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Teaching An Old Dog New Tricks -- How To Train Your Dog

By Kirsten Hawkins

Whoever said you can't teach an old dog new tricks, must not have owned a dog. If dogs are anything, they are extremely intelligent and can learn many new things given the chance to show you. When training your dog, keep in mind that yelling, hitting, cursing or punishment is uncalled for, as dogs will retreat backwards the more they are yelled at. Besides, you wouldn't treat a child like that and dogs are essentially just little children with tails and four legs!

The first thing to learn when training your dog to do anything new is to never change your verbal expression, tone or volume. If you say, "come here, boy" then do not change to "Fido, come here". By doing this, your dog will become confused and it will cause unneeded frustration for both of you.

A couple of tips to take into consideration when training your dog is to reward him with treats for good behavior, however be sure to also give a lot of praise and patting to ensure he does not rely totally on the treats when being good. You may also think about enrolling your dog in an obedience class. Even if training is going good at home, this will give him extra practice with interaction between other animals and people.

When training your dog don't cram everything into one day and expect him to remember it. Dogs have short attention spans and will quickly become bored, so try to keep training time down to short sessions throughout the day. Here are a few of the easier and more popular commands to teach Fido.

- Come— Use a toy or treat to encourage him to come towards you. Say "Fido, come." As he makes his way towards you, praise him. Once he is in front of you, hold onto his collar for 30 seconds and then let go.
- Sit— Press gently down on his backside and say "sit." You can also hold a treat above his head. When a dog is forced to look upward, he will automatically sit on his hind legs. Just as he bends to a sitting position, say "Fido, sit." Remember to praise and reward.
- Down— Get your dog into a sitting position. Slowly guide his legs straight down in front of him until he is flat. As you are doing this, repeat "Fido, down." Keep him in this position for 30 seconds and then

praise and treat.

· Stay– Have Fido sit. As you slowly take a couple steps backward, say "Fido, stay." Hold your hand out as you do this, palm facing him. If he moves from position, tell him "no" and return him to the starting point. If he stays, praise and treat. Don't forget to find a `release command' like "ok", or done." This will tell him it is okay to move.

By using persistence, consistency and patience when training your dog, you will almost effortlessly be able to teach new commands and tricks. The `trick' for you is to always praise and treat. Start with these easy commands and before long you will have him doing somersaults!

Kirsten Hawkins is a dog lover and animal expert from Nashville, TN. Visit

<http://www.doghealth411.com/>

for more information on dog health, the care of dogs, and dog travel.

Hot Tips On Dog Training

By David Amos

INTRODUCTION

Dog training is one of the most important things you can do for your pet. It will greatly improve the relationship between you and your dog.

Dog training will give you a means of communicating with your dog. The most obvious way it can help with communication is by teaching your dog to respond to commands. Next time you come across your dog ripping apart your favorite pair of slippers, you will be able to use simple oral commands to stop the destruction. Dog training will also improve communication by allowing your dog to find its place within your household social hierarchy. By teaching your dog to sit and give you its paw, you are telling the dog that you are in charge. When your dog obeys your command, it is recognizing your position.

Dog training can also protect your dog. A dog that has been properly trained won't go chasing after a bouncing ball into traffic. A dog that has been properly trained won't take a nip at other dogs or pedestrians when you are out for walks. A dog that has gone through dog training will be a confident dog. You will also be able to give it more freedom to do things like run off the leash when you know it will return on your command.

Finally, dog training can be a fun activity for you and your dog to do together, a time for you to focus all your attention on your dog. It need not be a chore, and it should never resemble an extended punishment.

DOG TRAINING BASICS

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The most important concept in dog training is the reward. Rewarding your dog with treats is the fastest and most pleasant way for your dog to learn new commands. While punishing your dog has its place in most dog training regimes, it should be used sparingly. If all your dog ever receives is punishments or reprimands, your dog will quickly learn to ignore or avoid you. This will make it extremely hard to properly train your dog.

WHEN TO START DOG TRAINING

Dog training should start as early as possible. While you may not see immediate benefits, and many doubt puppy can actually be trained, it will at the very least set the stage for successful dog training later in life. The methods you use to train your dog will seem familiar and a part of its daily routine. This is not to say that you can never teach an old dog new tricks. Just be prepared to put more effort into it than you would with a younger dog, and to always be patient.

FINDING A DOG TRAINER

While there are many resources available for you to train your dog on your own, the easiest way is to use a dog trainer. You should spend a lot of time picking a dog trainer, however, as bad training techniques could be very damaging to your dog.

Anyone can call himself or herself a dog trainer. It is therefore important to only use a dog trainer that has been glowingly recommended by someone with well-trained dogs, or by a reputable organization such as the ASPCA or other humane societies. And before spending any money, ensure that the dog trainer uses methods you are comfortable with. Visit the facility and see a dog training session in action. If you see any signs of cruelty or hostility by the instructor towards the dogs, find someone else.

David Amos is a dog lover and long time dog owner. For more tips and help on dog training click

<http://onlinedogcare.com/dogtraining>

and for more about dog care and keeping your dog happy and

healthy click

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