
The Importance of Training Your Dog

Obedience training is one of the most important aspects of raising a dog. Training opens a line of communication between you and your dog. In fact, a well-trained dog is by far a happier dog! Why? Because a trained dog requires fewer restrictions. The more reliable the dog, the more freedom he is given.

For example, many stores and businesses that normally won't allow dogs on their premises will make an exception for a puppy or a dog that will heel nicely by his owner's side, or will do a sit-stay or down-stay without hesitation.

And when company arrives in your home, there's no need to banish a well-behaved dog to another room for fear that he will be a nuisance. Moreover, because a well-mannered, obedience-trained dog is both appreciated and welcome, he receives more attention and interaction from family members, visitors, and passers-by, than does the ill-mannered dog. A well-behaved, obedience-trained dog is a pleasure to own because he can go virtually anywhere without being a risk or nuisance to others. And don't we all want a dog who exhibits appropriate behavior in a crowd, good manners when we have guests in our home, is reliable around children, and who doesn't threaten other dogs or passers-by? Obedience exercises not only teach good manners, but also increases relaxation in uncomfortable situations.

Dogs are social animals. Without proper training, they will behave like animals: soil your house, destroy your belongings, bark excessively, dig holes in your yard, fight other dogs—even bite you. Nearly all behavior problems are perfectly normal canine activities that occur at the wrong time or place or are directed at the wrong thing. For example, dogs will eliminate on the carpet instead of outside; dogs will bark all night long instead of just when a stranger is prowling around outside; or dogs will chew furniture instead of his own toys.

The key to preventing or treating behavior problems is to teach your dog to redirect his natural behavior to outlets that are acceptable in your home.