

Top 10 Dog Training Tips

1. Be consistent

Training your dog will start the first moment you have her. Hold a family meeting to create rules about caring for the dog. Will she be allowed on the couch, the bed, and in all rooms of the house? Who will walk her and clean up after her? As a family, you must all be consistent with your decisions or you will confuse your dog, usually resulting in the dog making her own rules and causing unnecessary tension. Take time to create a vocabulary list everyone will use when giving your dog directions. This will help prevent confusion and help your dog learn her commands more quickly.



2. Period of Adjustment

Your dog may be a bit uneasy at first as she gets to know you. Bring your new dog home when you can be there a few days so you can supervise her as she learns your house rules. Be patient and understanding while also keeping to the schedule you intend to maintain for feeding and walks. The schedule will show your dog what is expected of her as well as what she can expect from you.

3. Calm & Quiet

We know moving is stressful—and your new dog feels the same way! Give her time to acclimate to your home and family before introducing her to strangers. Make sure children know how to approach the dog without overwhelming her. For the first few days, remain calm and quiet around your dog, limiting too much excitement (such as a dog park or neighborhood children). Just like people, dogs like to have quiet time so be



sensitive to this in the first few days. Not only will this allow your dog to settle in easier, it will give you more one-on-one time to get to know her and her likes and dislikes.

4. Be Generous with Your Affection

Most people don't have a problem being very clear when they are unhappy with their dogs, but they often ignore good behavior. Big mistake! Make sure you give your dog lots of attention when she's doing the right thing. That's the time to be extra generous with your attention, praise, and treats!



5. Tell Her What You Want Her to Do

There is nothing inherently wrong with telling your dog "no," except that it doesn't give her enough information. Instead of telling your dog "no," tell her what you want her to do. If your dog jumps up on someone to say hello, a better alternative would be to ask her to "sit." Tell her what you want her to do in order to avoid confusion.



6. Be Prepared For Accidents

Coming into a new home with new people, new smells, and new sounds can throw even the most housebroken dog off-track, so be ready. NEVER hit your dog if an accident occurs. Simply begin to reinforce good potty habits with consistent potty time and place, treats, and praise. Praise, not punishment, is the key to a well-behaved pet.

7. Freedom

Let your new dog gradually earn freedom throughout your home. A common error that many pet parents make is giving their new dog too much freedom too soon. This can easily lead to accidents relating to housetraining and destructive chewing. Close off doors to unoccupied rooms and use baby gates to section off parts of the house. One of the best ways to minimize incidents is to keep your dog tethered to you in the house and by using a crate when you can't actively supervise her.



8. Crate Training

Do not leave your new dog unsupervised in the house (unless she is crated) until she has learned the rules. This way you can prevent bad habits from forming. Dogs instinctively like to den, and a crate makes the ideal place for your dog to sleep and get away from the household chaos. While crate training also makes housetraining and training in general easier, limit the amount of time the dog is crated. The crate should be roomy enough to allow your dog to stand up, turn around, and lie down comfortably.

9. Listen to Your Dog

Learn to listen to your dog. When she's first settling in, your dog may experience shyness, anxiety, restlessness, excitement, crying, or barking. If these persist or if you encounter behavior issues you are unfamiliar with, ask your veterinarian for a trainer recommendation. Select a trainer who uses positive-reinforcement techniques to help you and your dog overcome these behavior obstacles. Ensure your dog has all the necessary vaccines before taking your dog to group training classes or the dog park to socialize. While at the dog park, pay close attention to your dog's body language to be sure she's having a good time and is not fearful or a dog-park bully. If your dog appears to be uncomfortable meeting another dog, animal, or person, don't insist that she say hello. Your dog is telling you that she isn't comfortable, and you should respect that.

10. Obedience Training

Most cities' Parks and Recreation Departments or Humane Society offer dog obedience training. A weekly 1-hour, 6-8 week class and a ½-hour daily training lesson will teach your dog the simple obedience commands so necessary in having a well-behaved pet. Just as we must teach our children manners, we must also teach our dog.

