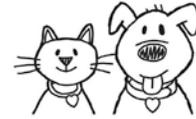




Resources for Pet Owners



“Bark! Bark! Bark!”

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Some canine behavior problems, such as house soiling, affect only a dog's owners. However, problems such as escaping and excessive barking can result in neighborhood disputes and violations of animal control ordinances. Therefore, barking dogs can become “people problems.” If your dog's barking has created neighborhood tension, it might be a good idea to discuss the problem with your neighbors. It's perfectly normal and reasonable for dogs to bark from time to time, just as children make noise when they play outside. However, continual barking for long periods of time is a sign that your dog has a problem that needs to be addressed.

The first thing you need to do is determine when and for how long your dog barks, and what's causing him to bark. You may need to do some detective work to obtain this information, especially if the barking occurs when you're not home. Ask your neighbors, drive or walk around the block and watch and listen for a while, or start a tape recorder or video camera when you leave for work. Hopefully, you'll be able to discover which of the common problems discussed below is the cause of your dog's barking.

Social Isolation/Frustration/Attention-Seeking

Your dog may be barking because he's bored and lonely if:

- ❖ He's left alone for long periods of time without opportunities for interaction with you.
- ❖ His environment is relatively barren, without playmates or toys.
- ❖ He's a puppy or adolescent (under three years old) and doesn't have other outlets for his energy.
- ❖ He's a particularly active type of dog (like the herding or sporting breeds) who needs a “job” to be happy.

Recommendations:

Expand your dog's world and increase his “people time” in the following ways:

- ◆ Walk your dog daily - it's good exercise, both mental and physical.
- ◆ Teach your dog to fetch a ball or Frisbee and practice with him as often as possible.
- ◆ Teach your dog a few commands and/or tricks and practice them every day for five to ten minutes.
- ◆ Take an obedience class with your dog.
- ◆ Provide interesting toys to keep your dog busy when you're not home (Kong-type toys filled with treats or busy-box toys). Rotating the toys makes them seem new and interesting (see our handout: “Dog Toys and How to Use Them”).
- ◆ If your dog is barking to get your attention, make sure he has sufficient time with you on a daily basis (petting, grooming, playing, exercising) so he doesn't have to resort to misbehaving to get your attention.
- ◆ Keep your dog inside when you're unable to supervise him.
- ◆ Let your neighbors know that you're actively working on the problem.
- ◆ Take your dog to work with you every now and then, if possible.

- ◆ When you have to leave your dog for extended periods of time, take him to a “doggie day care” or have a friend or neighbor walk and/or play with him.

Territorial/Protective Behavior

Your dog may be barking to guard his territory if:

- ❖ The barking occurs in the presence of “intruders,” which may include the mail carrier, children walking to school and other dogs or neighbors in adjacent yards.
- ❖ Your dog’s posture while he’s barking appears threatening – tail held high and ears up and forward.
- ❖ You’ve encouraged your dog to be responsive to people and noises outside.

Recommendations:

- ◆ Teach your dog a “quiet” command. When he begins to bark at a passer-by, allow two or three barks, then say “quiet” and interrupt his barking by shaking a can filled with pennies or squirting water at his mouth with a spray bottle or squirt gun. This will cause him to stop barking momentarily. While he’s quiet, say “good quiet” and pop a tasty treat into his mouth. Remember, the loud noise or squirt isn’t meant to punish him, rather it’s to startle him into being quiet so you can reward him. If your dog is frightened by the noise or squirt bottle, find an alternative method of interrupting his barking (throw a toy or ball toward him).
- ◆ Desensitize your dog to the stimulus that triggers the barking. Teach him that the people he views as intruders are actually friends and that good things happen to him when these people are around. Ask someone to walk by your yard, starting far enough away so that your dog isn’t barking, then reward him for quiet behavior as he obeys a “sit” or “down” command. Use a very special food reward such as little pieces of cheese or meat. As the person gradually comes closer, continue to reward his quiet behavior. It may take several sessions before the person can come close without your dog barking. When the person can come very close without your dog barking, have them feed him a treat or throw a toy for him.
- ◆ If your dog barks while inside the house when you’re home, call him to you, have him obey a command, such as “sit” or “down,” and reward him with praise and a treat.
- ◆ Don’t inadvertently encourage this type of barking by enticing your dog to bark at things he hears or sees outside.
- ◆ Have your dog neutered (or spayed if your dog is a female) to decrease territorial behavior.

Fears And Phobias

Your dog’s barking may be a response to something he’s afraid of if:

- ❖ The barking occurs when he’s exposed to loud noises, such as thunderstorms firecrackers or construction equipment.
- ❖ Your dog’s posture indicates fear – ears back, tail held low.

Recommendations:

- ◆ Identify what’s frightening your dog and desensitize him to it (see our handout: “Helping Your Dog Overcome the Fear of Thunder and Other Startling Noises”). You may need professional help with the desensitization process. Check with your veterinarian about anti-anxiety medication while you work on behavior modification.

- ◆ Mute noise from outside by leaving your dog in a basement or windowless bathroom and leave on a television, radio or loud fan. Block off your dog's access to outdoor views that might be causing a fear response, by closing curtains or doors to certain rooms.

Separation Anxiety

Your dog may be barking due to separation anxiety if:

- ◆ The barking occurs only when you're gone and starts as soon as, or shortly after, you leave.
- ◆ Your dog displays other behaviors that reflect a strong attachment to you, such as following you from room to room, frantic greetings or reacting anxiously to your preparations to leave.
- ◆ Your dog has recently experienced: a change in the family's schedule that results in his being left alone more often; a move to a new house; the death or loss of a family member or another family pet; or a period at an animal shelter or boarding kennel.

Recommendations:

- ◆ Separation anxiety can be resolved using counter-conditioning and desensitization techniques (see our handout: "Separation Anxiety").

Bark Collars

Bark collars are specially designed to deliver an aversive whenever your dog barks. There are several different kinds of bark collars:

- ◆ **Citronella Collar:** This collar contains a reservoir of citronella solution that sprays into your dog's face every time he barks. A citronella collar is considered humane and a recent study reported an 88% rate of success with the use of this collar. One possible drawback is that the collar contains a microphone, so the aversive is delivered in response to the sound of the bark. Therefore, other noises may set off the collar, causing your dog to be sprayed even if he hasn't barked. Also, some dogs can tell when the citronella reservoir is empty and will resume barking.
- ◆ **Aversive Sound Collar:** This collar emits a high-frequency sound when your dog barks. Some are activated by the noise of the bark, while others are hand-held and activated by a handler. The rate of success for this type of collar is reportedly rather low.
- ◆ **Electric Shock Collar:** We don't recommend an electric shock collar to control your dog's barking. The electric shock is painful to your dog and many dogs will choose to endure the pain and continue barking. The success rate of this type of collar is less than 50%.

The main drawback of any bark collar is that it doesn't address the underlying cause of the barking. You may be able to eliminate the barking, but symptom substitution may occur and your dog may begin digging, escaping, or become destructive or even aggressive. The use of a bark collar must be in conjunction with behavior modification based on the reason for the barking, as outlined above. You should never use a bark collar on your dog if his barking is due to separation anxiety, fears or phobias, because punishment always makes fear and anxiety behaviors worse.

Biting the Hand That Feeds: Resource Guarding

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It seems well fed dogs should not need to guard food, toys and other resources but they still do. A dog in the wild would not last very long if every time it had a piece of meat, it gave it up to another dog, the same way we would not survive if someone took our paycheck every week. We must teach our dogs to relinquish valued items to us.

A meaty bone or tasty treat are natural items for a dog to guard, but dogs will also guard tissues, sleeping areas and shoes. Some breeds are more likely to protect items than others, but it is more likely to be seen in formerly stray or sheltered dogs. It is natural for your dog to not let other dogs take its toy from it but it should be able to exchange items with you. If your dog has a long history of resource guarding, it will take longer to treat the problem. Do not attempt this technique if your dog has bitten in the past. Seek professional help.

Step 1:

Give your dog something to chew on, such as a bone or favorite toy. Let your dog chew for a while and leave it alone.

Step 2:

Find a very delicious treat such as a piece of chicken or steak.

Step 3:

Choose a command to give your dog when you would like it to release an object, like “give.” Have a delicious treat in the palm of one hand. Say “give” and show the dog the treat in your open hand.

Step 4:

When the dog drops the object say “yes” and give the dog the treat. When the dog is focused on the food, you can take the object.

Warning!

- Make sure your movements are slow and precise. Do not taunt the dog with the treat.
- Do not attempt to take the toy or object if the dog is growling or has his ears pinned back.
- Do not allow small children to practice this exercise with the dog. Children make jerkier movements and the dog may bite.
- Make sure the treat you give your dog is really delicious. Use a food it will do anything for.
- If your dog continues to growl or attempts snapping at you, stop the exercise and consult a behaviorist.
- If your dog is chewing on something that could be potentially life-threatening, you may need to throw a treat past the dog to get it away from the object in a hurry. You may even throw several treats to distract the dog.
- The more excited you appear to be over an object, the more your dog will protect it. Try to stay as calm as possible.
- Never punish a dog for growling. Growling is the dog’s way of telling others to get back. If the dog is punished for growling, it will just resort to biting.

Breeding Your Dog: Facts and Myths

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If you are thinking of breeding your pet, you need to consider the costs, risks and responsibilities of bringing puppies into the world. Not only will you have to worry about the offspring but also the extra work of having an unaltered pet. If you have a female, you will need to use sanitary products during her heat cycle and keep her isolated during that time. Unaltered males are more likely to roam to seek a mate, and also be more territorial.

Myth: Spaying My Dog Will Make Her Fat.

Spay surgery will make your dog’s mood more stable as she doesn’t have to deal with heat cycles. The only thing that will make her fat is too much food and not enough exercise. Spayed females may have an increase in appetite, but you still control how much food she receives.

Fact: Altered Pets Live Longer Lives.

Neutered dogs are less likely to roam thus reducing the chance of them getting lost or hit by a car. Also, they will not be susceptible to testicular cancer or be as likely to bite. Spayed females have a

reduced risk of breast cancer and other cancers of the reproductive organs. Females can also die or become ill while giving birth so if they are spayed, that risk is gone.

Fact: It is Less Expensive to Own an Altered Pet.

It is much less expensive to license an altered animal in Pima County. If you have a female dog you will not need to worry about buying products to keep your pet clean during heat cycles. You will not have to devote so much time to cleaning the area where your female dog sits or sleeps. Your vet bills will be less expensive because you will not have to take your female and her puppies to the vet for checkups.

Myth: You Shouldn't Spay or Neuter Before the Dog is 6 Months Old.

The earlier you get your dog altered, the better. Male dogs, if they are spayed early enough, are less likely to become aggressive or have a territorial urine-marking problem. It is beneficial to neuter your dog before their testosterone level peaks at around 10 months. Females do not need to wait until after their first heat cycle. That is just a myth.

Myth: Sterilization Surgery is Dangerous.

Spaying and neutering is routine surgery for most vets. Complications are kept to a minimum. Make sure you trust your vet and inspect the office before allowing your dog to go into surgery. Many places, including the Humane Society of Southern Arizona, offer low cost sterilization so cost should also not be a factor.

Fact: There is a Huge Pet Overpopulation Problem.

Many dogs and cats are euthanized every year because of a lack of space in shelters and rescues. Even though you may find homes for all the puppies, they may still end up at a shelter later in life. There are more than enough puppies and kittens born every year. Don't add to the overpopulation problem.

Call the Spay and Neuter Clinic at the Humane Society of Southern Arizona at 520-881-0321 to make an appointment to have your pet sterilized. The clinic is located at 3450 N Kelvin Blvd, Tucson, AZ 85716.

Canine Rivalry

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What Is Canine Rivalry?

Canine rivalry refers to repeated conflicts between dogs living in the same household. Animals that live in social groups establish a social structure within the group called a dominance hierarchy. This dominance hierarchy normally serves to maintain order, reduce conflict and promote cooperation among group members. Conflicts arise between household dogs when there is instability in the hierarchy, that is, when the ranking or social position of each dog is not clear or is in contention. Initially, dogs may only snarl, growl or snap without injuring each other. Sometimes, however, the conflict may intensify into prolonged bouts of dangerous fighting which may result in one or both dogs being injured.

Getting Professional Help

Ongoing canine rivalry is potentially dangerous since the dogs could be severely injured, as well as family members, if they become the object of redirected aggression when the dogs are fighting. Because resolving rivalry problems requires managing the dogs' somewhat complex social behaviors,

it's often necessary for owners to obtain assistance from a professional animal behaviorist. Animal behaviorists are trained to observe, interpret and modify animal behavior.

Why Conflict Occurs

Conflicts* between household dogs usually develop when the ranking of each dog is not clear or is in contention. This may occur if:

- ❖ You attempt to treat both dogs equally, rather than supporting the dominant dog's position.
- ❖ You interrupt or interfere with the dominant dog's ability to control the preferred items (food, toys, beds, attention) in his environment by giving preferential treatment to the subordinate dog(s).
- ❖ You prevent the dogs from expressing the signals and ritualized behaviors that establish dominance.
- ❖ A new animal has been introduced into the house.
- ❖ A resident animal has died or no longer lives in the house.
- ❖ A resident animal is re-introduced after an absence.
- ❖ A young, subordinate dog reaches social maturity (usually between ten months and two years of age).
- ❖ A dominant dog ages and cannot maintain his dominant status.

Understanding Dominance Behavior And Social Structure

You cannot choose which dog you want to be dominant. The dogs will establish this among themselves, and any attempt to interfere may result in increased conflict. Where each dog ranks in the dominance hierarchy is determined by the outcomes of interactions between the dogs themselves.

- ❖ **Determining which dog is dominant:** Individual personality, as well as breed characteristics, are important factors. The dog that demands to be fed first, petted first and through the door first is usually the dominant dog. Remember that the rankings may be different in different contexts (one dog may control food, while another may control resting places) and they may change over time.
- ❖ **How dominance is established:** Dogs usually establish their dominance hierarchies through a series of ritualized behaviors that include body postures and vocalizations that don't result in injury. One dog may "stand over" another by placing his paws or neck on the shoulders of the other. However, because of past experiences, inadequate socialization or genetic temperament tendencies some dogs may, with very little warning, escalate dominance displays into aggression. If this occurs, consult your veterinarian for a referral to a professional animal behaviorist.

Dealing With Rivalry Problems

- ❖ If the dogs involved are intact males or females, spay or neuter both dogs.
- ❖ Determine each dog's dominance status relative to each other. Remember, this ranking is based on the behavior of the dogs, and not what ranking you prefer.
- ❖ Support the dominance hierarchy. You need to support whatever dominance hierarchy or "pecking order" your dogs establish for themselves. Don't undermine their hierarchy by attempting to treat them equally or by preventing the dominant dog from asserting his position. Dominant dogs can, and should, be allowed to take toys away from subordinate dogs, to push in to receive attention and petting from the owner, to control favorite sleeping places, toys and other valuable resources (from the dogs' point of view). Support the dominant dog's status by allowing this to occur.

- ❖ Make sure that all of the humans in your household occupy the top of the dominance hierarchy by practicing “Nothing in Life is Free” (see our handout: “Nothing in Life is Free”). This provides stability at the top of the dominance hierarchy, which will help the dogs sort out their lower places in the pecking order more peacefully.
- ❖ Never, under any circumstances, attempt to break up a fight between dogs by grabbing their collars or inserting any of your body parts between them. If you feel you must break up a fight between dogs, do so by squirting them with a hose (outdoors), or squirting them with a vinegar/water mixture from a squirt bottle (indoors).
- ❖ With the help of a professional animal behaviorist, elicit and reinforce non-aggressive behaviors using counter conditioning and desensitization techniques. These procedures must be designed and tailored to specifically meet the needs of each individual case and require professional in-home help.
- ❖ You should be aware that if you respond to this type of problem inappropriately, you run the risk of intensifying the problem and potentially causing injury to either yourself, your dogs or both.

Punishment Will Not Solve The Problem

Punishment can actually make the problem worse. We encourage you to seek assistance from your veterinarian regarding: spaying and neutering your pet; evaluating the health status of your dogs; and for a referral to a professional animal behaviorist. Rivalry and fighting problems can usually be resolved so that you and your dogs can live together in peace.

Children And Dogs: Important Information for Parents

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Living with a pet can be beneficial to children. Pets can enhance a child’s self-esteem, teach them responsibility and help them to learn empathy. However, children and dogs are not always going to automatically start off with a wonderful relationship. Parents must be willing to teach the dog and the child acceptable limits of behavior in order to make their interactions pleasant and safe.

Selecting A Dog

What age is best? Many people have a "warm fuzzy" image of a puppy and a child growing up together. If you have a young child and are thinking of adopting a puppy (less than one year old) there are a few things you need to consider.

- ❖ **Time and energy:** Puppies require a lot of time, patience, training and supervision. They also require socialization in order to become well-adjusted adult dogs. This means they need to be taken places and exposed to new things and new people. If you have a young child who already requires a lot of care and time, will you have enough time to care for a puppy, as well?
- ❖ **Safety:** Puppies, because they’re babies, are somewhat fragile creatures. A puppy may become frightened, or even injured, by a well-meaning, curious child who wants to constantly pick him up, hug him or explore his body by pulling on his tail or ears.
- ❖ **Rough play:** Puppies have sharp teeth and claws with which they may inadvertently injure a small child. Puppies also tend to jump up on small children and knock them down. All interactions between your child and puppy will need to be closely supervised in order to minimize the chances of either being injured.

- ❖ **Advantages of getting an adult dog:** Adult dogs require less time and attention once they've adjusted to your family and household routine, although you'll still need to spend time helping your new dog with the transition to his new home. You can better gauge how hardy and tolerant an adult dog will be of childish enthusiasm and you can work with your local animal shelter to adopt a dog with a history of getting along well with children. As a general rule, if your child is under six years old, it's best to adopt a dog that's over two years old. Although puppies can be a lot of fun, and it's exciting and rewarding to help them grow into wonderful companions, they do require significantly more time to train and supervise than an adult dog.

What breed is best? Although some general statements can be made about specific dog breeds, the characteristics of an individual dog are just as important as a dog's breed.

- ❖ **Size:** Small breeds of dogs, such as toy or miniature poodles, chihuahuas or cocker spaniels, may not be good choices for a young child. These small breed dogs are more easily injured than larger dogs and may be more easily frightened by a lot of activity, loud noises and by being picked up and fondled frequently. Frightened dogs tend to snap or bite in order to protect themselves. Larger dogs may be better able to tolerate the activity, noise and rough play that is an inevitable part of living with children.
- ❖ **Breed type:** Some of the sporting breeds, such as labradors and golden retrievers, make good pets for families with children. Breeds that have been selected for protective behavior, such as chows and rottweilers, may not be as good for families with children. It's sometimes difficult for this type of dog to comfortably tolerate the many comings and goings of children and their friends, who may be perceived as territorial intruders. Herding breeds are inclined to "herd" children, chasing and nipping at their heels.

Who Will Care For The Dog?

It's unrealistic to expect a child, regardless of age, to have sole responsibility for caring for a dog. Not only do dogs need basic things like food, water and shelter, they also need to be played with, exercised and trained on a consistent basis. Teaching a dog the rules of the house and helping him become a good companion is too overwhelming a task for a young child. While responsible teenagers may be up to the task, they may not be willing to spend an adequate amount of time with the dog, as their desire to be with their friends usually takes over at this age. If you're adopting a dog "for the kids," you must be prepared and willing to be the dog's primary caretaker.

Starting Off Right

Following are some guidelines to help you start off on the right foot. Remember, small children should never be left alone with a dog or puppy without adult supervision.

Holding:

- ♦ It's safest for both your child and puppy if your child is sitting down whenever he wants to hold the puppy. Puppies are squirmy and wiggly and may easily fall out of a young child's arms and be injured. If held insecurely, a puppy may become frightened and snap or scratch in response. After your child is sitting, you can place the puppy in his arms.
- ♦ Have your child offer the puppy a chew toy while he pets the puppy. When puppies are teething, they tend to chew on everything, including hands and arms, so having a chew toy handy will divert the puppy's teeth away from your child. An added benefit is that the puppy will come to associate pleasant consequences (getting a treat) with being held by your child.

- ◆ For larger dogs, have your child sit in your lap and let the dog approach both of you. This way you can control your child and not allow him to get "carried away" with pats that are too rough. You are also there to teach your new dog to treat your child gently.*

Petting and giving affection: Children often want to hug dogs around the neck. Your dog may view this as a threatening gesture, rather than an affectionate one, and may react with a growl, snap or bite. You should teach your child to pet your dog from underneath the dog's chin, rather than hugging him or reaching over his head. You should also teach your child to avoid staring at, or looking directly into, your dog's eyes.

Giving Treats: Children tend to become somewhat fearful and anxious when a dog tries to take a treat from their hand. This causes them to jerk their hand away at the last second. The dog may then jump up or lunge to get the treat which may result in the child being knocked down. Have your child place the treat in an open palm, rather than holding it in his fingers. You may want to place a hand underneath your child's hand to help guide him.

Supervising Play: Children move with quick, jerky movements, have high-pitched voices and often run, rather than walk. All of these behaviors somewhat resemble the behavior of prey animals. Almost all of a dog's play behaviors are based on predatory behavior. Consequently, your dog may respond to your child's behavior by chasing him, nipping at his heels, jumping up at him or even trying to knock him down.

At first, your child may need to play quietly around your new dog until he becomes more comfortable and calm and your child has gained more control over the dog. Your dog must also learn that certain behaviors on his part are unacceptable, but he must also be taught what behaviors are the right ones. Our handout: "Dealing with Normal Puppy Behavior: Nipping and Rough Play" outlines procedures for discouraging rough play and encouraging appropriate play. However, most children under the age of ten are not capable of carrying out these procedures, so it's helpful to teach your dog a "leave it" command that you can use when play gets too rough. Taking an obedience class together is a good way to teach your dog to respond to commands.

An approach that is not helpful is to punish your dog for his behavior. If he learns that being around children always results in "bad things" happening to him, he may become defensive in their presence.

Possessions: Your dog won't know the difference between his toys and your child's toys until you teach him.

- ◆ Your child must take responsibility for keeping his playthings out of your dog's reach.
- ◆ If, and only if, you catch your dog chewing on something he shouldn't, interrupt the behavior with a loud noise, then give him an acceptable chew toy and praise him lavishly when he takes the toy in his mouth.
- ◆ Don't give your dog objects to play with such as old socks, old shoes or old children's toys that closely resemble items that are off-limits. They can't tell the difference!
- ◆ Dogs can be possessive about their food, toys and space. Although it's normal for a dog to growl or snap to protect these items, it's not acceptable. At the same time, children need to learn to respect their dog as a living creature who is not to be teased or purposefully hurt and who needs time to himself .

If your dog is growling or snapping at your child for any reason, the situation needs IMMEDIATE attention. Punishing your dog is likely to make matters worse. Please consult a certified animal behaviorist or professional trainer.

Coping with Pet Allergies

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Pets can be a wonderful addition to our lives but if you suffer from pet allergies, a fluffy cat or playful pup can be torturous. It is estimated that approximately 15 percent of the population suffer from some type of allergy to pets. However many people with pet allergies still have a companion animal. This shows that the benefit of having a pet outweighs the discomfort from the allergen. Fortunately, there are some things you can do to alleviate the symptoms of pet allergies.

Dogs and cats both cause reactions in people allergic to pets. There is not a single breed that doesn't cause allergic reactions. Some people are more sensitive to certain breeds and more people are allergic to cats than dogs. Do not believe that buying a certain breed of dog will prevent you from having an allergic reaction. Try to take these steps to alleviate some of your discomfort.

Solutions:

- Keep your pet brushed. This will remove some excess fur that may cause a reaction. Do not have the more allergic person in the family brush the dog or cat.
- Create an area of the house the pet is not allowed to go. It might be helpful to not allow the pet in the room where the allergic person sleeps. A person suffering from allergies will not be able to sleep as well in a room covered with fur and dander. Research HEPA filters to use in the living rooms of the house.
- Keep furniture, curtains and bedding clean. Wash bedding, blankets and throws often. Dust electronic equipment where static attracts hair. Regularly vacuum furniture and blinds. Use lint rollers or a damp cloth on curtains and furniture to clean quickly.
- Regularly vacuum and clean carpets and flooring. Baking soda or static remover on carpets can help loosen hair. Fur can also collect around baseboards. Use rubber dishwashing gloves, slightly damp, around baseboards then dispose of the hair. Change the vacuum bag or empty the canister frequently.
- Use a vacuum attachment on your car's interior or use the technique above for removing hair from baseboards.
- Don't over bathe your pet. Bathing your dog too frequently will actually create more dander. Between baths use wipes specially designed to remove pet dander. They will not remove all the allergens but they can temporarily help. See handout "Grooming: Brushing and Bathing Basics."
- Talk to your doctor about treatments for allergies. They may need to test to see what the specific allergen is. Your pet may not actually be to blame. Seasonal changes bring on other allergy problems such as hay fever, pollen and mold. Unfortunately, this often coincides with seasonal shedding cycles.
- Keep your pet's bedding clean. Regular cleaning of their bed will reduce the overall allergens in your house. Every time the dog or cat gets on or off the bed they put hair and dander in the air.

Do not bring a new pet into the home until you are certain your family can deal with the allergens they produce. Spend time around friends' pets to find out how you will respond to dander. Most people will not overcome allergies after they get used to the pet. Fortunately, steps can be taken to reduce allergens in the environment. Please consult a physician to get more information about controlling your allergies.

Crate Training Your Dog

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Crate training your dog may take some time and effort, but can be useful in a variety of situations. If you have a new dog or puppy, you can use the crate to limit his access to the house until he learns all the house rules – like what he can and can't chew on and where he can and can't eliminate. A crate is also a safe way of transporting your dog in the car, as well as a way of taking him places where he may not be welcome to run freely. If you properly train your dog to use the crate, he'll think of it as his safe place and will be happy to spend time there when needed.

Selecting A Crate

Crates may be plastic (often called "flight kennels") or collapsible, metal pens. They come in different sizes and can be purchased at most pet supply stores. Your dog's crate should be just large enough for him to stand up and turn around in.

The Crate Training Process

Crate training can take days or weeks, depending on your dog's age, temperament and past experiences. It's important to keep two things in mind while crate training. The crate should always be associated with something pleasant, and training should take place in a series of small steps - don't go too fast.

Step 1: Introducing Your Dog To The Crate

- ◆ Put the crate in an area of your house where the family spends a lot of time, such as the family room. Put a soft blanket or towel in the crate. Bring your dog over to the crate and talk to him in a happy tone of voice. Make sure the crate door is securely fastened opened so it won't hit your dog and frighten him.
- ◆ To encourage your dog to enter the crate, drop some small food treats near it, then just inside the door, and finally, all the way inside the crate. If he refuses to go all the way in at first, that's okay – don't force him to enter. Continue tossing treats into the crate until your dog will walk calmly all the way into the crate to get the food. If he isn't interested in treats, try tossing a favorite toy in the crate. This step may take a few minutes or as long as several days.

Step 2: Feeding Your Dog His Meals In The Crate

- ◆ After introducing your dog to the crate, begin feeding him his regular meals near the crate. This will create a pleasant association with the crate. If your dog is readily entering the crate when you begin Step 2, put the food dish all the way at the back of the crate. If your dog is still reluctant to enter the crate, put the dish only as far inside as he will readily go without becoming fearful or anxious. Each time you feed him, place the dish a little further back in the crate.
- ◆ Once your dog is standing comfortably in the crate to eat his meal, you can close the door while he's eating. At first, open the door as soon as he finishes his meal. With each successive feeding, leave the door closed a few minutes longer, until he's staying in the crate for ten minutes or so after eating. If he begins to whine to be let out, you may have increased the length of time too quickly. Next time, try leaving him in the crate for a shorter time period. If he does whine or cry in the crate, it's imperative that you not let him out until he stops. Otherwise, he'll learn that the way to get out of the crate is to whine, so he'll keep doing it.

Step 3: Conditioning Your Dog To The Crate For Longer Time Periods

- ◆ After your dog is eating his regular meals in the crate with no sign of fear or anxiety, you can confine him there for short time periods while you're home. Call him over to the crate and give him a treat. Give him a command to enter such as, "kennel up." Encourage him by pointing to the inside of the crate with a treat in your hand. After your dog enters the crate, praise him, give him the treat and close the door. Sit quietly near the crate for five to ten minutes and then go into another room for a few minutes. Return, sit quietly again for a short time, then let him out of the crate. Repeat this process several times a day. With each repetition, gradually increase the length of time you leave him in the crate and the length of time you're out of his sight. Once your dog will stay quietly in the crate for about 30 minutes with you out of sight the majority of the time, you can begin leaving him crated when you're gone for short time periods and/or letting him sleep there at night. This may take several days or several weeks.

Step 4:

Part A/Crating Your Dog When Left Alone

After your dog is spending about 30 minutes in the crate without becoming anxious or afraid, you can begin leaving him crated for short periods when you leave the house. Put him in the crate using your regular command and a treat. You might also want to leave him with a few safe toys in the crate (see our handout: "Dog Toys and How to Use Them"). You'll want to vary at what point in your "getting ready to leave" routine you put your dog in the crate. Although he shouldn't be crated for a long time before you leave, you can crate him anywhere from five to 20 minutes prior to leaving. Don't make your departures emotional and prolonged, but matter-of-fact. Praise your dog briefly, give him a treat for entering the crate and then leave quietly. When you return home, don't reward your dog for excited behavior by responding to him in an excited, enthusiastic way. Keep arrivals low key. Continue to crate your dog for short periods from time to time when you're home so he doesn't associate crating with being left alone.

Part B/Crating Your Dog At Night

Put your dog in the crate using your regular command and a treat. Initially, it may be a good idea to put the crate in your bedroom or nearby in a hallway, especially if you have a puppy. Puppies often need to go outside to eliminate during the night, and you'll want to be able to hear your puppy when he whines to be let outside. Older dogs, too, should initially be kept nearby so that crating doesn't become associated with social isolation. Once your dog is sleeping comfortably through the night with his crate near you, you can begin to gradually move it to the location you prefer.

Potential Problems

❖ Too Much Time In The Crate

A crate isn't a magical solution. If not used correctly, a dog can feel trapped and frustrated. For example, if your dog is crated all day while you're at work and then crated again all night, he's spending too much time in too small a space. Other arrangements should be made to accommodate his physical and emotional needs. Also remember that puppies under six months of age shouldn't stay in a crate for more than three or four hours at a time. They can't control their bladders and bowels for longer periods.

❖ Whining

If your dog whines or cries while in the crate at night, it may be difficult to decide whether he's whining to be let out of the crate, or whether he needs to be let outside to eliminate. If you followed the training procedures outlined above, your dog hasn't been rewarded for whining in the past by being released from his crate. Try to ignore the whining. If your dog is just testing you, he'll probably stop whining soon. Yelling at him or pounding on the crate will only make things worse. If the whining continues after you've ignored him for several minutes, use the phrase he associates with going outside to eliminate. If he responds and becomes excited, take him outside. This should be a trip with a purpose, not play time. If you're convinced that your dog doesn't need to eliminate, the best response is to ignore him until he stops whining. Don't give in, otherwise you'll teach your dog to whine loud and long to get what he wants. If you've progressed gradually through the training steps and haven't done too much too fast, you'll be less likely to encounter this problem. If the problem becomes unmanageable, you may need to start the crate training process over again.

❖ Separation Anxiety

Attempting to use the crate as a remedy for separation anxiety won't solve the problem. A crate may prevent your dog from being destructive, but he may injure himself in an attempt to escape from the crate. Separation anxiety problems can only be resolved with counter-conditioning and desensitization procedures. You may want to consult a professional animal behaviorist for help (see our handout: "Separation Anxiety").

Dealing With Dominance in Dogs

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Most dogs are more than happy to assume a submissive or neutral position in their human household. Dogs without boundaries and structure can become pushy or dominant. These dogs are difficult to live with and are often relegated to the backyard. It is possible to rehabilitate most of these dogs with the right amount of obedience, discipline and boundaries.

What does "dominance" mean?

In order to understand why your dog is acting "dominant," it's important to know some things about canine social systems. Animals who live in social groups, including domestic dogs and wolves, establish a social structure called a dominance hierarchy within their group. This hierarchy serves to maintain order, reduce conflict and promote cooperation among group members. A position within the dominance hierarchy is established by each member of the group, based on the outcomes of interactions between themselves and the other pack members. The more dominant animals can control access to valued items such as food, den sites and mates. For domestic dogs, valued items might be food, toys, sleeping or resting places, as well as attention from their owner.

In order for your home to be a safe and happy place for pets and people, it's best that the humans in the household assume the highest positions in the dominance hierarchy. Most dogs assume a neutral or submissive role toward people, but some dogs will challenge their owners for dominance. A dominant dog may stare, bark, growl, snap or even bite when you give him a command or ask him to give up a toy, treat or resting place. Sometimes even hugging, petting or grooming can be interpreted as gestures of dominance and, therefore, provoke a growl or snap because of the similarity of these actions to behaviors that are displayed by dominant dogs. Nevertheless, a dominant dog may still be very affectionate and may even solicit petting and attention from you.

You may have a dominance issue with your dog if:

- ❖ He resists obeying commands that he knows well.
- ❖ He won't move out of your way when required.
- ❖ He nudges your hand, takes your arm in his mouth or insists on being petted or played with (in other words, ordering you to obey him).
- ❖ He defends his food bowl, toys or other objects from you.
- ❖ He growls or bares his teeth at you under any circumstances.
- ❖ He won't let anyone (you, the vet, the groomer) give him medication or handle him.
- ❖ He gets up on furniture without permission and won't get down.
- ❖ He snaps at you.

What to do if you recognize signs of dominance in your dog:

If you recognize the beginning signs of dominance aggression in your dog, you should immediately consult an animal behavior specialist. No physical punishment should be used. Getting physical with a dominant dog may cause the dog to intensify his aggression, posing the risk of injury to you. With a dog that has shown signs of dominance aggression, you should always take precautions to ensure the safety of your family and others who may encounter your dog by:

- ❖ Avoiding situations that elicit the aggressive behavior.
- ❖ During the times your dog is acting aggressively, back off and use "happy talk" to relieve the tenseness of the situation.
- ❖ Supervise, confine and/or restrict your dog's activities as necessary, especially when children or other pets are present.
- ❖ When you're outdoors with your dog, use a "Gentle Leader" or muzzle.
- ❖ When you're indoors with your dog, control access to the entire house by using baby gates and/or by crating your dog. You can also use a cage-type muzzle, or a "Gentle Leader" and leash, but only when you can closely supervise your dog.

Dominance aggression problems are unlikely to go away without your taking steps to resolve them. Treatment of dominance aggression problems should always be supervised by an animal behavior specialist, since dominant aggressive dogs can be potentially dangerous.

The following techniques (which don't require a physical confrontation with your dog) can help you gain some control:

- ❖ Spay or neuter your dog to reduce hormonal contributions to aggression. NOTE: After a mature animal has been spayed or neutered, it may take time for those hormones to clear from the system. Also, long-standing behavior patterns may continue even after the hormones or other causes no longer exist.
- ❖ "Nothing in Life is Free" is a safe, non-confrontational way to establish your leadership and requires your dog to work for everything he gets from you (see our handout: "Nothing in Life is Free"). Have your dog obey at least one command (such as "sit") before you pet him, give him dinner, put on his leash or throw a toy for him. If your dog doesn't know any commands or doesn't perform them reliably, you'll first have to teach him, using positive reinforcement, and practice with him daily. You may need to seek professional help if your dog is not obeying each time you ask after two to three weeks of working on a command.
- ❖ Don't feed your dog people food from the table and don't allow begging.
- ❖ Don't play "tug of war," wrestle or play roughly with your dog.
- ❖ Ignore barking and jumping up.

- ❖ Don't allow your dog on the furniture or your bed, as this is a privilege reserved for leaders. If your dog growls or snaps when you try to remove him from the furniture, use a treat to lure him off. Otherwise, try to limit his access to your bed and/or furniture by using baby gates, a crate, or by closing doors.
- ❖ Always remember to reward good behavior.
- ❖ Consult your veterinarian about acupuncture, massage therapy or drug therapy.
- ❖ Obedience classes may be helpful in establishing a relationship between you and your dog in which you give commands and he obeys them (be sure to choose a trainer who uses positive reinforcement methods). Obedience classes alone, however, won't necessarily prevent or reduce dominance aggression.

A Note about Children and Dogs

From your dog's point of view, children, too, have a place in the dominance hierarchy. Because children are smaller and get down on the dog's level to play, dogs often consider them to be playmates, rather than superiors. Small children and dogs should not be left alone together without adult supervision. Older children should be taught how to play and interact appropriately and safely with dogs; however, no child should be left alone with a dog who has displayed signs of aggression.

Dealing With Normal Puppy Behavior: Chewing

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Puppies may be just as much work as human babies - maybe more so because puppies can't wear diapers and they have very sharp teeth! It's definitely true that, similar to infants and toddlers, puppies explore their world by putting things in their mouths. In addition, puppies are teething until they're about six months old, which usually creates some discomfort. Chewing not only facilitates teething, but also makes sore gums feel better. Although it's perfectly normal for a puppy to chew on furniture, shoes, shrubbery and such, these behaviors can be a problem for you. A puppy won't magically "outgrow" these behaviors as he matures. Instead, you must shape your puppy's behaviors and teach him which ones are acceptable and which aren't.

Discouraging Unacceptable Behavior

It's virtually inevitable that your puppy will, at some point, chew up something you value. This is part of raising a puppy! You can, however, prevent most problems by taking the following precautions:

- ❖ Minimize chewing problems by puppy-proofing your house. Put the trash out of reach, inside a cabinet or outside on a porch, or buy containers with locking lids. Encourage children to pick up their toys and don't leave socks, shoes, eyeglasses, briefcases or TV remote controls lying around within your puppy's reach.
- ❖ If, and only if, you catch your puppy chewing on something he shouldn't, interrupt the behavior with a loud noise, then offer him an acceptable chew toy instead and praise him lavishly when he takes the toy in his mouth.
- ❖ Make unacceptable chew items unpleasant to your puppy. Furniture and other items can be coated with "Bitter Apple" to make them unappealing.
- ❖ Don't give your puppy objects to play with such as old socks, old shoes or old children's toys that closely resemble items that are off-limits. Puppies can't tell the difference!
- ❖ Closely supervise your puppy. Don't give him the chance to go off by himself and get into trouble. Use baby gates, close doors or tether him to you with a six-foot leash so you can keep an eye on him.

- ❖ When you must be gone from the house, confine your puppy to a small, safe area such as a laundry room. You may also begin to crate train your puppy (see our handout: “Crate Training Your Dog”). Puppies under five months of age shouldn’t be crated for longer than four hours at a time, as they may not be able to control their bladder and bowels longer than that.
- ❖ Make sure your puppy is getting adequate physical activity. Puppies left alone in a yard don’t play by themselves. Take your puppy for walks and/or play a game of fetch with him as often as possible.
- ❖ Give your puppy plenty of “people time.” He can only learn the rules of your house when he’s with you.

Encouraging Acceptable Behavior

- ❖ Provide your puppy with lots of appropriate toys (see our handout “Dog Toys and How to Use Them”).
- ❖ Rotate your puppy’s toys. Puppies, like babies, are often more interested in unfamiliar or novel objects. Put out four or five toys for a few days, then pick those up and put out four or five different ones.
- ❖ Experiment with different kinds of toys. When you introduce a new toy to your puppy, watch him to make sure he won’t tear it up and ingest the pieces.
- ❖ Consider the various types of toys that can be stuffed with food. Putting tidbits of food inside chew toys focuses your puppy’s chewing activities on those toys instead of on unacceptable objects.
- ❖ If your puppy is teething, try freezing a wet washcloth for him to chew on.

What Not To Do

Never discipline or punish your puppy after the fact. If you discover a chewed item even minutes after he’s chewed it, you’re too late to administer a correction. Animals associate punishment with what they’re doing at the time they’re being punished. A puppy can’t reason that, “I tore up those shoes an hour ago and that’s why I’m being scolded now.” Some people believe this is what a puppy is thinking because he runs and hides or because he “looks guilty.” “Guilty looks” are canine submissive postures that dogs show when they’re threatened. When you’re angry and upset, the puppy feels threatened by your tone of voice, body postures and/or facial expressions, so he may hide or show submissive postures. Punishment after-the-fact will not only fail to eliminate the undesirable behavior but could provoke other undesirable behaviors as well.

Other Reasons For Destructive Behavior

In most cases, destructive chewing by puppies is nothing more than normal puppy behavior. Adult dogs, however, can exhibit destructive behaviors for a variety of reasons, which can occasionally be the cause of chewing problems in puppies as well. Examples include separation anxiety, fear-related behaviors and attention-getting behavior. For help with these problems, contact a professional dog trainer.

Destructive Chewing

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Exploring the world with their mouths is normal behavior for dogs. Chewing can, however, be directed onto appropriate items so your dog isn’t destroying items you value. Until he’s learned what he can and can’t chew, it’s your responsibility to manage the situation as much as possible, so he doesn’t have the opportunity to chew on unacceptable objects.

Taking Control By Managing The Situation

- ❖ Take responsibility for your own belongings. If you don't want it in your dog's mouth, don't make it available. Keep clothing, shoes, books, trash, eyeglasses and television remote controls out of your dog's reach.
- ❖ Don't confuse your dog by offering him shoes and socks as toys and then expect him to distinguish between his shoe and yours. Your dog's toys should be obviously different from household goods.
- ❖ Until he learns the house rules, confine him when you're unable to keep an eye on him. Choose a "safe place" that is dog-proof with fresh water and "safe" toys (see our handout: "Dog Toys and How to Use Them"). If your dog is crate trained, you may also crate him for short periods of time (see our handout: "Crate Training Your Dog").
- ❖ Give your dog plenty of people-time. Your dog won't know how to behave if you don't teach him alternatives to inappropriate behavior and he can't learn these when he's in the yard by himself.
- ❖ If, and only if, you catch your dog chewing on something he shouldn't, interrupt the behavior with a loud noise, offer him an acceptable chew toy instead, and praise him lavishly when he takes the toy in his mouth.
- ❖ Have realistic expectations. It's virtually inevitable that your dog will, at some point, chew up something you value. This is often part of the transition to a new home. Your dog needs time to learn the house rules and you need to remember to take precautions and keep things out of his reach.

Chewing is normal teething and investigative puppy behavior (see our handout: "Dealing with Normal Puppy Behavior: Chewing"), however, dogs will engage in destructive behavior for a variety of reasons. In order to deal with the behavior, you must first determine why your dog is being destructive.

Play, Boredom And/Or Social Isolation

Normal play behavior can result in destruction, as it may involve digging, chewing, shredding and/or shaking toy-like objects. Since dogs investigate objects by pawing at them and exploring them with their mouths, they may also inadvertently damage items in their environment when they're exploring or investigating. Your dog may be chewing for entertainment if:

- ❖ He's left alone for long periods without opportunities for interaction with you.
- ❖ His environment is relatively barren, without playmates or toys.
- ❖ He's a puppy or adolescent (under three years old) and he doesn't have other outlets for his energy.
- ❖ He's a particularly active type of dog (like the herding or sporting breeds) who needs an active lifestyle to be happy.

Solutions:

- ♦ Play with your dog daily in a safe, fenced-in area. If you don't have a yard, a tennis court can be a good place to play. Fetch is a great game that will use up your dog's excess energy without wearing you out!
- ♦ Go for a walk. Walks should be more than just "bathroom time." On-leash walks are important opportunities for you and your dog to be together. Don't forget to allow time for sniffing, exploring, instruction and praise.
- ♦ Increase your dog's opportunities for mental stimulation. Teach your dog a few commands and/or tricks and practice them daily. If you have time, take an obedience class.
- ♦ Provide your dog with lots of toys (see our handout: "Dog Toys and How to Use Them").
- ♦ Rotate your dog's toys to refresh his interest in them. "New" toys are always more interesting than old ones.

- ◆ Try different kinds of toys, but when you introduce a new toy, watch your dog to make sure he won't tear it up and ingest the pieces.
- ◆ Consider the various types of toys that can be stuffed with food. Putting tidbits of food inside chew toys focuses your dog's chewing activities on these toys instead of on unacceptable objects.
- ◆ Make your dog's favorite "off-limits" chew objects unattractive to him by covering them with heavy plastic, aluminum foil, hot pepper sauce or a commercial "anti-chew" product.
- ◆ You might want to consider a good "Doggie Day Care" program for two or three days a week to work off some of your dog's excess energy.

Separation Anxiety

Dogs with separation anxiety tend to display behaviors that reflect a strong attachment to their owners. This includes following you from room to room, frantic greetings and reacting anxiously to your preparation to leave the house.

Factors that can precipitate a separation anxiety problem:

- ❖ A change in the family's schedule that results in your dog being left alone more often.
- ❖ A move to a new house.
- ❖ The death or loss of a family member or another family pet.
- ❖ A period at a shelter or boarding kennel.

These behaviors are not motivated by spite or revenge, but by anxiety. Punishment will only make the problem worse. Separation anxiety can be resolved by using counter conditioning and desensitization techniques (see our handout: "Separation Anxiety").

Attention-Seeking Behavior

Without realizing it, we often pay more attention to our dogs when they're misbehaving. Dogs who don't receive a lot of attention and reinforcement for appropriate behavior may engage in destructive behavior when their owners are present as a way to attract attention – even if the attention is "negative," such as a verbal scolding.

Solutions:

- ◆ Make sure your dog gets a lot of positive attention every day – playing, walking, grooming or just petting.
- ◆ Ignore (as much as possible) bad behavior and reward good behavior. Remember to reward your dog with praise and petting when he's playing quietly with appropriate toys.
- ◆ Make his favorite "off-limits" chew objects unattractive or unavailable to him. Use aversives on objects that cannot be put away (See our handout "Sample Aversives for Dogs").
- ◆ Teach your dog a "drop it" command so when he does pick up an "off-limits" object, you can use your command and praise him for complying. The best way to teach "drop it" is to practice having him exchange a toy in his possession for a tidbit of food.
- ◆ Practice "Nothing in Life is Free" with your dog (see our handout: "Nothing in Life is Free"). This gets your dog in the habit of complying with your commands and is a good way to make sure he gets lots of positive attention for doing the right things – so he won't have to resort to being naughty just to get your attention.

Fears And Phobias

Your dog's destructive behavior may be a response to something he fears. Some dogs are afraid of loud noises (see our handout: "Helping Your Dog Overcome the Fear of Thunder and Other Startling Noises"). Your dog's destructive behavior may be caused by fear if the destruction occurs when he's exposed to loud noises, such as thunderstorms, firecrackers or construction sounds, and if the primary damage is to doors, doorframes, window coverings, screens or walls.

Solutions:

- ◆ Provide a “safe place” for your dog. Observe where he likes to go when he feels anxious, then allow access to that space or create a similar one for him to use when the fear stimulus is present.
- ◆ Don’t comfort your dog when he’s behaving fearfully. Try to get him to play with you or respond to commands he knows and give him praise and treats when he responds to you instead of to the fear stimulus.
- ◆ Don’t crate your dog unless he’s thoroughly crate-trained and considers the crate his safe place. If you put him in a crate to prevent destruction and he’s not crate-trained, he may injure himself and/or destroy the crate.

What Not To Do

Punishment is rarely effective in resolving destructive behavior problems and can even make them worse. Never discipline your dog after the fact. If you discover an item your dog has chewed minutes, or even seconds later, it’s too late to administer a correction. Your dog doesn’t understand that, “I chewed those shoes an hour ago and that’s why I’m being scolded now.” People often believe their dog makes this connection because he runs and hides or “looks guilty.” Dogs don’t feel guilt, rather they display submissive postures like cowering, running away or hiding, when they feel threatened by an angry tone of voice, body posture or facial expression. Your dog doesn’t know that he’s done something wrong; he only knows that you’re upset. Punishment after the fact will not only fail to eliminate the undesirable behavior, but may also provoke other undesirable behaviors, as well.

Developmental Stages of Puppy Behavior

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Although feeding time is important, it’s also vital to include petting, talking and playing, in order to help your puppy build good “people-skills.” Well-socialized mothers are more likely to have well-socialized puppies. Puppies “feed” off of their mothers’ calm or fearful attitude toward people.

Puppies are usually weaned at six or seven weeks, but are still learning important skills as their mother gradually leaves them more and more. Ideally, puppies should stay with their littermates (or other role-model dogs) for at least 12 weeks.

Puppies separated from their littermates too early often don’t develop appropriate “social skills,” such as learning how to send and receive signals, what an “inhibited bite” means, how far to go in play wrestling and so forth. Play is important to help puppies increase their physical coordination, social skills and learning limits. Interacting with their mother and littermates helps them learn “how to be a dog” and is also a way to explore ranking (“who’s in charge”).

Skills not acquired during the first eight weeks may be lost forever. While these stages are important and fairly consistent, a dog’s mind remains receptive to new experiences and lessons well beyond puppy-hood. Most dogs are still puppies, in mind and body, through the first two years.

The following chart provides general guidelines for the stages of development.

0 - 2 weeks = Neonatal

- ❖ Most influenced by their mother.
- ❖ Touch and taste present at birth.

2 - 4 weeks = Transitional

- ❖ Most influenced by their mother and littermates.

- ❖ Eyes open, teeth erupt, hearing and smell developing.
- ❖ Beginning to stand, walk a little, wag, bark.
- ❖ By four or five weeks, sight is well-developed.

3 - 12 weeks = Socialization

- ❖ During this period, puppies need opportunities to meet other dogs and people.
- ❖ By four to six weeks they're most influenced by their littermates and are learning about being a dog.
- ❖ From four to 12 weeks they're most influenced by their littermates and people. They're also learning to play, including social skills, inhibited bite, social structure/ranking and physical coordination.
- ❖ By three to five weeks they're becoming aware of their surroundings, companions (dogs and people) and relationships, including play.
- ❖ By five to seven weeks they're developing curiosity and exploring new experiences. They need positive "people" experiences during this time.
- ❖ By seven to nine weeks they're refining they're physical skills/coordination (including housetraining) and full use of senses.
- ❖ By eight to ten weeks they experience real fear -- when puppies can be alarmed by normal objects and experiences and need positive training.
- ❖ By nine to 12 weeks they're refining reactions, social skills (appropriate interactions) with littermates and are exploring the environment, spaces and objects. Beginning to focus on people. This is a good time to begin training.

3 - 6 months = Ranking

- ❖ Most influenced by "littermates" (playmates now include those of other species).
- ❖ Beginning to see and use ranking (dominant and submissive) within the pack, including humans.
- ❖ Teething (and associated chewing).
- ❖ At four months they experience another fear stage.

6 - 18 months = Adolescence

- ❖ Most influenced by human and dog "pack" members.
- ❖ At seven to nine months they go through a second chewing phase -- part of exploring territory.
- ❖ Heightened exploration of dominance, including challenging humans.
- ❖ If not spayed or neutered, beginnings of sexual behavior.

Dog Toys and How to Use Them

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"Safe" Toys

There are many factors that contribute to the safety or danger of a toy. Many of those factors, however, are completely dependent upon your dog's size, activity level and personal preference. Another factor to be considered is the environment in which your dog spends his time. Although we can't guarantee your dog's enthusiasm or his safety with any specific toy, we can offer the following guidelines.

Be Cautious

The things that are usually the most attractive to dogs are often the very things that are the most dangerous. Dog-proof your home by checking for: string, ribbon, rubber bands, children's toys, pantyhose and anything else that could be ingested.

Toys should be appropriate for your dog's current size. Balls and other toys that are too small can easily be swallowed or become lodged in your dog's mouth or throat.

Avoid or alter any toys that aren't "dog-proof" by removing ribbons, strings, eyes or other parts that could be chewed and/or ingested. Avoid any toy that starts to break into pieces or have pieces torn off. You should also avoid "tug-of-war" toys, unless they'll be used between dogs, not between people and dogs. Tug toys should never be used with aggressive dogs.

Ask your veterinarian about which rawhide toys are safe and which aren't. Unless your veterinarian says otherwise, "chewies" like hooves, pig's ears and rawhides, should be supervision-only goodies. Very hard rubber toys are safer and last longer.

Take note of any toy that contains a "squeaker" buried in its center. Your dog may feel that he must find and destroy the squeak-source and could ingest it, in which case squeaking objects should be "supervision only" toys.

Check labels for child safety, as a stuffed toy that's labeled as safe for children under three years old, doesn't contain dangerous fillings. Problem fillings include things like nutshells and polystyrene beads, however, even a "safe" stuffing isn't truly digestible.

Remember that soft toys are not indestructible, but some are sturdier than others. Soft toys should be machine washable.

Toys We Recommend

Active Toys:

- ♦ Very hard rubber toys, like Nylabone-type products and Kong-type products. These are available in a variety of shapes and sizes and are fun for chewing and for carrying around.
- ♦ "Rope" toys that are usually available in a "bone" shape with knotted ends.
- ♦ Tennis balls make great dog toys, but keep an eye out for any that could be chewed through and discard them.

Distraction Toys:

- ♦ Kong-type toys, especially when filled with broken-up treats or, even better, a mixture of broken-up treats and peanut butter. The right size Kong can keep a puppy or dog busy for hours. Only by chewing diligently can your dog access the treats, and then only in small bits - very rewarding! Double-check with your veterinarian about whether or not you should give peanut butter to your dog.
- ♦ "Busy-box" toys are large rubber cubes with hiding places for treats. Only by moving the cube around with his nose, mouth and paws, can your dog access the goodies.

Comfort Toys:

- ♦ Soft stuffed toys are good for several purposes, but aren't appropriate for all dogs. For some dogs, the stuffed toy should be small enough to carry around. For dogs that want to shake or "kill" the toy, it should be the size that "prey" would be for that size dog (mouse-size, rabbit-size or duck-size).
- ♦ Dirty laundry, like an old t-shirt, pillowcase, towel or blanket, can be very comforting to a dog, especially if it smells like you! Be forewarned that the item could be destroyed by industrious fluffing, carrying and nosing.

Get The Most Out Of Toys!

- ❖ Rotate your dog's toys weekly by making only four or five toys available at a time. Keep a variety of types easily accessible. If your dog has a huge favorite, like a soft "baby," you should probably leave it out all the time, or risk the wrath of your dog!
- ❖ Provide toys that offer a variety of uses - at least one toy to carry, one to "kill", one to roll and one to "baby."
- ❖ "Hide and Seek" is a fun game for dogs to play. "Found" toys are often much more attractive than a toy which is blatantly introduced. Making an interactive game out of finding toys or treats is a good "rainy-day" activity for your dog, using up energy without the need for a lot of space.
- ❖ Many of your dog's toys should be interactive. Interactive play is very important for your dog because he needs active "people time." By focusing on a specific task, like repeatedly returning a ball, Kong or Frisbee, or playing "hide-and-seek" with treats or toys, your dog can expel pent-up mental and physical energy in a limited amount of time and space. This greatly reduces stress due to confinement, isolation and/or boredom. For young, high-energy and untrained dogs, interactive play also offers an opportunity for socialization and helps them learn about appropriate and inappropriate behavior with people and with other animals, like jumping up or being mouthy.

Enrichment Activities for Your Dog

Humans actively seek out enrichment in their own lives. We read books, play video games, watch movies and exercise. Enrichment is anything mentally or physically challenging that is rewarding. Our dog's lives are not nearly as exciting as ours are. We get up every morning, drive to work, talk to people, eat different foods and are generally satisfied. Modern dogs really don't have much to do in comparison to their capabilities. Wild dogs must hunt for food, seek shelter, fight for mates and travel constantly. Our domestic dogs no longer have the need to perform such tasks so we need to find constructive ways to enrich their lives.

Walks The best enrichment activity for any dog is walking. Walking is beneficial for many reasons. Walking allows dogs to explore the outside world, be healthier, release excess energy, spend time with you and even prevent some behavioral problems. Dogs lacking in exercise must find other ways to release pent up energy. Without an appropriate outlet, most dogs will resort to digging, destructive behaviors and barking out of boredom. Remember a tired dog is a good dog. To start a walking program:

1. Always check with your doctor and vet before starting a walking program. Your vet should be able to give you a good idea of how long your dog can walk. Puppies and even large breed adolescent dogs can do irreversible damage to their growing bodies. Start with short walks only.
2. Get the right equipment. Find comfy shoes and proper tools for your dog. Make sure you have a good quality collar and leash. A head halter may make the walk more comfortable with you and your dog. Some dogs that are awful on a leash are perfect on a Gentle Leader. See handout "How to Use a Head Halter." If you and your dog are comfortable you are more likely to walk.
3. Keep a journal of your progress. Write down how far or how long you are walking each day. Set small goals for you and your dog.

Interactive Toys In the past few years there has been an onslaught of dog toys to hit the market. Many of the toys are interactive and incredibly mentally enriching. Toys don't have to be expensive to be good. Obviously, keep an eye on the condition of the toys to prevent choking. See handout "Interactive Dog Toys."

1. Kongs, Squirrel Dudes and Sterilized Bones: These toys are great because they can be stuffed with different types of foods the dog has to work to get out. These are mentally enriching.
2. Treat Ball, Buster Cube and Twist n' Treat: Dogs will knock these toys around to get food out which is physically and mentally stimulating. You can even use regular dry dog food.
3. Puzzle Toys: The I Qube, Hide-a-Squirrel and Intellibone are excellent toys for teaching the dog problem solving. These toys are plush so please monitor chewing.

Games Some dogs are natural athletes. Give them something fun to do with that energy. See handout "Games, Games, Games!"

1. Fetch: Retrievers, herding breeds and many mixed breeds love chasing after a ball. Incorporate some obedience commands to make the game mentally and physically demanding.
2. Almost any childhood game such as tag, hide-and-seek and tug of war can be modified to include dogs. These games will bring out the kid in you.
3. Organized Dog Sports: There are dog sports for almost any breed of dog. Try out several activities to see which your dog likes best. Agility, Flyball, drafting and tracking are terrific activities for owner and dog.

Obedience Training Group obedience classes are a great way to give your dog mental stimulation. Just as we take classes to better ourselves, dogs benefit from an education as well. Learning a new skill-set is challenging and exciting for dogs. Find a class using positive reinforcement.

Formula for Having a Great Dog

Select the Right Pet

To have a good relationship with a companion animal you must select a pet that is right for your home and your lifestyle. Even though you have had your heart set on a dog, you must consider the amount of time, space and money it takes to have a happy pooch. Don't pick a dog based on how cute it is or the fact that it really needs a home. Take the time to research breeds and talk to other dog owners to see what is best for you. Visit the Pima Animal Care Center to check out the variety of dogs available and talk to the staff to find a dog to fit your lifestyle.

Veterinary Care

It is essential to have a good relationship with your veterinarian. If you don't feel comfortable asking questions or your animal is not treated well, find a new vet. Talk to friends and family to get suggestions on vets in your area. No matter the age and condition of the dog you select, take it to the vet for an initial checkup. Make sure to stay current on vaccinations.

High Quality Diet

Proper nutrition can add years onto your dog's life. It will also improve your dog's behavior. Cheap kibble is full of byproducts, fillers and dyes that can lead to unruly behavior and even allergies. Ask your vet what type of food they feed their own dogs. Many dog magazines and organizations rank dog food each year. Do some research before selecting the brand. When changing your dog's diet, slowly incorporate the new food over a week to 10 days.

Grooming and Dental Care

Having a clean, nice-smelling pet will definitely aid in your relationship. No one wants to cuddle up with a smelly dog. Take time to research your pet's individual needs. Talk to groomers and veterinarians to see what they recommend. Improper grooming and dental care can lead to major medical problems. See handouts "Grooming: Brushing and Bathing Basics" and "Dental Care for Dogs."

Enrichment

All pets need some type of enrichment activity. Dogs need activities that are physically and mentally stimulating. The best enrichment activity for a dog is a walk. They need more than a bathroom break in the neighborhood. A couple of long walks a day will do amazing things for your dog's behavior and health. It will also be a great way for you to bond with your companion animal. Another way to enrich your pet mentally is to get them interactive toys. See handout "Interactive Dog Toys."

Obedience Training

Unfortunately dogs are not born knowing English or proper household manners. Taking an obedience class will help you have more control over your dog's behavior. Group classes will allow you to bond with your pet while learning how to teach your dog obedience commands. Many dogs are returned to the shelter for behavior problems. Most of these dogs have never taken an obedience class. Improve your dog's life, and yours, by getting into a class as soon as you get your new pet.

Patience

Be patient with your new pet. It is getting used to you and your home as you are getting used to it. Try to maintain a consistent schedule of feeding, taking it out, walking and training. Dogs are creatures of habit and they will assimilate to your home faster if you stay consistent. Make sure everyone in the family follow the same rules with the dog. If you do start having any problems with your new pet, consult a behaviorist before it becomes a larger problem. The most important thing is to have fun with your new companion.

Games, Games, Games!

Games are a fun way to bond with your dog and keep your dog mentally and physically active. Several childhood games can be easily modified to play with a canine companion. The possibilities are only limited by your imagination.

Hide and Seek: Put your dog in a stay and hide in a different room or somewhere outside. Call for your dog until they find you. When they find you reward them with praise or a small treat. When your dog gets better at the game, just say "find me" once and help them out if they are confused. This is a fun game but it is also a great way to reinforce your dog's stay. If the dog breaks the stay, put them back in the position where they started.

The Cup Game: Place a yummy treat under a clean empty soup can or a plastic cup. Have the dog stay back from the container until you release them to find the treat. They need to knock the object over to get the reward. Have the dog practice a sit or down stay until you release them. Start the game by using a light cup and a really smelly treat like hot dogs. As the dog gets better at the game, use some empty cups to test the dog and less smelly treats like dry bones. You can show your dog's intelligence off for your friends. This is a real crowd pleaser.

Bobbing for Hot Dogs: Fill a small swimming pool or bucket with water and put cut pieces of hot dogs in the pool for the dogs to find. If your dog enjoys fruit, you can also use cut pieces of apples or other safe vegetables. This is a great game for puppy parties; just make sure all the dogs are friendly!

Dig It: If your dog enjoys digging but you are tired of losing your petunias, make them their own sandpit. Use a child's swimming pool or a regular sandbox and hide Kongs or fun toys for the dog to find. This will make the sandbox a really rewarding place to dig. Rotate the toys out to keep the dog interested. Do not use regular soil or sand from your backyard. Soil in Southern Arizona has the potential to make your dog ill because of Valley Fever spores. Cover the box at night to keep it from becoming a litter box for the neighborhood cats.

Biscuit Hunt: This works just like an Easter egg hunt. Hide small hard biscuits in the backyard or around the house. Keep the dog in a crate or in another room while you hide the biscuits. Release your dog to find the biscuits. This is a great way to keep your dog occupied as you leave for work in the morning. As an added bonus hide a Kong with peanut butter for your dog to find.

Tug of War: Tug games can be a fun activity for your dog as long as they follow the rules. Make sure you pick a toy that is appropriate for this game. If you have any questions, consult a trainer. See our handout: "Tug of War: An Enrichment Activity").

Sports: Depending on your dog's natural abilities they may also enjoy soccer, swimming, tracking or organized sports. Agility, Flyball and Lure Coursing are exciting organized sports for all different breeds of dogs. Check with your local professional trainer for agility classes.

Grieving the Loss of Your Pet

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It's never easy to experience the death of a pet. Whether it's an older animal, who may have been part of your family longer than most of the furniture and some of the children, or a pet who has been with you for only a few years, the loss is always traumatic. When you have to make a decision to have your pet euthanized, other emotions become entangled with your feelings of loss. Once your pet is gone, you may think the experience is behind you, but unfortunately, it's not.

There will be an empty place in your household and in your life for awhile, and for the first part of that "while" the void may seem huge. Even though there are ways to fill the void, the loss you've experienced isn't something you can simply ignore by assuming your world will adjust itself. Instead, you must deal with it, just as you would deal with the loss of any good friend. You can't expect yourself to think of your pet as a friend and, yet, dismiss those feelings as disposable because this friend happened to be an animal. It's not silly to miss your pet, and it's not overly sentimental to grieve for him. Nevertheless, he was a pet not a person, and that makes it more complicated to sort out exactly what it is you're supposed to do and feel.

Although we recognize the individual personalities of pets, it doesn't mean they're just "little people." The relationship you have with your pet is different from any human relationship you may have.

Another difference lies in the complicated question of "what happens next?" Many people believe that animals have no souls and are concerned that they won't see their animals in the next life. Perhaps you're unsure about what "the next life" holds for any of us. If having a soul means being able to feel love, trust and gratitude, then some animals may be better equipped than some humans.

When an animal becomes the pet of a responsible, caring person, he is given exactly what he needs and wants – a secure and comfortable home, companionship, and the opportunity to return the favor through loyalty and affection. Dogs, especially, are naturally eager to please their "leader" and are

happiest when doing so. When a dog is too old or too sick to respond in the way he thinks he should, he can't understand why, and feels the anxiety of failure.

Because their natural life spans are shorter than ours, we usually outlive our pets. Nevertheless, the life you shared together can't simply be erased. Don't deny yourself the thoughts, memories and feelings that your pet's life deserves. You may decide to fill the empty place in your home and heart with another pet, but you'll never replace the special bond you held with the one you've lost.

Grooming: Brushing and Bathing Basics

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Different dog breeds have specific grooming needs. Brushing and bathing can be great ways for you to bond with your dog as well as having a clean healthy pet that people want to be around. Use the following tips to make the process enjoyable for you and your dog. Consult your veterinarian or groomer for additional help.

Brushing: Because many dogs stay indoors all year round they do not have a normal shedding cycle. Instead of shedding once or twice a year, like their ancestors, they lose small amounts of fur all the time. Brushing is a good way to keep your dog clean and free of matting.

Tips:

- Use a brush or comb specially designed for your dog's coat. Check with your veterinarian or groomer to see what is appropriate. Do not use a brush with hard wire bristles on the dog's skin. If it hurts when you press it to your arm, it will hurt them.
- Right when you get your puppy, get them used to being brushed. Start by showing them the brush and giving them a piece of food. Gradually build up to giving them a treat as you actually brush the dog. They make very small soft brushes designed for puppies.
- Brush with the direction of hair growth. Hair grows in different directions on different parts of the body. Be careful on the underside of the dog and any place with sparse growth.
- If the dog is matted, carefully trim the areas before beginning to brush. Watch for mats under the dog's ears and where the forepaws meet the body.
- Use a Kong or stuffed toy to occupy your dog during grooming sessions. They will look forward to their brushing.

Bathing: Dogs, unlike people, do not need to bathe daily or even weekly to have a healthy coat. Their skin produces much less oil than ours. Over bathing can lead to excessive dander and a very uncomfortable dog. Depending on the breed of dog they may only need to be bathed every quarter or whenever they are really dirty.

Tips:

- Get puppies used to baths early on by using a damp washcloth to clean their bodies. Use food to distract them while using the cloth to keep them from chewing.
- Use a shampoo that is specially designed for dogs. Do not use human shampoo or dish soap. It is too harsh for their skin. Ask your vet or groomer what they recommend.
- Use warm water when bathing. Do not wash the dog outside on a cold or even cool day. They can become hypothermic.
- Brush out any excess hair before getting them wet. This will also remove excess dirt.
- Give them a Kong or waterproof toy to play with in the bathtub. Try smearing a small amount of natural peanut butter against the side of shower just at head level. The dog will be too busy licking the peanut butter to jump out of the tub.
- Avoid getting water or soap in the dog's eyes and ears.

- Thoroughly rinse out soap and conditioner. Even the gentlest soap can irritate the skin. Be especially cautious around the dog's belly and tail.
- Towel dry your dog or use a blow dryer on the cool setting after the bath.
- Between baths use a waterless odor and dander remover specially designed for dogs.

Helping Your Dog Overcome The Fear Of Thunder And Other Startling Noises

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It's not uncommon for dogs to be frightened of thunder, firecrackers or other loud sounds. These types of fears may develop even though your dog has had no traumatic experiences associated with the sound. Many fear-related problems can be successfully resolved. However, if left untreated, your dog's fearful behavior will probably get worse.

The most common behavior problems associated with fear of loud noises are destruction and escaping. When your dog becomes frightened, she tries to reduce her fear. She may try to escape to a place where the sounds of thunder or firecrackers are less intense. If, by leaving the yard or going into a certain room or area of the house, she feels less afraid, then the escape or destructive behavior is reinforced because it successfully lessens her fear. For some dogs, just the activity or physical exertion associated with one of these behaviors may be an outlet for their anxiety. Unfortunately, escape and/or destructive behavior can be a problem for you and could also result in physical injury to your dog.

Things that are present in the environment whenever your dog hears the startling noise can, from her viewpoint, become associated with the frightening sound. Over a period of time, she may become afraid of other things in the environment that she associates with the noise that frightens her. For example, dogs that are afraid of thunder may later become afraid of the wind, dark clouds and flashes of light that often precede the sound of thunder. Dogs that are afraid of firecrackers may become afraid of the children who have the firecrackers or may become afraid to go in the backyard, if that's where they usually hear the noise.

What You Can Do To Help

Create A Safe Place: Try to create a safe place for your dog to go to when she hears the noises that frighten her. But remember, this must be a safe location from her perspective, not yours. Notice where she goes, or tries to go, when she's frightened, and if at all possible, give her access to that place. If she's trying to get inside the house, consider installing a dog door. If she's trying to get under your bed, give her access to your bedroom. You can also create a "hidey-hole" that's dark, small and shielded from the frightening sound as much as possible (a fan or radio playing will help block out the sound). Encourage her to go there when you're home and the thunder or other noise occurs. Feed her in that location and associate other "good things" happening to her there. She must be able to come and go from this location freely. Confining her in the "hidey-hole" when she doesn't want to be there will only cause more problems. The "safe place" approach may work with some dogs, but not all. Some dogs are motivated to move and be active when frightened and "hiding out" won't help them feel less fearful.

Distract Your Dog: This method works best when your dog is just beginning to get anxious. Encourage her to engage in any activity that captures her attention and distracts her from behaving fearfully. Start when she first alerts you to the noise and is not yet showing a lot of fearful behavior, but is only watchful. Immediately try to interest her in doing something that she really enjoys. Get out the tennis ball and play fetch (in an escape-proof area) or practice some commands that she knows.

Give her a lot of praise and treats for paying attention to the game or the commands. As the storm or the noise builds, you may not be able to keep her attention on the activity, but it might delay the start of the fearful behavior for longer and longer each time you do it. If you can't keep her attention and she begins acting afraid, stop the process. If you continue, you may inadvertently reinforce her fearful behavior.

Behavior Modification: Behavior modification techniques are often successful in reducing fears and phobias. The appropriate techniques are called "counter-conditioning" and "desensitization." This means to condition or teach your dog to respond in non-fearful ways to sounds and other stimuli that previously frightened her. This must be done very gradually. Begin by exposing her to an intensity level of noise that doesn't frighten her and pair it with something pleasant, like a treat or a fun game. Gradually increase the volume as you continue to offer her something pleasant. Through this process, she'll come to associate "good things" with the previously feared sound.

Example:

- ♦ Make a tape with firecracker noises on it, or purchase a CD with storm noises.
- ♦ Play the tape at such a low volume that your dog doesn't respond fearfully. While the tape is playing, feed her dinner, give her a treat or play her favorite game.
- ♦ In your next session, play the tape a little louder while you feed her or play her favorite game.
- ♦ Continue increasing the volume through many sessions over a period of several weeks or months. If at any time while the tape is playing, she displays fearful behavior, STOP. Begin your next session at a lower volume - one that doesn't produce anxiety - and proceed more slowly.

If these techniques aren't used correctly, they won't be successful and can even make the problem worse.

For some fears, it can be difficult to recreate the fear stimulus. For example, thunder is accompanied by changes in barometric pressure, lightening and rain, and your dog's fearful response may be to the combination of these things and not just the thunder. You may need professional assistance to create and implement this kind of behavior modification program.

Consult Your Veterinarian: Medication may be available which can make your dog less anxious for short time periods. Your veterinarian is the only person who is licensed and qualified to prescribe medication for your dog. Don't attempt to give your dog any over-the-counter or prescription medication without consulting your veterinarian. Animals don't respond to drugs the same way people do, and a medication that may be safe for humans could be fatal to your dog. Drug therapy, alone, won't reduce fears and phobias permanently, but in extreme cases, behavior modification and medication used together might be the best approach.

What Not To Do

- ❖ Attempting to reassure your dog when she's afraid may reinforce her fearful behavior. If you pet, soothe or give treats to her when she's behaving fearfully, she may interpret this as a reward for her fearful behavior. Instead, try to behave normally, as if you don't notice her fearfulness.
- ❖ Putting your dog in a crate to prevent her from being destructive during a thunderstorm is not recommended. She'll still be afraid when she's in the crate and is likely to injure herself, perhaps even severely, while attempting to get out of the crate.
- ❖ Don't punish your dog for being afraid. Punishment will only make her more fearful.
- ❖ Don't try to force your dog to experience or be close to the sound that frightens her. Making her stay close to a group of children who are lighting firecrackers will only make her more afraid, and could cause her to become aggressive in an attempt to escape from the situation.

- ❖ Obedience classes won't make your dog less afraid of thunder or other noises, but could help boost her general confidence.

These approaches don't work because they don't decrease your dog's fear. Merely trying to prevent her from escaping or being destructive won't work. If she's still afraid, she'll continue to show that fear in whatever way she can (digging, jumping, climbing, chewing, barking, howling).

Animal Behavior Specialists

If your dog has severe fears and phobias and you're unable to achieve success with the techniques we've outlined here, you should consult with an animal behavior specialist and your veterinarian.

Houstraining Your Adult Dog

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No matter what age your adopted dog is, you should assume they are not housebroken. Dogs in a shelter environment often are not able to get outdoors when they need to eliminate so even if they were trained in their last home, they may have lost that behavior prior to adoption. Your house may also have odors of other animals that can lead to marking as your dog gets used to its new home. Dogs need some time to get used to their new environment, so carefully watch them in the first few weeks to prevent accidents and learn their elimination cues.

If your dog was previously houstrained, you will have an easier time getting it used to using the restroom outdoors. You should assume, however, that your dog is not housebroken so you can prevent any lapses in training. It will take some time for your dog to get used to signaling you when it needs to eliminate. It will also take time for you to read this cues. Follow these suggestions to make the housebreaking process easy on you and your dog.

Houstraining Made Easy

- Establish a routine. Try to get your dog on a set schedule of elimination. Take it out first thing in the morning and the last thing at night. Dogs don't know that you want to sleep in on the weekend so make sure you are taking it out at the same time every day.
- Feed your dog on a set schedule, preferably twice a day. This will make its need to eliminate more consistent. Feeding high quality dry dog food will cut down on the amount of stool and limit digestive distress. When changing foods, gradually mix the foods over a week to ten days to get their stomachs used to the change.
- At bathroom time, try to take your pet out the same door every time. This will make it easier for your dog to signal when he needs to go out.
- Establish a specific area for your dog to eliminate. Make sure it is not too far from the door. Keep the dog on a leash and walk it to the same spot whenever it goes out. It only gets to play or go for a walk after it eliminates. Your dog will not be allowed to have free run of the house until it eliminates outside.
- Use a command to get the dog to go on cue. Once you take the dog to the bathroom spot, say "go potty" and praise it when they does eliminate. You need to make a big deal out of it eliminating outside. Praise it and give it a small food treat. This will make it more likely that it will eliminate outdoors.

- Do not let the dog practice going to the bathroom indoors. When it is in the house do not let it have free run until you are certain they have eliminated outdoors. When your dog is in the house, keep it tethered to you so you can watch for its elimination cues. If you are unable to watch it, keep it confined in a crate or a small area where it won't eliminate (see handout: "Crate Training Your Dog").

Accidents

- Most housebreaking errors are caused by human error. You are responsible for making sure your dog makes the right decisions. However accidents do occasionally occur. Just start over with your housebreaking routine and your dog will be back on track in no time.
- After an accident, make sure you thoroughly clean the area. Use a high quality enzymatic cleaner available at pet stores. Typical household cleaners will not work. Keep the dog away from the area until it has thoroughly dried.
- If you catch your dog beginning to eliminate indoors, quickly say "outside" and take it to their elimination spot. Try not to yell at it or scare it. This will only make the dog fear urinating in front of you and will begin to hide to eliminate. Praise it when it's finish using the bathroom outdoors.
- Do not punish your dog if it does have an accident. The dog is just not used to the rules of the house. Try to be patient and consistent.

Other Housetraining Problems

If you have been consistent with your housetraining and your dog is still having problems several months later, you might want to consider other extenuating circumstances.

- **Medical Problems:** physical problems will make housetraining impossible. Have your dog checked out by a veterinarian to rule out a urinary tract infection, age related incontinence or parasites.
- **Submissive Urination:** some dogs, especially young ones, temporarily lose control of their bladder when they become excited or feel threatened. This usually occurs during greeting, play or when they are being punished. (see handout: "Submissive Urination").
- **Territorial Marking:** dogs sometime deposit small amounts of urine to mark their home area. This tells other dogs that there is a dog already living here. Dogs are more susceptible to this practice if they are not neutered or if there are other pets in the house. Make sure to thoroughly clean your carpet and furnishings before a new dog enters a home with resident pets.
- **Separation Anxiety:** dogs from a shelter environment sometimes suffer from an irrational fear of being left alone. In their owner's absence, they may become destructive and also lose control of their bladders or have a bowel movement in the house. Never punish a dog for this behavior. (see handout: "Separation Anxiety").
- **Fears or Phobias:** like separation anxiety, dogs have emotional problems like humans. Phobic dogs may have housetraining lapses during monsoon season because of the lightning and thunder. Some dogs simply do not like to go outside during a rainstorm. Talk to a behaviorist or your veterinarian to get help with phobias.

While housetraining may take some time, try to be patient and consistent with your new family member. Your dog is getting used to you as you are getting used to it. The easiest way to train the dog is to keep it from having any accidents in the home in the first place. Also, rewarding the dog for the correct behavior will make the behavior more likely to occur in the future. Have fun with your new pet and good luck!

Houstraining Your Puppy

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Houstraining a puppy can be a nerve wracking experience if you don't have the right tools or information. It used to be that you would put a piddle pad or newspaper down in the corner of the room and teach the dog to go there. That is a very effective way of teaching the dog to urinate in one spot but the spot is indoors. You must teach the dog to use the same surface as what is in their backyard. Houstraining does not need to be difficult but you must be vigilant and consistent. Here are the steps you must take to train your puppy.

Errorless Houstraining

It helps to have certain tools to create a place for your puppy during the houstraining process. This method of houstraining is humane, safe and best of all efficient.

Things you will need

1. An exercise pen for puppy. Place this on a non-absorbent surface such as in the kitchen. The exercise pen or "x-pen" needs to be large enough to accommodate the puppy, crate and litter box.
2. A crate large enough for the puppy to stand up, turn around and lay down. If the crate is too big the puppy may use the crate for a bathroom.
3. A cookie sheet or litter box filled with whatever surface is in the backyard. If your backyard is rocks, fill the pan with rocks. If you have grass, place sod in the pan. This will teach the dog to develop a preference for whichever surface you have outside. Do not use newspaper or piddle pads as the dog will only develop a preference for absorbent surfaces like carpet.
4. Fun interactive toys to occupy the puppy. Fill small Kongs with food or peanut butter to keep the puppy busy. Do not give the puppy something that can choke it.
5. A small water dish and food if the puppy is still being free fed.
6. Treats or the puppy's dry dog food.

How to make it work

To make errorless houstraining work, you need to make sure the puppy is in its x-pen whenever you cannot watch it, such as when you are at work or asleep. Anytime the puppy is allowed to eliminate in the house, you must restart the houstraining process. The idea of errorless houstraining is the dog is never allowed to make a mistake in the house. If you are not actively interacting with the puppy and keeping it tethered to you, it must be a safe place with the litter box or outside.

Even though your dog will have their litter box in the x-pen does not mean you won't have to take it outside. You need to take your puppy out as much as possible. The younger it is, the more frequently it needs to go out. Whenever you take your puppy outside, it needs to be on leash. Put the leash on and take it to the place where you want it to eliminate. Tell your dog to "go potty" and give it a food treat when it eliminates. Make a really big deal out of it when it eliminates outside. Think of how excited you get when it pees inside, try putting all that energy into praising. Your dog will learn it will get more attention for doing what it is supposed to be doing. Only give them a few minutes to do their business. Do not allow it to be loose in the house if it did not eliminate outside. Take it back indoors and put it in its pen.

Put the x-pen in a safe area and then put in the dog's crate, litter box, toys and water dish. Teach the puppy to be comfortable in the x-pen by throwing in treats and having the dog walk in to get them. Feed the puppy in the x-pen and give them stuffed Kongs. See handout "Interactive Dog Toys." It will also help you with crate training to give your dog Kongs in the crate as well.

Establish a Routine

Dogs, not unlike people, are creatures of habit. To make housetraining simple, you must stick to a routine that works for you and your dog.

- Take your dog out first thing in the morning and several times throughout the day. They must go out after they eat, wake up, play or drink.
- Feed your dog at the same time every day.
- Do not make sudden changes to diet. This will interrupt the housetraining process.
- Remove the dog's water a couple of hours before going to bed.

Helpful Tips

Housetraining takes time, patience and consistency. Here are some tips that will make housetraining easier for you and your puppy.

- Feed your puppy high quality food designed for their growing bodies. Premium food will lessen the chance of digestive problems.
- Never allow your dog to be in the house without close supervision. Keep your dog tethered to you while they are in the house.
- If they begin to eliminate indoors, say "outside" and take them immediately outdoors to finish eliminating. Reward them for going outside.
- Thoroughly clean any accidents in the house. See handout "Removing Pet Stains and Odors."
- Never punish your puppy for eliminating in the house. If they were allowed to eliminate, you were not watching them carefully enough. It was your fault, not theirs. If you punish the puppy when you catch them, you will only make the puppy afraid of eliminating in front of you. You definitely don't want your puppy to begin peeing behind the couch or in another room.
- Do not walk your dog to get it to eliminate. Make your dog eliminate before starting the walk. If you take your dog home every time after it eliminates, that is like punishing it for eliminating outdoors. Reward your dog for eliminating by taking it for a walk or playing with it afterwards.
- Limit your dog's access to other rooms of the house where they could eliminate.
- If your dog is still experiencing housebreaking problems, look for other causes such as medical problems, separation anxiety, submissive urination or phobias.
- Consult a veterinarian or behaviorist for individual help with housetraining your puppy.

How to Solve the Digging Problem

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Digging is a normal behavior for most dogs, but may occur for widely varying reasons. Your dog may be:

- ❖ seeking entertainment
- ❖ seeking comfort or protection
- ❖ seeking escape
- ❖ seeking prey
- ❖ seeking attention

Dogs don't dig, however, out of spite, revenge or a desire to destroy your yard. Finding ways to make the area where the dog digs unappealing may be effective, however, it's likely that he'll just begin digging in other locations or display other unacceptable behavior, such as chewing or barking. A more effective approach is to address the cause of the digging, rather than creating location aversions.

Seeking Entertainment

Dogs may dig as a form of self-play when they learn that roots and soil “play back.” Your dog may be digging for entertainment if:

- ❖ He’s left alone in the yard for long periods of time without opportunities for interaction with you
- ❖ His environment is relatively barren, without playmates or toys
- ❖ He’s a puppy or adolescent (under three years old) and doesn’t have other outlets for his energy
- ❖ He’s the type of dog (like a terrier) that is bred to dig as part of his “job”
- ❖ He’s a particularly active type of dog (like the herding or sporting breeds) who needs an active job to be happy
- ❖ He’s recently seen you “playing” in the dirt (gardening or working in the yard)

Recommendations:

We recommend expanding your dog’s world and increasing his “people time” the following ways:

- ◆ Walk your dog regularly. It’s good exercise, mentally and physically, for both of you!
- ◆ Teach your dog to fetch a ball or Frisbee and practice with him as often as possible.
- ◆ Teach your dog a few commands and/or tricks. Practice these commands/tricks every day for five to ten minutes.
- ◆ Take an obedience class with your dog and practice daily what you’ve learned.
- ◆ Keep interesting toys in the yard to keep your dog busy even when you’re not around (Kong-type toys filled with treats or busy-box toys). Rotating the toys makes them seem new and interesting.
- ◆ For dedicated diggers, provide an “acceptable digging area.” Choose an area of the yard where it’s okay for your dog to dig and cover the area with loose soil or sand. Hide treats and toys in the designated area to encourage your dog to dig there. If you catch your dog digging in an unacceptable area, interrupt the behavior with a loud noise, say, “no dig” and take the dog to his designated digging area. When he digs in the approved spot, reward him with praise. Make the unacceptable digging spots unattractive (at least temporarily) by setting sharp rocks or chicken wire into the dirt.

Seeking Prey

Dogs may try to pursue burrowing animals or insects that live in your yard. Your dog may be pursuing prey if:

- ❖ The digging is in a very specific area, usually not at the boundaries of the yard
- ❖ The digging is at the roots of trees or shrubs
- ❖ The digging is in a “path” layout

Recommendations:

- ◆ We recommend that you search for possible signs of pests and then rid your yard of them. Avoid methods that could be toxic or dangerous to your pets.

Seeking Comfort or Protection

In hot weather, dogs may dig holes in order to lie in the cool dirt. They may also dig to provide themselves with shelter from cold, wind or rain, or to try to find water. Your dog may be digging for protection or comfort if:

- ❖ The holes are near foundations of buildings, large shade trees or a water source
- ❖ Your dog doesn’t have a shelter or his shelter is exposed to the hot sun or cold winds
- ❖ You find evidence that your dog is lying in the holes he digs

Recommendations:

We recommend that you provide your dog with other sources for the comfort or protection he seeks.

- ◆ Provide an insulated doghouse. Make sure it affords protection from wind and sun.
- ◆ Your dog may still prefer a hole in the ground, in which case you can try the “approved digging area” recommendation described above. Make sure the allowed digging area is in a protected spot.
- ◆ Provide plenty of fresh water in a bowl that can’t be tipped over.

Seeking Attention

Any behavior can become attention-getting behavior if dogs learn that they receive attention for engaging in it (even punishment is a form of attention). Your dog may be digging to get attention if:

- ❖ He digs in your presence
- ❖ His other opportunities for interaction with you are limited

Recommendations:

We recommend that you ignore the behavior.

- ◆ Don’t give your dog attention for digging (remember, even punishment is attention).
- ◆ Make sure your dog has sufficient time with you on a daily basis, so he doesn’t have to resort to misbehaving to get your attention.

Seeking Escape

Dogs may escape to get to something, to get somewhere or to get away from something. For more detailed information, please see our handout: “The Canine Escape Artist.” Your dog may be digging to escape if:

- ❖ He digs along the fence line
- ❖ He digs under the fence

Recommendations:

We recommend the following in order to keep your dog in the yard while you work on the behavior modifications recommended in our handout: “The Canine Escape Artist.”

- ◆ Bury chicken wire at the base of the fence (sharp edges rolled under)
- ◆ Place large rocks, partially buried, along the bottom of the fence line
- ◆ Bury the bottom of the fence one to two feet under the ground
- ◆ Lay chain link fencing on the ground (anchored to the bottom of the fence) to make it uncomfortable for your dog to walk near the fence

Regardless of the reason for digging, we don’t recommend:

- ❖ Punishment after the fact. Not only does this not address the cause of the behavior, any digging that's motivated by fear or anxiety, will be made worse. Punishment may also cause anxiety in dogs that aren't currently fearful.
- ❖ Staking a dog out near a hole he's dug or filling the hole with water. These techniques don't address the cause of the behavior, or the act of digging.

Inside or Out? - Making Your Dog Part of The Family

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Some dog owners believe that dogs, especially large ones, should be "outdoor only" pets. At the Denver Dumb Friends League, we believe that dogs of all sizes are happier, healthier and safer when they can be indoors with their people the majority of the time. Dogs have a need to be social just like we do.

Exercise

Some people believe that dogs need to be outside so they can get plenty of exercise. The truth is that most dogs don't exercise when they're in a yard by themselves; they spend most of their time lying by the back door, waiting for "their people" to either let them in or come out and play with them. However, dogs do need exercise every day, so we recommend walking your dog or engaging him in a regular game of fetch!

Socialization

Dogs need to spend time with "their people" in order to learn their rules and how to get along with them. Dogs that spend most of their time alone or only in the company of other dogs may demonstrate fearful, aggressive or overactive behavior toward family members or strangers because they've never learned how to act around people.

Safety

Dogs that spend most of their time outdoors are at risk for a variety of reasons. They could escape from the yard and become lost; a disgruntled neighbor could throw poison over the fence or spray the dog with mace or pepper spray; or the dog could be stolen and possibly sold to a research facility or dog-fighting ring.

Behavior Problems

Dogs left alone in the yard for long periods of time often get bored, lonely and frustrated. As a result, they may dig or bark excessively. Most cities have noise ordinances that penalize owners of barking dogs. If a dog escapes the yard in search of interesting things to do, not only is he at risk of being injured by a car, but his owner is liable for any damage or harm that he might do.

Protection

Dogs that spend time with their owners and feel attached to them are more likely to be protective of "their family." Dogs that spend most of their time outdoors may be friendly to any stranger who pets or feeds them. Alternatively, some yard dogs may become overly territorial and feel the need to

protect their territory even from family and friends. If a dog is hardly ever allowed to come indoors, it will be difficult for him to distinguish between family, friends and uninvited “guests.”

Puppies

People who are away from home for eight to ten hours a day may be inclined to leave their new puppy in the yard because he can't control his bowels and bladder for that length of time. Although it's true that puppies need to eliminate more frequently than adult dogs, it's also very important for puppies to receive adequate people time at this formative stage of their lives. If dogs aren't adequately socialized when they're young, they're likely to become fearful or aggressive toward people, and possibly other animals. Puppies are also more vulnerable to extreme weather conditions than adult dogs. If you must be away from home for more than four or five hours at a time every day, this may not be the right time for you to adopt a puppy.

The Garage

While dogs may be safer in the garage than in the yard, unless people spend time with them in the garage, they'll still suffer from isolation and, as a result, may develop any of the behavior problems previously mentioned. Most garages are very hot during the summer months and cold during the winter. Garages are often storage places for tools and chemicals that could cause injury to a curious dog. If the garage has an automatic door opener, the dog could run out into the street when the door is opened.

Changing Times

Some of us may have fond childhood memories of a family dog that lived outside, but times have changed. More mothers used to stay at home and children used to spend more time outdoors. The outdoor dog had company while mom hung laundry or gardened and the children played outside. With the advent of two-income families, television and computer games, the outdoor dog is more likely to spend most of his time alone.

Weather Issues

Anyone who has lived in Tucson in the summertime knows how unforgiving our climate is. While your dog may have shade, they are still very hot. They do not sweat like people, so their mechanism for cooling themselves is panting. Dogs lose an amazing amount of water in a short time on a hot day. Also, areas shaded in the morning may not be shaded in the afternoon and vice versa. During monsoon season, dogs are subject to lightning and tremendous amounts of rain.

No Alternative

If you **must** leave your dog outdoors, unsupervised for extended periods of time, please provide him with the following:

- ❖ Shade in the summertime. All dogs need shade, but remember that heavy-coated dogs, such as huskies and chows, are more susceptible to the heat.
- ❖ Fresh food and water every day. In winter, you'll need a heated water bowl to keep the water from freezing. In summer, you'll need a tip-proof bowl so your dog won't tip the bowl over in an effort to get cool.
- ❖ Interactive play time daily.
- ❖ A daily walk.
- ❖ An escape-proof fence with a locked gate.
- ❖ "Busy" toys (see our handout: "Dog Toys and How to Use Them").

Most dogs do enjoy spending time outdoors, but the time dogs spend alone outdoors must be balanced with quality time with "their people." With a little time and training, dogs can learn to be well-behaved around people and can come to respect the house rules. They can then be left inside alone without cause for worry and be trusted companions and members of the family.

Interactive Dog Toys

When you cannot be around to play with your dog, give them a fun mentally stimulating toy to occupy their time. Bones and rawhides can be enjoyable for dogs but they usually aren't interesting enough to keep the dog engaged for a long period of time. Dogs are more likely to focus on a toy that makes noise or release small amounts of food. Bored dogs will find other more destructive ways to entertain themselves. Use a combination of toys to keep the dog busy for hours.

Kong Toys and Squirrel Dudes: These are hard rubber toys that can be stuffed to keep your dog busy when you can't play with them. You can fill a Kong or Squirrel with just about any food that is safe for dogs. Keep your dog busy when you head off to work by filling the toy the night before with their kibble and fill the top with natural peanut butter and freeze it. This will help ease the anxiety of you leaving them alone. This is a great tool for crate training.

Treat Ball, Buster Cube and Twist n' Treat: These toys drop food as the dog knocks it around. This is a great toy for alone training. They come in different sizes and shapes, suitable for most breeds. Most of these toys can be used indoors or outside.

Puzzle Toys: Toys such as the I Qube, Intellibone and Hide-a-Squirrel are plush puzzle toys for your dog to take apart and put back together. Many of these toys have squeakers to keep the dog engaged. You and your dog will get hours of enjoyment out of these.

Balls: Many breeds are natural retrievers and love nothing more than following after a colorful ball in the backyard. Retrieving can be a fun game for you and your dog. Be cautious when deciding what type of ball to give to your dog. Many tennis balls have a chemical coating on them that is toxic to dogs. Also, tennis balls can be very abrasive on the tooth enamel. Try to find a rubber ball that is not too hard or too big for your dog to fit in its mouth.

Frisbees: Dogs that enjoy retrieving or herding often like catching flying discs. Many discs that are specially made for dogs are still very hard and can injure their teeth. Repetitive stress on the dog's ligaments can cause pain or even lead to paralysis. Try to throw the disc low to keep the dog from doing too many acrobatics. One bad leap can lead to knee or back surgery. Choose a fabric or rope disc to save wear and tear on the teeth.

Tug Toys: If you choose to play tug of war with your dog, choose a toy that is specially designed for tug. Do not use a regular plush toy or a rope. These can tear and injure the dog. Check with a trainer about what type of toy to use. (See handout: "How to Play Tug of War").

Safety Precautions

- Check toys often for defects. Even the most indestructible toy can become weak.
- Make sure the toy is size and breed appropriate. Each dog has different jaw strength.
- Never force a dog to play with a toy. Not all dogs like all toys. Find something they do like.
- Dogs can choke on almost any material. Watch them closely when playing.

Introducing Your New Dog to Your Resident Dog

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Animals that live in groups, like dogs, establish a social structure within the group called a dominance hierarchy. This dominance hierarchy serves to maintain order, reduce conflict and promote cooperation among pack members. Dogs also establish territories, which they may defend against intruders or rivals. This social and territorial nature affects their behavior when a new dog is introduced to their household.

Introduction Techniques

- ❖ **Choose A Neutral Location:** Introduce the dogs in a neutral location so that your resident dog is less likely to view the newcomer as a territorial intruder. Each dog should be handled by a separate person. With both dogs on a leash, take them to an area with which neither is familiar, such as a park or a neighbor's yard. If you frequently walk your resident dog in a park near your house, she may view that park as her territory, so choose another site that's unfamiliar to her. We recommend bringing your resident dog with you to the shelter and introducing the dogs before adopting the new dog.
- ❖ **Use Positive Reinforcement:** From the first meeting, you want both dogs to expect "good things" to happen when they're in each other's presence. Let them sniff each other, which is normal canine greeting behavior. As they do, talk to them in a happy, friendly tone of voice - never use a threatening tone of voice. Don't allow them to investigate and sniff each other for a prolonged time, as this may escalate to an aggressive response. After a short time, get both dogs' attention, and give each dog a treat in return for obeying a simple command, such as "sit" or "stay." Take the dogs for a walk and let them sniff and investigate each other at intervals. Continue with the "happy talk," food rewards and simple commands.
- ❖ **Be Aware Of Body Postures:** One body posture that indicates things are going well is a "play-bow." One dog will crouch with her front legs on the ground and her hind end in the air. This is an invitation to play that usually elicits friendly behavior from the other dog. Watch carefully for body postures that indicate an aggressive response, including hair standing up on the other dog's back, teeth-baring, deep growls, a stiff legged gait or a prolonged stare. If you see such postures, interrupt the interaction immediately by calmly and positively getting each dog interested in something else. For example, both handlers can call their dogs to them, have them sit or lie down and reward each with a treat. The dogs will become interested in the treats which will prevent the situation from escalating into aggression. Try letting the dogs interact again, but this time for a shorter time period and/or at a greater distance from each other.
- ❖ **Taking The Dogs Home:** When the dogs seem to be tolerating each other's presence without fearful or aggressive responses, and the investigative greeting behaviors have tapered off, you can take them home. Whether you choose to take them in the same, or different vehicles, will depend on their size, how well they ride in the car, how trouble-free the initial introduction has been and how many dogs are involved.
- ❖ If you have more than one resident dog in your household, it may be best to introduce the resident dogs to the new dog one at a time. Two or more resident dogs may have a tendency to "gang up" on the newcomer.

Introducing Puppies To Adult Dogs

Puppies usually pester adult dogs unmercifully. Before the age of four months, puppies may not recognize subtle body postures from adult dogs signaling that they've had enough. Well-socialized adult dogs with good temperaments may set limits with puppies with a growl or snarl. These

behaviors are normal and should be allowed. Adult dogs that aren't well-socialized, or that have a history of fighting with other dogs, may attempt to set limits with more aggressive behaviors, such as biting, which could harm the puppy. For this reason, a puppy shouldn't be left alone with an adult dog until you're confident the puppy isn't in any danger. Be sure to give the adult dog some quiet time away from the puppy, and perhaps, some individual attention as described above.

When To Get Help

If the introduction of a new dog to a household doesn't go smoothly, contact a professional animal behaviorist immediately. Dogs can be severely injured in fights, and the longer the problem continues, the harder it can be to resolve. Conflicts between dogs in the same family can often be resolved with professional help. Punishment won't work and could make things worse.

Items That Are Poisonous to Your Dog

Car Products

Antifreeze
Brake fluid
Gasoline
Windshield Washer fluid

Cleaners and Chemicals

Bleach
Boric acid
Disinfectants
Drain cleaner
Paint and paint remover
Soaps and detergents
Varnish
Furniture polish

Gardening Products

Fertilizers
Fungicides
Herbicides
Insecticides

In the Medicine Chest

Acetaminophen
Aspirin
Deodorants

Elsewhere in the House

Chocolate
Insecticides
Matches
Mothballs
Rat or mouse poison

Harmful Plants

Amaryllis
Azalea
Balsam Pear
Baneberry
Bird of Paradise
Black Locust
Blue-green
Algae
Boxwood
Buckthorn
Bull Nettle
Buttercup
Calla Lilly

Caladium
Castor Bean
Chalice Vine
Cherry Tree
Chinaberry Tree
Christmas Candle
Coral Plant
Crocus
Daffodil
Daphne
Datura
Deadly Amanita
Death Camas
Delphinium
Dieffenbachia
Eggplant
Elephant's Ear
English Ivy
False Henbane
Foxglove
Golden Chain
Glory Ivy
Hemlock
Henbane
Holly Berry
Horse Chestnut
Hyacinth
Hydrangea
Indian Tobacco
Indian Turnip
Iris
Java Bean (Lima Bean)
Jerusalem Cherry
Jimsonweed
Juniper
Lantana
Larkspur
Laurel
Lily of the Valley
Lobelia
Locoweed
Lords and Ladies
Marijuana
Mayapple
Mescal Bean
Mexicanes
Mistletoe
Mock Orange

Monkshood
Morning Glory
Narcissus
Night-blooming Jasmine
Nightshades (all types)
Nutmeg
Oak
Oleander
Philodendron
Poinsettia
Poison Ivy
Poison Oak
Poison Sumac
Pike Weed
Pokeweed
Poppy
Pothos
Privet
Rhododendron
Rhubarb
Rosary peas
Skunk Cabbage
Snowdrop
Snow on the Mountain
Sweet Pea
Tobacco
Virginia Creeper
Wisteria
Yam Bean
Yew

Keeping Your Dog Confined To Your Property

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We recommend that you keep your dog indoors, unless you're present to supervise his time outside. Dogs are "pack animals" and need to socialize with you and the world around them. By walking your dog regularly (at least twice a day), you can provide him with the exercise and mental stimulation he needs.

If there are times when you must leave your dog outside, you should keep him in a securely fenced yard to prevent him from straying. Within the safe confines of your yard, he should have access to adequate shelter from rain, snow, severe winds and other inclement weather. You may also consider providing him with a covered dog "run" or pen with a doghouse inside. This is a good alternative if you're unable to fence your yard, or if your dog is apt to escape from your yard by jumping the fence.

It is illegal to have your dog chained or on a tie-out in Tucson. A dog on a tie-out is more likely to have aggression problems, dig, bark, and get injured. Dogs on a tie-out can die from exposure or hanging themselves. Find an alternative way to keep your dog in your yard.

Arizona law requires you to make sure your dog has access to appropriate shelter, clean water at all times, and food, if necessary.

It's best to provide your dog with a tip-proof water bowl or place the bowl in an area where it won't get knocked over. You can dig a hole and place the bowl at ground level, which will not only keep it from being knocked over, but will keep the water cool as well. You'll also want to provide your dog with safe toys that are appropriate for his size.

Try to find a way to keep your dog inside if at all possible. Dogs inside are safer, less likely to get sick, better mannered and less likely to become aggressive toward strangers. Almost all dogs can be crate trained or taught to have good manners in the house.

Kitchen Training

By Debbie McKean

I know what it's like to try to cook, or eat a meal, when you own a perpetually starving dog. My *Labradorus goofus*, Pierce, acts as if he hasn't eaten in weeks when there is activity in the kitchen or dining room. He takes every opportunity to search the kitchen floor for molecules of anything remotely edible. He holds his breath if he thinks I'm about to give him a taste of something. He'd not only sell his own soul for a grain of rice, he'd sell mine, too.

Keeping him out from under my feet has been a relatively easy thing to do, using the "slot machine" principle of learning.

I have a small kitchen that leads directly to the dining room. The kitchen is tile floored, the dining room carpeted. Pierce only gets a taste from the kitchen if he's lying with his front legs on the tile, the rest of him on the carpet. This keeps him out of my way, but his head over the tile so any messes are easily cleaned. What he's learned is that if he's not lying down in exactly that spot he gets nothing – ever. Nothing! No food, no attention. Not even negative attention like hearing me yell "get out of here!" If he is lying on that spot he might get something, or he might not. This is why people dump their hard earned money into slot machines. They might go home broke, but then again, they might hit the jackpot. If they don't put any money at all into the machine, they are, for sure, not going to be rewarded. This is Pierce's feeling about his kitchen place.

Pick a spot for your dog that keeps him out of your way during meal preparation or dinner time. In the beginning, reward often whenever he's in that spot. You'll know that he's gotten the hang of the concept when he goes directly to the spot as soon as you go into the kitchen. When that happens, reward heavily (the jackpot!). The next time, reward after he's been on the spot for 30 seconds, the next time wait one minute. Continue to increase the time span until he will stay on his spot for a full two minutes before getting rewarded. When that happens, start staggering the times. One time he may get a reward as soon as he gets to his spot, another time it might be five minutes. If he decides not to wait there, that's fine – no rewards. It won't take long for him to figure out that being on the spot doesn't always get a reward, but being off of the spot never gets a reward. He will choose to take his chances on the spot.

Pierce gets to have a taste of almost anything I'm having – no onions, no spicy foods, no sugar. Breakfast is the least likely time that he's going to be sharing, but I do give him an egg now and then. You don't have to share your food with your dog, you can keep a handful of Cheerios or puppy sized dog biscuits ready and toss one at a time. Whatever you give him, remember to adjust his regular meal to allow for the extras.

Dog-Friendly Kong Recipes

These Kong stuffing recipes feature unique combinations of your dog's own kibble, dog treats, and other pet-friendly foods.

Put some Kong Stuff 'n product (or Cheese Whiz) in the small hole first. Then put dry dog food and/or small dog treats in next. Top with some canned dog food mixed with dry dog food. Place a dog biscuit into the large opening, and leave about 1/3 of it sticking out. Freeze.

Cram a small piece of dog biscuit (or freeze-dried liver) into the small hole of the Kong. Smear a little honey (or Kong Stuff 'n product) around the inside. Fill it up with dry dog food. Then block the big hole with dog biscuits placed sideways inside.

Combine your dog's favorite treat with some moistened dry dog food.

Other Tasty Kong Recipes To Try:

The following Kong stuffings are made with one or more human food ingredients:

CHEESY ELVIS: Combine a ripe banana, 3 spoonfuls of peanut butter, and a slice of cheese. Mix until blended well. Fill the Kong and freeze.

MONSTER MASH: Instant mashed potatoes (without the salt) -- or leftover mashed potatoes from dinner -- mixed with crushed dog biscuits.

DOGGIE OMLET: Combine a scrambled egg, some beef, yogurt, cheese and mashed potatoes all together.

FIBER CRUNCH: Combine bran cereal with some peanut butter.

KONGSICLE JERKY POPS: The equivalent of a popsicle... Seal the small hole of the Kong toy with peanut butter. Fill to the rim with water and a pinch of bouillon (or just use chicken broth instead). Place a stick or two of beef jerky inside. Freeze. (This one gets messy in a hurry, so it's recommended only for outdoor use.)

GOOEY CHEERIOS: Combine cheerios and peanut butter. Freeze.

FRUIT KITTY NOODLES: Mix together some dried fruit, cooked pasta, banana and dry cat food.

BANANA YOGURT: Plain yogurt and mashed bananas. (You can also add a little peanut butter or other fruits.) Then freeze it.

PEANUT BUTTER GLUE: Fill Kong 1/3rd full of dog food. Pour in melted peanut butter (after it has cooled from microwaving). Add more dog food, followed by more melted peanut butter until the Kong toy is full. Freeze until solid.

ROCK-HARD KIBBLE: Combine some of your dog's regular food with cream cheese, which acts as a cement, keeping everything inside.

STICKY BREAD: Smear peanut butter on a piece of bread. Fold it over and stuff inside the Kong. Mix together plain yogurt with some fruits or vegetables (carrots, celery) and pour inside. Freeze. The yogurt sticks to the bread holding everything together.

APPLE PIE: Squeeze a small piece of apple into the tiny hole. Fill the Kong with a small amount of plain yogurt. Add a few slices of mashed banana, more apple, yogurt, banana. End with a slice of banana and chunk of peanut butter on the top.

CRUNCH 'N MUNCH: Combine crumbled rice cakes and dried fruit with some cream cheese and croutons.

PUMPKIN PIECES: Combine some plain yogurt, canned pumpkin, and cooked rice in a small baggie. Mix well inside the bag, then snip off a corner of the bag and squeeze it into the Kong toy. Freeze.

KIBBLE-SICLE: Put a glob of peanut butter into the Kong first. Then add some dry dog food. Pour in some chicken broth. Add some more peanut butter, followed by more dry dog food. End with another glob of peanut butter at the very top. Freeze until solid.

MUTT & CHEESE: Melt a cube of Velveeta cheese in the microwave, until it's gooey -- not runny. Fill the Kong toy with cooked noodles. Pour cheese over noodles.

FROZEN BONZ: Mix up some bananas, unsweetened applesauce, oatmeal, peanut butter, and plain yogurt. Freeze.

CHEEZY DELIGHT: Combine small chunks of cheese (or cheese spread) with some dry dog food and microwave until the cheese melts. Let it cool completely, then pour into the Kong toy. Freeze thoroughly.

CARB DELIGHT: Combine some canned dog food with pasta noodles, rice, mashed potatoes, and some of your dog's dry dog food. Freeze.

NUT CRUNCH: Take 2-3 dog biscuits and crunch them a bit into very tiny bite-sized pieces. Add a couple spoonfuls of peanut butter. Then add a couple spoonfuls of plain yogurt. Mix in bowl until soft, but not runny. Stuff inside Kong.

FRUITOPIA: Combine applesauce with chunks of fruit. Freeze.

PUPPY TRAIL: Fill the Kong with some cashews (unsalted) and freeze-dried liver bits. Add some dry dog food and/or dog crushed dog biscuits and some Cheerios. Drop in a spoonful of peanut butter, followed by some dried fruit. Finally, top it off by using a piece of ravioli or tortellini to close the large opening.

RED ROVER: Smear the inside of the Kong toy with peanut butter. Put a tiny piece of apple into the small hole, then drop some more apple pieces in next. Drop in a scoop of peanut butter (or cream cheese), then drop in some dog food or broken dog treats. Add another scoop of peanut butter (or

cream cheese), then more apples. Plug the large opening with a final scoop of peanut butter (or cream cheese) and freeze.

IMPORTANT: While it's perfectly fine to give your dog a Kong toy that just came out of the freezer, it's NOT okay to give your dog any food item that just came out of the microwave! Make sure any heated items have completely cooled to room temperature before serving to your dog.

Let's Go!! Getting Your Dog to Walk on a Loose Leash

By Pat Miller

Walking politely on a leash is probably one of the most challenging behaviors we ask our dogs to learn. Dogs pull on the leash because we are slow and boring and because pulling seems to get them where they want to go. In other words, pulling is rewarded! By the time most dogs get to a training class, pulling has been rewarded so much that it has become a deeply ingrained habit. The sooner you stop rewarding your dog for pulling, the easier it will be to teach him loose-leash walking.

For now, you will need to think of walks with Fido as training games rather than exercise or destination outings. Keep sessions short at first so you don't relent and let him pull just so you can get to the dog park, etc. Until he is good at walking politely, drive to his off-leash play areas or other destinations, practice polite walking and let him get his exercise and play. Training loose-leash walking should not take the place of normal exercise. Practice after Fido has a good hard play session in your yard or home.

How to Start

The best way to lay a good foundation for loose-leash walking is by starting without the leash. In a quiet place with few distractions, walk around with your dog. Every time your dog is walking near you, mark the behavior (with "yes") and treat. He will eventually decide that "near you" is a great place to be. Then you can start using a verbal "let's walk" or "let's go" cue to let him know what the behavior is called. GRADUALLY increase the distraction over a period of time until you see you are getting a high percentage of the wanted behavior.

Lots of unruly leash behavior starts before you even attach Fido's leash to his collar. Do not make the "walk" as the most exciting event that he may ever have. Make this a "life reward" by training your dog that a walk on the leash is only accomplished when he sits politely and waits to have the leash clipped to the collar. Do not reinforce jumping, barking, and over-excited behavior prior to asking for a calm, loose-leash stroll.

Stay by Me

You will need a mega-supply of treats (high value). At first, this exercise is a very treat-intensive one. Be sure you have plenty of high value treats with you. Now that you have practiced without the leash and the dog is not overly excited about going for a walk, just step forward as you say "let's go". If Fido rushes ahead and hits the end of his leash, stop. Don't jerk, just stand still and wait. Sooner or later Fido will look back at you to see why you aren't following. The instant he looks back at you, mark the behavior with "yes" and treat. Hold the treat in front of you or at your side. If he pulls out

ahead and hits the end of the leash, stop and wait until he looks at you. Repeat the sequence. Ideally, you can keep your dog at your side as you treat and walk. Walking beside you is the most rewarding experience that he has ever had.

You can also do a lot of directional changes to keep Fido from getting bored. If Fido begins to get ahead of you, turn around and go the other way. Bingo! Now he is behind you and, as he turns to hurry and catch up, you have lots of praise and rewards waiting at your side. Caution: the intent here is NOT to jerk him when you go the other way. Just a gentle pressure should be enough for the dog to realize that you have changed direction and he needs to catch up with you. Make it HIS decision to do so – do not pull, tug or jerk.

If He Still Keeps Pulling

If your dog doesn't pay any attention to you and continues to pull excessively on the leash, the dog may be fearful or over-stimulated by the environment. He is either too distracted by all the surroundings and activities or is too stressed to think about eating treats. You MUST try getting his attention focused back on you. This can be done by doing simple exercises (look, sit, down, etc.) that get rewarded when the dog pays attention to you. If that doesn't work, you may need to do one of the following:

1. Increase the value of the treat. Find something that he just would not be able to ignore.
2. Go back to the beginning exercise of working on the "let's go" in a quiet environment and gradually add distractions until he is able to keep his attention focused on the exercise.
3. Be sure to walk him before meals, when he has a little edge to his appetite, not immediately after, when he is full. Do not consider this exercise as a substitute to normal exercise.
4. It is a good practice to go to places where you can just sit and calmly hang out where there is mild distraction. Keep calm and keep dropping treats as he remains calm. If he begins to show too much interest in the surroundings, get his attention back on you by treating. This is teaching him that it is good to stay focused on you and that all the distractions are not as exciting as he initially thought.

Remember, you must take each step carefully and slowly and never ask your dog to do more than what he is ready for.

Loose Leash Walking Training Methods

WALK, STOP AND LOOK

Just walk around with the dog on leash. When the dog is looking at something else, STOP MOVING. When the dog looks back at you say "yes" reward close to your legs. Never step towards the dog to feed, make the dog come to you.

CLOSE

This simply means that the dog can walk or run along beside the handler.

Start teaching "side" by having the dog sit and wait. Walk out to stand about six feet directly in front of your dog with your back to the dog. Drop one hand only and say side or close or whatever words you choose for your command. To help the dog understand this, feed where you want the dog to be, beside you with the hand closest to the dog.

It is important to remember not to allow your other hand to drop or flap when teaching this. It may be helpful to work with someone to watch you and remind you about the other hand.

Once the dog is doing this reliably from a stationery position, add some movement and start walking forward. Remember to feed the dog beside you, not in front of you.

Moving with Your Pet

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Moving to a new home can be just as stressful on your pet as it is on you. Following are some tips to help you help your pet through this change of address.

- ❖ Talk to your veterinarian at least three weeks before the move to determine if your pet will need medication for nervousness or car sickness.
- ❖ Gather the supplies your pet will need during the move - food, water, medications, medical records, bedding and toys. It also helps to bring along some of your dirty laundry because the familiar scent of these belongings is comforting to your pet.
- ❖ Keep your pet away from the moving-day activity by confining him to a room where he feels safe, otherwise, your pet could become frightened and bolt out the door unnoticed. It's difficult to pack, move furniture, and keep an eye on your pet at the same time. Maybe you have a friendly place where your pet can stay during the packing and moving, like a neighbor, friend or boarding kennel. As much as possible, try not to disrupt his daily routine.
- ❖ Be sure your dog or cat has a tag with your new phone number or the number of a friend so there will be someone to contact if your pet gets lost during the move.
- ❖ Move small animals, like birds and hamsters, in their cages, covered with a lightweight fabric. Remove water and any other objects that might loosen and injure them. You must keep the temperature constant for these small friends to survive.
- ❖ Unpack and settle in a bit before turning your pet loose in the house. Keep the doors to your extra rooms closed and slowly give your pet access to them as they become accustomed to their new home.
- ❖ Orient your dog or cat to the new surroundings. If possible, try to place their favorite resting place (dog bed, chair or cushion) in the same position or area, as it was in your old home. Put their food and water bowls and toys in familiar places as well.
- ❖ If you have a dog, walk him around the house, yard and block. If you have a cat, sit quietly and pet her, preferably while sitting in a familiar chair. Provide a place for your cat to hide (she'll do this anyway). Make sure she's eating, drinking and using her litter box.
- ❖ Be patient, loving and reassuring with your pet, and they'll adjust quickly to their new home.

Never Never Say It Say It Twice Twice

By Gary Wilkes

Question: What do the words "bee", "moo", and "yo" have in common?

Answer: Say them once and they have a particular meaning. Say them twice and they mean something completely different.

While we humans are quite comfortable translating this type of “double talk”, it might surprise you to know that dogs also recognize double words, such as “sit-sit”, “down-down” and “come-come”. Some dogs are even capable of understanding “three-peats” such as “sit-sit-sit”, or “stay-stay-STAY!!”

One of the most common training errors is repeating commands. If Fido does not “sit” at the first command, we automatically say the word again (“sit-sit”). Over a series of repetitions, we inadvertently teach the dog to wait patiently until the second or third command before he is required to respond. While the owner fumes about stubbornness and laziness, the dog’s comment would probably be “Look, boss, the command isn’t “sit”, it’s “sit-sit”! I’m just waiting for you to finish the sentence!” The ironic part of this exchange is that both participants are convinced the other is mistaken.

HUMAN COMMUNICATION

The primary reason for this confusion is that most people take language for granted. We are so conditioned to respond to humans that we forget that animals do not think of words as we do. They know words as sounds that are connected to particular situations. Our mistake is that we assume that dogs speak “language” and that commands “cause” behaviors to happen. If we are talking to another human and receive no response to a simple request, we automatically repeat the word on the assumption that the person did not hear us. Often this second command is spoken louder than the first, still convinced that the first word was not heard. To test this reasoning, watch the way tourists attempt to communicate with people who do not speak their language. When the first word brings no response, they automatically say it again louder.

If increased loudness fails, they will probably try to pronounce the word in an exaggerated manner and at times add a foreign sounding ending to it, such as turning “car” into “car-o”. If a person, or a dog, does not know an association between the word and its meaning, saying it twice or twenty times will make no difference.

USE OF PRAISE AND CORRECTIONS

While repeating commands tends to erode good behavior, there are two other types of repeated words that can seriously effect a dog’s learning potential – praise and corrections. Dogs listen for praise to tell them which behaviors bring treats and affection, while scolding identifies those behaviors that should be avoided. Both praise and scolding are dependent upon good timing to be effective. Repeating the words that identify good or bad behavior does not necessarily give them added emphasis but does slow them down. This makes it difficult for the dog to know which behavior “caused” the praise or scolding.

For instance, if Fido likes to jump up on Aunt Winnie, the time to say “NO!” is at the instant he starts to jump. If you are in the habit of saying “no-no-NO!” Fido has already done the deed and escaped before you got to the end of your doubletalk. In this case, Fido heard the first “no” as he started to jump on Winnie. He knows he can ignore this sound because a single “no” has little or no consequence tied to it. It is the all important, and much louder, third “NO!” that he must pay attention

to. By the time he hears the third “NO!” he is racing down the hallway and thinking of darting out of the doggie door. All thoughts of jumping and Winnie are long forgotten.

Just as scolding must be quick to be precise, long winded praise can be equally inefficient. If Fido decides to sit momentarily for Aunt Winnie and then jumps on her, a series of “Good-boy-good-boy-good-dog” will capture both behaviors. Instead of praising just the sit, Fido’s owners have mistakenly reinforced the jump as well. Without a fast signal to identify good behavior, the dog will soon be convinced that the entire sequence is appropriate.

IDENTIFYING “DOUBLETALK”

Avoiding the problem of “doubletalk” takes some concentration and observation. The tendency to repeat oneself is so deeply ingrained that most people are unaware that they do it. The quickest way to tell if you suffer from a case of “doubletalk” is to have a friend listen as you train your dog. Try to work as you always do. Your friend may surprise you by distinctly hearing you repeat a command even though you could swear that you only said it once.

If you are fairly caught giving commands twice, don’t panic. Merely recognizing the problem is half the battle. First, get a package of doggie treats at the store. Offer a small treat to your dog, so that Fido knows what you are offering. Now give the command “sit”, and bite your lip after you say the word. Wait for 30 seconds to allow your dog to realize that you aren’t going to say it twice.

If the dog sits within the time limit, praise him and give him the treat. If Fido simply stands like a zombie, turn your back and walk away from him. A very shocked Fido is most likely to quickly follow you to get another chance for the treat. Ask him to sit again. Give him another 30 seconds. If he does it, praise him and give a treat, if not, walk away and try it again.

After several attempts at getting the dog to respond to only one command, Fido will not wait for the second one. Once he realizes that you aren’t going to repeat yourself, you can give him less and less time to perform the behavior before his failure “causes” you to go away. Soon he will perform the behavior instantly, on the first command.

MARKING THE BEHAVIOR

Reducing praise and scolding to a minimum is an even easier task. Start by developing the habit of saying the word “Yes” at the instant your dog performs a behavior correctly. After you say “Yes”, wait a second before you start including the normal excited and affectionate praise. By waiting a second you are prepared to withhold the more powerful reinforcers if Fido switches to an incorrect response.

In nature, a dog rarely has a second chance to respond to the sound of a bear or the smell of a rabbit. Your dog is descended from animals that must respond instantly to the slightest hint of danger or safety. To utilize your pet’s best attributes, avoid using doubletalk for commands or reinforcers. It’s really not necessary to say it twice.

Normal Puppy Behavior: Nipping and Bite Inhibition

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When puppies play with each other, they use their mouths. Therefore, puppies usually want to bite or "mouth" hands during play or when being petted. With puppies, this is rarely aggressive behavior in which the intent is to do harm. Because puppies are highly motivated to exhibit this type of behavior, attempts to suppress it or stop it are unlikely to be successful unless you give your puppy an alternative behavior. The goals of working with this normal puppy behavior are to redirect your puppy's desire to put something in her mouth onto acceptable chew toys and to teach her to be gentle when a hand is in her mouth.

How to Teach Bite Inhibition and Stop Nipping

- Play interactive games with your dog to teach it acceptable play behavior.
- Find well-socialized adult dogs to teach your puppy bite inhibition. Dogs are more immediate and effective than humans at correcting puppies. They give a warning growl to let the puppy know it is biting a little too hard before they snap or bark at the puppy. Your puppy will need to spend plenty of time with lots of other dogs; find friends and neighbors with non-aggressive adult dogs.
- Redirect your dog to an acceptable toy when it tries to nip at your hand or shoes. Reward your puppy for playing quietly by itself and for chewing on good objects. Have lots of stuffed Kongs or bones ready for your dog.
- Don't get angry while your dog is learning. The angrier you get, the more anxious your dog becomes. If dogs are anxious they are more likely to bite or jump.
- Don't ever wear gloves to play with a nipping dog. The dog will bite harder before you feel it. It may teach the dog that biting hands is fun.
- If your puppy continues to try and nip at you, give it social isolation. If you have repeatedly said "ouch" without result, start saying ouch and leave the room. Go into the bathroom for a few seconds. You can also give the dog a short time out in his crate. A timeout means the puppy does not get any social contact for a very short period of time. This teaches the puppy that nipping will not get the attention it wants. Make sure timeouts are obvious by covering the crate with a dark blanket and not giving the puppy attention. When the puppy nips, take the dog by the collar and put him in his crate. Don't say "come" or "kennel" as this is confusing.

Hand Feeding

- Never feed your puppy out of a bowl. Hand feed it or make it eat out of a Kong. Eating out of a Kong will make your dog work for his dinner.
- Hand feed your dog his dinner. Hand feeding teaches the dog to take food from your hand without biting skin. If your puppy bites your finger too hard, say "ouch" like you have been mortally wounded and put the kibble in the bowl. Give the dog another chance to take the food from your hand. If they bite you again put the kibble in the bowl on the counter and walk away for 5 seconds. Resume the feeding after a break.
- Make sure to praise your dog when it nicely takes food or treats from your hand.

Bite inhibition needs to be taught before the dog gets its adult teeth. Start teaching bite inhibition as soon as your puppy comes home.

Encourage Acceptable Behavior

Redirect your puppy's chewing onto acceptable objects by offering her a small rawhide chew bone or other type of chew toy whenever you pet her. This technique can be especially effective when children want to pet her. As you or the child reach out to scratch her behind the ears (not over the head) with one hand, offer the chew bone with the other. This will not

only help your puppy learn that people and petting are wonderful, but will also keep her mouth busy while she's being petted. Alternate which hand does the petting and which one has the chew bone. At first, you may need to pet or scratch your puppy for short periods of time, since the longer she's petted, the more likely she is to get excited and start to nip.

Jumping Up

When your puppy jumps up on you, she wants attention. Whether you push her away, knee her in the chest or step on her hind legs, she's being rewarded for jumping up (even though it's negative attention, she's still getting what she wants).

When your puppy jumps up:

- ◆ Fold your arms in front of you, and turn away from her.
- ◆ Continue to turn away from her until all four of her feet are on the ground, then quietly praise her and give her a treat. If she knows the "sit" command, give the command when all four of her feet are on the ground, then quietly praise her and give her a treat while she's in the sitting position.
- ◆ When you begin to praise her, if she begins to jump up again, simply turn away and repeat step two, above. Remember to keep your praise low-key.

When your puppy realizes that she gets no attention from you while she's jumping up, but does get attention when she stops jumping up and sits, she'll stop jumping up. Remember, once you've taught her to come and sit quietly for attention, you must reward her behavior. Be careful not to ignore her when she comes and sits politely, waiting for your attention.

What Not To Do

Attempts to tap, slap or hit your puppy in the face for nipping or jumping up are almost guaranteed to backfire. Several things may happen, depending on your puppy's temperament and the severity of the correction:

- ❖ She could become "hand-shy" and cringe or cower whenever a hand comes toward her face.
- ❖ She could become afraid of you and refuse to come to you or approach you at all.
- ❖ She could respond in a defensive manner and attempt to bite you to defend herself.
- ❖ She could interpret a mild slap as an invitation to play, causing her to become more excited and even more likely to nip.

Never play "tug-of-war" or wrestling games with your puppy if you're having a nipping problem. These types of games encourage out-of-control behavior, grabbing, lunging and competition with you. These aren't behaviors you want her to learn.

A Note About Children And Puppies

It's very difficult for children under eight or nine years old to practice the kind of behavior modification outlined here. Children's first reaction to being nipped or mouthed by a puppy is to push the puppy away with their hands and arms. This will be interpreted by the puppy as play and will probably cause the puppy to nip and mouth even more. Dogs should never be left alone with children under ten and parents should monitor closely all interactions between their children and dogs.

Normal Puppy Behavior: Rough Play and Jumping

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Puppies are adorable little bundles of energy with a tremendous capability for fun. While puppies are cute, they are also an amazing amount of work. They need training to learn acceptable behavior and it is your job to teach them. Rough play and jumping is cute when a puppy is 8 weeks old but at fifty pounds, they are dangerous. Start as early as possible teaching your puppy the best way to get attention is to keep all four paws on the ground.

Jumping

Puppies can often hardly control themselves when they meet a new person or when you come home from work. It is adorable but it can be dangerous around small children or the elderly. You need to curb the behavior early to keep from having an adult dog that jumps.

- Praise your puppy when it is calm. If it only gets a reaction when it jumps, it will keep jumping to get attention. Teach your puppy to sit when greeting people.
- Wait to greet your puppy until it is calm. If it is jumping when you walk in the door, walk straight to another room and allow the pup a few minutes to calm.
- If the puppy picks its feet up off the ground, say “uh-oh” and give it a timeout. A timeout is a short period of time in social isolation. Use a covered crate or small bathroom to confine your dog for 10 seconds and let it out. Give your dog a chance to repeat the same mistake. The puppy will never learn not to jump if you don’t give it a chance to learn. You can give multiple timeouts in the same day for jumping.
- Make sure the whole family knows what is expected if the dog jumps. Do not expect young children to teach the dog to not jump. They do not have the strength or size.
- Redirect your dog when it meets new people. Entice your dog with a treat held at nose level and ask it to sit. Keep feeding it to keep it in the seated position.

Rough Play

Rough play between people and puppies will encourage the dog to be hyper. Wrestling and teasing the dog will make your dog more likely to jump and nip. Instead of wrestling with the dog, teach him new tricks or play games with him. See handouts “Enrichment Activities for Dogs” and “Games, Games, Games!”

- Never try to get your dog to bite or jump. The dog will not learn when it is acceptable to jump and when it is not. You don’t want your adult dog jumping on small children.
- Praise and reward the dog for laying quietly and chewing on a bone. Teach the dog to lay on its bed and work on a Kong or long-lasting bone.
- Give your dog lots of positive outlets for its energy. Walk it at least once a day and play fetch or other games with it. A tired dog is a good dog.
- Make sure your dog is not being teased through the fence. Neighborhood kids can make your dog mean by daily abuse. Keep your dog inside where you can watch it.
- Try to stay calm when your dog is getting hyper. Your energy will transfer to your dog. Put it on a leash and practice “puppy push ups” (a series of sits and downs).

Jumping and rough play are normal parts of puppy development. To keep these habits from becoming permanent in adulthood, you must work on them now. Get your puppy some well-socialized adult dog friends to help teach it appropriate behavior. These habits do not have to continue if you are patient and consistent. Consult a behaviorist or join a puppy class for additional help.

Nothing In Life Is Free

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Does your dog: Get on the furniture and refuse to get off? Nudge your hand, insisting on being petted or played with? Refuse to come when called? Defend its food bowl or toys from you? “Nothing in life is free” can help. “Nothing in life is free” is not a magic pill that will solve a specific behavior problem; rather it’s a way of living with your dog that will help it behave better because it trusts and accepts you as its leader and is confident knowing its place in your family.

How to practice “nothing in life is free:”

- ❖ Using positive reinforcement methods, teach your dog a few commands and/or tricks. “Sit,” “Down” and “Stay” are useful commands and “Shake,” “Speak” and “Rollover” are fun tricks to teach your dog.
- ❖ Once your dog knows a few commands, you can begin to practice “nothing in life is free.” Before you give your dog anything (food, a treat, a walk, a pat on the head) it must first perform one of the commands it has learned. For example:

YOU:

Put your dog’s leash on to go for a walk
Feed your dog
Play a game of fetch after work
Rub your dog’s belly while watching TV

YOUR DOG:

Must sit until you’ve put the leash on
Must lie down and stay until you’ve put the bowl down
Must sit and shake hands each time you throw the toy
Must lie down and rollover before being petted

- ❖ Once you’ve given the command, don’t give your dog what it wants until it does what you want. If it refuses to perform the command, walk away, come back a few minutes later and start again. If your dog refuses to obey the command, be patient and remember that eventually it will have to obey your command in order to get what it wants.
- ❖ Make sure your dog knows the command well and understands what you want before you begin practicing “nothing in life is free.”

The benefits of this technique:

- ❖ Most dogs assume a neutral or submissive role toward people, but some dogs will challenge their owners for dominance. Requiring a dominant dog to work for everything it wants is a safe and non-confrontational way to establish control.
- ❖ Dogs who may never display aggressive behavior such as growling, snarling, or snapping, may still manage to manipulate you. These dogs may display affectionate, though “pushy” behavior, such as nudging your hand to be petted or “worming” its way on to the furniture in order to be close to you. This technique gently reminds the “pushy” dog that it must abide by your rules.
- ❖ Obeying commands helps build a fearful dog’s confidence; having a strong leader and knowing its place in the hierarchy helps to make the submissive dog feel more secure.

Why this technique works:

Animals that live in groups, like dogs, establish a social structure within the group called a dominance hierarchy. This dominance hierarchy serves to maintain order, reduce conflict and promote cooperation among pack members. In order for your home to be a safe and happy place for pets and people, it’s best that the humans in the household assume the highest positions in the dominance hierarchy. Practicing “nothing in life is free” effectively and gently communicates to your dog that its position in the hierarchy is subordinate to yours. From your dog’s point of view, children also have a place in this hierarchy. Because children are small and can get down on the dog’s level to play, dogs often consider them to be playmates, rather than superiors. With the supervision of an adult, it’s a

good idea to encourage children in the household (aged eight and over) to also practice “nothing in life is free” with your dog.

Positive Reinforcement:

Training Your Dog Or Cat With Treats And Praise

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Positive reinforcement is the presentation of something pleasant or rewarding immediately following a behavior. It makes that behavior more likely to occur in the future, and is one of the most powerful tools for shaping or changing your pet’s behavior.

Correct timing is essential when using positive reinforcement. The reward must occur immediately, or your pet may not associate it with the proper action. For example, if you have your dog “sit,” but reward him after he’s already stood up again, he’ll think he’s being rewarded for standing up.

Consistency is also essential. Everyone in the family should use the same commands. It might be helpful to post these where everyone can become familiar with them. The most commonly used commands for dogs are “watch me,” “sit,” “stay,” “down” (means lie down), “off” (means off of me or off the furniture), “stand,” “come,” “heel,” (or “let’s go” or “with me”) “leave it” and “settle.” Consistency means always rewarding the desired behavior and never rewarding undesired behavior.

For your pet, positive reinforcement may include food treats, praise, petting or a favorite toy or game. Food treats work especially well for training your dog. A treat should be enticing and irresistible to your pet. It should be a very small, soft, piece of food, so that he will immediately gulp it down and look to you for more. If you give him something he has to chew or that breaks into bits and falls on the floor, he’ll be looking around the floor, not at you. Small pieces of soft commercial treats, hot dogs, cheese, cooked chicken or beef, or miniature marshmallows have all proven successful. Experiment a bit to see what works best for your pet. You may carry the treats in a pocket or a fanny pack on the front of your belt. There are even special treat packs available in many pet stores. Each time you use a food reward, you should couple it with a verbal reward (praise). Say something like, “Good boy” in a positive, happy tone of voice.

Note: Some pets may not be interested in food treats. For those pets, the reward could be in the form of a toy or brief play.

When your pet is learning a new behavior, he should be rewarded every time he does the behavior (continuous reinforcement). It may be necessary to use “shaping,” with your pet (reinforcing something close to the desired response and gradually requiring more from your dog before he gets the treat). For example, if you’re teaching your dog to “shake hands,” you may initially reward him for lifting his paw off the ground, then for lifting it higher, then for touching your hand, then for letting you hold his paw and finally, for actually shaking hands with you.

Intermittent reinforcement can be used once your pet has reliably learned the behavior. At first, you may reward him with the treat three times out of four, then about half the time, then about a third of

the time and so forth, until you're only rewarding him occasionally with the treat. Continue to praise him every time, although once he's learned the behavior, the praise can be less effusive - a quiet, but positive, "Good boy." Use a variable schedule of reinforcement, so he doesn't catch on that he only has to respond every other time. Your pet will learn that if he keeps responding, eventually he'll get what he wants. If you have a dog who barks until you reward him by paying attention to him, you've seen the power of intermittent reinforcement.

By understanding reinforcement, you can see that you're not forever bound to carry a pocketful of goodies. Your pet will soon be working for your verbal praise, because he really does want to please you and he knows that occasionally, he'll get a treat, too! There are many small opportunities to reinforce his behavior. You may have him "sit" before letting him out the door (helps prevent door-darting), before petting him (helps prevent jumping up on people) or before giving him his food. Give him a pat or a "Good dog" for lying quietly by your feet or slip a treat into his Kong toy when he's chewing it, instead of your shoe.

Punishment, including verbal, postural and physical, is the presentation of something unpleasant immediately following a behavior which makes it less likely that the behavior will occur again. To be effective, punishment must be delivered while your pet is engaged in the undesirable behavior, in other words, "caught in the act." If the punishment is delivered too late, your pet will feel "ambushed." From his point of view, the punishment is totally unpredictable, and he's likely to become fearful, distrusting and/or aggressive. This will only lead to more behavior problems. What we humans interpret as "guilty" looks, are actually submissive postures by our pets. Animals don't have a moral sense of right and wrong, but they are adept at associating your presence and the presence of a mess, with punishment.

If you've tried punishment and it hasn't worked, you should definitely stop using punishment and use positive reinforcement instead. Physical punishment usually involves some level of discomfort or even pain, which is likely to cause your pet to bite, as that is the only way he knows to defend himself. Scruff shakes and "alpha rolls" are likely to result in bites, especially if the dog doesn't perceive you to be his superior. Also, punishment might be associated with other stimuli, including people that are present at the time the punishment occurs. For example, a pet that's punished for getting too close to a small child may become fearful of or aggressive to that child.

Preparing Your Pet for Baby's Arrival

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Helping your pet adjust to the arrival of a new baby is much like preparing a young child for the same event. Handling your pet's curiosity, anxiety and increased insistence for attention may seem like an overwhelming task, in addition to preparing yourself and your household for the baby's arrival. You can, however, help your pet adjust to the big changes ahead with minimal time and effort by making gradual adjustments to your lifestyle before the baby arrives.

Sounds And Smells

Your pet is very sensitive to sounds and smells and uses these special abilities to gather information. From your pet's point of view, you and your home have specific identifying smells that are uniquely yours. There are also certain sounds that your pet considers "normal" for your household. Even the different tones of voice you use send important signals. Your baby won't actually change those scents and sounds that are part of your identity, but the baby's arrival will certainly add some new and

very different ones. It's important that you introduce these new smells and sounds to your pet gradually in a calm and pleasant atmosphere.

Each time you introduce something new to your pet, make the experience positive. Stroke him, give him treats and praise him for his good behavior when he's faced with a strange new sound or smell. Relax! If you act anxious, your pet will be anxious too.

Pets tend to feel alarmed and defensive when faced with unexpected sounds. Take a little time to become familiar with the "normal" sounds of your household. Is your home normally quiet, with little background noise? If so, how does your pet react to "extra" sounds like a vacuum cleaner, a ringing telephone or a whistling teakettle? If your home is normally noisy, your pet may simply sleep through the usual sounds, but how does he react when something unusual occurs? The more strongly your pet reacts to unexpected sounds, the more important it is for you to help him adjust to the "baby sounds" which will become a regular part of your home environment.

Try to recognize what smells are prominent in your home, including your own personal scent. Your home has its own mixture of smells that makes it feel familiar and safe - cleaning products, kitchen odors, even dust. Also be aware of the products you use that help create your own individual scent, such as soaps, hair care products, toothpaste, deodorant, laundry detergent and cologne. Any new smells should be added gradually, layered on over a period of weeks. Be aware of the effect these changes have on your pet. While you do this, try to keep one part of your home smelling "right" for your pet.

In order to prepare your pet for the new baby, borrow some baby sounds and smells. Visit a friend's baby or a nursery and make a tape recording of baby sounds like gurgling, laughing, screaming, crying and kicking. Handle a baby and absorb some of the smells of baby lotion, powder and food. Go directly home and spend some positive, relaxed time with your pet. Give him a massage or play with him while the baby smells mingle with your own odors and you introduce the recorded baby sounds.

Start out with the volume turned fairly low and if your pet doesn't react strongly to the sounds, gradually increase the volume to a normal level. As you play the tape, look at your pet and speak calmly, using your pet's name. Smile! It adds a special tone to your voice that helps your pet relax. Repeat these sessions daily until the baby's arrival. After a week or so, add the actual sources of the odors to the sound-and-smell sessions with the supplies you'll be using for your own baby. Think about your pet's perspective. How does a baby bottle smell when it's freshly sterilized? When it's dirty? Borrow a dirty diaper and let your pet become accustomed to that smell, too.

Borrow a baby! After a few weeks, combine baby sounds and smells (which should be familiar to your pet by now) with the bustle and attention of a visiting baby. This is an excellent "dress rehearsal" for the extra visitors and attention you and your baby will receive during the first few weeks after delivery.

After you bring your baby home, be aware of the ways you use your voice. Do you only speak to your pet with negative tones when the baby's in the room ("no," "off," "don't," "stop")? If so, your pet will certainly connect unhappy feelings with the baby's presence. While you hold your baby, smile at your pet and use his name. Give your pet a small treat when the baby is fed to distract your pet from the smell of the baby's food. Make time with the baby a pleasant time for your pet as well.

Environment

If you'll be redecorating or rearranging your home, do it long before the baby arrives. With your supervision, let your pet explore any off-limits areas, then exclude him from these areas before the baby arrives. Screen doors are excellent, inexpensive barriers for off-limits areas like the baby's room. Your pet can still see, smell and hear all the action and so can you. If an off-limits room has

been a favorite area for your pet, this will be a major change for him. Move his favorite things from that room into another area, if possible in the same arrangement.

To boost your pet's confidence, establish a private, comfortable place that your pet can use as a safe retreat. Select an area you can close off, if necessary. The "safe-zone" should include a water bowl, a nest composed of a soft towel or your pet's bed and some worn, unwashed clothing with your smell on it. If your pet is a cat, you should include a litter box in this area also.

Your pet can choose to retreat here, or you can choose to confine him to this "safe zone" when things get extra hectic. Spend some positive time with your pet in this area every day, and if he must be confined for an hour or so, it mustn't seem like punishment. During the transition, respect your pet's need for rest and privacy. This will become especially important when your baby reaches the crawling stage. In addition to a "safe-zone," cats should also have access to plenty of escape routes, hiding places and perches.

Routine

Routine is important to pets because they need to know what to expect. Think ahead and gradually begin establishing new routines early on. Include in your adjusted schedule at least once a day, quality time for just you and your pet, with no competition for your attention. This "non-baby" time is very important for your pet and for you!

Some of the changes in your post-baby routine won't be permanent, like getting up at all hours of the night. Help your pet handle temporary schedule adjustments by ignoring any extra attention-getting ploys used at those times. Try to get back to your normal routines as soon as possible.

Social Order

The first priority for an animal faced with a new family member is to determine who will be top dog (or cat) in the relationship. Dogs and cats live by an unwritten code of ranking in their relationships. For most dogs and cats, it isn't really important which one comes out on top, only that the rank be decided.

Whether you have one pet or several, your own position in the family's social order should be clear - you must always be the top-ranking animal in your family. This will be especially important as your baby's arrival approaches. When your position as leader of the family is secure and it's clear that the baby belongs to you, your pet should not challenge the baby's important rank in your home.

If your pet is very protective of you or your home, is a little pushy about food and toys, has been known to behave aggressively toward other animals and/or challenges your rank as leader, then you probably have a dominant pet (see our handout "Dealing with Dominance in Dogs"). In this situation, it's especially important that family rank and household rules be firmly established before your baby's arrival. You may need to seek the help of an animal behavior specialist.

Reinforce house rules and manners to remind your pet that you are the leader in your family (see our handout "Nothing in Life Is Free"). If your pet hasn't learned basic manners or obedience commands, now is the time to start. Train your dog to sit and lie down on command. This physical control will be especially important when your arms are filled with your baby and various baby paraphernalia.

Be sure that your pet understands when (if ever) jumping onto people or things is appropriate. If cats have always had access to any surface in your home (counters, tables and so forth) you need to decide which places will be off-limits after the baby's arrival. Start training your pet now to discourage him from jumping onto those places. Be considerate, though, and be sure to allow your cat access to some high-up places in your home. Dogs should only be allowed to jump when specific permission is given.

If your pet likes to spend time in your lap, teach him to ask permission before jumping up. You don't have to eliminate lap-time completely, just limit access to those times when you can give him your full

attention and an entire lap. Teach your pet that your voice, your look and your presence are also positive forms of attention -- that you don't always need to touch him to show affection. You can do this simply by talking calmly and pleasantly to your pet as he lies or sits nicely at your feet. Use his name, smile and make eye contact with him.

Insist on good manners from the beginning. Don't accept any whining, growling or pushy behavior in an attempt to gain attention. Give your pet plenty of time and attention whenever you can, but not when he's demanded it!

Plan short periods of play time, treat time and snuggle time with your pet - with and without your baby in the room. Meals should be eaten in the same room and at the same time whenever possible.

Whenever anything inappropriate is in your pet's mouth, offer him a treat in trade for the object, say "drop it" and when he takes the treat praise him enthusiastically and offer him a toy that he's allowed to have. As a "rule of thumb," if you don't want it in your pet's mouth, don't leave it on the floor.

Encourage a positive relationship between your baby and your "furry child" by involving them in activities you can all enjoy. Settle into your favorite chair by a sunny window, with your baby in your lap and your cat on a table beside you, so you can stroke them both at the same time! Walk with your baby in a stroller and your dog on leash, just like you did before the baby came, but with this nice addition. Share mealtimes, and when your baby gets a treat or a toy, be sure your pet has something nice to hold, too.

Removing Pet Stains and Odors

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Dogs and cats often prefer to urinate and defecate on soft absorbent surfaces. Unfortunately, that may include carpets and bedding. After a pet finds a surface they prefer, they will continue to use the same area unless the behavior is interrupted. To keep the pet from going on these indoor surfaces you must thoroughly clean stains. What seems clean to you may not smell clean to the pet. Regular household cleaners will not remove proteins found in urine and feces. Follow these helpful tips to remove stains and odors from your house.

Find Old Stains

Before you can fix a housetraining problem or litter box issue, you must thoroughly clean all stains even if they are old and dry. Even if there is just one spot in the house, your pet will smell the scent and think it is an appropriate place to eliminate.

- Carefully check for stains in the corners of the house and even on walls. Use a black light in a dark room to find hidden urine stains.
- Look for any discoloration on carpet or tile.
- Search for spots around the dog or cat's bed or place they sleep.
- Do what your animal does. Get down on their level and use your nose to sniff it out.

Fixing the Problem

Before you begin cleaning, mark all areas the need to be cleaned with a Post-It note. You will lose track of stains once you start cleaning. Purchase a high quality enzymatic cleaner and some paper towels. Take the pet out of the room where you will be working. Do not put them in a room where they can have more accidents. Remove any objects or bedding that can go in the washing machine.

Clean Washable Items

- Add a pound box of baking soda to your wash with normal detergent.
- Air dry items if possible.
- If stain is still present, add an enzymatic cleaner to the wash cycle. There are enzymatic detergents available at some pet stores and online catalogs.

Clean Carpets and Tile

- For fresh stains, remove as much liquid and solid matter as possible. Do not rub liquids into the carpet, blot carefully with a dry towel or rag. Rubbing will put the stain into the padding.
- On tile, remove all traces of liquid and dispose of paper towels or newspaper outdoors. If you are cleaning cat urine, you can place the paper towel or newspaper in the litter box.
- Thoroughly soak the entire area with an enzymatic cleaner. Do not rinse or wipe off the cleaner. Allow cleaner to soak through to the pad and let it air dry. The smell will remain until the area is completely dry. If the animal keeps going back to the same area, cover the stain with aluminum foil and place a heavy dish on top of it. Animals should not be allowed in the room until the stain is completely dry and you have them tethered to you or can watch them closely.
- For old or stubborn stains, rent a carpet-cleaning machine or wet-dry vac. Follow cleaning with an enzymatic cleaner.

Clean Walls

- If urine has soaked through drywall, you will probably need to replace the area. Once drywall has been saturated, it is impossible to remove the enzymes. If wall is brick or slump block, clean majority of stain off wall and follow with an enzymatic cleaner.

Additional Help

- If animals are engaging in marking behavior, it is very beneficial to have them neutered. Marking behavior decreases when the animal is no longer able to reproduce.
- Do not allow animals free access to areas where they urinate in the house. Restrict access to the house until the animals are housetrained or litter box trained. See handouts on housetraining and crate training.
- If an animal has been using a particular surface for a long period of time, you may need to replace the area. As mentioned above, soiled drywall can rarely be salvaged. Cats will continue to spray walls if left untreated. Urine often soaks through to padding under carpet and needs to be replaced.
- Avoid using a steam cleaner. Steam can make the area spread and thoroughly soak through to the padding.
- Do not use regular household cleaners, especially ones containing vinegar or ammonia.
- If you find your dog or cat is repeatedly using the same item to urinate on, put the item out of reach or make it unattractive. Potted plants and other organic material are common targets.
- Carefully test items before using an enzymatic cleaner. Enzymatic cleaners are not appropriate for all surfaces. Varnishes and paints can react with urine making it impossible to use an enzymatic cleaner. These surfaces will need to be stained, painted or replaced.
- Restart the housetraining process. If you have noticed a sudden change in urinating habits from a cat or dog that is housetrained, take them to the vet immediately to have a urinalysis done. The animal may be suffering from a painful infection that is making good behavior impossible.

- Check your animal's bed to see if urine may be leaking while they sleep. If your dog is leaking small amounts of urine, have him checked out by a veterinarian. He may be suffering from incontinence. Keep bed and sleeping area as clean as possible while pet is being treated.
- Watch for any changes the dog has experienced in his routine. Keep a journal of accidents as well as feeding and exercise schedule.
- For litter box issues, make sure you have not changed litter or location of the litter box. Cats are very sensitive to where the litter box is placed and what is in the box. Keep litter as clean as possible and do not make sudden changes to litter. Many cats do not like scented litter, watch for preferences in your cat.
- It will take time for your animal to be retrained. It took time for him to develop this habit and it will take time to unlearn the behavior. Do not punish the pet for accidents in the house. Follow tips outlined in the handouts on housetraining.
- Be patient during the housetraining process. Your anxiety will only make your pet more stressed. Consult a behaviorist if the problem continues or you need additional support.

Selecting the Right Pet for You

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Puppies and kittens are babies. All babies are cute, cuddly and fun to watch whether they're playing or sleeping. It's wonderful to watch a baby grow, explore and learn. However, we can't predict what kind of personality that baby will have as an adult. It's impossible to look at the rows of human babies in a hospital nursery and know who will be athletic or academic, quiet or talkative, high-or low-energy, artistically or mechanically gifted, sociable or a "loner."

Many physical traits of certain types or breeds of dogs and cats can be fairly predictable. Some are good traits like size, coat and hair types, and some are bad, such as over-breeding, health problems and so forth. Some have general personality traits: retrievers like to have things in their mouths; terriers like to dig; and Siamese-type cats tend to be very talkative. These traits can be predicted to a limited degree, however, it's hazardous to make too many assumptions about any infant's individual personality based solely on what traits his or her "group" is expected to have.

Each baby, whether human, canine or feline, will develop into an individual with a unique personality and special characteristics all their own. Their personality will be based on some inherited and some learned traits, and that combination is what makes each individual unique. When we choose our friends, we look for certain characteristics that fit into our lives, traits we share, and attitudes that help us mesh. Physical characteristics may play a part in those choices, but the real "click" comes from those combined traits that are unique to each individual. The same is true when we choose pets to share our lives with us for ten to 20 years.

How do I decide what age pet is right for me? Many people assume that puppies or kittens are the only "right" age for a new pet to be introduced into the family, when in fact, an older pet is more suitable for many situations. There are important differences between the needs and abilities of adult dogs or cats and puppies or kittens. Puppies and kittens learn many of their most important skills, such as how to be a dog or a cat, from their mothers and littermates until they're ten to twelve weeks old (see our handouts: "General Developmental Stages of Puppy Behavior" and "General Developmental Stages of Kitten Behavior"). Baby animals taken from their families before that age

need specialized lessons and care. Just because they can eat grown-up food doesn't mean they have grown up. However, those first few weeks aren't the only time for learning.

The first six months of life are vital to the development of puppies and kittens and require a lot of time, care and energy. Many households are not able to provide what is needed during this busy period of high-rate learning and growing. Baby animals that are not properly taught and cared for during this time find it difficult to develop the proper social skills. Depending on the type of cat or dog, most pets can be considered "teenagers" or young adults from six months to 16 months old. These puppies and kittens are still growing and developing through adolescence, but are beginning to show the direction that their individual personalities will probably take. They're still high-energy "kids" at this stage and will test your patience at every turn.

Every pet has a history, no matter how young or how old. Some animals come with details about their backgrounds, and some have histories that remain mysterious. A pet of any age can bond with the people who love and care for him, giving as much to the relationship as he receives in return. Some animals may have very negative memories of humans who mistreated them, and need extra time to adjust and to learn to trust. The majority of adult cats and dogs, however, can bond with their new families as deeply as puppies or kittens raised from babyhood.

If you're looking for a pet with certain personality traits, it's more likely that you'll find the right companion to fit your lifestyle if the candidate is at least six months old. If you don't have the patience or energy for a teenager, you should consider an adult dog or cat that is at least one year to eighteen months old. Dogs and cats this age learn quickly, have more coordination and control over their physical functions, and have more predictable natures.

You must first decide if you have the time, energy, space and money for a pet – it's a huge commitment (see our handout: "Is This the Best Time to Adopt a Pet?"). You then need to determine whether a baby animal or a mature pet is more appropriate for your lifestyle and your expectations for this new member of the family.

To help you weigh the "pros" and "cons" of adopting a dog or cat versus a puppy or kitten, ask yourself these important questions:

- ❖ **How much time do you spend at home on an average day?** Puppies and kittens need more physical and emotional involvement with their people than you can give if you are away from home more than six hours a day (see our handouts: "Housetraining Your Puppy," "Dealing with Normal Puppy Behavior: Chewing" and "The Educated Dog"). Most adult pets can easily adjust to your schedule, however, they also need time to learn what is expected of them. Some dogs never grow accustomed to being left alone. If all of your family members are away from home more than eight hours most days, a dog may not be the appropriate choice for your household, and you might want to consider adopting an adult cat (or two) instead.
- ❖ **Are there children in my home? How many? How old?** While many families think they want "a pet for the children," it actually takes a very special combination of parent/child/pet to have a successful relationship. If the child is under six years old, the pet should be over four months old. Puppies and kittens play roughly, and without careful supervision and training, both your child and your pet could have a bad experience with potentially serious consequences.

An adult pet is usually past the stage of becoming overly excited, and you can better gauge how hardy and tolerant he'll be toward childish enthusiasm. It's your responsibility, to your pet and to your child, to monitor their interaction. You can help to strengthen the relationship between your pet and child by showing your respect for your pet's needs and feelings. Teach by example that

your pet is an important family member, not a “plaything” to be neglected and tossed away when no longer new and exciting.

While a family pet offers children a wonderful opportunity to learn about caring and responsibility, regular pet-care duties need to be carefully supervised by an adult. A child should never be solely responsible for a pet. You also need to keep in mind that your child’s life and interests will change over the next ten to 15 years. The ultimate responsibility for a pet’s care and safety is that of the adults in the household.

- ❖ **Will this pet be a companion to another pet?** It’s best to introduce a younger animal to an adult resident pet in your household, but not too young. Your resident cat or dog may respond to a very young kitten or puppy as prey to be hunted. In addition, the older pet may not like the constant bother and play. Very young pets lack the social graces to read your older pet’s irritation and the reflexes to escape if the situation becomes tense. From four to 14 months old is a good age range to introduce a puppy or kitten to your adult pet.

Most pets like to have at least one “buddy.” You might want to consider adopting a pair of adult pets that are already accustomed to and attached to each other? Many pets (especially cats) are surrendered to shelters in “pairs” because their human families are no longer able to care for them. There are many benefits to keeping a pair together.

- ❖ **Do I want a pet that will participate with me in outdoor activities?** If you want a dog to take hiking and camping, to play ball or swim in the lake with, or to train to catch flying discs, you should consider a teenage or young adult dog. For major outdoor activities a dog should be a certain size and have natural hardiness. Not all dogs (even retrievers) are naturally inclined toward catching things. This is an excellent example of finding the right combination of traits to fit your particular criteria.

In addition, dogs that are involved in these types of activities must have excellent manners, and you must be willing and able to build a strong relationship with your dog, including ongoing obedience training. Many pets, like many people, don’t travel well. Some reasons for chronic carsickness can be remedied, but if you specifically want a pet to travel with you to local activities or on short vacations, don’t expect miracles from a young animal. There is no way to tell which pet will have the stomach for it.

- ❖ **Do I want a “lap-pet” that will be physically affectionate and cuddly?** Most puppies and kittens will accept some physical affection, but they don’t all grow up to be pets that like to be cuddled. This is another good example of a specific personality trait, which if it’s important to you, will be easier to find in an adult animal.
- ❖ **Do I prefer a certain physical appearance, coloring or coat?** If you like big cats, shiny dogs or fluffy coats, you can do some “educated guessing” with a puppy or kitten, but you’ll still be guessing. By the time a cat or dog is about six months old, these physical traits will be clear, plus you’ll be able to see what kind of personality traits go along with the “package.”
- ❖ **How large is “too large” for my lifestyle?** If you’re renting your “home,” you’ll want to check the pet policies in your rental contract or lease -- especially regarding size limitations. Puppies and kittens grow up, and believe it or not, thousands of puppies and kittens lose their homes each year because someone didn’t think about what their adult size might be. If you have a specific size in mind for your ideal pet, it’s not a good idea to guess. By the time cats and most dogs are six or seven months old, you can usually tell what size they’ll be when they’re fully grown. Many large dogs are surrendered to animal shelters because they were cute, little, fluffy puppies one week and big, clumsy, enthusiastic teenagers the next. It takes time to teach any dog basic manners,

like not to pull on the leash, not to jump on people and not to play too roughly, and even more time and patience with a puppy.

You can benefit from someone else's poor planning if you adopt an adult or teenage dog, but only if you're willing to do what they did not - teach him the difference between acceptable and unacceptable behavior. This training may take weeks or months, but it can begin very simply with a dog over six months old that's ready and able to learn quickly, and has good muscular coordination and some knowledge of social skills.

Separation Anxiety

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Dogs with separation anxiety exhibit behavior problems when they're left alone. Typically, they'll have a dramatic anxiety response within a short time (20-45 minutes) after their owners leave them. The most common of these behaviors are:

- ❖ Digging, chewing and scratching at doors or windows in an attempt to escape and reunite with their owners.
- ❖ Howling, barking and crying in an attempt to get their owner to return.
- ❖ Urination and defecation (even with housetrained dogs) as a result of distress.

Why Do Dogs Suffer From Separation Anxiety?

We don't fully understand exactly why some dogs suffer from separation anxiety and, under similar circumstances, others don't. It's important to realize, however, that the destruction and house soiling that often occur with separation anxiety are not the dog's attempt to punish or seek revenge on his owner for leaving him alone, but are actually part of a panic response.

Separation anxiety sometimes occurs when:

- ❖ A dog has never or rarely been left alone.
- ❖ Following a long interval, such as a vacation, during which the owner and* dog are constantly together.
- ❖ After a traumatic event (from the dog's point of view) such as a period of time spent at a shelter or boarding kennel.
- ❖ After a change in the family's routine or structure (a child leaving for college, a change in work schedule, a move to a new home, a new pet or person in the home).

How Do I Know If My Dog Has Separation Anxiety?

Because there are many reasons for the behaviors associated with separation anxiety, it's essential to correctly diagnose the reason for the behavior before proceeding with treatment. If most, or all, of the following statements are true about your dog, he may have a separation anxiety problem:

- ❖ The behavior occurs exclusively or primarily when he's left alone.
- ❖ He follows you from room to room whenever you're home.
- ❖ He displays effusive, frantic greeting behaviors.
- ❖ The behavior **always** occurs when he's left alone, whether for a short or long period of time.
- ❖ He reacts with excitement, depression or anxiety to your preparations to leave the house.
- ❖ He dislikes spending time outdoors by himself.

What To Do If Your Dog Has Separation Anxiety

For a minor separation anxiety problem, the following techniques may be helpful by themselves. For more severe problems, these techniques should be used along with the desensitization process described in the next section.

- ❖ Keep arrivals and departures low-key. For example, when you arrive home, ignore your dog for the first few minutes, then calmly pet him.
- ❖ Leave your dog with an article of clothing that smells like you, an old tee shirt that you've slept in recently, for example.
- ❖ Establish a "safety cue"--a word or action that you use **every** time you leave that tells your dog you'll be back. Dogs usually learn to associate certain cues with short absences by their owners. For example, when you take out the garbage, your dog knows you come right back and doesn't become anxious. Therefore, it's helpful to associate a safety cue with your practice departures and short-duration absences.
Some examples of safety cues are: a playing radio; a playing television; a bone; or a toy (one that doesn't have dangerous fillings and can't be torn into pieces). Use your safety cue during practice sessions, but don't present your dog with the safety cue when you leave for a period of time longer than he can tolerate or the value of the safety cue will be lost. Leaving a radio on to provide company for your dog isn't particularly useful by itself, but a playing radio may work if you've used it consistently as a safety cue in your practice sessions. If your dog engages in destructive chewing as part of his separation distress, offering him a chewing item as a safety cue is a good idea. Very hard rubber toys that can be stuffed with treats and Nylabone-like products are good choices.

Desensitization Techniques For More Severe Cases Of Separation Anxiety

The primary treatment for more severe cases of separation anxiety is a systematic process of getting your dog used to being alone. You must teach your dog to remain calm during "practice" departures and short absences. We recommend the following procedure:

- ❖ Begin by engaging in your normal departure activities (getting your keys, putting on your coat), then sit back down. Repeat this step until your dog shows no distress in response to your activities.
- ❖ Next, engage in your normal departure activities **and** go to the door and open it, then sit back down.
- ❖ Next, step outside the door, leaving the door open, then return.
- ❖ Finally, step outside, close the door, then immediately return. Slowly get your dog accustomed to being alone with the door closed between you for several seconds.
- ❖ Proceed very gradually from step to step, repeating each step until your dog shows no signs of distress (the number of repetitions will vary depending on the severity of the problem). If at any time in this process your actions produce an anxiety response in your dog, you've proceeded too

fast. Return to an earlier step in the process and practice this step until the dog shows no distress response, then proceed to the next step.

- ❖ When your dog is tolerating your being on the other side of the door for several seconds, begin short-duration absences. This step involves giving the dog a verbal cue (for example, "I'll be back."), leaving and then returning within a minute. Your return must be low-key: either ignore your dog or greet him quietly and calmly. If he shows no signs of distress, repeat the exercise. If he appears anxious, wait until he relaxes to repeat the exercise. Gradually increase the length of time you're gone.
- ❖ Practice as many absences as possible that last less than ten minutes. You can do many departures within one session if your dog relaxes sufficiently between departures. You should also scatter practice departures and short-duration absences throughout the day.
- ❖ Once your dog can handle short absences (30 to 90 minutes), he'll usually be able to handle longer intervals alone and you won't have to work up to all-day absences minute by minute. The hard part is at the beginning, but the job gets easier as you go along. Nevertheless, you must go slowly at first. How long it takes to condition your dog to being alone depends on the severity of his problem.

Teaching The Sit-Stay And Down-Stay

Practice sit-stay or down-stay exercises using positive reinforcement. Never punish your dog during these training sessions. Gradually increase the distance you move away from your dog. Your goal is to be able to move briefly out of your dog's sight while he remains in the "stay" position. The point is to teach him that he can remain calmly and happily in one place while you go to another. As you progress, you can do this during the course of your normal daily activities. For example, if you're watching television with your dog by your side and you get up for a snack, tell him to stay, and leave the room. When you come back, give him a treat or quietly praise him.

Interim Solutions

Because the above-described treatments can take a while, and because a dog with separation anxiety can do serious damage to himself and/or your home in the interim, some of the following suggestions may be helpful in dealing with the problems in the short term:

- ❖ Consult your veterinarian about the possibility of drug therapy. A good anti-anxiety drug should not sedate your dog, but simply reduce his anxiety while you're gone. Such medication is a temporary measure and should be used in conjunction with behavior modification techniques.
- ❖ Take your dog to a dog day care facility or boarding kennel.
- ❖ Leave your dog with a friend, family member or neighbor.
- ❖ Take your dog to work with you, even for half a day, if possible.

What Won't Help A Separation Anxiety Problem

- ❖ Punishment is not an effective way to treat separation anxiety. In fact, if you punish your dog after you return home it may actually increase his separation anxiety.
- ❖ Getting another pet. This usually doesn't help an anxious dog as his anxiety is the result of his separation from you, his person, not merely the result of being alone.
- ❖ Crating your dog. Your dog will still engage in anxiety responses in the crate. He may urinate, defecate, howl or even injure himself in an attempt to escape from the crate.
- ❖ Leave the radio on (unless the radio is used as a "safety cue" - see above).

- ❖ Obedience school. While obedience training is always a good idea, it won't directly help a separation anxiety problem. Separation anxiety is not the result of disobedience or lack of training, it's a panic response.

Submissive and Excitement Urination

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Submissive Urination

Submissive urination occurs when a dog feels threatened. It may occur when he's being punished or verbally scolded, or when he's approached by someone he perceives to be threatening to him. It's important to remember that this response is based on the dog's perception of a threat, not the person's actual intention. Submissive urination may resolve as your dog gains confidence. You can help to build his confidence by teaching him commands and rewarding him for obeying. You should also gradually expose him to new people and new situations and try to make sure all of his new experiences are positive and happy.

Your Dog May Be Submissively Urinating If:

- ❖ Urination occurs when he's being scolded.
- ❖ Urination occurs when someone approaches him.
- ❖ He has a history of rough treatment or punishment after the fact.
- ❖ Urination occurs when he's being greeted.
- ❖ He is a somewhat shy, anxious or timid dog.
- ❖ The urination is accompanied by submissive postures, such as crouching or rolling over and exposing his belly.

What To Do If Your Dog Has A Submissive Urination Problem:

- ❖ Take your dog to the vet to rule out medical reasons for the behavior.
- ❖ Keep greetings low-key.
- ❖ Encourage and reward confident postures from him.
- ❖ Give him an alternative to behaving submissively. For example, if he knows a few commands, have him "sit" or "shake" as you approach, and reward him for obeying.
- ❖ Avoid approaching him with postures that he reads as dominant, for example:
 - ◆ Avoid direct eye contact – look at his back or tail instead.
 - ◆ Get down on his level by bending at the knees rather than leaning over from the waist and ask others to approach him in the same way.
 - ◆ Pet him under the chin rather than on top of the head.
 - ◆ Approach him from the side, rather than from the front, and/or present the side of your body to him, rather than your full front.
- ❖ Don't punish or scold him - this will only make the problem worse.

Excitement Urination

Excitement urination occurs most often during greetings and playtime and is not accompanied by submissive posturing. Excitement urination usually resolves on its own as a dog matures, if it's not made worse by punishment or inadvertent reinforcement.

Your Dog May Have An Excitement Urination Problem If:

- ❖ Urination occurs when your dog is excited, for example during greetings or during playtime.
- ❖ Urination occurs when your dog is less than one year old.

What To Do If Your Dog Has An Excitement Urination Problem:

- ❖ Keep greetings low-key.
- ❖ To avoid accidents, play outdoors until the problem is resolved.
- ❖ Don't punish or scold him.
- ❖ Take your dog to the veterinarian to rule out medical reasons for the behavior.
- ❖ Ignore him until he's calm.

The Canine Escape Artist

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Escaping is a serious problem for both you and your dog, as it could have tragic consequences. If your dog is running loose, he is in danger of being hit by a car, being injured in a fight with another dog, or being hurt in a number of other ways. Additionally, you're liable for any damage or injury your dog may cause and you may be required to pay a fine if he's picked up by an animal control agency. In order to resolve an escaping problem, you must determine not only how your dog is getting out, but also why he is escaping.

Why Dogs Escape

Social Isolation/Frustration

Your dog may be escaping because he's bored and lonely if:

- ◆ He is left alone for long periods of time without opportunities for interaction with you.
- ◆ His environment is relatively barren, without playmates or toys.
- ◆ He is a puppy or adolescent (under three years old) and doesn't have other outlets for his energy.
- ◆ He is a particularly active type of dog (like the herding or sporting breeds) who needs an active job in order to be happy.
- ◆ The place he goes to when he escapes provides him with interaction and fun things to do. For example, he goes to play with a neighbor's dog or to the local school yard to play with the children.

Recommendations:

We recommend expanding your dog's world and increasing his "people time" in the following ways:

- ◆ Walk your dog daily. It's good exercise, both mentally and physically.
- ◆ Teach your dog to fetch a ball or Frisbee and practice with him as often as possible.
- ◆ Teach your dog a few commands and/or tricks. Practice these commands and/or tricks every day for three to five minutes.
- ◆ Take an obedience class with your dog and practice daily what you've learned.
- ◆ Provide interesting toys (Kong-type toys filled with treats or busy-box toys) to keep your dog busy when you're not home.
- ◆ Rotate your dog's toys to make them seem new and interesting (see our handout: "Dog Toys and How to Use Them").
- ◆ Keep your dog inside when you're unable to supervise him.
- ◆ If you have to be away from home for extended periods of time, take your dog to work with you or to a "doggie day care," or ask a friend or neighbor to walk your dog.

Sexual Roaming

Dogs become sexually mature at around six months of age. An intact male dog is motivated by a strong, natural drive to seek out female dogs. It can be very difficult to prevent an intact dog from escaping, because his motivation to do so is very high.

Recommendations:

- ♦ Have your male dog neutered. Studies show that neutering will decrease sexual roaming in about 90% of the cases. If, however, an intact male has established a pattern of escaping, he may continue to do so even after he's neutered, so it's important to have him neutered as soon as possible.
- ♦ Have your female dog spayed. If your intact female dog escapes your yard while she's in heat, she'll probably get pregnant. Millions of unwanted pets are euthanized every year. Please don't contribute to the pet overpopulation problem by allowing your female dog to breed indiscriminately.

Fears and Phobias

Your dog may be escaping in response to something he is afraid of if he escapes when he is exposed to loud noises, such as thunderstorms, firecrackers or construction sounds.

Recommendations:

- ♦ Identify what is frightening your dog and desensitize him to it (see our handout: "Helping Your Dog Overcome the Fear of Thunder and Other Startling Noises"). You may need professional help with the desensitization process. Check with your veterinarian about giving your dog an anti-anxiety medication while you work on behavior modification.
- ♦ Leave your dog indoors when he is likely to encounter the fear stimulus. Mute noise by leaving him in a basement or windowless bathroom and leave on a television, radio or loud fan.
- ♦ Provide a "safe place" for your dog. Observe where he likes to go when he feels anxious, then allow access to that space, or create a similar space for him to use when the fear stimulus is present.

Separation Anxiety

Your dog may be escaping due to separation anxiety if:

- ❖ He escapes as soon as, or shortly after, you leave.
- ❖ He displays other behaviors that reflect a strong attachment to you, such as following you around, frantic greetings or reacting anxiously to your preparations to leave.
- ❖ He remains near your home after he's escaped.

- ❖ Factors that can precipitate a separation anxiety problem:
 - ❖ There has recently been a change in your family's schedule that has resulted in your dog being left alone more often.
 - ❖ Your family has recently moved to a new house.
 - ❖ There's been a death or loss of a family member or another family pet.
 - ❖ Your dog has recently spent time at an animal shelter or boarding kennel.

Recommendations:

Separation anxiety can be resolved using counter-conditioning and desensitization techniques (see our handout: "Separation Anxiety").

How Dogs Escape

Some dogs jump fences, but most actually climb them, using some part of the fence to push off from. A dog may also dig under the fence, chew through the fence, learn to open a gate or use any combination of these methods to get out of the yard. Knowing how your dog gets out will help you to modify your yard. However, until you know why your dog wants to escape, and you can decrease his motivation for doing so, you won't be able to successfully resolve the problem.

Recommendations for Preventing Escape

For climbing/jumping dogs: Add an extension to your fence that tilts in toward the yard. The extension doesn't necessarily need to make the fence much higher, as long as it tilts inward at about a 45-degree angle.

For digging dogs: Bury chicken wire at the base of your fence (with the sharp edges rolled inward), place large rocks at the base, or lay chain-link fencing on the ground.

Punishment

- ❖ Punishment is only effective if administered at the moment your dog is escaping and if he doesn't associate the correction with you. If you can squirt him with a hose or make a loud noise as he is going over, under or through the fence, it might be unpleasant enough that he won't want to do it again. However, if he realizes that you made the noise or squirted the water, he'll simply refrain from escaping when you're around. This type of correction is difficult to administer effectively, and won't resolve the problem if used by itself. You must also give your dog less reason to escape and make it more difficult to do.
- ❖ Never punish your dog after he's already out of the yard. Dogs associate punishment with what they're doing at the time they're punished. Punishing your dog after the fact won't eliminate the escaping behavior, but will only make him afraid to come to you.
- ❖ Never punish your dog if the escaping is a fear-related problem or is due to separation anxiety. Punishing fear-motivated behaviors will only make your dog more afraid, and thus make the problem worse.

The Educated Dog

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When you feel frustrated with your dog's behavior, remember that someone must teach a dog what is acceptable behavior and what is not. A dog that hasn't been given any instructions, training or boundaries can't possibly know what you expect of him. By teaching your dog how you want him to behave, you'll not only have a saner household, but a healthier and happier dog as well.

An Educated Dog:

- ❖ Allows you to handle every part of his body, to check for injury or illness and to give him medication.
- ❖ Has good manners, so he can spend most of his time indoors with his people. That means more supervision, less boredom and fewer opportunities for dangerous mischief. The more time you spend with your dog, the more you will also be able to notice when something is wrong with him.
- ❖ Wants to stay near you, listening for instructions (and praise). This means he'll have less opportunity to stray into danger.
- ❖ Will walk or run beside you on a leash without pulling, dragging or strangling, so you and your dog can get more exercise and spend more time together.
- ❖ Knows that "drop it" and "leave it alone" are phrases that mean business, so he'll have fewer opportunities to swallow dangerous objects. He also can be taught what things and places are out

of bounds, like hot stoves, heaters or anxious cats. However, you'll still need to limit his access to dangerous places when you cannot supervise or instruct him.

- ❖ Will "sit" immediately, simply because you say so. No matter what danger may be imminent, a dog that is suddenly still is suddenly safe. And a dog that will "stay" in that position is even safer.
- ❖ Understands his boundaries, knows what's expected of him and has fewer anxieties. Less stress means a healthier dog.

By training your dog, you can help prevent tragedy and develop a better relationship with him. Keep in mind, however, that even an educated dog needs supervision, instruction and boundaries -- sometimes even physical boundaries. Allowing your dog, no matter how educated he may be, to walk, run or roam outside of a fenced area or off of a leash, is putting him in danger.

How to Have a Well-Trained Socialized Dog

- Call your local Behaviorist and get your dog enrolled in a class. Dogs under 8 months of age can get into a puppy class to be socialized. Dogs too old for puppy class can join a basic obedience class to learn to sit, stay, walk on a leash, come and settle. No dog is too old or too young to begin learning.
- Take your dog out into the world. Teach your dog how to have good manners in any situation. Train in different locations with different distractions.
- If you have a puppy, get it used to being handled and held like it would be at the vet's office.
- Give your dog enrichment activities and interactive toys to burn excess energy. See handouts "Interactive Dog Toys" and "Enrichment Activities."
- Make training fun. Positive reinforcement classes are fun, but you can also play games with your dog to hone its skills. See handout "Games, Games, Games!"

Modern methods of dog training are not likely to be force-based or difficult to learn. Positive reinforcement training focuses on training your dog by using a reward system. Training should strengthen the bond you have with your dog, not damage it. If you find yourself in a class and you don't feel comfortable with the method or training, find a new class. Be wary of anyone who guarantees your dog's obedience performance. Have fun with training and enjoy your dog!

The No Wiggling Exercise

By Nancy Gyes

During this handling exercise I expect my dog to stay in a position at my side, without struggling, while being touched and examined. The dog needs to be on leash for the exercise. I kneel on the ground with the leash tucked under my knee. I set a bowl of treats out of his reach off to my side, where I can pick up one cookie at a time. I do not want food in my hand. If having the bowl of treats on the floor beside you is too distracting for your pup, put the bowl on a table, but within reach. You can use a clicker, but I find it challenges my dexterity too much while doing these exercises.

I use the marker word "Yes" or just quietly praise when my dog tolerates my touch. I pet him gently down his back with my left hand for just a couple seconds while my right hand holds the collar. I say Yes the instant he stops wiggling; then I exchange hands with my left hand holding the collar as the right reaches for a treat and hands it to him. I switch hands again and repeat many times.

Next, with my hand under his belly, I gently lift him into a stand and I tickle his belly softly. I also whisper a calm *Good Boy* while he stands. I say Yes, change hands, feed, change back again, and repeat. I lift a leg from the elbow, mark it with Yes, change hands, feed, change back again, and repeat. I lift a leg from the elbow, mark it with Yes, release the leg, change hands, feed, change hands again, and repeat. If holding the leg was okay, then I move farther down the leg the next time (mark, reward), and then move my hand to his foot (mark, reward).

I put my hand on his back, pet all the way down his back, and gently tuck him into a sit by folding him into the position with my hand below his rump. Never push on your puppy's rear to get him into a sit. I do not use any words to cue positions like sit, down, or stand. This exercise does not teach your dog to sit, stand, or down; it teaches your dog to tolerate handling and be rewarded accordingly.

The sessions last about 5 minutes. We do these when my dog has already been out for some exercise and play, not when he is amped and wants to wiggle. Handle in all ways and positions (sit, down, stand). Touch your dog's face, ears, mouth, teeth, and each leg from top to foot; rub the foot gently and separate each toe and rub it gently. I do the outside left legs when the dog is on my left side and the right legs when he is on my right. Be sure to rub gently between the back legs, and touch the privates. Every time the pup tolerates your touching a part of him, he is marked and rewarded while he is tucked into your side.

The Training Tether

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A training tether is a temporary management tool that can be used to prevent behavior problems or assist in resolving an existing problem. The idea is to tether your dog in the places where your family spends time, such as the kitchen, the TV room, or the bedroom, so he can be with you but doesn't have to be the center of attention, and he can't wander off and get into trouble. The training tether should only be used when you are close by; never leave a dog tethered when you are not home.

Getting Started

A tether should be 2 to 3 feet long and preferably made of plastic coated wire cable with a snap at both ends. The plastic coating protects furniture and the wire prevents the dog from chewing through it. A leash or rope may be used but should be soaked in a taste aversive to prevent the dog from chewing it.

Attach the tether to a heavy piece of furniture, a door knob, or to an eyebolt screwed securely into the wall. Make the tether short enough that the dog won't get tangled in it, and make the tethering spot a happy place – put a rug or mat there and a chew toy. Don't use a ball that can roll out of range.

Getting Your Dog Accustomed to the Training Tether

Start by putting your dog on the tether a few times a day for five to ten minutes. Give him a reward as soon as he gets to the tethering place, then give him a special treat – like a food stuffed Kong while you settle down nearby to watch TV, read, etc.

Slowly extend the length of time the dog is on the tether, but also vary the time, mixing short sessions with longer ones.

If the dog barks or whines while on the tether, leave the room until he is quiet. Then return and reward his quiet behavior. The idea is to ignore unacceptable behavior and reward calm behavior with a quiet praise and/or a small, soft treat.

Using the Training Tether for Behavior Problems and Problem Prevention

1. Your new dog – containment and management: If you are busy (reading, watching TV, doing dishes) put your dog nearby on the tether so he can be with you, but he can't wander off and chew something he shouldn't. Supply him with a stuffed Kong or a chew toy and remember to reward him when he is calm and quiet.
2. Housetraining: Dogs generally will not eliminate in the space they have to lie in, so the tether can be used between trips outside for elimination. (See our handouts "Re-housetraining Your Adult Dog" and "Housetraining Your Puppy.")
3. Jumping up: If your dog jumps up on guests, put him on his tether before visitors arrive. After the guests are seated and your dog is behaving calmly, allow him to meet everyone.
4. Separation anxiety: If your dog follows you from room to room, use the tether to help him learn to relax without you. Leave for short periods – starting with seconds and building up to minutes. Don't make a big deal of leaving or returning. (See our handout "Separation Anxiety.")
5. The attention junkie: If your dog pesters you constantly for attention or play, use the tether to teach him that he can be with you without being the center of attention.
6. Door darting: If your dog attempts to escape through the door any time someone comes or goes, be sure he is on the tether before the door opens.
7. Begging at the dinner table: Place your dog on his tether while you are eating dinner.

Rules for Using the Training Tether

1. Only put your dog on the training tether when you are around to supervise. Never leave a dog tethered when you are not at home.
2. Use only a buckle collar with the training tether; never use a choke chain, slip lead, prong collar or head halter with the training tether.
3. The training tether may also be used outdoors; for example, while you garden or have dinner on the patio, but only when someone is close by.
4. The training tether area should be a pleasant and safe place for your dog. Never use it as punishment. Don't allow children or other pets to bother your dog when he is on the training tether.
5. Reward calm behavior with a quiet praise and tasty treats.

Tips for Successful Training

Used with the permission of Doug Somerville.

1. **Don't think of dog behaviors as "good" and "bad"** – those words carry too many human moral implications which have no place nor meaning in a dog's existence. Instead, think of their behaviors in terms of **desirable and undesirable**. Many dogs love to jump up on people. This is a natural expression of affection for the dog and not a "bad dog thing". It is, however, undesirable in many human situations. The dog did not do a "bad". He simply did something we find undesirable. By thinking in this way, we can avoid becoming angry at the dog and quite possibly making him afraid and distrustful of us. Instead of punishing the dog, we teach him an alternative behavior such as "SIT" (desirable). If he's sitting, he can't be jumping! Your most important asset in training your dog is **PATIENCE**. When you get mad or lose your temper, you both lose. Period.
2. Set your dog up for success! Manage his environment so he can't make mistakes. When training, keep your criteria low enough that the dog can usually be successful. **Always Give Your Dog 100% of Your Attention When Training**. If you are paying close attention to the dog, you will develop the insight necessary to correctly time your praise and rewards (or corrections) to reinforce the behaviors you desire.
3. Begin with a high rate of reinforcement. Your dog won't be spoiled, he will be eager to work because it's fun. **Use really good treats**. Keep treats stashed in bowls out of the dog's reach all over the house. That way you can reinforce desirable behaviors anytime. **Instant praise**, followed by rewards help him learn and keep him interested and motivated! You can go to random rewards later when he understands the exercise thoroughly.
4. Train many exercises off-leash whenever it is safely possible and practical. Remember, the leash is a tether for safety – it's not necessarily a training tool.
5. Divide your dog's food into tiny portions and have him work for it throughout the day. Several short training sessions will accomplish more than a single long one. Watch you dog and you will soon be able to tell when he begins to lose interest. End the session with a short game before he gets bored. Repetition is necessary for learning to occur, but too much repetition at one time kills enthusiasm and actually inhibits learning.
6. As your dog learns a behavior, change the picture a little bit every time you ask for that behavior. Change you position. Change locations. The only thing that should be consistent is the cue. This will help him learn to perform the correct behavior regardless of location or distraction. Don't push him too fast. If you have a problem, back up to his "comfort zone" and advance more slowly. **Above all, BE PATIENT.**
7. **PRAISE every reasonably decent exercise**, but begin to randomize your rewards (every 2nd – 3rd exercise, etc.) so that the dog is never quite sure when he will be rewarded. Focus your attention on him and **Reward His Better Performances**. You are now beginning to fine-tune your dog's performance while developing his gambler's instinct. The dog is learning that **PRAISE** (you did good!) is instantly forthcoming, while the treat is not always available or may be delayed. He is never quite sure which performance will produce the reward so he tries harder. After several weeks of training with treats immediately available on your person, begin to leave them on a table. It's okay to

delay delivery of the treat for a moment while you walk to a bowl. Continue randomizing rewards by treating only his better performances.

8. Reinforcing desirable behavior is like putting money in the bank. It earns dividends by strengthening the bond with your dog. The more \$\$\$ in the account, the more you can draw on it later when you need it. Punishment, even if effective, removes money from the account and weakens the relationship.

9. Ignore undesirable behavior as much as possible. If you do need to use a correction, evaluate its effect. Did the undesirable behavior not only stop temporarily, but happen less frequently? If not, it wasn't a correction – it was just abuse.

Tug of War: An Enrichment Activity

Tug of war can be a fun rewarding activity for you and your dog. It used to be said that playing tug of war with your dog will make them dominant and aggressive. It is true that letting your dog decide when they play and how long they play can make them more likely to have dominant behaviors, if you follow the rules outlined here, you can have a new fun game to play together.

Rules

- To play tug you first must teach the dog to release the toy. Use a command such a “take it” to signal the dog that they can take the toy and “out” to give up the toy. Teaching them to take it should be fairly easy. Say “take it” and gently pull back when they do. Praise them for touching the toy with their mouth. To get them to release the toy, show the dog a tasty food treat and when they drop it, give the dog the treat. This will teach them that you are not stealing the toy, but rather trading them for something better. If you are unable to do this on your own, consult a trainer.
- Select a toy that will be safe for the dog. Rope toys can rip the dog's gums and stuffed animals can tear open, injuring the dog's neck. There are special toys designed to use with tug of war. Make sure the size and material is safe for your dog's size and breed.
- You always initiate a game of tug. The tug toy will be kept out of reach of the dog until you are able to play. This should be a special toy that you control. If your dog is not interested in playing tug do not tease them to incite play. Praise them if they do decide to grip the toy.
- The game is over if their teeth touch your skin. Scream “ouch” and put the toy out of sight for 10 seconds. Resume play after the dog has calmed down. If they put their teeth on you again, the game is over until the next day.
- Only play when your dog seems interested in the game. If the dog gets bored, trade the toy for a treat and put it away until your next play session.
- Take obedience breaks. Make the dog do several “outs” in a play session and make them sit, down or roll over before they can re-grip. This is a great way to reward obedience without having to use food.

Important Safety Precautions

- Never play tug with a dog that has a history of biting or does not have good bite inhibition.

- Do not allow young children to play tug with the dog.
- Everyone in the family must follow the rules of the game. No one should continually tease the dog.
- Do not play tug with a dog that will not “out” or growls when you go near its toys.
- Never try to rip the toy out of the dog’s mouth. They will grip the toy harder and you might damage the dog’s teeth.
- Do not play tug with a dog that already has dominant tendencies. Consult a behaviorist. See handout “Nothing in Life is Free.”

Twelve Tips for a Well Behaved Dog

by Robin Kovary

1. Start training your puppy early on. While old dogs can be taught new tricks, what’s learned earliest is often learned more quickly and easily. Moreover, the older the dog, the more bad habits will likely need to be “un-learned”. When it comes to raising and training a dog, an ounce of problem prevention is certainly worth a pound of cure!
2. Train your dog gently and humanely, and whenever possible, teach him using positive, motivational methods. Keep obedience sessions upbeat so that the training process is enjoyable for all parties involved. If training your pooch is a drudgery, rev things up a bit, and try the “play-training” approach: incorporate constructive, non-adversarial games (such as “Go Find”, “Hide ‘n’ Seek”, retrieving, etc.) into your training sessions.
3. Does your dog treat you like “hired help” at home? Does he treat you like a human gymnasium when you’re sitting on the furniture? Does he beg at the table? Jump up on visitors? Demand your attention by annoying you to death? Ignore your commands? How well your dog responds to you at home affects his behavior outdoors as well. If your dog doesn’t respond reliably to commands at home (where distractions are relatively minimal), he certainly won’t respond to you properly outdoors where he’s tempted by other dogs, pigeons, passersby, sidewalk food scraps, etc.
4. 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.
5. One command should equal one response, so give the command only once, 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 lure your dog into the sit position, then praise/reward.
6. Avoid giving your dog combined commands which are incompatible. Combined commands such as “SIT-DOWN” can confuse your dog if your dog has been taught that the word “SIT” means one behavior and the word “DOWN” means a different behavior. Using this example, say either “SIT” or “DOWN”, but do not ask your dog to “SIT-DOWN” if you want your dog to sit.
7. When giving your dog a command, avoid using a loud voice. Even if your dog is especially independent/unresponsive, your tone of voice when issuing an obedience command such as “SIT”, “DOWN”, or “STAY”, should be calm and authoritative, rather than harsh or loud.

NOTE: Many owners complain that their dogs are “stubborn”, and that they “refuse to listen” when given a command. Before blaming the dog when he doesn’t respond to a command, determine whether a) the dog knows what the owner wants; b) the dog knows how to comply; or c) the dog is simply being unresponsive due to fear, stress or confusion.

8. Whenever possible, use your dog’s name positively, rather than using it in conjunction with reprimands, 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 a word he responds to with enthusiasm, never hesitancy or fear.

9. Correct or, better yet, prevent the (mis)behavior, don’t punish the dog. Teaching and communication is what it is all about, not getting even with your dog. If you’re taking an “it’s-you-against-your-dog, whip ‘em into shape” approach, you’ll undermine your relationship, while missing out on all the fun that a motivational training approach can offer. Additionally, after-the-fact discipline does NOT work.

10. When training one’s dog, whether praising or correcting, good timing is essential. Take the following example: You’ve prepared a platter of hors d’oeuvres for a small dinner party, which you’ve left on your kitchen counter. Your dog walks into the room and smells the hors d’oeuvres. He air-sniffs, then eyes the food, and is poised to jump up. This is the best, easiest and most effective time to correct your dog; before he’s misbehaved, while he’s thinking about jumping up to get the food.

11. Often, dog owners inadvertently reinforce their dogs’ misbehavior, by giving their dogs lots of attention (albeit negative attention) when they misbehave. Needless to say, if your dog receives lots of attention and handling when he jumps up on you, that behavior is being reinforced, and is therefore likely to be repeated.

12. Keep a lid on your anger. Never train your dog when you’re feeling grouchy or impatient. Earning your dog’s respect is never accomplished by yelling, hitting, or handling your dog in a harsh manner. Moreover, studies have shown that fear and stress inhibit the learning process.

Understanding Aggressive Behavior in Dogs

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Dog aggression is any behavior meant to intimidate or harm a person or another animal. Growling, baring teeth, snarling, snapping and biting are all aggressive behaviors. Although aggressive behaviors are normal for dogs, they’re generally unacceptable to humans. From a dog’s perspective, there’s always a reason for aggressive behavior. Because humans and dogs have different communication systems, misunderstandings can occur between the two species. A person may intend to be friendly, but a dog may perceive that person’s behavior as threatening or intimidating. Dogs aren’t schizophrenic, psychotic, crazy, or necessarily “vicious,” when displaying aggressive behavior.

Because aggression is so complex, and because the potential consequences are so serious, we recommend that you get professional in-home help from an animal behavior specialist if your dog is displaying aggressive behavior.

Types of Aggression

Dominance Aggression: Dominance aggression is motivated by a challenge to a dog's social status or to his control of a social interaction. Dogs are social animals and view their human families as their social group or "pack." Based on the outcomes of social challenges among group members, a dominance hierarchy or "pecking order" is established (see our handout: "Dealing With Dominance In Dogs").

If your dog perceives his own ranking in the hierarchy to be higher than yours, it's likely that he'll challenge you in certain situations. Because people don't always understand canine communication, you may inadvertently challenge your dog's social position. A dominantly aggressive dog may growl if he is disturbed when resting or sleeping, or if he is asked to give up a favorite spot, such as the couch or the bed. Physical restraint, even when done in a friendly manner, like hugging, may also cause your dog to respond aggressively. Reaching for your dog's collar, or reaching out over his head to pet him, could also be interpreted by him as a challenge for dominance. Dominantly aggressive dogs are often described as "Jekyll and Hydes" because they can be very friendly when not challenged. Dominance aggression may be directed at people or at other animals. The most common reason for dogs in the same family to fight with each other is instability in the dominance hierarchy (see our handout: "Canine Rivalry").

Fear-Motivated Aggression: Fear-motivated aggression is a defensive reaction and occurs when a dog believes he is in danger of being harmed. Remember that it's your dog's perception of the situation, not your actual intent, which determines your dog's response. For example, you may raise your arm to throw a ball, but your dog, perceiving this to be a threat, may bite you because he believes he is protecting himself from being hit. A dog may also be fearfully aggressive when approached by other dogs.

Protective, Territorial And Possessive Aggression: Protective, territorial and possessive aggression are all very similar, and involve the defense of valuable resources. **Territorial aggression** is usually associated with defense of property. However, your dog's sense of territory may extend well past the boundaries of "his" yard. For example, if you walk your dog regularly around the neighborhood and allow him to urine-mark, to him, his territory may be the entire block! **Protective aggression** usually refers to aggression directed toward people or animals that a dog perceives as threats to his family, or pack. Dogs become **possessively aggressive** when defending their food, toys or other valued objects, such as Kleenex stolen from the trash!

Redirected Aggression: This type of aggression is relatively common, but is a behavior that pet owners may not always understand. If a dog is aroused into an aggressive response by a person or animal that he is prevented from attacking, he may redirect this aggression onto someone else. A common example occurs when two family dogs become excited, bark and growl in response to another dog passing through the front yard. The two dogs, confined behind a fence, may turn and attack each other because they can't attack the intruder. **Predation** is usually considered to be a unique kind of aggressive behavior, because it's motivated by the intent to obtain food, and not primarily by the intent to harm or intimidate.

Individual Variation

Dogs differ in their likelihood to show aggressive behavior in any particular situation. Some dogs tend to respond aggressively with very little stimulation. Others may be subjected to all kinds of threatening stimuli and events, and never attempt to bite. The difference in this threshold at which a dog displays aggressive behavior is influenced by both environmental and genetic factors. If this threshold is low, a dog will be more likely to bite. Raising the threshold makes a dog less likely to respond aggressively. This threshold can be raised using behavior modification techniques. How easily the threshold can be changed is influenced by the dog's gender, age, breed, general

temperament, and by whether the appropriate behavior modification techniques are chosen and correctly implemented. Working with aggressive dogs can be potentially dangerous, and should be done only by, or under the guidance of, an experienced animal behavior professional who understands animal learning theory and behavior.

What You Can Do

- ❖ First check with your veterinarian to rule out medical causes for the aggressive behavior.
- ❖ Seek professional help. An aggression problem will not go away by itself. Working with aggression problems requires in-home help from an animal behavior specialist.
- ❖ Take precautions. Your first priority is to keep everyone safe. Supervise, confine and/or restrict your dog's activities until you can obtain professional help. You're liable for your dog's behavior. If you must take your dog out in public, consider a cage-type muzzle as a temporary precaution, and keep in mind that some dogs can get a muzzle off.
- ❖ Avoid exposing your dog to situations where he is more likely to show aggression. You may need to keep him confined to a safe room and limit his people-contact.
- ❖ If your dog is possessive of food, treats or a certain place, don't allow him access to those items. In an emergency, bribe him with something better than what he has. For example, if he steals your shoe, trade him the shoe for a piece of chicken.
- ❖ Spay or neuter your dog. Intact dogs are more likely to display dominance, territorial and protective aggressive behavior.

What Not To Do

- ❖ Punishment won't help and, in fact, will make the problem worse. If the aggression is motivated by fear, punishment will make your dog more fearful, and therefore more aggressive. Attempting to punish or dominate a dominantly aggressive dog is likely to cause him to escalate his behavior in order to retain his dominant position. This is likely to result in a bite or a severe attack. Punishing territorial, possessive or protective aggression is likely to elicit additional defensive aggression.
- ❖ Don't encourage aggressive behavior. Playing tug-of-war or wrestling games encourages your dog to attempt to "best" you or "win" over you, which can result in the beginning of a dominance aggression problem. When dogs are encouraged to "go get 'em" or to bark and dash about in response to outside noises or at the approach of a person, territorial and protective aggressive behavior may be the result.

Unusual Eating Habits In Dogs and Cats

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Definitions

Dogs and cats will sometimes eat socks, rocks or other objects, which may result in a variety of problems for both you and your pet. Not only can your possessions be destroyed or damaged, but objects such as clothing and rocks can produce life-threatening blockages in your pet's intestines. Eating non-food items is called *pica*. A specific type of pica is stool eating (either their own or that of another animal) and, while not necessarily dangerous to the animal, is probably unacceptable to you. Stool-eating is called *coprophagy*.

The causes of pica and coprophagy are not known. Many ideas have been proposed by various experts, but none have been proven or disproven. Such behaviors may sometimes be attention-getting behaviors. If engaging in one of these behaviors results in some type of social interaction between the animal and his owner (even a verbal scolding) then the behavior may be reinforced and occur more frequently. These behaviors may be attempts to obtain a necessary nutrient lacking in the diet, although no nutritional studies have ever substantiated this idea. They may also stem from frustration or anxiety. It's possible the behaviors begin as play, as the animal investigates and chews on the objects, then subsequently begins to eat or ingest them.

It has been suggested that coprophagy is carried over from the normal parental behavior of ingesting the waste of young offspring. Some experts believe coprophagy occurs more often in animals that live in relatively barren environments, are frequently confined to small areas and/or receive limited attention from their owners. Coprophagy is fairly common in dogs, but is rarely seen in cats and is seen more often in dogs who tend to be highly food-motivated. It's also possible that dogs learn this behavior from other dogs.

Because pica and coprophagy are behaviors that are not well understood, stopping them may require assistance from an animal behavior professional who works individually with owners and their pets. A variety of specialized behavior modification techniques may be necessary to resolve these problems (see our handout: "When the Behavior Helpline Can't Help").

Coprophagy

Suggested Solutions:

Because the cause of coprophagy isn't known, there are no techniques or solutions that are consistently successful. The following techniques may, or may not be, effective in resolving the problem.

- ◆ Treat your pet's food with something that causes his stool to have an aversive taste. A commercial product called "4-BID" is available through your veterinarian, or the same result may be achieved by using the food additive, "MSG." Based on owners' reports, both of these products appear to work in some cases, but not always. Before using either of these products, please check with your veterinarian.
- ◆ Treat your pet's stools directly with an aversive taste by sprinkling them with cayenne pepper or a commercial product, such as "Bitter Apple." For this method to be effective, every stool your pet has access to must be treated in order for him to learn that eating stools results in unpleasant consequences. Otherwise, he may discriminate by odor which stools have been treated and which have not.
- ◆ Any time your pet goes outside, he must be on a leash with you. If you see him about to ingest some stool, interrupt him by using a squirt bottle or shake can (only for pets who aren't afraid of loud noises) then give him a toy to play with, instead. Praise him for taking an interest in the toy.
- ◆ The simplest solution may be to clean your yard daily in order to minimize your pet's opportunity to eat his stools.
- ◆ To stop a dog from eating cat feces from a litter box, install a baby-gate in front of the litter box area. Your cat shouldn't have any trouble jumping over it, while most dogs won't make the attempt. Or, you could place the box in a closet or room where the door can be wedged open from both sides, so your cat has access, but your dog doesn't. Any type of environmental "booby-trap" to stop a dog from eating cat feces from a litterbox must be attempted with caution because if it frightens your dog, it's likely to frighten your cat, as well.

What Doesn't Work:

- ◆ Interactive punishment (punishment that comes directly from you, such as verbal scolding) is usually not effective because it may be interpreted by your pet as attention. With interactive punishment, many animals learn to refrain from the behavior when their owner is present, but still engage in the problem behavior when their owner is absent.
- ◆ Punishment after the fact is never helpful. Animals don't understand that they're being punished for something they did hours, minutes or even seconds before. This approach won't resolve the problem and is likely to produce either fearful or aggressive responses from your pet.

Health Risks:

In Arizona's dry climate, parasites are not as much of a problem as in other parts of the country. If your pet is parasite-free and is eating only his own stools, he can't be infected with parasites by doing so. If your pet is eating the stools of another animal that has parasites, it may be possible, although still unlikely, for your pet to become infected. Some parasites, such as giardia, cause diarrhea, and most coprophagic dogs ingest only formed stools. There is also a delay period before the parasites in the stools can re-infect another animal.

Most parasites require intermediate hosts (they must pass through the body of another species, such as a flea) before they can re-infect another dog or cat. Thus, your pet is much more likely to become infected with parasites through fleas or by eating birds and rodents than by coprophagy. Most parasites are also species-specific, meaning that dogs cannot be infected by eating cat stools. Health risks to humans from being licked in the face by a coprophagic animal are minimal. For more information, please contact your veterinarian.

Pica

Pica can be a serious problem because items such as rubber bands, socks, rocks and string can severely damage or block an animal's intestines. In some instances, the items must be surgically removed. Because pica can be potentially life-threatening, it's advisable to consult both your veterinarian and an animal behavior professional for help.

Suggested Solutions:

- ◆ Make the objects your pet is eating taste unpleasant with some of the substances mentioned above (see our handouts: "Cat Aversives" and "Dog Aversives").
- ◆ Prevent your pet's access to these items.
- ◆ If your pet is food-oriented, it may be possible to change to a low-calorie or high-fiber diet to allow him to eat more food, more often, which may decrease the behavior. Check with your veterinarian before changing your pet's diet.
- ◆ If you suspect that anxiety or frustration is the reason for pica, the cause of the anxiety or frustration must be identified and the behavior changed by using behavior modification techniques.
- ◆ Sometimes pica is an attention-getting behavior. If this is the case, try to startle your pet with a loud noise or a spray of water when you catch him ingesting the items. If possible, avoid letting him know that the startling noise or spray came from you, and be sure to praise him when he leaves the items alone. Try to set aside 10-15 minutes twice a day to spend with your pet, so that he doesn't need to resort to pica to get your attention.
- ◆ If pica is a play behavior, keep plenty of toys around for your pet to play with. Cats, especially, tend to play with string, rubber bands and tinsel, and ultimately ingest them. Keep these items out of reach and provide a selection of appropriate toys (see our handouts: "Cat Toys and How to Use Them" and "Dog Toys and How to Use Them").

What Doesn't Work:

- ◆ Interactive punishment (punishment that comes directly from you, such as verbal scolding) is usually not effective because it may be interpreted by your pet as attention. With interactive punishment, many animals learn to refrain from the behavior when their owner is present, but still engage in the problem behavior when their owner is absent.
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Urine Marking Behavior in Dogs

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Dogs are territorial animals and they mark their territory by depositing small amounts of urine to stake their property. In the wild, urine marking does not cause any problems, but in domestic situations dogs are punished for such behavior. Urine marking is not the same as a housetraining problem. The best housetrained dog in the world can still have problems with marking. If this is a new problem, take your dog to the vet to rule out an infection or bladder stones. If the cause is behavioral, there are steps you can take to help the problem.

Symptoms of Marking

- Only a small amount of urine is deposited.
- The urine is often on vertical surfaces such as fences, walls, curtains or furniture. Leg lifting is also a sign of marking but this does not have to occur for it to be territorial marking.
- Males and females can mark. Intact females and males are more likely to mark but neutered pets will mark as well, especially if there is an intact animal in the house.
- Your dog frequently marks on walks.
- Your dog urinates on unfamiliar or new objects. This may include grocery bags, new furniture or items brought over by visitors.
- Your dog is around other animals outside the home. Dogs will often mark their fence if other dogs frequently pass by the area.

What to Do

- Immediately have your pet spayed or neutered. Altered dogs are less likely to urine mark. The longer the dog is left unaltered, the longer it will take to stop the marking. If there are other animals in your home, have them neutered as well.
- Thoroughly clean any areas they have previously marked. Use an enzymatic cleaner and restrict access to the area until the treated area is dry.
- Change the significance of the marked area to the dog. Practice obedience in those areas or begin feeding the dog there.
- If your dog is reacting to a change in living conditions try to keep your dog on its old schedule. A major lifestyle change can make the dog more likely to mark.
- Watch your dog at all times. Do not allow him free reign of the house if he is marking indoors. He will never learn what he did wrong if he is punished after the fact. If you see your dog attempting to mark, make a loud noise to distract him. Redirect him to a more appropriate activity.
- Praise your dog when he goes to the bathroom outdoors. If he is marking the side of buildings or fences you will need to discourage the behavior and keep him on a leash with you. Do not allow him to mark on walks, either.

- Restrict your dog's access to windows and doors where they may see other animals. Use privacy slats in the fence to keep your dog from looking at other animals.
- Use the Nothing in Life is Free method to modify your dog's behavior. Establishing firm rules will take pressure off your dog. Make him work for petting, dinner and toys.

It is Not Revenge

Dogs do not mark to get even with you or exact revenge. They are not like people; they do not get jealous. Dogs must do what they feel is necessary to claim their territory. They are not angry that you brought a new pet home, they are just reaffirming their position in the house. Be patient while working on your dog's behavior. They did not learn this behavior in a day and they won't lose it in a day. Consult a behaviorist for more individual help.

Use the Four D's to Help Your Dog Gain Fluency

by Terry Ryan

A dog is fluent when he can perform on cue, no matter what the circumstances. Dogs don't seem to generalize well. For example, if your dog responds well to the *Sit* cue indoors by the couch, that doesn't necessarily mean he will respond appropriately to a *Sit* cue outdoors next to another dog. You can help your dog build fluency by making sure he has the opportunity to practice the sit in many different situations.

Common criteria for building fluency in behavior begin with the letter "D." The first D stands for the **Delivery** schedule of the reward. The second represents the **Distance** the trainer is from the dog. The third is the **Duration** of the exercise. The last stands for **Diversity**, which reminds us that we need to train in different places among distractions. To keep your dog motivated to perform you need to carefully apply each of these four Ds. As you're making one D more difficult, relax the other D criteria. Doing so reduces the possibility of a failure and increases the probability for reward. Rewards drive behavior! For example, if you are working with *distractions*, decrease the *distance* you are from your dog and the *duration* or length of the exercise.

If you find your dog is not performing as expected, it may be time to go back a step or two and work on the four Ds.

Delivery Schedule of Reward

It's appropriate to begin training specific behaviors with a continuous rate of reinforcement (reward every behavior that meets criteria). Once your dog knows the response to your cue, you can start to use a variable delivery schedule to help build fluency. Play the "Sit lottery game." Start getting at least one, but no more than two free sits from your dog. That means ask for *Sit* once, release, then as for *Sit* and this time treat when your dog sits. Then ask your dog for three sits before you reward. Now start varying your schedule even more. Keep your dog guessing and mix it up: two-fers, three-fers, one-fers. Before long your dog learns to enjoy playing the lottery game. Try using the lottery game when you are working on *Sit* and *Down*.

This intermittent schedule of reinforcement is thought by many to be the best to perpetuate a learned behavior. Dogs live in a complex environment where more than one thing is happening at the same time. In this real world, as careful as a trainer might be, there will be times when the dog is *not* reinforced for each correct behavior.

You can use your delivery of reward schedule to help build a speedy response to your cue. Usually trainers want the dog's response to a cue to happen within a certain specified period of time. This is called a "limited hold." Think of our dog's wild ancestors hunting for food. When the dog sees a prey animal, he has a certain period of time to respond (capture and eat). If the response doesn't happen quickly, the prey animal moves on, and the dog goes hungry for a while longer. The primary reinforcement (food) was not available because the response was not fast enough. Dogs catch on to limited hold quickly, and, as a bonus, they seem to be able to generalize speed of response to other exercises as well.

Distance of Trainer

If your dog will perform reliably when he is very close to you, start moving a little farther away before you give your dog a cue. As you gradually build up the distance you are away from your dog, remember to decrease the difficulty of the other Ds.

Duration of Exercise

When the dog is successful for short periods of time, try extending the exercise a little. Ping-pong back and forth on duration: your setup might be 25 seconds, then the next time 10 seconds, and next 40 seconds, and so on. By varying the duration of the sit you are also letting your dog know that the duration of the sit won't always be the same.

Diversity of Environment

If your dog performs well in his usual, calm training environment (home, local park, training class), it's time to complicate matters a little by introducing distraction and taking him to different places to practice. There are many different factors to consider when you are training. What might you be wearing when you need your dog to perform? What smells might be lingering? What noises might be around, like children playing or planes flying overhead? Sights: is your dog's best buddy (human or canine) standing nearby? What type of surface might you ask your dog to perform on? You can help your dog by setting up as many diverse environments as your imagination allows. A dog that has a wealth of experience performing for you in many different circumstances is going to be a more confident, happy dog.

Using Aversives to Modify Your Dog's Behavior

Aversives are anything your dog will work to avoid. They are unpleasant but should not be painful. Dogs will do what works for them and will not do things that are not rewarding. They do not do things to get revenge, but they will do things that feel good, such as lying on the couch. If the couch is no longer pleasant because it has a mat on it, they will no longer lay on the couch. Aversives are easy to use because you do not have to be around to administer them. If your dog is doing something you would like to stop, use positive reinforcement training when you are at home and aversives when you are gone.

Taste

Dogs obviously have a different sense of taste than us. They can chew on an old shoe all day long without regard to the terrible odor. There are some tastes many dogs will actively avoid.

- **Bitter Apple:** Bitter Apple is a commercially made product that can be sprayed on cords, rugs and other objects to discourage chewing.

- Cayenne Pepper and Hot Sauce: Most dogs dislike overly spicy foods so powdered chilies or hot sauce can be a deterrent.
- Citronella: Citronella, an ingredient found in insect repellent, also can repel dogs. This is often used in bark collars. Not all insect repellents are non-toxic so look for ones safe for pets.

Texture

Covering an object with an uncomfortable surface will make the area less attractive. They can be a great way of keeping dogs off furniture or a counter.

- Plastic Floor Runners: Non-slip floor runners often have pointy tips on the underside to keep them in place. If these are put upside down on a couch, dogs often will not jump on them or stay on them.
- Shelf Paper: Paper with the sticky side up will keep dogs from keeping their paws on something. Weigh down the paper with a heavy rock or tape it down. Make sure the weight won't fall on the dog.
- Chicken Wire: Burying chicken wire will keep most dogs from digging. Patio stones and heavy rocks will also keep dogs out of certain areas.

Owner Administered Aversives

Aversives can be used while people are present as well. You can use aversives to interrupt your dog's behavior but never to injure them. Startle the dog to stop a behavior and redirect them to a more appropriate activity. The aversives should not make the dog afraid of you if used correctly.

- Spray Bottles: Bottles designed for misting plants can also be used to interrupt bad behavior such as excessive barking or digging. Do not spray the dog directly in the face or use too much force.
- Air Horns: Loud noises distract dogs without applying force. Never aim the noise towards them.
- Shaker Can: Fill an empty soda can with coins to create your own noisemaker. Loudly shake the can to interrupt behavior. Never throw the can at the dog.

Other Aversives

There are commercially made aversives. Many online catalogues and pet stores have products designed to keep dogs out of restricted areas or off furniture. The ScatMat delivers a light electric shock when the dog gets on restricted furniture. These work only on the particular items in your house where the sensor is located. Mousetraps taped upside down under brown paper sacks can also be placed on couches and chairs. Be careful when using any method because there is a risk of injury. Test out every method before using it on your dog. These methods should not be used on fearful or anxious dogs; it will only make their problem worse.

Why Dogs Bite: A Guideline for Parents and Children

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Dogs can be a wonderful addition to families. They help teach children compassion, responsibility and companionship. Dogs do not have any way to express themselves verbally so they use their mouth to communicate. They have an amazing amount of strength in their jaws so it is possible for them to damage the delicate skin of children. To better understand your dog, look at the reasons they bite.

Pain or Illness

Dogs that are hurt or sick feel the need to keep children at bay until they feel better. If a dog has a lame paw, he will do anything to be left alone. The dog may believe you are causing the pain. You should keep children away from the dog until he is better and make sure he receives medical care if needed. Give the dog a safe area where he can recuperate, like a crate.

Excitement

Puppies and adolescent dogs often play with their mouth open. They see children as other dogs so they are more likely to bite when playing with them. Loud noises, screaming, running and chasing can make the dog overly excited causing her to bite more. The dog doesn't mean to hurt anyone, she is just playing along. If you find your dog becoming overly excited, take a break from playing until the situation is calm. Try to find calm games to play with your dog until she learns to not use her mouth when excited.

Fear

Dogs don't know how to express fear so they may end up biting when frightened. Dogs can be scared of strangers, odd noises and even thunderstorms. If you sense your dog is frightened, you should let him find a safe place to hide. Never approach a dog you don't know. If he is scared, he may bite. Keep children away from an unfamiliar or scared dog.

Protecting Resources

Toys, bones, treats and even an old shoe can be a coveted object for a dog. The dog does not know you want to play with him, he thinks you are taking his toy. An adult needs to teach the dog to exchange their toy for something else. This is too difficult for a child to do. Find a really delicious treat to give to the dog when it gives up an object. Show the dog the treat and when it releases the object, give it the treat and take the object. This way the dog will learn if it gives up a resource, it will get something good in return. Tell children to leave the dog alone when it is eating or chewing on a bone until it learns to give up objects in exchange for something else.

Aggression

Even dogs that like people will sometimes still not like children. If a dog was not exposed to children at a young age, she may not understand their quick movements or high pitched voices. If you are seeing signs of aggression in your dog, do not let children around your dog. Make sure your gate and house are locked so a child will not accidentally let the dog out. Consult a behaviorist immediately.

Warning Signs

Dogs often warn or give signals before they bite. You need to carefully monitor your dog's body language and vocalizations around children.

- Watch for stiffness in the dog's body. Stiff movements show stress in the dog.
- Ears may be pinned back and their gaze may be fixed.
- The hair on the back, neck and tail may be raised.
- The dog may be growling, barking or showing teeth.

What to Do

If your dog is showing any of these signs, freeze immediately. Do not stare right at the dog. Shift your gaze off to the side. Count to five, silently, and then move away slowly sideways or backwards. If the dog jumps on you, curl into a ball and cover your head. Never scream, run, throw things or stare at the dog. Try to be as quiet as possible.