

The 100 Greatest Dog Training Tips of All Time

The Only Dog Training Tips You'll EVER Need!



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About the Authors:

This book has been carefully prepared, researched and edited by a team of canine information experts. Our authors are, first and foremost, passionate about dogs and share a mutual satisfaction in assisting people who are experiencing problems with their pets. Our works have been read by more than 12 million pet owners globally.

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Introduction:

If I'd have known then what I know!

How many times have we said this in relation to a skill or a problem solving situation?

The 100 Greatest Dog Training Tips of All Time is a collection of tips, advice and personal experience from a collection of experienced dog trainers and owners, all of which goes toward giving YOU the advantage of tapping in to the combined knowledge of decades of experience and real world knowledge of how to cure, solve and avoid the most common canine behaviour issues.

10 Greatest Puppy Training Tips

10) When trying to settle a puppy into a new home, providing them with a warm hot water bottle and placing a ticking clock in the room where they sleep will help to replicate the body heat and heartbeat of their litter mates and can really help them to relax in their new environment.

9) When taking your puppy to the Vet for its first inoculations, health checks etc, it is good practice to sit with your puppy on your lap and not have him or her on the floor. Apart from being able to comfort and re-assure the puppy easier in this position you must also consider the fact that there may be a number of sick animals in the surgery and your puppy is vulnerable if they come into direct contact with infectious animals that may also be in attendance at the same time as your pup.

Make a very deliberate effort to ensure your puppy's trips to the vets are as fun as you can make them. Don't allow your puppy to think you are nervous or concerned, instead make a game and even take a toy to amuse the puppy with whilst they sit on your lap.

8) Always ensure from the earliest possible moment that your puppy is given his or her own, private sleeping place that is not used by anyone else in the family or another pet. Your puppy will benefit from short periods left alone in his or her 'den' with you always returning to reward the pup when he or she is relaxed and quiet.

7) Try to make sure your puppy is entertained adequately for short but regular intervals during the day. Long periods of being left unstimulated may lead to destructive or disruptive behaviour later in life. Little games playing 'fetch' with the pup's favourite toy will have the beneficial affect of stimulating the pup, increasing his or her bond with you and allowing the pup to expend short, sharp bursts of energy.

6) Don't over-train your puppy. Remember, a one-year old dog is, effectively, the same as a seven-year old person. It is a good rule of thumb to keep reminding yourself 'would I expect a three, four, five or six-year old child to accomplish some of the tasks I am asking of my pup?'

Manners, house-cleanliness and the very basics (including socialisation) are all you should really seek to instil in your puppy until such a time, as they are mature enough to undergo a more formal training regime. Puppies can deceive you into thinking they are ready for training but will ultimately 'rebel' against discipline as they get older. Ensuring you have taught your puppy to respond to his or her name, what is and is not acceptable in terms of house-manners and establishing an uninhibited relationship with your pup is more important than any other discipline in the early stages of any dog's life.

5) OWWWW! Teach your puppy that biting or nipping is not a pleasant experience for you by reacting as if in pain to their playful nips. Rather than scold the dog, let him or her know that nipping is not a pastime that you wish to engage in. Letting out an over-

exaggerated expression of pain will more than likely shock the puppy into ceasing this behaviour. You will be glad you put an end to this behaviour early on instead of confronting a 'playful' 2-year-old with a full set of adult teeth!

4) Decide early on what is and is not acceptable in your house. If you don't want your pup to use the living-room sofa as a raised dog bed when they get older then don't encourage him or her to come up for fuss when they're young just because they look sweetly at you and are small enough to pick up.

3) Jumping up. All puppies love to jump out when greeting anyone. Rather than reprimand the pup, simply ignore the behaviour and wait until he or she settles down and is not jumping up before lavishing any attention on them. Above all else, don't encourage the behaviour by patting or praising the dog when they are in the 'jump-position' or you may run in to problems as the dog gets bigger and views jumping up as an easy way to receive attention.

2) The puppy's name will be with them for life, make sure they know it by associating it with all things pleasant and fun. In the same way dog's cotton on in a very positive way to words such as 'walkies', 'biscuits' or 'dinner-time' they should be given the same association with their own name.

Too often the only time the puppy hears his or her name is when they have done something naughty. 'Jasper, stop doing that!' 'Buster, leave that alone!' It's tough but try to ensure that you NEVER use the puppy's name in a negative scenario only positive ones. Instead of 'Jasper, leave that alone!' simply, 'Leave that alone!' or better yet 'No!'. And instead of 'walkies', biscuits or 'dinner-time' try 'Jasper, biscuits!', 'Jasper, walkies!', 'Jasper, dinner-time!' Golden rule. Your puppy should associate his or her own name with all that is pleasant and fun and nothing that is negative.

The word 'no' is negative and it is enough to cover all undesirable behaviour.

1) From the moment your puppy comes into your life teach him that coming to you when called is nothing short of being the best thing in the world. Puppies can't resist humans who sit down on the floor with legs spread apart so, while they're easily persuaded to come by this very simple gesture, make the most of it by using their name, sparingly, but making a huge fuss when puppy arrives. Try it at times when pup is pre-occupied with something interesting and make coming back to you the most enjoyable and rewarding experience in the world for him or her. You will really see the benefits as the dog gets older.

10 Greatest Canine Socialisation Tips

10) It is essential when you start to socialise your dog that it is done in the company of another dog(s) who is/are friendly, well adjusted and tolerant. Trying to socialise your dog with a dog suffering from their own personal anxieties will lead to disaster.

9) Make a point of being able to 'control' certain environmental scenarios when you are exposing your dog to them for the first time. For instance, make sure that the first time you take your dog for a walk on a busy high street, it is not on an occasion when you are running late and your attention may be focussed away from the dog. Instead set aside the time to introduce your dog 'gently' to different environmental elements such as loud vehicle noises, busy traffic, hustle and bustle of people and different smells in different areas. Make sure your focus is on the dog and you are in a position to comfort and reassure them at all times.

Plan ahead. Don't throw the dog in at the deep end by exposing them to too much too soon it could have disastrous results. Try to expose your dog to different scenarios where you can control what is likely to happen and how you will respond to the dog, depending on his or her reaction to events.

8) Try and allow your dog to have some sort of interaction with children at the earliest possible opportunity. Always ensure this interaction is monitored 100% of the time but make a point of allowing your dog to find out for themselves what children are and how they respond different to adults.

The earlier your dog can get a firm understanding that children are not a threat to pack status or are a viable target for a challenge of authority, the better they will respond when confronted with younger people throughout the course of the dog's life. It must be stressed further though: NEVER allow a dog to be left unattended with a child or baby that it is not familiar with.

7) Try and 'hand-pick' the dogs that you allow your dog to be introduced to at an early age. Generally dogs that are considerably older and who are already very well socialised themselves will make excellent 'role-models' for your own dog. If your dog is introduced, either deliberately or through circumstances out of your control to an overly aggressive or overly nervous dog it can lead to your dog adopting a similar response.

Remember, dogs learn by association and they form behavioural habits very quickly. It is well worth while to go out of your way to set up early meetings between your dog and a variety of other, carefully selected canine-companions.

6) Although it can be difficult at times, allowing your dog to experience the natural reactions of another dog can often be beneficial. For example, male dogs who show an over eagerness to explore the private areas of other dogs will, on occasion come up against resistance in the form of a 'snap', deep growl or obvious display of aggression.

Sometimes it is worth remembering that dogs are the best teachers when it comes to eradicating unwanted behaviour in their canine-counterparts and allowing your dog to experience first hand that all other dogs may not necessarily want to play or be investigated can be extremely beneficial to their early learning curve.

5) Don't inadvertently re-enforce fearful responses from your dog when socialising. If your dog acts fearfully to a new situation such as meeting another (friendly/inquisitive) dog, don't pick him or her up or make a big fuss. Instead allow your dog to process what is happening in their own time and approach it in their own manner at their own pace. By trying to re-assure your dog if he or she responds with fear you may be accidentally instilling the belief that acting fearfully to new situations is the desired response you are looking for from your dog.

By making an intervention you will also be preventing the dog from carrying out a canine/canine interaction in the natural way and the dog will learn to expect your intervention all the time. Obviously in situations when your dog is presented with an aggressive or potentially dangerous situation you must read the situation and act by simply removing your dog from the vicinity of the danger with as little fuss as possible.

If you can, simply turn away in another direction, don't say a word and carry on your way as if nothing has happened. Remember at all times that your dog regards you as his or her pack leader and the way YOU respond to situations will have an enormous bearing on how your dog responds.

4) Develop an understanding and ability to 'read' your dog. Try and predict your dog's responses to certain events and ensure you are able to act if necessary. For instance, if your dog is very playful or bold, is he likely to get into trouble by being too forward with another dog or person? How will your dog respond to a dog who is likely to snap? How will you deal with the situation? You must plan for all scenarios, formulate how you will respond and put it into practice the moment it happens.

It is not at all uncommon for some dogs to suffer with longstanding fears as a result of incidents that happened years ago if it was something they had either never experienced before or if their owners were not prepared to take appropriate action at the moment the incident occurred.

Situations where dogs have had an ongoing fear of a particular breed as result of a frightening experience earlier on in their life are common and therefore your foresight and ability to act quickly can really help your dog to regain confidence and composure very quickly in the event that they suffer an unpleasant experience at the hands of another dog or person.

3) Always make a point to reward positive behaviour from your dog when they are interacting with other dogs. Dogs, very much like children have the uncanny ability to pick up bad habits from other dogs far quicker than you can instil the good habits into their

psyche. Make sure your dog is rewarded for good behaviour despite what may be going on around him or her. Dogs, when together, can act very differently to the way they normally do when they are on their own. Barking at people, chasing animals or anything else that moves, stealing from each other, mounting or riding one another are just some of the unwanted behavioural traits displayed when their pack instincts are awoken and their confidence levels are up as a result of being surrounded by canine-chums.

Ensure your dog is rewarded for not taking part in undesirable activity by praising him or her for behaving normally when all around them are 'showing-off'. Make a big point of letting your dog know that you are pleased with them for not joining in the bad behaviour even though they may not have done anything out of the ordinary. YOU will never know how tempting it was for your dog to join in the 'fun'!

2) Include your dog in as much as you are able to. Always try and think to yourself 'can the dog come?' You might be going to the pub for a quick drink 'can the dog come?' You might be going in the car to the tip to get rid of some junk, 'can the dog come?' Picking the kids up from school, 'can the dog come?' Wherever possible expose your dog to as much as you humanly can and always try and include them in different activities and expose them to different environments.

Make it a rule whenever you are about to do something or go somewhere ask yourself 'can the dog come?' Remember to assess each situation and plan ahead. Can you, at least to some extent 'control' the scenario? Do you have your pre-planned responses worked out? Are you in a position to 'read' your dog? Can you ensure your dog will be safe and you will be in a position to reassure him or her if needed? If the answer is yes then take the dog where you go as often as you can.

1) Dog training classes are excellent as they will allow you to socialise your dog in a controlled environment under the watchful eye of a knowledgeable dog trainer or behaviour expert. Take advantage of them even if you are confident of being able to train your own dog in the basic commands. You can't beat the experience of allowing your dog to mix freely with all sorts of other dogs or different shapes, sizes and temperaments. Make the most of these classes even if you only attend occasionally.

10 Greatest Tips for Canine Anxiety

10) Define whether you are dealing with a shy or a nervous dog. There is a big difference, as with people. A naturally shy person will react in a certain way to a crowd of people. They will slink away and try and avoid as much of what is happening as they possibly can. Now imagine a very confident person in the same crowd of people but imagine that confident person happens to be wearing a Manchester United football shirt and the crowd of people happen to all be Manchester City fans.

The confident person, due to the scenario they are presented with, will, in many ways, act exactly the same as the naturally shy person even though, under normal circumstances they would have no problems with what was happening. You must define if your dog is prone to nervous reactions to certain events and scenarios or if you own a naturally shy dog.

To determine this ask the following questions: Is the dog scared of ALL people who come to your house or just certain people they've never met before? If the former is the case then you probably have a dog who is of a naturally shy disposition, in the case of the latter, probably just prone to reacting nervously to different situations. Is the dog scared of loud noises? What happens if you clap your hands for a long time?

Does the dog eventually settle down and let the noise become part of the background or does he or she jump every single time? In the case of gundogs it is a commonly accepted fact that there can be dogs who are gun-shy and dogs who are gun-nervous. Gun-shyness is incurable and means the dog will never be able to be trained for the field, gun-nervousness can be overcome through positive reinforcement and conditioning to noise. It is essential that you understand if you are dealing with a shy dog or a nervous dog as the way you approach certain training situations will differ.

Nervous dogs can overcome obstacles through a process of a well-planned and expertly-executed exposures to whatever it is they are nervous of. In the case of a shy dog, this course of action could traumatise them for life and lead to them losing all trust in you. So, before you dog anything, define your dog as nervous or shy and understand the differences.

9) Similar to the advice given on not reinforcing fearful behaviour when socialising your dog the same theory should be applied when dealing with dogs who are frightened of loud noises such as thunder or fireworks. If you make a big song and dance over the noise or make an extra effort to reward your dog's fear response by being excessively attentive toward the dog you may instil a thought-process into the dog that something is wrong or that the noises mean there is a possibility of incoming danger. You should show the dog that there is nothing to be frightened of by going about your business in the normal way, not reacting to the noise, not acting in a manner that is out of the ordinary and above all don't react with a fearful or shocked response yourself.

Your dog is looking to you for leadership and you must show him or her that you are not in the slightest bothered or concerned with the loud noises by simply ignoring them.

8) Distraction is an excellent method to lessen the impact of fearful experiences amongst nervous dogs. Rather than increasing the dog's fear by making the dog 'face-up' to whatever it was that may have frightened him or her, it can be beneficial to distract the dog's trail of thought by engaging in an activity that is fun and stimulating for them. This will avoid the situation where a nervous dog may dwell on a frightening experience for too long, causing a particular fear to be prolonged or increased.

Distraction is by no means a cure but it can lessen the intensity of fear at any given moment and can help the dog to regain composure quickly. For instance in an imaginary scenario where your dog may be startled by somebody riding past quickly on bicycle, as the moment will pass so quickly and you won't be in a position to educate the dog or 'control' the environment at that particular moment, it would be good practice to engage the dog in a quick game of some kind where the dog will be rewarded for sitting or walking to heel or something similar.

This way you can distract the dog from what has just passed and reward for good behaviour (i.e. sitting, heeling etc) rather than allow the dog to think you are rewarding them for the fear response they showed when the bicycle startled them. Now you are aware of your dog's fear of bicycles you can, later on, 'set up' a situation with a bicycle where you ARE in a position to control the scenario and respond effectively to the dog's fears. Always be ready to distract the dog and engage them in a positive experience when they show fear but never confuse the dog into thinking you are rewarding the fear response, always make them work for praise or a treat even if it is only something very simple you ask them to do.

7) Never, under any circumstances try and 'cure' a fear by over-exposing the dog to whatever it is they are afraid of. If this method has a 1 in 100 chance of working 99 out of 100 dogs will be far more fearful than they were to begin with. Dogs that are scared of the noise the vacuum cleaner makes, for example, will not overcome the fear if you make a big effort to 'force' them to confront it. Dogs that are of a naturally nervous disposition will react badly to such treatment and shy dogs even more so. In some circumstances 'over exposure' may even lead to aggression or in extreme cases the nervous dog might even attack. Balance is the key, if the dog shows fear don't make a big deal out of it, simply carry on as normal and allow the dog to deal with their fear at their own pace.

6) Nerves can often be overcome by allowing the dog the opportunity to investigate and explore different environments at their own pace. Being too hands-on with the dog can lead to the dog getting a sense that you are concerned or worried about something. Simply leaving the dog to it, as it were, can often be the best way to allow them to naturally overcome certain fears.

Try sitting on the floor, legs apart and face turned away from the dog with your hands

open in front of you with food. Don't encourage the dog to come, just let him come of his own accord and take the food. Now sit to the side, food in hand and let him come again to be rewarded by food. Now put your hands behind your back and follow the same steps, with dog walking behind you. All the time YOU must not move, simply let the dog come and explore you.

Now put your hands out in front but close them, waiting for the dog to give you a nudge before giving him the treat. Extend this to lying face down with food in hands until the dog is so confident that he will come up and really nudge and push you until you release the food. Don't over praise, don't go to touch the dog, don't offer your hand – just let him come and 'work' at his own pace to get a treat from you. If you can encourage other people to play similar games, he will develop a great deal of confidence around new people as well as just you.

5) In situations where your dog shows fear towards strangers or visitors to them home, try and explain to visitors that you would prefer if simply ignored the dog completely, not even looking at the dog once or paying them the slightest bit of attention. Very often visitors feel the need to try and 'comfort' the dog and this can lead to the dog feeling even more threatened.

Once the dog has learned not to react at all to visitors, ask the occasional 'dog-knowledgeable' guest to nonchalantly and without any ceremony, simply drop a treat by the dog and then walk off in another direction. It is important they don't try and make a fuss of the dog or offer the treat from the hand. Doing this regularly with different guests will accustom the dog to the idea that all visitors are not intruders to the 'den' and they are not intent on causing harm to the dog or his pack.

4) Complimentary therapies and treatments can be very helpful for aiding nerves. Diet also plays an important role. If a dog is unusually nervous, listless, depressed or lacking coat condition a change of food may be in order. There are specialist dieticians and holistic vets who may be able to greatly increase your dog's physical and psychological well-being, thus improving the dog's confidence and reducing nervousness. Try the Internet or Yellow pages and look for holistic vets and animal dieticians.

3) Keep in your mind at all times how your body language impacts the shy or nervous dog. You are a very large creature with an ability to make all sorts of frightening noises (vacuum cleaners, washing machines, shouting at the TV). Imagine another creature that was the equivalent distance in size to what you are to a dog and you will have an appreciation of how the shy or nervous dog may see you.

Now imagine that creature 'bearing' down on you with wide eyes, a booming voice and hands the size of saucepans on their way to touch your face. Frightening isn't it? Well, to a shy or nervous dog that can be how they see the world of humans and your body language can be interpreted wrongly by the dog. The fact that you are so much bigger than him and the fact that people at large generally have a tendency to approach dogs

from a standing position thus bearing down on them can make the world a scary place. Always try and narrow the size difference with a nervous dog by getting down to their level. Avoid direct eye contact at all times, don't wear sunglasses (to a dog, they look like a pair of wide, staring eyes that never go away) and remember how the dog sees the world from different angles than you. Body language is vital in helping nervous dogs overcome their fears.

2) Make use of other dogs. Dogs, as a rule, will copy and emulate their canine counterparts. If you have a nervous dog it can be a wonderful experience for him or her to meet a carefully selected friend. Just one other dog to begin with. Let them play, let the nervous dog explore and the nervous dog will very soon begin to absorb the confidence of their bolder playmate and mimic their behaviour around people. It may take a while but regular 'play sessions' with other dogs can be the ultimate technique for curing many of the nervousness dog's hang-ups about life.

Ensure the play mate is well selected, is playful but not boisterous and has no aggressive tendencies. Don't, under any circumstances try and help a nervous dog by introducing them to an equally nervous playmate, it will double the problem. Meeting other dogs is a pastime best done socially where a 'screening' process can take place. Taking a nervous dog somewhere where there are likely to be lots of other dogs can be problematic. Explain your problems to friends, family, co-workers and be honest about your need to find a well-mannered, confident dog for yours to play with from time to time.

1) Consistency is a word used by all dog trainers and behaviour experts on a, well, consistent basis. Never is it more pertinent than in the case of the nervous or shy dog. You may be an erratic person, disorganised, impulsive, loud, prone to bad moods or shouting with none of these characteristics meant for the dog's consumption. However even the most ebullient of pooches will catch the vibes if something's 'up' in the household.

Ensuring stability, calm and an even tempered approach to home life will not only allow you to live longer and avoid an ulcer it will, above any other training tip or technique, help the more nervous of dogs to adjust to the world. Be patient, be calm, be understanding and be empathetic towards the dog's disposition.

Even if he or she has done something particularly naughty you must accept that there are certain ways to correct the problem that may work on 99.9% of dogs, even on dogs you have previously owned, but on THIS nervous or shy pet, the wrong response from you could literally kill their spirit.

10 Greatest Tips for Mastering Basic Commands

3 Basic Tips For Better Handling Of Your Dog

10) Signals should be given to your dogs with one hand and arm only. In the earliest stages you may exaggerate the signals to gain the dog's attention, but in the final analysis all signals must be given smoothly and swiftly without any excess body motion. The size of your dog is not a factor here, for you can train any dog to pay attention, and if he is paying attention to you he will see your signals.

The people who would disagree with this theory are those who have yet to learn how to make their dogs pay attention to them. You will have to watch yourself very carefully to avoid giving unintentional body signals to your dog. It is natural for a beginner to nod his head, lean forward, or move his hands when he calls his dog. He is so intent in watching his dog that he is unaware of his own actions. Have someone watch you so he can tell you when he notices you doing this.

9) Be consistent - never scold a dog for a misdemeanor one day and praise him the next for the same act. You cannot expect your dog to understand an exercise if you keep changing your training methods each time you try it. Dogs learn the basic work by repetition, and the entire training program should proceed smoothly and consistently. For instance, the techniques that you will use in puppy training will be repeated in advanced exercises when your dog gets older, and your handling will be just the same.

8) You should study your dog so you can foresee his reaction to any situation. You should become attuned to your dog's sensitivities. If you have a gentle, quiet dog, do not antagonize him by rough treatment. He will become very alert and responsive if you train him in a calm and gentle manner with consideration for his feelings. Aggressive or overly playful dogs need a more forceful approach.

A Six-Step Method for Teaching ANY New Behaviour

7) Training a new behaviour, you can follow this simple six-step method. Depending on the dog and other circumstances, a good trainer will vary his training method when he decides that a particular training challenge needs either a little more or less. When you have used the method enough to know it well, you can add your own personal touch as needed.

1. Get the desired behaviour.
2. Mark the desired behaviour.
3. Reward the desired behaviour.
4. Repeat the behaviour until it happens consistently.
5. Add the verbal cue as your dog does the behaviour to associate the word with the appropriate response.
6. Use the verbal cue to elicit the desired behaviour on command/at will.

You first get the behaviour by capturing, shaping, or luring it. You mark the behaviour with the click., or some other reward marker that your dog has already learned means that the reward is coming. Reward the behaviour by following the click with his favourite treat or, in some cases, with a favourite toy or other desirable reward, such as swimming or going outside.

Repeat the behaviour until your pet is offering it easily before you add the verbal cue, so that he will associate the word with the correct behaviour response. For instance, by saying "Sit" as he does it, you are telling him that the name of the behaviour he is doing is Sit. If you ask him to do it before he's offering the behaviour easily, you risk teaching him that the word sit means "stand there and look at me," or worse, "sniff the ground and pull on the leash."

After your dog has heard the word at least a half-dozen times during the behaviour, depending on how quickly he seems to learn, then you can say the word first to elicit the behaviour. Be sure that his attention is focused on you so that he actually hears the word, and keep your body position the same as it was when you were getting the behaviour before. If you had been doing the "Sit" while you were standing and you suddenly start asking for it while you are sitting, he won't understand that it's the same thing.

Give him a few seconds to respond. When he sits, click! and reward. If he doesn't sit, use the minimum amount of assistance necessary (through body language or a lure, not through physical assistance) to get the behaviour, and repeat the exercise. If you find that he will only respond if you help him, start to minimize the amount of help you give until he is sitting for the verbal cue without any help from you.

6) An Effective Way To Teach Your Dog To Drop On Recall

Many dogs will do their best ever drop on recall, almost by accident! This is because the element of surprise is so powerful that first time that the trained dog simply complies with the command on the spot. Later on, he tends to come more slowly and drop quite slowly. For this reason, this command is used sparingly. If not, you will really slow up your dog's recall in the early stages of their training. That's worth repeating – this command can take time and results can be variable in the early days. If you don't get perfection immediately, always be prepared to leave it for a while and go back to perfecting other, more simplistic commands before returning to this one.

If used carefully, this command can be a life saver. If you call your dog and then see danger approaching the path he is taking, you can stop him by dropping him and save his life in the process. Therefore, do not use this flashy command over and over to prove yourself, your dog or to entertain your friends. Teach it and then save it for an emergency.

Once your dog learns to readily drop from a distance on verbal or hand signal alone, you can begin to train the drop on recall. In this command, the dog is asked to come from afar

and then dropped (given the down at a distance command) when he is half way to you. With practice, your dog can be dropped at almost any time along the way so that if you need to drop him at any point, you will be able to do so.

In order to teach your dog to do this, place him on a "Sit, Stay" position at some distance. Six feet is not enough since that would allow him to get too close after the "Come" before you had a chance to drop him. Ten or twelve feet should do the trick. Call him to come. When he is one-third of the way toward you, raise your arm in the distance signal and say "Down" in a good, strong, and firm voice.

Your dog may drop on the spot. If so, wait one second and then call him to come, using both voice and hand signal for "Come." As soon as your dog gets to you and sits in front, make sure to give him lots of love and praise. Do the exercise one more time and then move on to another command.

If your dog does not drop when told, run to meet him and drop him with the raised hand that gave him the down signal. This procedure works very well and, with patience on your part, your dog can learn to accomplish this very stunning looking but very practical exercise. Practice it twice a week, with no more than three times per session.

What if your dog does a perfect drop on recall but consistently creeps in on the come, expecting every plain recall to turn into a drop on recall? In this case, and it is a very common occurrence, work on exercises to speed the recall and defer practising the drop for a couple of weeks while you do so. Call the dog to come and run away from him, turning at the last moment to let him catch you. Praise wildly.

Occasionally when you are heeling the dog, break away without warning and call "Come, Come" to him. Again, let him finally catch you and be praised. Play recall games with several family members calling the dog to come in random order and zestfully praising him when he does so. When you do practice the drop on recall again, only do it once or twice, following it up with some fast, active work, some speedy straight recalls followed by lots of praise.

5) The Importance of Timing in Dog Training

Good timing is critical to success. When we wait and then react to a dog's behaviour, we are always going to be behind the eight ball. On the other hand, influencing a dog's emotional process before he acts is an incredibly efficient manner in which to train him. When timing is correct nervousness is inhibited and drive is reinforced.

Also, since we're affecting the internal emotional process, the dog in effect "chooses" to be calm rather than being forced to be under control. A dog so trained will be mannerly or mindful of domestic restraints even when his handler isn't near.

The key to proper timing is not quickness, although that is a valuable asset. Rather, the

key is anticipation. The handler should always be thinking ahead and anticipating what the dog might do next. It is a skill easily acquired if one becomes disciplined enough to pay constant attention to the dog. Without good timing, training degenerates into a question of strength.

By being relentlessly focused on the dog, the handler will start to sense the dog's rhythm of actions and be able to anticipate what the dog is about to do. Then, before the dog acts, the handler can already be in gear taking steps to predetermine what the dog will do next. The dog will be choosing to obey; however, since we're controlling his instinctive emotional process, there won't really be any choice involved.

For example, if you are training a dog to heel you should watch his head very closely. When you sense he is about to shift his attention away from you then make a shock on the collar and begin to praise the dog at the same time. Additionally, pick up your pace, and to complete the process, throw a ball for him to chase or give him a food treat.

In this sequence of events, I'm not correcting the dog for being disobedient, I'm shocking the nervousness that I feel is about to influence the dog's behaviour and disrupt his focus on me. The praise, food, and the ball then serve to convert the shock to a stimulation. Since I'm the source of the excitement, the dog's calm focus on me from which he was about to stray is renewed and reinforced.

I like to emphasize the point about timing with the following analogy. Suppose you were a therapist assigned to help a heavy drinker recover from alcoholism. When would be the best time to influence this person's pattern of behaviour - before, or after he decided to gulp down a drink? The very same question is before the dog trainer: Is it best to react to a dog's behaviour or is it better to take the initiative and ensure that the dog always performs appropriately? Why wait for a negative behaviour to express itself?

4) How Much And How Often Should You Train Your Dog?

Positive dog training can happen any time, all the time. You don't need to get your dog ready in special training equipment. Your pet is usually ready whenever you are. It is recommended that you train in several 5 to 15-minute sessions, for a total of 30 to 45 minutes per day.

This is easier than it sounds. Every time you interact with your dog, you have a great opportunity to train him. By incorporating your practice sessions into your dog's daily routine, he learns that responding to your behaviour cues earns him rewards, it's not just something he does when you have a leash in your hand.

Practice the "Wait" exercise a few times whenever he goes outside or comes back in. Do some "Stay" practice during walks. Reinforce "No Jumping" when you come home from work. Before you know it, you will have easily exceeded your three to six sessions per day.

In any single training session, pick one or two exercises to concentrate on. Start with something that he is good at to get him tuned in to you. There's nothing like success and rewards to get him excited about training. Then introduce something new or more challenging. At first, do enough repetitions so that he has an opportunity to figure out what you are asking him to do.

If he doesn't seem to be getting it, you may need to do more shaping, by breaking the behaviour down into smaller pieces and rewarding him more often for small bits of the desired goal behaviour. For instance, if he won't lie down, you may need to click and reward him at first just for looking toward the floor as you move your lure toward the ground.

Keep marking and rewarding as he goes lower and lower, until he is all the way down. If he quits playing the game with you, go back to the point where he was doing well and proceed more slowly, giving more clicks and rewards for smaller pieces of the goal behaviour. If you sense that either or both of you are getting frustrated, it's time for a break. End the training session on a positive note by giving him a treat or playing his favourite game.

Once he gets the hang of it, you can make the future practice sessions for that particular behaviour shorter to prevent him from getting bored. How long you train a particular behaviour will depend on your dog's personality and level of training. Some dogs will quit after three or four repetitions while other dogs have longer endurance.

Get to know your dog. If he gets bored after five reps, stop at three, while he is still fresh and enthusiastic. As long as you keep the training interesting for him, you will be able to gradually build up his stamina and attention span. Some dogs will happily repeat a behavior dozens of times because they are looking forward to earning the reward that goes with it. If you encourage this attitude, just performing the behaviour itself can become the reward, because it has been so consistently associated with fun and play and other good stuff. When your dog understands and performs the behaviour on cue reliably in different environments, then you no longer have to practice that behaviour as often.

3) How To Teach Your Dog To "Go Lie Down"

Many dog owners consider the "Go lie down" as their favourite command. The "GO lie down" not only tells the dog to assume a reclining position, it tells him to do it elsewhere. When you are talking on the phone, drinking hot coffee, or working out, "Go lie down" is the command you need to send your overly affectionate dog somewhere else. Do not feel guilty if you cannot give attention to him every time he asks you to. If he's just had his walk, he's eaten well, you've exercised him, trained him, played with him, "Go lie down" is a humane, handy answer to your own personal dog problem.

Before you begin with the exercise, put your dog on leash. Point toward a corner of the room you two are in. Tell him in a pleasant tone, "Go lie down." Now, run with him to

where you were pointing, repeating "Go lie down" followed by "Good boy" with a final "Down" as you pat the floor in the corner of the room.

Now, pat your dog's head. Go across the room and sit down. If he stays, after a minute or two tell him "Ok, good boy." You can even pet him when he approaches you. Now repeat the exercise about two more times, varying the minutes that he stays in position.

Each day, try this exercise three times. Work in different rooms so that he will do this no matter where you are. This is preferable to the command "Go to place" or "Go to your bed" because you will want to use this in places where your dog is and his bed isn't.

What happens if your trained dog lies down on the spot when you say "Go lie down?" Some people would find that funny. They would think that when the dog heard "down", he ignored the other strange words and just obeyed the command he had already learned. They would think that the training was going so well. But you know better, so you will calmly say, "No-Go lie down", taking the dog by his collar and transporting him against his will to the far side of the room, the side you pointed to.

If your dog makes this mistake early on, it is a genuine misunderstanding that you can and will correct without taking it personally and with patience. However, if your dog is already doing the "Go lie down" and then when you say it he lies down at your feet, beats his tail on the floor and pastes his ears back, he's acting. He is using passive assertion to get his way instead of doing your bidding. Don't be mad. He can't help it if years of selective breeding made him smart, assertive, and witty. Dogs are built to try to rise to the leadership of their packs.

Some dogs take the obvious, aggressive route to the top. Others are more subtle in their attempts. In either case, it is not a personal affront, nor is it to be accepted. It is part of being a dog owner that you look at your pet, think about his behaviour, understand him, love him, and remind him of the limits you have set for him. In fact, the "Go lie down", aside from being very useful, is another wonderful, non-violent way to remind your dog that you are the leader of the pack.

2) How To Train Your Dog To "Retrieve"

The "Retrieve" must be learned step by step. Playing a 'fetch' with a dog is not only an mutually enjoyable experience, it forms the basis of some other basic obedience elements that can all be rolled in to one (such as the recall).

First, you should teach your dog to take a very light dumbbell and hold it. Even though a handler has never tried this with his dog he should be able to accomplish it in one lesson. If you are training a dog who refused to retrieve when some other method was used, and he has become stubborn or frightened, it might take two or three lessons. The length of time it takes will depend upon your skill in using your voice as you tighten his collar.

Teaching a dog to retrieve is one of persuasion, and your voice is your most important asset here. You must use your dog's name repeatedly before each command and do so in a most persuasive tone of voice. Your voice should be kept low, firm, and pleasant, and you should talk to the dog continually as you urge him to take the dumbbell. When your dog takes it, you should immediately sound very pleased and praise him happily and excitedly as you pet him.

Never raise your voice in anger or impatience; if the dog appears to be stubborn, never shove the dumbbell in your dog's mouth or against his gums, never jerk your dog's collar, and don't hit him over the head with the dumbbell. Be gentle but firm with him at all times.

Start your dog in a quiet corner and keep him on a leash for the first three steps. Place the dumbbell under, in front of, and close to, your dog's upper lip, and as you tell him to "Get it," put your third finger behind his canine tooth. This will open his mouth slightly and you can gently slide the dumbbell into his mouth. If you can't use your right hand to open his mouth, use the index finger of your left hand.

Quickly tell your dog to "Hold it," as you stroke his nose on top, in one direction away from his nose, with your right hand, and you stroke him under the chin with your left hand. By stroking him this way you will keep the dumbbell in his mouth. You should be praising him as you do this. Keep the dumbbell in your dog's mouth for two or three seconds at first so he can get the feel of it.

Most dogs accept the dumbbell gracefully and hold it firmly the first time. This is especially true of puppies who will actually reach out to take it and hold it for you. However, some dogs will put up a struggle, and you will have to hold their jaws closed gently with both hands around their muzzles as you command them firmly, but quietly, to "Hold it." Generally speaking, the majority of dogs will hold the dumbbell if you are gentle with them and talk to them reassuringly. Be careful not to bang the dog's teeth with the dumbbell.

After placing the dumbbell in your dog's mouth two or three times to get his reaction to it, teach him to take it by himself. Slide your dog's medium link chain or heavy nylon choke collar up high on his neck, behind his ears and high under his chin, and hold it in your left hand. Your right hand will be holding the dumbbell. By pushing against the dead ring with your thumb you will be able to draw the collar into the palm of your hand very steadily and smoothly. Do not jerk the collar, just tighten it smoothly and quickly. When the dog takes the dumbbell you should let go of his collar immediately and praise him.

1) How To Train Your Dog To "Sit-Stay"

The sit-stay is a basic exercise that all dogs should know. Here is how you do it. Hold your left hand, palm back, close to the dog's nose and command 'Stay!' Step out with your right foot and turn and face your dog. Stay close to him at first! Pivot back on your left foot to heel position without circling your dog. Again, tell your dog to stay! Signal back with your

left hand and move out on your right foot. Keep your leash slack, but be ready to make a quick correction if your dog shifts position! Now, with the dog facing you, hold your right hand in front of his nose and say "Stay!" and back away to the full length of the lead.

When the dog is at the handler's side in heel position, the stay signal is given with the left hand held in front of the dog, palm back. When the dog is sitting and facing the owner, the stay signal is given with the right hand. It is held with the palm toward the dog and the fingers pointing to the ground. This is the signal that will later be used to make the dog sit from the down position. It should be put into effect at the start of training.

While your dog is facing you at the full length of the leash, circle slowly to the right and pass in back of your dog to heel position. As you move around, take up the slack in the lead with the left hand and hold it on the right side of the dog. If he moves, stand still and repeat the command "Stay!" as you jerk him back to a sitting position. Hold the dog with both hands, if necessary, while you circle around him, but don't let him move from that spot until you give him permission. Stand quietly at his side. Pat and praise him while he is still sitting. Now release him from training and play with him.

Tell your dog to stay and stand in back of him. Stay close at first and be ready to correct him if he moves. The dog is permitted to turn his head but not his body. Correct him if he does. Step back to heel position. Don't praise him yet. Tell him to stay once more. Step in back of him to the full length of the lead. Return to heel position. Say "Stay!" and face him. Go to the right of the dog and stand in back of him. Walk past him and face him again. Return to heel position. Don't keep saying, "Stay!" Repeat the command if the dog breaks, but otherwise don't say anything. Move slowly in the sit-stay exercise until the dog becomes accustomed to staying by himself. If the dog breaks position, move quickly! Allow as little time as possible between the actual mistake and the ensuing correction. With dogs in heel position, say "Stay!" Back with your left hand, out on your right foot, and go to the end of the lead.

Lean over and put the lead quietly on the floor. Command "Stay!" as you do so. Pick up your lead. Command "Stay!" at the same time. Drop it again without leaning over. Pick it up. Circle back to heel position. Every time your dog moves forward to break the sitting position bounce the palm of your hand against his nose, or lift the lead sharply to throw him back again into position. Keep your lead slack when you step out from your dog!

Use a firm tone of voice when you give a command the first time - a demanding voice if the dog disobeys. Don't keep repeating your dog's name! Stress the command. Don't keep talking to the dog. If he is sitting, let him alone. Repeat the command if your dog is disobedient.

10 Greatest Tips for Teaching The Recall

We regard these as the 10 greatest tips for teaching the MOST IMPORTANT command in the entire canine vocabulary...the recall.

10) Ensuring your dog is completely familiar with his or her name and always associates the sound of his or her name with something positive is a great way to encourage them to come to you upon hearing it called.

9) Physically, the sitting down, legs apart, arms apart, eyes down on the ground position appears to be one that very few (young dogs at least) can resist. Take up the position in the home, in the garden, at the top of the stairs, at the bottom of the stairs and establish a positive reaction from the dog for simply coming to you. Make yourself small and inviting and when the dog comes running to you, make it WELL worth their while!

8) Name association is the best method for achieving a simple recall, but for dogs that are likely to be away in the distance at any given time, a firm recall command needs to be established. The word used could be anything from 'heel' to 'come' above all it needs to be snappy, to the point and clear.

To start familiarising your dog with the recall command a good method to use is, whilst the dog is on the lead, sharply turn in the opposite direction to a position where the dog is facing you all of sudden and you are 'shuffling' backwards. Say your chosen recall word and give the dog a little tug on the lead. As soon as he or she makes it into your legs (nose touching) reward with food and praise.

Establish a pattern for doing this in unusual situations where the dog would least expect it such as when you are walking to the shops or even better, when your dog is at his most excited when you are just about to leave the house for a walk. Practice, practice and practice some more until you can see you are getting an instant response to the recall command and the dog is not simply following your physical action.

7) Using a specialist whistle to train the recall can be particularly useful for dogs who are allowed to roam at distance. A whistle carries further and is much more distinguishable to the dog. If you choose to use the whistle, simply follow the same pattern as detailed in tip 6, replacing the recall word with the sort, sharp, tooting of a whistle. There are a number of manufacturers of specialist dog whistles and you should be able to find one in your local pet shop or nearest dog training school.

6) Never repeat the recall command over and over. Soon it will lose its effect and will sound like background noise to the dog. Once you have established that your dog understands the recall command and he is, in effect, disobeying you by ignoring it, you should be pro-active. Depending on the nature of the dog you could either choose to RUN off in the opposite direction to the dog, inducing him to follow you and making him think the next time he hears the recall that you might be heading off in another direction, or

you might choose to 'get after him'. Give the command and when ignored let him know that you're on your way to where he is. Obviously the nature of your dog is relevant. If you have a dog who will run off if you start after him then you need to use the first method. If you have a dog that is not too fussed about the fact that you are running off in the other direction to him, then he was not ready to be let of the lead and free run at distance yet! You need to get back the close-quarter basics of the recall and work on the understanding of the command.

5) A common problem with recall is actually caused by dog owners themselves without realising it. If you allow your dog to free run anywhere. Think. Every time he or she is asked to return is it to be put on a lead and taken home? Very often it is the case that the only time the dog is ever actually requested to recall is when it's the end of walk-time and his or her owner wants to go home. In effect this is teaching the dog that recall or return to owner actually equals end of fun, thus dog is less keen on recalling. Make it habit to recall the dog continually when he or she is free running simply to give him praise, reward or a food treat. Make sure the dog is not associating the recall with the end of his or her fun.

4) The recall must never be an 'option' for the dog that you, as his owner, are content if he complies on a 3 times out of 5 recalls basis. Put in your mind that one of those 2 non-compliance times might be when he's spotted a bunny in a field just on the other side of a busy main road. The recall MUST be 100% as it could save your dog's life.

3) An excellent method to improve and master the recall on a 100% basis is actually teach your dog the 'stop' command. This is something that working gundogs and sheepdogs have to do on a regular basis even in the face of the greatest temptations such as when there are pheasants falling all around them, rabbits running up in front or sheep merrily trotting just yards away. The stop command is best taught with a whistle. One long blast on the whistle should translate to the dog as 'stop whatever it is I am doing, was going to dog, was thinking of doing and stop.

Right here, right at this very second'. Some people teach the dog to sit at the same time as the whistle is blown, others simply expect the dog to stand still on hearing the 'stop whistle'. The technique should be mastered at close quarters whilst the dog is under control. If you are happy in the knowledge that you can stop your dog at any distance, under any temptation then the recall is easier as it gives the dog (and you) time to collect your thoughts, take some deep breaths and think logically about the next move (the recall).

If the dog was about to run off to see another dog in the distance and you have successfully taught him to stop on a whistle, you give yourself and the dog a little extra time to ensure he hears and complies with the recall. Any specialist trainer of working dogs will be able to advise on teaching a really solid stop command.

2) If you have a problem with a dog that is continually running up to other people whilst

you are out you can set up a situation with a friend to 'surprise' the dog by standing away in the distance. When the dog takes off to investigate your friend or assistant they should squirt the dog with a blast of air or water from a washing up bottle and make the experience unpleasant for the dog, immediately upon doing this you should get down and really encourage the dog back to you and reward heavily.

Do this with a few different assistants in different locations and impress upon the dog that running off to other people is unpleasant but returning to you is really enjoyable. Above all, try and dissuade strangers whom your dog runs up to from making a fuss of them as they are essentially rewarding the undesirable behaviour from the dog.

1) Teaching your dog to recall is a technique best practiced at the earliest possible age. If you can instil the notion to a puppy that returning you, his or her beloved owner, will be a more pleasurable experience than WHATEVER he or she happens to be doing at the time, then you have the basic concept of the recall. The dog must always view you as a happy alternative to anything else that may be happening at any given time and this is something that can ONLY be achieved through positive, praise and reward based techniques.

10 Greatest Tips for Curing Dog Travel Problems

10) Some dogs and most young puppies have a tendency to drool or even vomit when on their first few trips in a moving vehicle. Always make sure you pack towels, air freshener and kitchen roll to make sure the dog's (and your own) journey is not made into an even more unpleasant experience than it needs to be.

9) Motion sickness is a common problem with many dogs. Nausea can be brought on by either periods of extreme excitement or extreme panic – it's inevitable that for most dogs, they either get really excited or really worried when travelling thus the likelihood that they will throw up is pretty high! There are some over-the-counter remedies to help with motion sickness and some natural remedies.

8) Where possible but especially on long journeys, try and make sure your pet is travelling on an empty stomach. This not only decreases the chances of the dog being sick it will also make his or her journey a physically more comfortable experience.

7) For young dogs or nervous travellers lots of little journeys to pleasant 'doggy' locations can help immensely. A short 5 minute drive to the local park is beneficial even if the park is in walking distance from the dog's home as it gets the dog into the frame of mind that travelling ends in a nice experience.

Often dogs with travel problems come from rural areas where they only ever have to use a car when the journey is essential to somewhere such as the vet or boarding kennels, the dog then learns to associate travelling with upsetting or unpleasant experiences.

6) Whenever you are taking your dog anywhere, especially by car when you are going outside of your immediate local area, make sure the dog is fully protected with ID – even if the dog is micro-chipped it makes sense to ensure they are also wearing a visible form of identification such as a tag with their name and address on.

It has been known for vehicles carrying dogs to be involved in road traffic accidents where the terrified dog has escaped from the scene in panic and in a strange area. If the dog has no visible ID containing full contact data the chances of getting him or her back are made much harder in such circumstances.

5) Never, ever, under any circumstances leave pets in cars unattended. Two very simple reasons. You may be able to live with the theft of your car stereo, handbag, designer sunglasses etc but if someone decides to steal your dog could you forgive yourself? It happens so don't take the risk.

Secondly dogs excrete heat. Unlike us humans, a dog left in a confined area – even with the window down (which will increase the likelihood of a car break in anyway) – will heat

up his or her immediate area as they get warmer. This produces an oven effect as the dog gets hotter so does the area in which he is located which in turn will make him hotter, in turn making his area hotter and so on until eventually he or she may die from being literally cooked. Simple solution – never leave dogs in cars, ever.

4) It's funny to look at and my word they all seem to love doing it but dogs sticking their heads out of car windows is actually not good – yes, even when it's a Boxer and their cheeks flap up and down in the wind with spit flying everywhere – it's still not big or clever for three important reasons. Just as children sticking their heads out of car windows is considered by most parents to be dangerous (and there are cases when serious injury has resulted) the same is true of dogs.

Cyclists, close encounters with other drivers or stationary or moving objects – all could result in serious injury or even death and as everyone knows you as the driver, have no control over other situations that may arise on the road. A dog with ears and gums flapping up and down is a common sight on the road and most would agree that it has its funny side but by the same token it is also very, very distracting for other drivers.

You also run the risk, in some cases, of being pulled over by the police who could make a case for you driving without due care and attention or even causing a danger on the road – in this day in age with speed cameras all too happy to eat into the 12-point limit on your driving licence you have to ask yourself do you really want to Fido to be the reason for a fine, higher insurance premium and a points penalty? Lastly, it's actually very un-healthy for the dog – roads by their very nature are highly polluted and dogs feel the force of this more than most due to their highly tuned sensory organs. Bugs, road chippings and an increased chance of getting conjunctivitis also make the head out of the window trick one to avoid.

3) A dog-travel bag is a great idea. Having a little hold-all containing a first aid kit, water bottle, portable water holder, food bowl, food and various other essential items is a really worthwhile investment and you'll be amazed and just how often you make use of it if you and your dog(s) are regular travellers.

2) To get a young or particularly nervous dog to get used to the idea of car travel there is no better tip than to allow the dog to enjoy a stationary vehicle on a regular basis. Feed the dog in the back of the car, throw a ball into the back of the car for the dog to fetch, hide treats in the back of the car for the dog to jump in and find, lie down in the back of the car yourself and play with the dog – just get the dog to feel like the car itself is as much fun and un-daunting and the back yard, the park or any other place where they should expect good things to happen. Allow the dog to feel comfortable in a non moving vehicle and it will make him or her far more at ease.

1) Always ensure the dog is safe and secure. Dogs need to feel protected when they are outside of their normal environments, a moving vehicle can make the dog feel very, very exposed – new smells, noises, scenery flashing by, people – it can be a traumatic

experience. A dog box is idea as it cuts down the dog's sense of fear enormously making them feel more secure. If not a dog box then a boot with a dog guard, lots of blankets to prevent the dog from sliding around and if the boot has side windows it can help the dog if these can somehow be covered to avoid the dog's sense being overloaded by sights and sounds. Safety is by far the number 1 travel tip for dogs.

10 Greatest Tips for Teaching Dog Tricks

10) Teaching the down – a really simple trick for teaching your dog to understand the down command (taught in a 'trick' format) Hold a piece of food in your right hand with your dog on a lead to your left. Bend down on your left knee with your right knee forming an 'arch'. With dog on the right of the arch show the food to the dog in such a way that he or she has to crawl through the arch to get to the food – all the time say the word 'down'. As soon as the dog hits the floor in the down position reward with food. Repeat the trick over and over and eventually don't make an arch but wait for the dog to assume the down position on your command before rewarding. A great little trick for pet dogs.

9) A really clever way to teach your dog not to bark is actually to teach the dog to bark on command – doing this means that you create your own 'on/off' command so when the dog is actually engaged in un-wanted barking you will be in a position to deploy the 'off' command. It may seem a little illogical that a common cure for un-wanted barking is actually to teach the dog to bark on command but here's how it works. Find out what makes your dog bark i.e excitement, teasing, hiding their toys behind your back etc. Engage the dog and repeat the command you wish to use to stimulate barking i.e. 'speak', 'bark', 'talk' etc.

Eventually when the dog gives out a healthy bark, reward. Repeat until the dog understands that the command followed by him or her giving out a bark results in a reward. The next stage is to encourage the dog to bark for a longer period. Instead of rewarding on one bark encourage the dog to let out a number of barks and then give the command you want to use to 'turn-off' the barking i.e. 'quiet' etc.

Give the command, followed by the dog stopping the barking and reward – repeat the exercise until the dog fully understands the commands to bark and stop barking. Whenever the dog is engaged in un-wanted barking you should be able to give him or her command to stop which is fully understood by the dog. Simple, illogical but an effective trick.

8) The 'stand' is a command only really needed in the show or obedience ring but never the less it's a nice little trick to teach your dog and show off to your friends! It's really a very simple trick to learn but needs practice so that it can be performed at distance. Start by having your dog sitting by your side on a lead, take one step forward and instead of using the word 'heel' say 'stand'. You stop after one stride and the dog should not be able to take any strides.

Reward the dog in the standing position. Integrate this by exercise by next giving the command to 'heel' walk forward and then stop, ask the dog to sit and then issue the stand command again – rewarding the dog in the stand position. Repeat until the dog is ready to be issued the command whilst in front of you, again rewarding when the dog is in the stand position. Eventually increase the distance between yourself and the dog until you are able to issue the stand command when you are in no physical contact with the dog. If

the dog tries to walk towards you simply walk to heel, turn around and decrease the distance again. Eventually you might be able to issue the stand command from 100's of yards away – a very nice trick to impress all your dog owning friends with.

7) The 'stay'. A very simple trick that requires patience and your willingness to work gradually on increasing the length of time the dog is asked to stay. Have the dog in the 'down' position facing you, with his or her lead on but without you holding it and issue the command to stay followed by a hand pointed palm first at the dog (a bit like when a police man halts traffic). Say 'stay' clearly and firmly' but don't move. Reward the dog for not moving. Take a stride backwards again issuing a firm 'stay'.

The dog may try and get up and follow you at this point, if this is the case simply take hold of the lead and walk the dog calmly to heel – saying nothing –return the dog to the down position and repeat the stay until the dog does stay in the down. Take a stride forward and reward the dog by playing, treating etc and making an effort then move to another spot before increasing the strides you take away from the dog.

The key is 'little by little', never get upset with the dog for moving, simply return them to the down by taking up the loose lead and putting them back in the exact same position, reward the stay by treating, playing and moving off to another spot to break the tension. Increase the distances and then eventually remove the lead so the dog 'knows' they are free to break if they want to – eventually start moving out of sight to return to the dog in the down position to reward – again, little by little building up to a time when you can give a stay command and the dog won't move for hours and hours until you return to them.

The stay is the epitome of a dog training trick that can not be accomplished to perfection quickly, it needs patience and a very gradual build up of confidence between you and dog – the dog should always feel confident that he won't be in trouble if he moves – the last thing you want is for the dog to look like a nervous wreck whilst in the 'stay' – but that you will always come back to him to reward and play no matter how long or how far away you go.

6) The giving of the paw or 'hand-shake' command. This is an easy one because all dogs learn it literally at birth when they are suckling from their mothers. The dog understands that raising a paw and pushing can result in milk (i.e. reward) being dispensed into their guzzle-gut tummies when they are just a few hours old. You as the trainer can harness this into a very cute trick.

Simply hold a treat in a closed fist and play, play and play some more with the dog until he will eventually revert to basic instinct and put his paw on your hand to try and get you to release the treat – as soon as he does, you let go and he gets the treat. Build this up by issuing a command at the same time such as 'paw' or 'please' and to such a degree that the dog is in fact 'reaching' for your closed hand with his paw – as soon as the paw is raised, you reward and the dog learns that most valuable of canine equations [dog being cute = humans being suckered into giving food or praise]

5) The flip. An eye-catching trick that will astound your friends and your dog will love it to. First you need a dog with a fairly good level of basic obedience who already understands the 'leave' command' Balance a dog biscuit on his or her nose and say 'leave' for some reason most dogs will sit absolutely motionless at this point until you give an excited 'flip' command at which point they'll jerk their head back and grab the biscuit. (works better on dogs with long noses!) In all seriousness it is a nice control and discipline exercise that always ends up with the dog being rewarded for listening to you rather than following their instincts – which is a good thing.

4) Fetch the newspaper – a classic! It is a trick basically evolved from any form or retrieving exercise so the key is to get the dog to understand the word newspaper and associate it with, well, a newspaper funnily enough! Here's a quick way to teach the trick. Get a bone or the dog's favourite most distinguishable toy and rap it up in a newspaper tied by elastic bands – play fetch with the toy wrapped in newspaper and always repeat the command 'fetch the newspaper'. Two key things to remember – don't let the dog tear the paper to get to the toy.

Don't let the dog run off with the retrieve, they should always realise that they can't get the toy from the paper only you can and the reward they receive comes from you, not from the newspaper. Eventually progress the game to the extent where the dog is happy with fetching the newspaper without a toy or bone inside and he knows he is being rewarded for bringing it to you.

Once that's accomplished, teach the dog to stay while the paper is placed in various places around the house then give a really up-beat 'fetch the newspaper' command and watch him scamper off to fetch the newspaper for you. You may find he'll take it upon himself to bring you the newspaper all the time once this trick's been mastered especially if he's looking to please you for something he's done wrong!

3) Play dead – another classic. Very simple and gives you an excellent opportunity to get a nice physical bonding session with the dog. Simply play with the dog at his or her level until they lie down or push into your side. Holding a treat to the floor, encourage the dog to push you and nudge in the laying down position.

Flip the treat from side to side over the dog's head until they naturally roll over on their back to try and keep up with the motion – at this point reward and issue the 'play dead' command. Increase the time spent doing this until you can hold the dog's attention in the 'dead' position for a few seconds before rewarding. Eventually you'll be able to issue the command and the dog will automatically assume the 'play dead' pose waiting for their treat.

2) Walk backwards. You might be surprised to see such a simple trick as high as number two in the list but performed correctly, this is one of the most eye catching, jaw-dropping, clever dog tricks there is. To train it initially is simplicity itself. Simply have your dog on a

lead facing you, close up. Issue the command 'walk backwards' or even better 'go back' (clearer) whilst you start 'shuffling forward holding a dog treat high in the air on which the dog's attention should be transfixed. As you start moving forward the dog will start walking backwards and as they do, you will reward him, all the while repeating the 'go back' instruction until the treat is given.

As with most dog training regimes time, effort and patience is the key to success ahead of any great technical ability. Very much like 'the stay' you need to work little-by-little on this trick until you can eventually stand some distance away from the dog and issue the command (you stand motionless) and the dog will simply walk backwards until you say stop – it is extremely impressive to watch a well trained dog having such complete trust in his trainer that he will walk backwards (which is unnatural for a dog) with his attention absolutely fixed on his trainer until a command to stop is given.

1) 'Take a bow'. An utterly useless trick with no point at all other than to round off all the other tricks that your dog has expertly performed in front of your amazed and extremely envious friends and family. A little bit like the 'giving of the paw' trick, this one leans on something the dog does naturally with you intervening by issuing a command and reward when they do it.

The dog will eventually cotton on to the action they are performing and associate it with the command you are giving and the reward that follows. Every morning when you meet your dog after they've just woken up they will perform a few stretching exercises in front of you. They will stretch with their front paws out in front of them with their backsides high in the air in an action that looks like a 'bow'.

As soon as they do it – you will jump in with the command and get ready to reward. At first the dog won't have a clue what you're banging on about and they'll probably think you've gone mad! However as you'll also have a number of opportunities through the day and night when the dog's been having a little sleep, to repeat the dose match the dog's stretching action with a command and a reward, they'll soon start putting two and two together.

Depending on how quickly your dog learns – it can take anywhere between a week to a few months – you'll eventually be able to say 'take a bow' and your dog will spontaneously impress the socks off all before him as he goes into his forward stretch. Completely pointless, as most tricks are, but mighty pleasing on the eye, as most dogs are!

10 Greatest Tips for Perfect Heel Walking

10) If your dog tends to be one of those who like to lag behind on a walk, entice him to catch up with some verbal encouragement and a series of gentle lead tugs. It is important that you don't get into the regime when the walks are controlled at the dog's chosen pace ahead of your own.

9) Dogs who are utterly focussed on what's up ahead need to be made to think about you and your actions all of the time. This is accomplished by constantly changing your direction. Walk forward, purposefully and then spin and your heels and walk the opposite direction.

Walk forward slowly and then spin on your heels and break into a march. Constantly keep the dog guessing and don't let him get it into his head that he already knows where you're both heading to. Yes, you'll look a bit of a funny sight out on the street but your dog will be much more responsive and aware of you.

8) Control the head. Dogs that like pulling who are also extremely strong such as Staffordshire Bull Terriers, will actually be able to 'out power' most normal people if they so chose and so a normal lead and collar set up may end up as battle of strength which you, the owner, are more than likely going to lose day in day out. In such circumstances you need the dog in a position where you have full control of his or her head in a manner that the dog is comfortable but controllable.

If you use a rope lead, position the knot high at the back of the dog's head not directly at the back of the neck (which is the natural position for the lead to fall to). Whilst this rope lead technique will improve control over some dogs, for many it won't be the desired level of control and could result in an injury to the dog if not done correctly.

If you use a normal lead and collar but have a dog who is a strong puller, consider a special lead such as Halti which will offer much more control of the dog's movements without causing them any pain or discomfort. The Halti works in much the same way as a horse's head collar and has a lot of fans amongst dog walkers all over the world.

7) The actual command 'heel' is important and is far too often made into background noise from many owners who will walk along with their dog pulling their arms out of their sockets virtually whilst saying 'heel, heel, come to heel, heel, heel' all the way along the street. The dog quite obviously, will start to ignore the command as it means nothing to them and is never followed by a positive reinforcement.

The dog needs to be trained from a very early age that the word heel means something to them and it is not to be ignored completely or taken as an optional choice. It should be issued once, clearly and firmly and the dog should be made to understand that by pulling or straining on the lead they have broken the command at which point the handler will simply turn around, put the dog in the sit position, issue the command again and start

walking. If you say 'heel' mean it. Don't issue this command over and over without doing something to back it up.

6) Teach your dog to automatically sit when you stop walking by always issuing the command to sit every time you stop and giving the dog a reward. Eventually it will become second nature to the dog to sit when you stop and this will not only make for a more well behaved walking companion it will also keep the dog's mind active as you walk together.

5) Aim high with the standard of your dog's heel walking position. Aiming high means set high standards for what you consider to be at heel or not. Some people train their dogs so well to heel walk that the dog's nose never loses contact with the handler's knee. You will notice with dogs trained to this standard that they are also always extremely alert in the heel position and totally focussed on the handler – you may not want your dog at this level but you do need to set your standards based around the theory that if you can feel your dog on the lead then he's pulling rather than being prepared to put up with a little pull here and there. The lead should sit totally slack in your hand and anything above that is a break from heel – a higher standard will result in more pleasant walks for you and the dog.

4) Be lively in your walking motion. Dogs can all too often get bored and that is when the pulling may start. Inject some vigour into the way you walk with your dog, talk to him and keep the walks lively and interesting. Remember that walking the dog shouldn't feel like a chore to you or the dog will soon start 'playing up' to create their own entertainment.

3) When your dog encounters another dog whilst out walking you need to be very careful not to act any differently than if you had ten miles of open road in front of you. If you slow up, tense up, hold the lead tighter, change direction or generally respond in a way that is different the norm then you can absolutely guarantee your dog will pick up on it and act similarly.

Other dogs are going to cross your path regularly. As a rule you need to act as if they're not even there and carry on exactly as normal. If you find yourself having to cross the road to avoid a particularly aggressive or over enthusiastic dog do it calmly, don't make a big deal out of it to your own dog and maybe make a note in passing to the other dog owner to say; 'sorry he/she's not very good with other dogs' thus avoiding causing offence to the other owner and a potential behavioural problem to come for your own dog!

2) For a bit of additional power and leverage this technique will help you if you are not physically strong enough to restrain your dog. Please be aware that a serious pulling problem should be corrected using some of the techniques and basic training methods as mentioned elsewhere in the feature but for those instances when you physically have to try and restrain a strong dog try this.

With your lead held in your right hand but your dog positioned to your left, have the lead

going from the dog, round the back of your legs (preferably against your backside) so you are able to put the full force of your body weight into holding onto the dog. The key is to make sure the dog is on the opposite side to the hand in which you have the lead and that the lead itself is going from the dog round the back of your legs.

You should be able to 'dig-in' and the dog would virtually have to move your entire body weight to progress forward. This is a far more effective method than simply trying to hold the dog using the strength in your arms and shoulders and will cause the dog less discomfort.

1) Heel is a command like every other and it should be understood, accepted and obeyed by the dog in the same way that he obeys sit, stay, come etc. Teach the actual heel command to such an extent that no-matter what the dog is doing or wherever he happens to be, if you give the command the dog will instantly respond and position himself at your heel ready to walk with you. Heel should not be entirely associated with the dog pulling on a lead it should be a command that the dog understands to mean he should be by your side and walking with you stride for stride whether a lead is on or off.

10 Greatest Tips for Coping With Boisterous Dogs

10) A useful tip to stop chewing. Vicks Vapour Rub, just a little, rubbed onto items you don't want the dog to chew and you will find the smell is enough to put them off completely. Some dogs actually seem to none too perturbed about similar methods using such things as butter apple, curry powder and mustard. Vicks Vapour Rub appears to work consistently.

9) Always ensure that your dog's perceived boisterousness is not in fact a medical or dietary problem. Often an examination by a petcare professional can reveal that a behavioural issue is linked to a high protein diet or a lack of a particularly vitamin etc. Try to rule out such problems as early as possible by making an appointment to see a vet.

8) Keep a diary of events that trigger bad behaviour. Is your dog constantly boisterous or misbehaving or is the behaviour sparked by certain events? If you keep a diary and record as much information as possible it will be extremely useful in the event that you eventually have to use the services of an animal behaviour expert.

7) There are natural and medicinal supplements specifically created to produce a calming effect in dogs. The options may be worth exploring and again, documentation by you of your dog's behavioural patterns will be very useful for the petcare professional who can advise you on suitable treatments.

6) Is your household a calm or lively environment? Dogs are very much the products of their environment and you often find house, for example, where people work and kids go to school are very hectic in the mornings and the dog stays alone for most of the day when it is very quiet and then there is a mad influx of people and activity in the evening at which point the dog has saved all his energy and is ready to expend it all in play at the time when most of the family want to wind down after a long day. Is the dog being given the opportunity to expend his physical and mental energy often enough?

5) Mental stimulation is very important to most dogs but for some it can be the deciding factor between them living a happy fulfilled life or being a strain on their owner's health! If you decide to own a breed which is known to need lots of mental stimulation as much as physical exercise you absolutely must be in a position to give it or the dog may become a genuine problem in the home through no fault of their own.

If you want a quiet, easy going pet dog then do your breed research well and don't buy a Border Collie, Springer Spaniel, German Shepherd, Flatcoated Retriever for instance. Look at more sedate breeds who will fit well with your own lifestyle.

4) Does your dog have a serious behavioural deficiency? Some dogs like some people can be born with either too much of one chromosome or too little of another etc to the extent

that you, as the dog's owner might have done absolutely everything you possibly can, by the book and as well as you know how only to end up with a dog who you fell 'aint wired up right!!'. In such circumstances you simply have to be prepared to enlist the help and experience of a suitably qualified canine behaviour expert who will be able to take a look at your dog and advise you on how to have a better life together.

By all means do lots of research, read lots of books and speak to as many other dog owners as you can but it is not advisable to let serious behavioural problems linger and grow to such an extent that they can become almost incurable.

Your sleepless nights could be ended with just a few comforting words from a genuine dog behaviour specialist. A few good places to look for a behaviour expert or dog trainer would be the Association of Pet Dog Trainers www.apdt.com, www.petfriendlyworld.com or use forums for recommendations.

3) The great balls of fire debate! With male dogs there is a school of thought that says having them neutered may decrease their boisterousness. This is fairly controversial area with many pet behaviourists pointing out that a medical procedure is not necessarily going to be the answer to a problem that may be deep-rooted in the dog's brain rather than his b***s!.

Instead of advising to have Fido-fixed for his boisterous behaviour we strongly suggest you speak to a vet and a behavioural expert for a couple of professional opinions. If you've kept a diary of your dog's behaviour this will be very useful at this juncture.

2) A dog's physical, nutritional and mental requirements are directly related to the way they behave. High energy dogs tend to have high metabolisms, can be more prone to stomach upsets and mood changes and can also lose condition at the drop of a hat. It is absolutely essential if you own a boisterous, high energy dog that you know exactly what is needed to ensure their boisterousness and energy is converted positively.

Learning to understand pet food labels is a great start (see K9 Magazine issue 7 for a full article on this subject or visit www.k9magazine.com). Knowing that you own a high energy you need to make sure they are receiving the most suitable diet, training regime and lifestyle possible. Accepting the fact that your dog may well need more devotion than your friend's sleepy Cavalier King Charles is important. Look on it as a special challenge and embrace it.

Don't let your special dog end up in a shelter or get caught up in a vicious cycle of going from new owner to new owner because they were born with high energy. High energy nearly always translates to high personality and accepting your dog for how they are in conjunction with expert advice of how best to look after him or her will reap countless rewards for you both.

1) Get into dog training in a big way! If you've got a boisterous dog not only will they

NEED lots of training they will positively thrive on it. You may have pictured a life with your dog where he or she was trained and behaving perfectly by the time they were seven months to a year old – if you own a naturally boisterous, high energy dog you can pretty much forget it. They need regular training sessions, lots of attention, lots of challenges and lots of stimulation.

Look for a dog training club or get together with some friends and make dog training a part of your and your dog's life – you'll find it rewarding and stimulating and you'll live with a much more contented canine companion as a result.

10 Greatest Tips for Older or Disabled Dogs

10) Think about installing a ramp for your car. The older the dog gets the more effort it can be for them to get into and out of a vehicle, a ramp will not only allow them easy access in it will take all the strain that the dog's joints suffer when they have to jump out of a car onto a hard surface. A car ramp also means the dog doesn't have to miss out on trips just because they are less mobile than they used to be!

9) For dogs with severe joint problems there are specially made canine-wheelchairs which can ease the strain on a dog's hind quarters. Many dogs are living perfectly happy lives with a canine-wheelchair who might otherwise have been put to sleep. For further information on canine wheelchairs visit www.wheelchairsfordogs.com (and American website but lots of useful information), www.k9carts.com (another American website but very useful)

8) It sounds obvious but for many owners the reality of their dog losing their eye sight is hard to accept and as a result they don't take adequate precautions around the home until an accident happens. Moving dangerous objects and generally making the home safe for a pet that is losing or has lost their vision is just a small means to ensure they have a happier existence.

Many owners don't notice the onset of their dog's impaired vision until late as dogs are so adept at utilising their other senses such as hearing and smell more than normal. You should have your vet give your dog regularly eye checks to make sure you are fully prepared in the event that they do start go blind as they get older. For a dog, blindness is not the end of the world as they have such powerful noses and ears but you, as the owner of a blind or visually impaired dog must be able to adapt the home to make life easier on the dog.

7) Lots of dogs suffer from that common canine complaint called 'selective deafness' where they hear what they choose to hear and play deaf to other instructions. For some dogs though, deafness is a hereditary condition which is almost certain to play a part at some point in their lives.

All dogs have the capacity to understand sign language and hand signals – as with deaf people, deaf dogs appear to have the ability to pick up hand-signalled instructions quicker than most.

6) Epilepsy is an increasingly common problem in dogs. It is a condition which causes the dog to have seizures 'fits' which can strike at any time. Epilepsy is found in all breeds of dogs and has widely varying degrees of impact on individual dogs with some dogs suffering regular seizures and others only ever experiencing one in their whole life.

If you have an epileptic dog your vet can prescribe a number of different treatments and guidance as to how best to manage the condition. You'll also find this website

www.canine-epilepsy.com contains just about all you could ever wish to know about epilepsy in dogs.

5) Cancer is another disease which appears to be increasingly affecting more and more dogs. Whilst there are great strides being taken in the study of canine cancer, finding out your dog has just been diagnosed with the disease is obviously a highly traumatic experience.

Cancer is now the worldwide number one killer of domestic animals – a frightening thought – but like us, dogs who contract cancer can overcome it. There are conventional and alternative treatments ranging from chemotherapy and laser surgery to herbal therapy, acupuncture, and touch therapy.

The first thing to do is discuss the diagnosis with your vet AFTER you've had the chance to absorb the initial shock and made a list of your questions. You may suffer shock, anger, confusion and even feelings of guilt upon discovering your much loved pet has cancer but there is hope.

You can find out more about canine cancer as we recommend the following canine cancer advice guide, available at <http://k9m.ag/dogcancer>

4) Old dogs have completely different nutritional requirements to young or semi-adult dogs. Understanding that an older dog is less active, has less energy to burn up, has a different metabolic rate and a changing immune system means their diet is increasingly important.

Dog food manufacturers have responded and there are a number of specialist diets created especially for the older dog specific to their physical condition, weight, activity level and size.

Older, less active dogs should consume less calories and if you don't change your dog's diet to reflect their activity level he or she could become obese which in turn could shorten their life expectancy and would certainly decrease the dog's quality of life as they get older. Splitting meals is often valuable for older dogs as it places less stress on their stomachs which could become more and more sensitive as they advance in years. We've created a special guide for feeding the older dog which you can access for free at www.olderdogs.co.uk

3) Elderly or infirm dogs need even more attention to their general state of health than younger animals and therefore you should be prepared to make trips to the vet for just general maintenance on a more regular basis. It is easy to get into the habit of only taking the dog to see the vet when they absolutely HAVE to go but why not make it your goal to book your dog in for a health check up at least every time they due to be wormed (this should be four times a year – see www.dogworms.co.uk) this way the vet may be able to pick up on something which you may not have spotted or could have been lurking without

your knowledge. It is, unfortunately, a sad fact of life that the older our dogs get the more prone they are to illness and affliction and even things which they may have encountered and beaten off in their younger days such as fleas can make an elderly dog very ill indeed.

Vet fees are expensive, we all know that, but if you think of it the same way as a car that never gets serviced and only goes to the garage when it absolutely needs repairing, they often prove to be more expensive and end up in junk-yard heaven a lot earlier than the cars who are lovingly serviced and given regular maintenance throughout their lives, increasing in frequency as they get older. Your dog is worth more than your car!

2) Prevention is always better than cure. Joint problems affect the majority of elderly dogs and there are ways and means by which the effects of old age on the joints can be lessened whilst the dog is still young and active.

Cortaflex is an extremely effective solution which can be given to dogs young and old. The product, used regularly, relieves the pain and suffering in joints and also, most importantly, can help to prevent the onset of joint problems in healthy dogs. There are few products in the petcare market which can be described as truly revolutionary, Cortaflex can and is.

1) Whilst it's obvious to state that the older the dog gets the more attention they require in respect to cleaning up after them, looking after their diet, health and general well-being don't forget he or she still wants to be your puppy so play, pet and cuddle them just as much as when they were 8 weeks old and never lose sight of the fact that mentally your dog still needs you to look upon him or her as an incredibly important member of the family unit.

RESOURCES:

So, now you've read what you need to do to have a happy, obedient, well behaved companion. Here are some of our most highly recommended suppliers who can enhance and make the experience even easier for you:

Dog training whistle from Acme (perfect for teaching the recall): <http://k9m.ag/whistle>

Joint care tablets (Vetzyme): <http://tidd.ly/a3275f45>

Canine cancer information and resources: <http://k9m.ag/dogcancer>

Interactive dog training toys (cure boredom): <http://tidd.ly/309a4f3e>

Dog harnesses (better lead control and heel walking): <http://tidd.ly/dc7ea112>

Dog clicker training accessories: <http://tidd.ly/f5d2c4e8>

Dog travel equipment: <http://tidd.ly/88a7432c>

Free daily dog tips: <http://www.dailydogtips.co.uk/>

10 BONUS TIPS

1. **Recognise the strong link between your dog's food and their behaviour.** It is a simple fact that what you put into your dog is reflected in how they look, act and feel. Getting the right balance of nutrients is not entirely simple and depends on a seemingly endless amount of variables such as breed, activity level, age and medical condition. As a responsible dog owner, you owe it to your pet to ensure their diet is perfectly matched to their lifestyle, age and activity level. Many dog owners simply select a food and stick with it, never trying anything different and refusing to change even as the dog's lifestyle changes.

2. **Bored dogs are normally badly behaved dogs.** A healthy dog isn't just physically fit, but is mentally happy too.

Most dog owners strive towards making their dog happy and healthy. Many assume that physical health is the key to a happy dog, and it's only when problems arise that an owner will question their dog's mental wellbeing.

When dogs do not receive enough interaction it can cause mental health issues such as destructive behaviour, hyperactivity, obsessive compulsive behaviour, separation anxiety, fear, aggression and lack of interest in activities. Most of these behavioural problems will surface when no one is at home, however in severe cases, dogs will still display behavioural issues in the presence of the owner.

If your dog chews furniture and objects, barks excessively, runs at speed without being provoked, whines or shows no interest in anything, the chances are your dog is bored.

What causes boredom?

Dogs are pack animals; they thrive on companionship and interaction, but when this is taken away and they are not provided with other means of entertainment, boredom sets in. Because of the lack of mental and physical activity, the dog will start to find new ways to entertain himself, which often leads to destructive behaviour and excessive barking. Dogs do not misbehave on purpose or destroy your favourite sofa out of spite. They are simply looking for their own way to burn off energy and beat the boredom. Ensure your dog has plenty of mental and physical stimulation on a daily basis.

3. **Teach your dog the 'watch me' command.** This is a hidden gem that nearly all top level, elite dog trainers use. Now you can too! [Read all about it here.](#)

4. My dog barks when I go away. Help!! The key to dealing with dogs that bark for attention is patience and the ability to be on hand to reward good behaviour. It is ineffective to reward a dog for simply not barking, unless that reward is an alternative to the undesirable behaviour.

Again, your friends can help with this. Get a friend to sit with the dog as you 'leave the house'. Your friend can distract the dog with the treat and also positively reinforce the no barking rule. Only return to your dog when he has successfully completed a designated period of not barking. As soon as the dog barks, your friend should leave the room.

Then try it without your friend. Simply leave a few treats with the dog on his own. Do not return to him if he barks. If he continues to bark return to the dog, issue a 'no' and leave, offering no attention or physical contact.

5. There are **few better ways to engage your dog's brain and body** than diving in to an activity such as canine agility. Worried that it might not be for you? Worry no more! [**Read all about Eileen's canine agility journey and take inspiration...**](#)

6. Did you know: there are **10 common mistakes** many dog owners make every, single day. Are you making any of them yourself? [**Find out here...**](#)

7. **You CAN teach old dogs new tricks...**the key is, simply, don't ask him to do anything his body can't handle. Really, it's all about mental stimulation. And old dogs need that as much as young pups.

Ever looked across the park at Betty and her dog Reg, where he's all bushy tailed, performing a double front flip with sideways glance? Betty takes it in her stride and walks off in the knowledge that everyone has seen the performance. And have you ever felt that a) what a show off Betty is, and b) that your dog could do that, if it wanted to?

Well you needn't fret, because it's never too late to teach that old dog of yours some new tricks. All you'll need is a pack of treats and some patience. Lots of it. So, here you can discover [**six of the best training exercises for older dogs...**](#)

7. When teaching your dog something, ever wondered why they tilt their head sometimes? Well, [**here's a theory....**](#)

8. **Always focus on what your dog is doing right.** Professional dog trainers everywhere tell their students to reward their dogs when they do something right. This "positive training" method is in contrast to training that centres on punishment. Trainers recommend that owners praise and reward their dogs with treats and affection for good behaviour instead of just scolding them for bad behaviour.

9. **Be proactive** and keep your dog from behaving badly in the first place. One of the most important tips that a professional dog trainer will tell his or her students is that good behaviour is not just the responsibility of the dog. The owner must make every effort to avoid giving the dog the ability to engage in bad behaviour while they are still learning the ropes. For example, if you notice that your dog likes to chew, it's important to make sure that everyone in the home puts their shoes behind closed closet doors to remove temptation.

10 Be patient, persistent and consistent. These three behaviours on the part of an owner will develop similar behaviours in a dog. Patience means that you understand that learning new behaviours may take some time and a lot of practice and repetition. Persistence means that you, as the owner, do not give up when training does not seem to be going well. Consistent means that your dog knows what to expect from you. For example, if you always say NO when your dog is misbehaving, they learn to recognise NO as a sign of disapproval. Conversely, if you only give treats for good behaviour, your dog will learn to recognise such positive feedback.