

Jumping Up:

Jumping up to greet people is a common behavior in dogs. The trick to solving the problem is two fold.

First reward your dog for sitting at every opportunity. Use food treats to reward fast sits and then teach a stay as well using food treats. Have your pet sit for EVERYTHING it wants for the next 4 weeks; sit to have the door opened, sit to be leashed, sit to be petted, sit for meals, sit for a toy to be thrown, etc. The more the dog learns to sit to get what it wants, the less the jumping will occur. Think of sitting like a child asking, "Please may I?" You want your dog to be polite when asking for something.

Secondly, your dog must receive NO rewards for jumping up. Don't feed, pet, talk to, touch etc. when your dog jumps up. Even to say NO and push at the pet is rewarding that behavior. Simply turn away so the dog falls off of you. Ignore until the pet is calm and sits, then reward with a food treat. You can also leash the dog and put the leash under a foot so he is physically unable to jump up very far. Practice coming and going through the door 15 times in a row until you enter the dog just automatically sits.

If you have guests coming who cannot do the above program, then teach your dog to go away from the door and lie on a bed or towel when the doorbell rings. Reward your pet with food treats for remaining there and being calm. If your dog can not do a down stay, then put a tie down in that spot and hook it to your dog's collar BEFORE you answer the door (See our handout on Tie Downs). Ignore your dog until he is calm and then let him off to greet guests (OR keep a leash on him to greet guests). Your dog does not have to spend every moment loose when guests come over either. Your pet can be on a tie down for the first 20-30 minutes after the guest's arrival then leashed and practice sitting for everyone, then put back on the tie down and taken around again later for a round of sitting for everyone.

If things don't improve within 14 days then we do recommend that you take your dog to a basic humane training class or do some private lessons in home to help you. See our handout on finding a humane, professional trainer and local trainers we recommend.

WHILE ON WALKS:

The dog is leashed at all times, have a friend meet you at the park that you have given instructions to before hand so they know what to do. The friend should only approach when the dog is sitting, the minute the dog stands, they stop walking and wait for the sit. When the dog sits, YOU give the dog a treat (in such a way that the dog KEEPS sitting of course) and your friend starts walking towards you again. They stop when the dog stands, etc. until they can walk up and the dog is still sitting.

DON'T have them pet the dog or talk to the dog just yet. Reward the dog heavily for remaining in a sit while your friend is just standing there. Have the friend leave for a couple of minutes (out of sight) and then repeat this process 15 times in a row until the dog solidly remains sitting all the while a person walks up.

During this training process, do NOT cue the dog to sit but let the dog believe they can control the person coming up by remaining sitting. Just remember that as SOON as the dog attempts to get up out of the sit, they immediately stop moving towards the dog.

Once your dog absolutely will not move out of a sit for this person, arrange to have another person practice with you the next day. Keeping practice with different people until it is VERY clear the dog understands what their job is when a person approaches. Make sure that you are rewarding the sit with food treats to increase the target behavior of sit.