

PAWS 4 THE CAUSE

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DOG TRAINING TIPS

Here are some helpful tips to help you with your dog training. There are two simple truths to successful dog training:

1. Reward behaviours you like
2. Do not reward behaviours you don't like

Sounds simple, right?

Negative reinforcement, such as corrective collars or punishment do not work. This is not new-age philosophy, these are just the facts, and always have been. Teaching your dog by hurting or frightening her may achieve some desired results, such as teaching her not to jump, but it will have the added impact of teaching her that humans are to be feared, and with that you will find yourself with a whole new array of problems.

1. Your dog might decide that people are scary since she gets hurt whenever she tries to greet them—and she might try to drive them away by growling or barking the next time they approach.
2. Your dog might decide that YOU are scary since you hurt her whenever she tries to greet people.

The most important part of training your dog is teaching her that it pays to do things you like, but your dog also needs to learn that it doesn't pay to do things you don't like. Fortunately, discouraging unwanted behavior doesn't have to involve pain or intimidation. You just need to make sure that behavior you dislike doesn't get rewarded. Most of the time, dog motivations aren't mysterious. They simply do what works! Dogs jump up on people, for example, because people pay attention to them as a result. They can learn not to jump up if we ignore them when they jump up. It can be as simple as turning away or staring at the sky when your dog jumps up to greet or play with you. As soon as she sits, you can give her the attention she craves. If you stick to this plan, your dog will learn two things at once. Doing something you like (sitting) reliably works to earn what she wants (attention), and doing things you don't like (jumping up) always results in the loss of what she wants.

1. Reward behaviors you like with treats or attention
2. Ignore behaviour you do not like. Look away, turn away and do not offer treats or attention.

In order for this to work, all members of your household must establish a plan and STICK TO IT. Be consistent each and every time, and after a couple of weeks, you will see the changes. Do not yell at your dog, hit her or shout "NO", simply ignore the bad behaviour and reward the good. This will work. I promise you!

To teach your dog to sit, take a small treat in one hand. It can be part of a dog biscuit or a small piece of a "Pup-Peroni" dog treat. Tell your dog to sit while motioning downward with your hand. If she does not get it after a minute or so, try pushing gently on her rear end. When she sits, immediately reward her AND praise her. She will learn very quickly to "sit" on command, and eventually you will not have to give her a treat but give simple praise, but for the first few weeks, a treat should be given. If she ever does an undesirable behaviour, such as jumping on someone, instead of shouting "no", you can eventually tell her to sit and give her a reward. Your dog is looking for something to do that will please you, and consistently rewarding good behaviour will give her a positive path to follow that you both will feel good about.