



Rowdy Dog Training Guide

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ROWDY DOGS

WHAT IS A ROWDY DOG?

Rowdy is a common way people describe certain dog behaviors rooted in arousal, but it can mean a lot of different things. Often, rowdy dogs are full of energy and respond strongly to excitement or stress. They may become overwhelmed more easily, especially when multiple stressors are involved.

WHY DO THEY ACT THIS WAY?

There are many reasons a dog might show "rowdy" behavior, and most are completely natural and manageable with the right support. Puppies and adolescent dogs are still developing and naturally have lower impulse control, so their energy can sometimes feel overwhelming. Dogs who did not receive enough early socialization may get overly excited when encountering new people, places, or experiences. Breed traits also matter — working breeds like herding dogs, guardians, sled dogs, and hunting dogs were selectively bred for high energy and stamina, so they often need more outlets for their drive. Sometimes, dogs experience emotional overload when feelings like fear, frustration, and excitement happen all at once, making it hard for them to stay calm. Additionally, if a dog's physical or mental needs are not fully met, or if they missed early training and guidance, they may not yet know how to interact appropriately with people. The good news is that with patience, consistency, and positive training, rowdy behavior can improve over time!

WHAT BEHAVIORS DO WE SEE?

1. **Lack of impulse control-** struggle to pause, think, and choose appropriate behaviors. They react immediately to whatever excites them.
2. **Jumpy-** jumping up on people instead of waiting for attention.
3. **Mouthy-** using their mouth on people or clothing in greeting, play, or frustration.
4. **Humping/mounting-** people or other dogs.
5. **Inability to settle-** struggling to calm down or relax.

TIPS FOR MANAGING AROUSAL LEVELS

Prevention, in the form of management strategies, is the first step to reducing rowdy behavior. If your dog's arousal leads to aggression, reactivity, or inability to calm down, work with a qualified positive reinforcement trainer or veterinary behaviorist.

1. **Ensure you meet your dog's needs.** Providing predictable routines so your dog knows what to expect of their day, and mental and physical exercise so they are satisfied.
2. **Manage the environment.** Avoid frequent exposure to situations that cause excessive excitement until your dog can manage them.
3. **Monitor your own energy.** Dogs mirror our energy- staying calm can help your dog stay calm too. This includes avoiding rough play that can increase arousal levels and make it harder for your dog to calm down.
4. **Teach and reinforce calm behaviors.** Regularly reward and calmly praise your dog for being calm and relaxed.
5. **Practice impulse control.** Playing games with rules and training cues like "wait," "leave it," and "settle" can help your dog to think before acting.
6. **Use structured activities.** Incorporate activities like obedience training, scent work, or puzzle toys that engage the mind and encourage focus.
7. **Implement breaks.** Give your dog downtime after exciting activities (like playtime or walks) to help them decompress.

POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT VS. AVERSIVE PUNISHMENT

WHAT IS POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT?

Positive reinforcement involves rewarding your dogs for behavior you'd like them to repeat. Rewards can come in many forms, including play, petting, food, and treats. The most important thing is that your dog enjoys it!

WHAT IS AVERSIVE PUNISHMENT?

Aversive punishment involves something that is painful, scary, or otherwise unpleasant. Aversive techniques include startle (using noise makers or compressed air), painful corrections (like leash jerking, e-collars, or pinch collars), and physical manipulation (like pushing a dog's butt down until they sit, or forcing them onto their side or back).

WHAT NOT CORRECT UNWANTED BEHAVIOR?

Correcting an unwanted behavior only interrupts your dog at the moment. It does not, however, teach your dog what to do instead of the thing you punished them for. Corrections and punishments also fail to improve your dog's motivation or desire to perform the behaviors you prefer. In fact, it is very common for dogs to resume the behavior they were previously punished for, and to learn to avoid or fear you instead.

HOW TO TRAIN POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT

1. Using a treat or toy, lure your dog from one place to another or into a desired position.
2. Give your dog plenty of daily mental and physical exercise. A tired dog is a good dog!
3. Prevent unwanted behaviors using environmental management.
4. Use gates, leashes, or visual barriers so that your dog can't practice the unwanted behaviors.
5. Teach your dog new behaviors to replace the unwanted ones.
6. For more information, see the handout titled "Teaching Alternative Behaviors".
7. Ignore unwanted behaviors when they occur, and calmly direct your dog toward a more desirable behavior.

TEACHING ALTERNATIVE BEHAVIORS

WHY TEACH IT?

Pet parents frequently ask, “how do I get my pet to stop doing that?” The most effective way to get your dog to stop doing the unwanted behavior is to focus on what you want your dog to do instead. Deciding what you want your dog to do gives you something to train, instead of complain about.

Choose an alternative behavior that your dog cannot do at the same time as the unwanted behavior. Teach the alternative behavior using positive reinforcement. Consistently reward the alternative behavior (what you want your dog to do), and prevent or ignore the unwanted behavior. Your dog will always choose the most rewarding behavior they have learned. Over time, the alternative behavior replaces the unwanted behavior.

HOW TO TEACH IT

1. Define the unwanted behavior.
2. Define what you would like your dog to do instead.
3. Prevent the unwanted behavior from happening through proactive management.
4. Teach the behavior using positive reinforcement and put it on cue.
5. Once learned, practice the new behavior in the problem scenario.

TRAINING EXAMPLE

1. **Unwanted behavior:** “My dog jumps up on people when they greet them.”
2. **Alternative behavior:** “I would prefer that my dog sits politely for greetings.”
3. **Manage the unwanted behavior:** Ask people not to greet your dog while you are in training.
4. **Teach the alternative behavior:** Use your clicker to teach the dog to sit on cue reliably.
5. **Practice it in the problem scenario:** Enlist the help of a friend to recreate the scenario of a person walking up to greet your dog. Cue your dog to sit, and only allow the approach if your dog sits.

TRAINING TIPS

1. Use life rewards! Treats go a long way, but you can also use other experiences that are rewarding to your dog. Examples: petting, attention, play, going outside, etc.
2. Be consistent! Once your dog knows the alternative behavior, ask for it in every problem scenario and reward it every time. Avoid rewarding the unwanted behavior if it arises again.
3. Manage your environment and set your dog up to succeed! In the example scenario, it’s up to you to give other people the right guidance for how to interact with your dog.
4. Be proactive about training! There are a lot of useful skills you can teach your dog, which will prevent most common problem behaviors. Examples: settle on a mat, eagerly entering and staying in their crate, stationing outside of the kitchen, or waiting at the door.

TEACHING A NOSE TARGET

WHAT IS A NOSE TARGET?

Nose targeting refers to your dog's ability to touch their nose to an object. Teach your dog to touch their nose to your flat palm. Once they eagerly do so, you can teach them to touch their nose to a variety of objects.

WHY TEACH YOUR DOG TO NOSE TARGET?

A Nose Target may seem like a cute party trick, but it is so much more than that! Nose Targets are useful for polite greetings, moving your dog into or out of position, and coming when called. Dogs who are skilled at nose targeting pay more attention to their handlers, always looking for body cues that give them direction. A reliable Nose Target can also help build a dog's confidence, and help fearful dogs learn how to explore new spaces.

HOW TO TEACH IT

1. Hold your hand flat, with fingers pointed downward or to the side. Tuck your thumb across your palm, and face your palm toward your dog.
2. Gently offer your hand directly in front of your dog's face, 2-3 inches from their nose.
3. Keep your hand still, being very careful not to move it toward or away from your dog.
4. Wait for your dog to look at your hand, sniff it, or touch it with their nose.
5. Click as soon as they offer any of these behaviors, then offer a treat.
6. While your dog eats the treat, remove your hand from your dog's view to reset. Repeat these steps 5-10 times, offering your hand at the same height and distance.

TRAINING TIPS

1. You can advance this skill by offering your hand at different heights and distances.
2. If your dog stops touching their nose to your hand, go back to an easier position.
3. Add a verbal cue. Say the word "touch", count 1-mississippi, then offer your hand.

ENRICHMENT FOR DOGS

WHAT IS ENRICHMENT?

Enrichment is anything that improves the quality of your dog's life. It may involve an increase or a decrease in stimulation. Enrichment activities encourage your dog to participate in behaviors that are natural to them. In other words, they allow your dog to be a dog!

ENGAGE ALL 5 SENSES!

By focusing on engaging all of your dog's senses, you can be sure to offer them a healthy variety of enriching experiences. Variety ensures that your dog's mental and physical needs are being met. Keep in mind that daily mental stimulation is just as important as physical exercise.

SCENTS: Your dog experiences the world through scents. Their ability to detect and analyze scents is staggering. Use your dog's sense of smell to engage their brain in problem solving.

- Take a Sniffy Walk! Allow your dog to smell what they want, for as long as they want.
- Treat treasure hunt! Hide treats around your home or yard for your dog to find.
- Introduce new scents to your dog. This could include dog-safe essential oil on a cloth, blankets that came from another animal, or store-bought animal scents (sold for hunting or pest control).

SOUNDS: In addition to their amazing sense of smell, dogs also have very sensitive hearing. Keep this in mind as you introduce new sounds, because playing sounds that are too loud or jarring may cause distress.

- Play soothing classical music, or dog-specific calming soundtracks to help your dog relax. Studies have shown that calming sounds can positively affect a dog's behavior.
- Play books on tape. This may be something you and your dog can enjoy together, or something to leave playing for your dog when they are alone.
- Play animal sounds to engage your dog's ears. This is only recommended as a supervised activity. Search online or for a sound-specific app to play with.

SIGHTS: Dogs don't see nearly as well as we do, but that doesn't mean they aren't interested in beautiful or interesting sights. They see best in tones of yellow and blue.

- Subscribe to DogTV on youtube, which is specifically designed to engage your dog's senses.
- Place a bird feeder outside a window where your dog can watch the activity.
- Vary your walking route to keep sights, and smells and sounds varied on each outing.

TASTE: Variety is the spice of life! Incorporate special treats every now and then to engage their taste buds in new and exciting ways.

- Does your dog have a favorite treat? Rotate treat types and flavors to keep their taste buds guessing. This prevents a high value treat from becoming boring over time.
- Some dogs love vegetables (raw or frozen). Be sure to stick to dog-safe options.
- Stuffed kongs are a great way to occupy our dogs for long periods of time. Fill them with many different tasty snacks - from peanut butter to bananas to baby food!

ENRICHMENT FOR DOGS (CONT.)

TOUCH: There are two types of touch - touch your dog initiates and touch that happens to them. Both types of touch can be enriching so long as it is enjoyable to your dog.

- Try a doggy massage! Use gentle pressure in circular motions on your dog's neck, shoulders and back. Avoid using too much pressure or causing discomfort.
- Walking on and rolling or digging in different substrates can be an exciting way to pass the time. Take a walk on sand, dirt, gravel, concrete, or grass. If your dog wants to roll around, or start digging, you know they're having fun!
- Water and ice can provide fun and interesting tactile experiences for your dog. Offer a baby pool with some water in it, or a frozen treat to your dog in the summer.

PLAY!

SOCIAL PLAY: This includes play with any other animal or human. Remember that dogs are social creatures!

- Playtime with age-appropriate social dogs is a great way to burn off mental/emotional energy, and to learn necessary social skills. Keep play frequent, but short and sweet.
- Parallel walks or group walks can also provide protected social contact between dogs, so long as all dogs are given freedom of movement and enjoy being around each other.

PLAY WITH TOYS: Dogs benefit from play with a variety of toys that they can chase, chew or dissect. These are natural behaviors for dogs, which help them burn excess energy.

- Playing fetch allows your dog to run, chase, and grab toys. The added benefit is that it encourages coming back to you and dropping objects on cue.
- Tug with Rules is a safe game to play between adults and dogs. When played with rules, your dog learns to collaborate with you, practice dropping on cue and to wait patiently for the game to resume. For more information, check out our handout "Tug With Rules".
- A flirt pole is a great alternative for the dog who loves to chase and tug. It is also a safe option for play between children and dogs. Flirt poles can be purchased online, or made at home using PVC pipe, bungee cord, and a toy.

PROBLEM SOLVING FOR FUN: Believe it or not, problem-solving can be fun for your dog! The goal of using problem-solving tasks for enrichment is to challenge our dogs without frustrating them.

- Foraging games involve encouraging your dog to scavenge for food. Store-bought and DIY food puzzles can be a great way to serve meals. For DIY options, use cardboard boxes, paper towel rolls, or simply scatter food around the house or yard.
- Clicker training and other learning games mentally tire out your dog in a healthy way. Teach your dog a new trick, or take up a dog sport such as agility, treibball, or canine freestyle.

IMPULSE CONTROL GAMES

WHAT IS IMPULSE CONTROL?

Impulse Control is when your dog can resist the temptation to perform an unwanted behavior (chewing, nipping, jumping) that would give them access to a desired reinforcer.

WHY PLAY IMPULSE CONTROL GAMES?

Impulse control is like a muscle. Using it requires energy, so you can only enlist so much of it at any given time. But also like a muscle, you can make it stronger by exercising it! These are several games you can play with your dog which will help them to gain impulse control.

TUG-OF-WAR WITH RULES!

1. Prepare tasty treats your dog loves. Cue or lure your dog into a sit.
2. Say a verbal cue to start the game; example: “take it.” Present the toy to your dog. You may need to animate the toy to encourage your dog to play.
3. Engage in tugging on the toy with your dog. Play for 5 seconds before moving to step 4.
4. Say a verbal cue to end the game; example: “drop it.”
5. Present a treat to your dog, right in front of their nose so they can smell it. When they let go, praise them and release the treat.
6. Wait until your dog sits before offering the toy again, as in Step 1.
7. Continue playing the game using the above steps on a loop. Over time, your dog will let go of the toy sooner and offer a sit sooner.
8. Increase difficulty by asking your dog to remain seated for longer before the game begins. You can incorporate the cue “wait” to this part of the game.

FLYING COOKIE GAME

1. Start with your dog in a sit.
2. Tell your dog “stay”.
3. Hold a treat in your hand, high over your dog's head.
4. Steadily lower your hand towards your dog.
5. If your dog remains seated, deliver the treat to their mouth.
6. If your dog stands, or lifts his front paws off the ground, reset the treat to the very top.
7. Begin again at step 1.

Training Tip: As your dog gets good at remaining seated and waiting for the cookie, you can make the game slightly harder by slowing the rate that the cookie falls. Once they do well with a slow-moving cookie, you can try taking a longer route to your dog's mouth.

Training Tip: If your dog keeps jumping up, it means you need to make the game easier! Move your hand slower, and/or more directly to your dog's mouth so they have some successful repetitions.

Training Tip: Do not play this game if your dog has a history of resource guarding.

IMPULSE CONTROL GAMES (CONT.)

BUNGEE STAYS

1. Start with your dog sitting or lying down, whichever is easier for them
2. Tell your dog “stay”
3. Take one step back
4. If your dog remains seated, click your clicker, or use a verbal marker such as “YES”
5. Take a step forward to return to your starting position and give your dog a treat
6. Repeat steps 1-5 at least 5 times

Training Tip: Move back toward your dog immediately, as if you were attached to them by a bungee cord.

Training Tip: Once your dog is successful at least 4 out of 5 times, move on to taking 2 steps back before you click and return to your dog to treat them.

Training Tip: Increasing difficulty may involve adding distance, distraction, or longer durations. Increase difficulty in only one way at a time, and do so gradually so that your dog remains successful.

Training Tip: If your dog follows you when you take even one full step back, reduce the difficulty by only taking a half step and returning immediately! Once you find success, you’ll be able to advance from there.

TUG WITH RULES

WHAT IS IT?

When played with rules, the game of “Tug of War” is a great game that helps constructively burn energy through play, and teaches your dog about self-control. Tug with Rules is a wonderful relationship-building activity for you and your dog, because when played with rules, the game promotes communication and trust. The game also facilitates safe and healthy boundaries for play by teaching your dog to release objects from their mouth on cue and patiently wait to get what they want - which, in this case, is for the game to resume.

HOW TO TEACH IT

1. Designate a toy or a few toys that are only for Tug with Rules. See Rule #1.
2. Prepare tasty treats your dog loves. Cue or lure your dog into a sit.
3. Say a verbal cue to start the game; example: “take it.” Present the toy to your dog. You may need to animate the toy to encourage your dog to play.
4. Engage in tugging on the toy with your dog. Play for 5 seconds.
5. Say a verbal cue to end the game; example: “drop it.” Present a treat to your dog, right in front of their nose so they can smell it. When they let go, praise them and release the treat.
6. Wait until your dog sits before offering the toy again, as in Step 2.
7. Continue playing the game using the above steps on a loop. Over time, your dog will let go of the toy sooner and offer a sit without prompting.

TRAINING TIP

If presenting a treat in front of your dog’s nose doesn’t cause them to drop the toy, try tossing the treat gently, to entice your dog to follow the movement. If/when they do, give them a few extra treats to help them feel great about dropping the toy.

RULES OF THE GAME

1. **Tug toys should only be used for Tug with Rules.** Long toys, such as braided ropes, are a good option. Only use toys you don’t mind tearing or shredding.
2. **The game ends if teeth come into contact with skin.** If this happens, quit the game for 30 seconds before resuming. Do not punish your dog, simply end the game.
3. **When tugging, only move the toy side to side.** Never tug up and down, because that kind of motion can hurt your dog’s neck. Similarly, your dog’s head should be level with their spine as you play, and you should never lift your dog up with the tug toy.
4. **Once learned, your dog must let go when you ask him to drop the toy.** Ask one time and let the toy go lifeless (stop tugging back). If they refuse to let go, even for treats, end the game.
5. **Let your dog win some rounds of tug.** No game is fun if there’s no chance to win! Dogs prefer playing tug with those that let them win sometimes, so in place of the “drop it” cue, sometimes just let your dog pull the toy out of your hands. Allow them to take a victory lap and chew on the toy a little, too!

SETTLE ON A MAT

WHY TEACH YOUR DOG TO SETTLE ON A MAT?

Teaching your dog to settle - lie down quietly in a designated spot when asked, sometimes for long periods at a time - is an essential life skill! Settle on a mat prevents your dog from engaging in unwanted behaviors like jumping, counter-surfing, rushing the front door, or getting underfoot. Teaching your dog to settle on cue gives them an “off switch,” and teaches them to regulate their emotions.

HOW TO TEACH IT

1. Find a mat that is comfortable for your dog to step on, and position the mat in front of you. You can simply put a towel on the floor.
2. Use a treat to lure your dog onto the mat. Click as soon as they step on the mat, then release the treat.
3. Toss a treat away from the mat to reset your dog.
4. Pause after they eat the reset treat. Most dogs will want to return to the mat because it's close to you. This allows you to fade the lure.
5. Click when your dog steps on the mat, then offer a treat. As they eat the treat, click, then treat 1-2 more times.
6. Repeat the above steps, pausing between treats on the mat. Doing so gives your dog a chance to choose to sit or lie down, and also builds duration.
7. Repeat the steps above, but position yourself away from the mat. Continue to offer a click, then a treat on the mat as a reward. Fuse your release cue or toss a treat away to reset.

ADDING A CUE

1. Lure your dog onto the mat and into a down position.
2. Use a release cue, such as "Free", or "Okay", and toss a treat away from the mat to reset your dog. Repeat steps 1 and 2 once more.
3. On the third repetition, use an un-baited hand, or a hand without a treat in it. Use the same motion to lure your dog onto the mat.
4. Click and reward your dog from the opposite hand
5. Continue this pattern, fading this “fake lure” into a finger pointed towards the mat. Repeat this until your dog readily follows that hand signal.
6. Teach a verbal cue like “settle” or “bed” by saying your cue, pausing for one second, then using your hand signal. Repeat this until your dog readily responds after the verbal cue.

BUILDING DURATION

1. Build duration by pausing for one second after your dog lies down on the mat before delivering the click, then treat.
2. Continue to click-then-treat every few seconds as your dog stays in place.
3. On each repetition, vary the length of the pause before the next click.
4. Continue to offer click-then-treats on the mat, and use your release cue to reset.

RELAXATION PROTOCOL

WHAT IS RELAXATION PROTOCOL?

Teaching your dog to have positive associations with being relaxed on a mat or bed.

WHY TEACH IT?

Relaxing on a mat teaches your dog to calm on cue. The cue in this case is the mat itself. This behavior is useful for those times when you need your puppy to behave while you are otherwise busy, such as when you're working at your desk, watching TV, cooking in the kitchen, during guest arrivals, and so on.

HOW TO TEACH IT?

1. Place a mat or bed on the floor in front of you, where your dog is likely to go.
2. Place a small treat on the mat, and let your dog eat it.
3. As your dog eats the treat, calmly place another treat on the mat.
4. Repeat the above steps, pausing in between treats to see if your dog will move all four paws onto the mat. Calmly treat your dog for doing so.
5. Continue to offer treats, pausing to see if your dog will sit or lay down. Offer a treat if they do.
6. Continue to offer treats on the mat periodically for remaining seated or lying down.
7. Capture other calm behaviors such as taking a deep breath, looking away, putting their head down, or shifting their weight to one side or another.
8. You can reset your dog by tossing a treat off the mat. After your dog resets, repeat the above steps.

TRAINING TIPS

1. Use a skid-proof bed or mat, so that it is comfortable for your puppy to step onto it.
2. If your dog remains excitable or tries to climb onto you, place the mat to your side instead of in front of you. Remain quiet and calm so as not to reinforce the excitement.
3. If your dog lays on the mat but doesn't seem to relax, try to get yourself more settled. Sit down comfortably, and take deep relaxing breaths. Keep your gaze soft, and slightly beside your dog. Capture and reward any looks away from you, or other physical settling from your dog.

RELIABLE RECALL

WHAT IS IT?

Recall refers to your dog's ability to come when called.

WHY TEACH IT?

Reliable Recall keeps you and your dog safe. You want to know that your dog will return to you - even in those risky, unplanned moments of taking off after something. By following the rules below, you and your dog can build a reliable recall that will last a lifetime.

THE 5 RULES OF RELIABLE RECALL

1. Choose a special word

It's important to have a special word for recall that won't be used by accident, one that you promise to use only when necessary. Use a distinct sound or a word that is three syllables or less that you are comfortable shouting in public but don't say in regular conversation.

2. Always reward your dog for recalling.

When you use your Reliable Recall cue, be prepared to reward your dog with something they absolutely love. It's a good idea to keep something extra special just for recall practice. Some examples of very high-value foods are hot dogs, cheese, steak, or cheeseburgers.

3. Never punish your dog when they come to you.

No matter how long it might have taken them to come back to you, or how naughty they were behaving prior to coming back, you should never punish your dog when they come to you. Your dog won't connect the punishment to the naughty behavior, but they will connect it to coming back to you.

4. Teach your dog to sit when they arrive at your feet.

Recall is less valuable if it only results in a drive-by from your dog! Teach your dog to sit on their return. Alternatively, you can also practice physically getting a hold of your dog prior to delivering the reward. Either option gives you time to gather your dog or leash them up when you need to.

5. You're always working on recall.

Recall is not about how the dog is rewarded in the moment, but about how the dog has been rewarded in the past! Don't expect your dog to come when called if you are not regularly practicing and rewarding it. The more you use your recall cue, according to the 5 Rules, the more reliable it becomes. Remember to train in a variety of locations and over varying distances.

RELIABLE RECALL (CONT.)

HOW TO TEACH IT

Your goal is to teach your dog that returning to you is always the better bet! Do this by making recall games fun for your dog.

GAME #1: MOONWALK RECALL

1. Click, then treat!
2. Repeat these steps, walking a little further with each repetition.
3. Give your recall cue in a clear, cheerful tone.
4. Walk backwards excitedly, 1-2 steps. Make it enticing for your dog to follow!
5. When your dog gets to you, gently take their collar or harness in your hand.

Training tip: This game can be played on leash or off leash in a safe space.

GAME #2: TREAT TO TROT

1. Place 3-4 pieces of low-value food (like your dog's kibble) on the ground.
2. Calmly walk away a few steps while your dog eats the food.
3. As soon as your dog finishes eating, give your recall cue in a clear, cheerful tone.
4. When your dog comes to you, gently take their collar or harness in your hand.
5. Click, then treat!
6. Repeat these steps, walking a little further away with each repetition.

Training tip: Give yourself more time to get further away by scattering the low-value food.

GAME #3: PUPPY PING PONG

1. Enlist the help of a friend. Prepare treats for both of you to keep in your treat pouch.
2. Stand 6 feet from the other person, and gently hold your dog's collar or harness.
3. Ask the other person to call your dog, using your recall cue. Then let your dog go.
4. When your dog arrives, have the other person gently take a hold of their collar or harness, then click, then offer a treat.
5. This time, call your dog back to you. When your dog arrives, gently grab their collar or harness, then click, then offer a treat.
6. Repeat these steps 5-10x times. Thereafter, vary the distance your dog must travel.
7. Advance this by adding more people to the game. Vary who calls, but be sure that only one person calls your dog at a time.

Training tip: Give your recall cue once. Avoid repeating the cue, or your dog will not learn it reliably.

JUMPING ON PEOPLE

WHY DOES MY DOG JUMP ON PEOPLE?

Jumping up is a common side effect of excitement and enthusiasm. The trick to getting your dog to stop jumping on people is to teach them to do something else instead. Reacting by scolding or otherwise getting physical with your dog often inadvertently reinforces the behavior, causing it to increase in intensity and frequency. Instead, teach your dog to sit or stand with four paws on the floor during times they are likely to get excited.

HOW TO TEACH A POLITE GREETING

Teach your dog to sit or lay down for greetings.

1. Teach your dog to sit on cue, and reward them with praise, petting, and treats when they perform the behavior.
2. Practice sitting on cue in a variety of settings, and with different people giving the cue.
3. Start using a sit during play or other times when your dog might be excited. Interrupt play by calmly asking for a sit. Reward them for performing the behavior.
4. Notice all the times your dog freely offers a sit without prompting and reward them generously! Doing so teaches your dog that sitting is most often the best choice they can make.
5. Once your dog reliably sits on cue, practice this during greetings. Cue a sit and only allow the person to approach if your dog is sitting.

TRAINING TIPS

1. Dogs that jump for attention can be rewarded with attention, but only when they sit.
2. Get into the habit of crossing your arms, turning your body and head away, then standing still until they stop. By removing your attention, you encourage them to try something else instead. Only give attention after your dog puts four paws on the floor again.
3. Use baby gates, or closed doors to create temporary separation prior to getting excited, and until after the inciting event is over. A common time to practice this is when you come home at the end of the day.
4. Be your dog's advocate! During training, it is common for other people to reinforce the jumping with attention. Be consistent about politely asking others to wait, until you say it is okay to interact with your dog. Only give permission for interaction if your dog is calmly standing or sitting.
5. When practicing sit, practice in loops so the dog has more opportunities to practice making the right choice. This looks like: cue the dog to sit in front of you, when they do mark with "yes" or click, then toss the treat away from you. The dog then must go retrieve their treat which gives them another opportunity to approach you and sit. This behavior loop helps the dog to practice the appropriate approach.
6. When working on tip 3, practice tip 5 with you on one side and the dog on the other side so your dog will learn to be calm while they wait for you to get in.

MOUTHING & NIPPING

WHAT IS IT AND WHY DO THEY DO IT?

Mouthing and nipping occurs when your dog puts their mouth or teeth on your hands, feet, clothing, or other body parts during play or excitement. This is a very common behavior in puppies and young, high-energy dogs. It is typically done to get attention or continuing play. Puppies also go through their teething period where we will see more gnawing or chewing to relieve the pain and pressure of their teeth erupting. Whether or not harm is caused when they put their mouth on us, it is a behavior we want to discourage.

WHY WORK ON IT?

Biting and chewing are not only normal behaviors, but they are essential to the wellbeing of any dog. Therefore, before we focus on discouraging them from mouthing us, it's important to ensure that they have other outlets for their need to bite and chew as well as engage in play using their mouths! Make sure your dog always has access to appropriate chew toys, and that they are encouraged to play with toys during interactions with humans. Fetch and tug-of-war are both healthy outlets for their desire to use their mouth in interactive play.

HOW TO TEACH IT: PETTING

1. Pet your dog.
2. If your dog puts their mouth on you at all, stop petting them.
3. Wait 30 seconds or more before continuing to pet your dog.

TRAINING TIP: Be sure to stick to 5 repetitions or less of this activity. If your puppy continues mouthing or nipping, it means they need a better outlet for their energy! Try going for a walk, giving them a stuffed kong, or playing with a toy instead.

HOW TO TEACH IT: PLAY WITH A TOY

1. Engage your dog in playing with a toy.
2. If their teeth make contact with your skin, immediately end the game. You may stand or even walk out of the room. It is not necessary to take the toy away or scold them.
3. Wait 30 seconds or more before resuming play.

HOW TO TEACH IT: GIVE A KISS

1. Place a meaty treat into your closed fist.
2. Offer your closed fist to the dog. When they lick your fist, quickly open your fist so the dog can eat the treat.
3. Once the dog gets the pattern of the game, get additional licks before you release the treat.
4. Say the words "Give A Kiss" as your dog licks your fist.
5. Cue the newly learned alternative behavior of licking when your dog becomes mouthy.

MOUTHING & NIPPING (CONT.)

TRAINING TIPS:

1. These training plans should be in place any time you are petting or playing with your dog, not just during structured training sessions. Dogs are learning every time they interact with us, whether we intend to be teaching them or not!
2. Refrain from scolding your dog, because that may accidentally be reinforcing, or overly frightening to them. If they find it reinforcing, you'll make the behavior more likely to recur. If you scare or threaten your dog to discourage the behavior, other problematic behaviors may surface!
3. In some instances of mouthing, simply placing a toy into their mouth, instead of your hand or arm, can be enough to redirect the behavior onto an appropriate outlet.
4. Instances of nipping due to breed tendencies should be worked on with a positive reinforcement trainer or behavior consultant.

LOOSE-LEASH WALKING

WHY TEACH LOOSE-LEASH WALKING?

Loose-Leash Walking (LLW) is defined as walking within the length of the leash. LLW is actually a lot more complicated than we give our dogs credit for! Think about what it takes to walk within the length of the leash: attention to handler, making periodic eye contact, and walking at an unnaturally slow pace for dogs. Being good at LLW is just as dependent on the human's leash skills as it is on the dog's.

GET STARTED: THE MAGIC CIRCLE GAME

1. Imagine a circle around your body, which stretches 4 feet in every direction. Your dog gets rewarded for remaining within the magic circle.
2. Clip a leash to your dog's collar or harness, and let it drag on the floor.
3. Click, then treat for attention.
4. Take a baby step, and click-treat your dog for staying in the magic circle.
5. Repeat this as you move around the room. Vary the number of baby steps you take.
6. If your dog stays within the magic circle for several laps around the room or house, you're ready to pick up the end of your dog's leash.
7. Set up your equipment before proceeding. Choose a hand for the leash, and a hand for the clicker and treats. See Training Tips!
8. Practice as you did before. Focus on providing a loose leash for your dog.

BABY STEPS

1. Clip a leash to your dog's collar or harness and let it drag on the floor.
2. Click, then treat your dog for giving you their attention.
3. Take a baby step, and click-treat your dog for any movement with you.
4. Repeat this as you move around the room, one baby step at a time. First, walk in a straight line, then a circle, and finally a zig-zag pattern.
5. Once your dog reliably takes baby steps with you around the room, pick up the leash. Set up your equipment before proceeding. Choose a hand for the leash, the clicker, and the treats.
6. Continue as you were before, but this time holding the leash. Focus on keeping slack in the leash as you continue to click, then treat for movement with you.

TRAINING TIPS

1. Start in a low-distraction environment, like your living room or backyard.
2. Use a treat pouch. If you have a preferred side for your dog to walk on, wear it on that side for quick treat delivery.
3. Give treats at nose level. If you prefer to drop a treat on the ground, be sure to drop them within the circle and wait for your dog to eat them.
4. Click-then-treat frequently! The more your dog is rewarded, the faster they learn.
5. Once you have the leash in your hand, be sure not to use it to pull on your dog. Remember that you're a part of the loose-leash-walking equation!
6. If your dog starts pulling at the end of the leash, stand perfectly still and wait for them to return to the magic circle. Never use the leash to pull them back.

PREVENTING RESOURCE GUARDING

WHAT IS RESOURCE GUARDING?

Resource guarding (RG) refers to a dog's desire to maintain possession of an object or other resource. As a result, a dog may show escalating warning signals and aggressive behaviors in an attempt to prevent an item from being taken away. This can happen in interactions with humans or other animals. RG is a common behavior in dogs because it is a survival tactic.

WHY IS RG PREVENTION IMPORTANT?

We all want to live peaceably with our dogs. RG can get in the way of that by turning seemingly normal interactions into confrontations. Changing a behavior like RG is extremely time-intensive and risky. Preventing RG from a young age is much easier.

Preventing RG means we take the time to teach our dog's brain to respond positively when they are approached by others while in possession of something they feel is valuable. We can take that a step further by teaching our dogs to enjoy giving up valuable items and, therefore, do so willingly without confrontation. We do this by creating a positive association with being approached and/or giving up the valued item, as a means of access to something better.

The following activities are options for preventing RG in puppies. These activities should not be used with adult dogs or dogs with a known history of RG or other aggression. If during either activity your puppy becomes distressed or defensive, contact a qualified trainer for help.

HOW TO TEACH IT: FOOD BOWL BONUSES

1. Prepare high-value treats in your treat pouch. Portion some of your puppy's meal in a bowl. Offer the bowl to your puppy. Then take several steps away.
2. After 3 seconds, step towards your puppy and toss some high-value treats into the bowl. Immediately take several steps away from your puppy.
3. Wait until your puppy finishes eating the treats. Then repeat Step 2.
4. Repeat this game until your puppy finishes the food in the bowl. Play this game regularly as your puppy grows.

Training Tip: The sequence of events is always: approach, add treats, walk away.

Training Tip: Use treats that are higher in value to your puppy than what is already in the bowl.

HOW TO TEACH IT: TEACHING TRADES

1. Choose a verbal cue for trading up. This will be the cue you use when you want your puppy to give up possession of an object. Ex: "give," "trade ya!" or "drop it."
2. Say the cue then offer your dog a jackpot of 4-6 small pieces of a high-value treat.
3. Repeat this until your puppy immediately looks at or moves towards you after you give the cue, even before they see the treats.
4. Play in that short increment, several times daily. After you've spent a few days on steps 1-3, you can try using the trade cue when your dog has something moderately valuable like a toy.

Training tip: The trade cue is a promise to your dog, so only use it when you're prepared to offer a trade!