

Common Dog Training Mistakes

1. Not Being Consistent Within the Family

Everyone in the family wants to be involved in the dog training process. Each and everyone come out with their own commands and methods. While this is understandable, this kind of training will confuse your dog. Proper planning such as specific routine, methods, responsibilities and rules should be discussed among your family members before the dog or puppy arrives home. In this way, everyone will understand their own role and the importance of consistency.

2. Training Too Much, Too Fast

Unfortunately, this happens frequently among many dog owners and will usually cause your dog to be confused. Instead, you should focus on one or two new training exercise or command per training session. Dogs have a shorter attention span. Train your dog 10-15 minutes per session (less for puppies) each, 2 to 3 times per day. Having patience will also set up your dog to understand each command better and be more successful in the training process.

3. Not Praising or Rewarding Immediately

If your dog has performed a new desired action and you delay giving out immediate rewards, you will find the dog does not pick up on what you are asking for. A dog will fail to understand what it is doing right unless you teach them to associate the behaviour with praise or food immediately after each action. Rewarding immediately also ensures that you are rewarding the correct behaviour. You should only withhold rewarding when your timing is so late and you could be unintentionally rewarding the wrong behaviours.

4. Unintentional Approvals

Do you pet your dog when they jump on you enthusiastically every time you come home? Do you allow your dog to greet another dog if they are pulling at the lead and barking to get to the dog? If you answered yes then you are unintentionally encouraging the behaviour. Though it may seem harmless, this kind of unintentional approval may lead to more serious behaviour problems when they figure out that it results in increased direct attention from you, or something else they find rewarding. Once a dog has learned a bad behaviour or has developed a phobia, more time and effort will be needed to correct and retrain your pet again. Therefore, always be mindful of your actions and plan ahead on how you want to train your dog.

5. Giving Commands with Unpleasant Actions

Never give out a command or call your dog's name, only to be disciplined by you. Once the dog associates any command or recall with an unpleasant experience, it will start to ignore and run away from you whenever you use that particular command. Always greet your dog positively for each command and action. Do not shout, but use a stern voice when you catch them making a mistake and show them what you would prefer they do, praise and reward for this.

6. Training Your Dog When You Are In A Bad Mood

If you are having a bad day, do not train your dog. Your tone of voice will be different and you are more likely to get frustrated and display anger more easily. You should also discontinue training if you or your dog are finding it difficult to concentrate. Your dog will be more eager to learn and listen to you if they always have a positive training experience.

7. Giving Too Much Attention and Affection

Many dog owners start showering too much physical affection the moment a puppy arrives to its new home. This constant attention can cause your dog to be unable to cope whenever they are not in your presence, causing them to whine or cry whenever you leave the house. Help your dog earn your affection by not petting or praising them for no apparent reason. Train them to relax alone by leaving him in a separate room with its favorite toy.

8. Repeating Basic Cues When a Dog Fails to Respond

We know that a repetitive sound in quick succession actually excites your dog and a calm non-repetitive sound calms your dog. When you are repeating a command it shows your frustration and the dog becomes uncomfortable. Stay calm and do not show any frustration. Rapidly repeating a command will guarantee your dog will never respond to the first command. Your dog is looking to you to be its leader and good effective leaders stay calm. If the dog does not respond to your first command, move to another spot 2-3 feet away and reissue the command. And be sure to use your visual command.