

Top 10 Training Tips

*Your Dog Wishes
You Knew*

Cindy Scott



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I founded Dogs Etc. Dog Training in 1997 with the simple mission - to enrich dogs' lives.

But it all started way back in 1989 when I lost one of the loves of my life - my little cockapoo Pepper. She did the unthinkable. She ran out into the street and was killed by a car. It was over before I had a chance to react. Heartbroken, I tried to make sense of why the conventional training I had done with her failed. A psychology major at the time I discovered operant and classical conditioning. Why was this not applied in dog training instead of punishment?

It then became my mission to share these better, easier and funner training techniques with all dogs and their owners. I never, ever, want anyone to suffer the heartache of losing a dog like that. But even more important, I never want one dog to suffer. My dedication to training dogs is my way of honoring my beloved Pepper. Every dog that I help is a tribute to her.

Cindy 

1.) Train Early

It's so much easier to prevent problems than it is to correct them. The ideal time to start training is *before* your dog is 4 1/2 months old. Puppies learn faster and easier than adult or even adolescent dogs. It's like teaching a 2 year old child a second language as opposed to waiting until they are in high school. The younger the faster and easier.



Give your puppy the same rules at 8 weeks that they will have at 8 years. Then teach him those rules. The old standard was that you couldn't start training your dog until they were 6 months. That was back in the choke chain days. You can't use a choke chain on a small puppy. Choke chains and other harsh collars can seriously injure dogs, especially puppies. There are much better, more effective training methods now.

Lure and positive reinforcement are gentle yet very effective. Using these methods your breeder can start working with your puppy. Handling, socializing as well as command training can and should be taught to your

pup even before you bring him home. The more you teach your dog before the critical 4 month age the better. It's like money in the bank.

2.) Socialization.

Have a variety of people feed your dog a variety of treats in a variety of locations. I cannot stress this one enough. Socialization is one of THE most important things you can do for your dog. If your dog does not have many POSITIVE experiences with many types of people he may become afraid of them.

Fear leads to aggression. Fear aggression is by far the most common type I see, especially with rescue dog. The best time to socialize your dog is in puppyhood. In fact, research has shown that you really only have until 4 and a half months of age. This is the ideal time for learning. Puppies' brains are just sponges soaking up information. We want to make sure they are learning what we want - especially at this crucial stage of development.

But socialization does not end in puppyhood. It is lifelong. You must continually positively expose you dog to lots of different stimulus. So take

your dog out with you. Visit 3-4 dog friendly places a week. Bring lots of treats (for you and your dog) as well as a stuffed Kong or bully stick.



Reward your dog for being around new sights and sounds. This also helps desensitize them so new places becomes less and less a big deal. There are more and more dog friendly businesses and frankly just going on walks and to the park is good too. Just get your dog out of the house.

If your puppy has not had all their vaccines yet, invite people over to your house. Have a Puppy Party. Help them to love people. The best way is to

have people feed them. Kids should give the best treats. The number one fear dogs have is of kids. So bring them on! Make a game out of it for the kids. Bonus - it's a great opportunity to teach kids the proper way to interact with dogs.

3.) Make It Fun

Utilize games and play training to keep it fun for you and your dog. Use a variety of rewards when your dog behaves correctly. Treats and food are of course rewarding but so are toys and praise. And don't underestimate the rewarding power of play. To some dogs a good game of fetch is the most earth shattering reward known.

Don't take the training too seriously.

No one gets a dog because they need more poop to clean up.

If you find yourself getting frustrated, take a break and come back later. Every dog learns at a different pace. If yours isn't "getting" it, no big deal. Take a break and re-evaluate your technique. Your dog's behavior is in direct response to your behavior. A lot of times they just aren't "getting" it because your timing is slow.

Teach your dog something silly. Stupid pet tricks are a great way to continue the learning while having a great time. Shake, play dead (BANG!), rollover, sit pretty, speak, and the list goes on and on. Anything you can lure or dog

to do or anything they do on their own you can put on cue. Yes a 30 minute down stay is great, but yawn. Right? A rollover. That's fun!

There are also plenty of games to play. My favorite is hide n' seek with the dogs. It is a fantastic way to practice the recalls and you really get to see your dog think. Hide behind the couch and call your dog. Make him use his brain to find you. Once he discovers you his joy is the biggest reward. This is how they teach search and rescue dog. So much fun.

4.) Don't Let Your Dog Train You

It's easy to fall for those sad eyes and that soft little whimper. Keep in mind if you give in once your dog will look for that one time and do it again. That one time he looked so adorable so you gave him something while you were eating will lead to a second time and a third. That's how bad habits get started.

It may be cute for your little puppy to jump on you. But remember that little puppy is going to grow. Give your dog as a puppy the same rules he will have as an adult. It is not fair to change the rules on him. Imagine how confusing to be rewarded for something one day and reprimanded for the same behavior the next day.



5.) Your Dog Is Family - Not Lawn Furniture

Dogs are pack animals and when you bring one into your family you become your dog's pack. Companionship is crucial to your dog's mental health. To him it's about quantity not quality time. Just being in the same room with you is calming to him. Dogs that are left outside (or in the garage) become stressed and bored. Stressed and bored dogs become destructive and vocal. Believe it or not, it is much easier to teach your dog to behave inside than it is to teach them to behave outside.

Shedding is a common excuse why dogs are left outside. Frequent grooming, good nutrition and brushing are easy ways to reduce shedding. Get a good vacuum and get over it. If allergies are an issue, get a dog that doesn't shed. There are many breeds that don't shed at all - Poodles, Maltese, Schnauzers just to name a few.

Lack of house training is another excuse for banishing dogs to the backyard. It is virtually impossible to house train a dog that is outside all the time. If he never comes in the house, how can you teach him not to pee there? The

only way to teach your dog to behave properly inside is to, well, have him inside.

6.) Make it A Habit

Spoiler alert - training never ends. It is lifelong. If you slack off, so will your dog. Your training does not end with a 6 week class no matter how wonderful it is. I call this my "donut theory of dog training." You cannot work out, eat clean, get in great shape and then eat pizza and donuts and maintain that great shape. It just can't be done. Sigh. Trust me I've done the research.

Dogs, just like us, also go through different stages of development. Puppies will be doing great and then, BAM, adolescents hits and all bets are off. Suddenly they are jumping, stealing food off the counters and barking at everything that moves. Congratulations you have a teenager. If you are making training a habit it is fairly easy to keep your dog on course. Don't get frustrated, that's just life. Nothing stays the same. The only constant is change.

The best way to make it habit for you AND your dog, is to integrate the training into your daily routine. Who has an extra 30 minutes a day to train the dog? But we can easily ask him to say "please" and "thank you" for

everything he enjoys. My kids have to say it, why not the dog? How does your dog display good manners? Have him do a few commands. He should at least sit before all life rewards. The more advanced he is the more you can ask him to do.



Have your dog come, sit, watch before you give him his meals or a toy, attention, putting his leash on him. Anything your dog enjoys in life he should earn. If you are consistent with this, so will he. Soon you don't even have to ask him he will do it automatically. Yeah! That's the best.

7.) Exercise, Exercise, Exercise

Roughly 90% of behavior problems are due to bored dogs with too much energy. Your mantra to remember is - "a tired dog is a happy owner". Most breeds were created to do a specific job, so give them one. They may not need to herd sheep all day anymore but they still have that energy. Your job is to keep them mentally and physically occupied. A walk once a day is nice, but it may not be enough. Consider a couple of fetch games sprinkled throughout the day. It's a good stress reliever for you too.

a tired dog is a happy owner

Make the most of your walks. Doggie back packs are a great way to tire your dog out a little more on walks. They are like saddle bags for your dog. You can put a bottle of water in each side to weigh him down a little. The extra weight help to exert more energy. You can also put his poop bags in the pack. That way you will never be caught without one. It also serves as a restraint. Slows a lot of dogs down a little too.

8.) It's You - Not Your Dog

That old break up line rings true but in reverse. Your dog's behavior hinges on your behavior. How you respond to what your dog does will determine if that behavior is repeated or not. If you don't take the time to exercise your dog or show him proper chew toys, what is he supposed to do when he's bored? Your timing is crucial to your dog's learning. As your timing improves, so will your dog's behavior. As your behavior improves - so will your dogs'.

If your dog jumps on you and you pet him, you are telling him, "thanks for jumping on me please do it again." Remember - behaviors that are followed by a positive stimulus will re-occur and increase in frequency. If your dog is doing something that bug you, first look at the situation. What is his reward?

If your dog barks and you pet him, you are saying, "thank you for barking please do it again." It is especially easy to inadvertently reward little dogs. When they misbehave, we just pick them up. It's very easy to control them that way. But what are they really learning? They don't learn the correct

way to behave in that situation. They learn - I barked I get picked up. I like that. Yeah for me. I'll do it again. Consistency is key.

If your dog does something you don't like, it's really not fair to get mad at him. After all, you taught it to him whether you like it or not. Dogs are always learning. Forget all the Disney movies you've ever seen. The reality is that dogs do what works. If it works they'll do it again. If it doesn't work they won't do it again.

9.) Nutrition And Health Care

You and your veterinarian are a team. Your dog depends on you to be an advocate for him. Stay informed. Read labels and ask lots of questions. Don't be intimidated by your vet, your trainer or your groomer. If you are uncomfortable with any of your dog professionals, it's time to replace them.

There are several behavioral issues that are caused by diet. For instances, a lot dogs have food allergies manifest as dermatitis and other problems.

Many dogs, especially continuous growth hair dogs like poodles, maltese and schnauzers, are allergic to wheat and corn. Wheat and corn are a common fillers in commercial dog foods and treats. Most shampoos also contain wheat gluten which is a common allergen.

Years ago, I was convinced my Miniature Poodle, Max, suffered from Obsessive Compulsive Disorder because he licked his feet constantly. (OCD's are actually more common in dogs than you would think.) However, after taking him completely off wheat, his licking stopped. It was amazing.

Too much filler in commercial dog foods can also cause your dog to have to relieve himself more often. If you know what I mean. This of course will result in increased trips out doors and may interfere with house training.

There are many diseases and even parasites that can also cause your dog's behavior to change. Diabetes, for example, will make your dog very thirsty.

The increase in water intake can lead to house training accidents. Diabetes will also increase your dog's appetite. This can lead to trash digging and counter surfer. Be aware of these and other changes and communicate them to veterinarian immediately.



10.) Train Don't Complain

I know it is much easier to complain about the situation (any situation) than it is to actually do something about it. If you really want to change your circumstances you must roll up your sleeves and act. Take charge and be proactive. Don't wait for a problem to occur and then react to it. Troubleshoot problem areas to set up your dog for success not failure. Teach what you want.

All the training tips in this and every other training guide have one critical design flaw. You must actually do the steps outlined in them for you to have any success in changing your dog's behavior. So no more excuses. No more blaming your dog. If you want your dog to be great - teach him. Train don't complain.



Bonus- Have Fun With Your Dog!!!

Thank you. I hope you've found this information helpful.

Ready for more?

If you're ready for a deeper dive, I invite you join my *Enlightened Puppy* program. Don't let the name fool you. It's for all ages and all breeds.

- Ready to **finally** solve those pesky doggie behaviors that are driving you crazy?
- Dreaming of quiet walks and peaceful family visits?
- Tired of trying to piece together training from google and YouTube?

If you're ready to stop the struggle and frustration and have that dog you've always dreamed of, then I invite you to *enlighten* yourself and your dog.

Inside my program [The Enlightened Puppy](#) you will be receive all training and support you need.

Behave,

Cindy



*When the spirits got ready to leave the earth they
created a great fissure.*

*On one side was Man, on the other the spirits.
Man was no longer able to cross over to the spirit
realm.*

*The fissure widened, and at the very last minute,
Dog jumped across to stand with Man.*

- Lakota Legend

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