goes toward it, issue the 'stop' or 'leave it' command then give him an even better treat and have a big game. Your reward needs to be better than what they would get if they did steal the food.
6. **Yard digging.** Dogs will dig for a number of reasons, be it to bury a bone, because they're bored, or to find a cool place to nap. Maybe they need a shadier spot, more toys in the yard, a crate to eat their bones in, or even a designated digging area such as a sandpit. It is best to figure out WHY they are digging and go from there.
7. **Digging under fences.** Some dogs will dig under fences to go out and explore. Just like stealing food, this is a very self-reinforcing behavior so it must be addressed quickly. If the dog is in the yard unsupervised, make sure they have plenty of toys and things to do. But perhaps the best thing to do is to bury chicken wire under the fence and cover it with a few inches of dirt so that they can't find a way out.
8. **Barking.** Barking is a very natural thing for a dog, however some will do it unnecessarily. First, is to make sure your dog is receiving the necessary amount of physical and mental stimulation each day and that they have enough to entertain them in the yard. If these needs are being met and they are still barking continuously, a bark



collar can be a great option. This device will quickly teach them independently to not bark unless really needed.

9. **Running out the door.** As this can be a serious safety issue, dogs that do this simply need to be taught some boundaries around doors. They will need to be taught to stay behind open doors in a sit and stay or down and stay position until issued a command to go "outside"

10. **Chewing on furniture.** Dogs and puppies may chew on furniture out of boredom or because they are teething. Give them toys of their own that they can choose, and give them a variety to choose from. Spray bitter apple spray on the furniture that they chew on, and praise them whenever they are chewing on their own items.



11. **Chewing on your belongings.** In this case, the responsibility lies with the owner. If there are things that you don't want chewed, move them to an area that the dog can't access them. Make sure the dog has plenty of their own toys, as they may chew on our belongings because they have nothing else, or simply because they smell like you.
12. **Preventing biting.** Initially, it is crucial to never let your dog intentionally put his teeth in contact with human skin. Anytime your dog or puppy does so, curl their lip underneath their top teeth and press it against their teeth. The goal is to get the message across without instilling fear, and this is one of the most effective methods.



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