



Nate Schoemer's Dog
Training Manual

A Message from Nate

“

Thank you for your purchase of this book. You either received this personally after our 1-on-1 training, or you bought it from Amazon (Kindle or paperback). I'm dedicated to helping dogs, their owners, and the community by better educating dog owners. Through training, I believe we can save the lives of countless animals who would otherwise end up on the street or in kill-shelters. Thanks and we'll talk soon!

Nate Schoemer's Dog Training Manual

An Expert Dog Trainer Shares His Dog Training Secrets

Third Edition

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Dedicated to:

Dog lovers around the world.

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Introduction



Congratulations, you're about to embark on a great adventure with your dog. Whether you were supplied this dog-training manual directly from Nate Schoemer, or you discovered this product separately (perhaps through learning about me on the series *Rescue Dog to Super Dog* on Animal Planet), the following is a highly condensed, brief system to

revolutionize life with your canine companion.

The purpose of dog-training is to enhance relationships between dogs and their owners. Implementation of training principles is designed to put you and your dog on the same page together. Dog are especially loyal to their owners; they're animals with a desire to please. This is why a dog may live in confusion as she notices how her owners are unhappy—but the poor pup doesn't understand why. Because communication is poor, the situation never improves—the owner remains frustrated, and the dog remains confused.

Sadly, this pattern can deteriorate the relationship, and in the worst case scenarios—prompt an owner to surrender the dog to a shelter

(where it may be put down). I believe it's very important to stop this pattern, improve the lives of dogs and their owners—and thus save the lives of dogs in the process.

In summary, dog training is the process of helping your dog to understand your expectations. As they are not capable of cognitive reasoning as is practiced by us bi-pedal mammals, we must instead use systems of conditioning, pattern-recognition, and positive habit forming to create our desired results, and help the dog to comprehend our own thoughts and feelings.

Sincerely,

Nate Schoemer,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nathan Schoemer". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping initial "N" and a long horizontal stroke that underlines the name.

Certified Master Dog Trainer

www.nateschoemer.com

Chapter 1 – Dog Training Terminology

Before we begin, let us break down the dog training terminology (in alphabetical order for reference).

- **Chasing:** This is when you make your dog chase food that is in your hand to increase food drive, prey drive, play drive, and make the training more fun for your dog. You can also have your dog chase toys to build your dog's toy drive.
- **Classical Conditioning:** A word or sound that predicts a reward, or even a correction. At first, the sound is just meaningless stimuli, but if the sound always precedes a reward or a correction, the dog will learn what it means—and so the dog will become classically conditioned to the sound.
- **Climb Command:** This is a command that requires your dog to go to elevated positions and maintain that position until released. A climb command can be a dog bed, a park bench, the car, or whatever position you choose for your dog as long as it's an elevated position.
- **Command:** This can be physical or verbal. It is telling the dog

they need to do what is being asked of them.

- **Conditioned Correction:** This is a word or sound that lets the dog know they will be receiving a correction (positive punishment) (For the purposes of this book, we will use “No” as the conditioned correction. You can use whatever you like.)
- **Conditioned Reinforcer (Mark / Marker):** This is a word or sound that has been classically conditioned to predict a reward. It's called a marker because it signifies that you are marking a moment in time when your dog is right or wrong.
- **Continuation Marker:** This is a sound that lets the dog know they will be receiving a reward. Sound = Reward
- **Counter Conditioning:** This means training an animal to display a behavior that is different than his / her current reaction to a stimulus. Simply put, we take something that the dog may not like and we change the way they feel about it by having it predict something pleasant. For example; a dog that is afraid of the mail carrier can learn to like the mail carrier if every day when the mail carrier comes by, the dog is given a high-value reward. The dog would start to associate the mail carrier with the reward.
- **Desensitization:** This is the process of exposing the animal to a stimulus beginning at a very low intensity. As the dog gets more comfortable with the stimuli, the intensity can be increased. You have to be careful not to increase the intensity too quickly or you could end up making the dog more sensitive to the stimulus. (Here's an example: if a dog is extremely reactive to other dogs, a trainer may allow the dog to just see other dogs walking around while standing outside a dog park for a few hours, until they're so exposed to other dogs it's not such an exciting stimuli).
- **Directional to the Collar:** This terminology is for when a remote collar is being used for obedience. This means that your dog understands what the remote collar is and understands that it is a correction that is coming from you and

that it's not just a random bug biting your dog's neck. So, when you correct your dog with the remote collar (without a leash being attached) he knows that you are the one correcting him.

- **Disposition:** Your dog's genetic behavioral tendencies that may determine its training process. Also see: Temperament.
- **Distribution Hand:** This is the hand you use to deliver rewards to your dog. Keep in mind that your supply hand and distribution hand can be interchangeable. Also see: Supply Hand.
- **Fixed Shaping (also just known as shaping):** This is when you have a training goal in mind, but you're letting your dog figure out what you want instead of showing your dog. For example: you put your dog in a room with a skateboard, when your dog investigates the skateboard you then use your conditioned-reinforcer to mark your dog's behavior. This will show the dog that the skateboard is a good thing. You can then keep marking new behaviors to develop exactly what you want your dog to do.

This is how many trainers teach their dogs to do things like ride skateboards. This is a great training technique to use. You can see an example of this on my YouTube channel in the scent detection series.

- **Free Shaping:** This is when you don't have a particular training goal in mind, and you are simply watching your dog to see if your dog will perform a behavior that you like. For example, your dog does a cute stretch in the morning when they wake up, and you can mark this action. After enough repetitions, your dog will start to offer up that behavior for rewards. This is also a great way to create a pro-active dog.
- **Focused Heel:** This is when your dog is on the left side of your body and your dog is also looking up at your face the entire time. If you stop moving, your dog must sit and continue looking at your face. This is a very difficult behavior to teach and each sport has slightly different rules on what's considered

correct. (Also see: Heel).

- **Heel:** Is a position either on your left or right side that your dog must maintain when commanded. As soon as you stop moving, your dog should then sit in heel position. If you are considering competition obedience, then be sure to check the rules for that sport as they often have different requirements for their heel command. (Also see: Focused Heel).
- **Leash Pressure:** This is when we use the leash to guide our dog into specific positions. Once the pressure of the leash is turned on, it cannot be turned off until the dog complies. Once the dog complies then the pressure must instantly be turned off. This is a form of negative reinforcement.
- **Leash Pop:** This is when you make a snapping motion with the dog's leash to engage the training-collar to give the dog a correction (a positive-punishment).
- **Luring:** This is when you use food to guide your dog into the desired position, and once your dog is in that position, you would then release the reward to your dog (positive reinforcement).
- **Negative-Punishment:** This is when you remove something of value from your dog. For example, you're petting your dog and your dog jumps up, so you stop petting your dog. By removing the reward of petting you would be implementing negative punishment.
- **Negative-Reinforcement:** This is when pressure is applied, and it is only turned off when your dog complies.
- **Non-Reinforcement Marker:** This is a signal for *negative-punishment*; which means withholding the reward from your dog until your dog does the behavior correctly. This is for mistakes. Your dog must understand that they can make a mistake and try again.
- **Operant Conditioning:** Also known as instrumental

conditioning, and in the dog world is a method of learning that occurs through rewards and punishments for behavior. In other words, this is how a dog learns how their behavior has an effect on their environment. It's how a dog (or even a human) makes an association between a particular behavior and a consequence.

- **Overshadowing (Pairing):** This is when two or more stimuli is present to the dog, but one produces a stronger response and overshadows the objective. In other words, when teaching a dog a command, the command must come before the physical cue, or one will overshadow the other. This means all physical cues and commands must be performed separate from each other. If you pair your physical cue with your command, then the physical cue will override the command, and your dog will never learn the command. (For example: Telling your dog to go “down” while gesturing with your hand and pointing to the floor at the same time. You shouldn't do this.)
- **Physical Cue:** This is a signal to perform a behavior. Such as with luring or leash pressure.
- **Positive-Reinforcement:** This is when you give your dog a reward for performing a behavior that you would like your dog to repeat.
- **Positive-Punishment:** This is when you use a correction (such as popping on the leash) to reduce the occurrence of a behavior.
- **Primary Reinforcer:** This is going to be the primary reward you give your dog when they do a behavior that you like. A primary reward can be food, a toy, or affection.
- **Reactive vs. Proactive Dogs (Obedience Training):** A reactive dog will wait to see a reward before complying with a command. You ask the dog to sit and the dog doesn't sit. You then pull out a treat and the dog sits, therefore the dog's behavior was being motivated by the reward. A proactive dog understands that their behaviors affect their environment. With

a proactive dog, the behavior is the driving force for the reward. They will do things even without the reward readily visible.

- **Sit-Front:** This is when your dog is sitting in front of you looking at your face. You want your dog as close to you as possible without touching you. The dog should be center and straight.
- **Supply Hand:** This is the hand that you use to hold extra rewards for your dog. Keep in mind that your supply hand and distribution hand can be interchangeable. Also see: Distribution Hand.
- **Temperament:** Your dog's personality, makeup or nature that will determine its training process. Also see: Disposition
- **Terminal Marker:** This is a sound that lets your dog know they will be receiving a reward, but it also guarantees a release. Sound = reward & release.
- **Value Transfer:** This is when your dog has something of value, and you use something of equal value to get that item from your dog. It's like you're making a trade with your dog, so it's important to give your dog the other item when you use this technique—otherwise your dog will lose trust in you. It's also a great technique to teach the "drop it" command.

Chapter 2 – Dog Training Equipment

Notice: This manual has been designed and written for educational purposes. Below is a list of some of the most common dog training tools. Even though I don't personally use all of them, it's important to understand how they work so that you can be fully prepared in the event you are required to use one.

Agitation Collar: These collars are much thicker than normal flat collars. They are designed to allow the dog to pull, much like a harness does. Trainers will often use these collars for protection dog training.

Binder: After acquiring your puppy, it's a very good idea to not only ensure your dog is properly vaccinated, but that you also have copies available of all pertinent information and medical records. I feel the simplest solution is to keep a binder available with all important documents, such as: veterinarian records, the puppy's birth certificate, any contracts related to the purchase., and your puppy's genealogy records (if given).

Choke Chain: This collar has the potential to be dangerous and can cause life-long injuries to your dog. Only the most skilled dog trainers can use this collar correctly without it being a risk to their dog's health. So, unless you're an expert and are in a situation where you are being asked to use this collar, stay away from it. However, many trainers

also use this as a dummy collar (see: dummy collar).

The Crate: If you're still house training or potty training, then you'll need a crate. During the potty-training process, it's important to initially have a crate that is only a little larger than your dog or puppy, with only enough space to stand up, turn around and lay down. This will make the dog learn to hold his/her bladder. If your dog is already potty-trained, a bigger crate is acceptable.

Dog Bed: Help your puppy learn to adjust to their own special place of comfort. A popular command we use is the "climb command" that teaches the dog to go to their bed and stay until given the release word. This is very easy to teach when you know the proper steps. Luckily for you, this information is explained in detail, and demonstrated with a dog, in my training videos on my YouTube channel.

Dog Gate: If you want to control where the dog goes within the household, then use dog/puppy gates. These will restrict the dog from going into, or out of, certain rooms. They can be installed in most doorways.

Dummy Collar: In the sport of IGP, which is a protection sport, a dog is allowed to wear a choke chain or a fur saver, but not a remote collar. Some competitors use a choke chain that imitates a remote collar, so the dog behaves as if it were wearing a remote collar.

Flat Nylon or Leather Collars: These collars are basic functional collars. They can hold your dog's dog tags and provide some pressure when used with a leash.

Gentle Leader or Halti: This collar is designed to control the dog's head as well as giving you the ability to close the dog's mouth when lifting up. Just like any training tool, this can be a safe option when working on specific issues. However, when used incorrectly, it has the potential to cause neck and spinal cord injuries.

Harness: These are excellent and highly recommended for when you want your dog to pull. I use a harness to build a dog's confidence, during protection training, and I also use it when I'm exercising them.

There are multiple different types of harnesses that can be used on a dog—some are designed to pull and others can be used for working dogs.

Heeling Stick: Teaches a dog how to respond when it's felt in a particular part of the body, so as to cue the dog to manipulate their bodies for precision obedience objectives. It's similar to leash pressure, as it's just one additional tool to improve communication with the dog using negative reinforcement. It is not used to hit the dog or any other form of positive punishment.

The Leash: There are four different types of leashes that I like to use when training a dog. The first is a basic 4-foot or 6-foot leash. The second is a 20 to 30-foot-long line, the third is a Flexi leash (a retractable leash), and the fourth is called a tab, which is a 4"-12" short leash. I use a tab when I'm house training a dog as it gives me the ability to maintain control of the dog if I need to for any specific situation, and is less likely to get caught on furniture as a long leash.

Martingale Collar: This is similar to the pinch collar as far as the use and application, however, this collar only works well on dogs with low correction levels, meaning, if the dog is very sensitive to corrections. This collar usually doesn't provide enough of a correction for most dogs. It's also used to prevent dogs from slipping their heads out from the collar, which is very helpful when teaching leash pressure.

No-Pull Harness: Many canine health professionals advise to stay away from these types of harnesses, since they are considered to be detrimental to a dog's structure and gait. Since you are learning how to train your dog, I would suggest teaching them to not pull on a leash, instead of using this tool.

Pinch Collar (prong collar): This is one of the most commonly used training collars on the market. If the dog pulls on the leash it will tighten the collar creating a pinching sensation around the dog's neck. Once the dog stops pulling then the pressure will stop. This can also be used to stop issues that arise during training by popping on the leash when the dog does an undesired behavior. When the leash pops, it will

activate the collar creating a pinching sensation around the dog's neck. However, when used this way, the correction only lasts a split second. This is a very safe and effective tool when used correctly. The most popular brand amongst professional dog trainers is Herm Sprenger.

Puppy Pen: This is a good idea if you want your puppy to run around and play, but limiting access to the rest of the house

Remote Training-Collar: These are also known as shock collars. When these collars are used correctly, they are perfectly safe. However, ethical considerations arise when used by inexperienced, negligent or careless trainers. Two popular brands currently in use are Dogtra and E-Collar Technologies.

Toys: Having a few toys at the house when he or she comes home will help with the transition, and give you and your puppy a way to bond. Just be sure to never leave a puppy unattended with toys. This is a safety concern as many puppies will try to eat the toys which can cause health issues such as a ruptured bowel or blockage and possibly death.

Chapter 3 – Dog Psychology

The foundation and understanding of dog psychology starts with the four quadrants of operant conditioning. Since this is something that most people have a hard time understanding, let's go over it. The four are: *positive reinforcement*, *positive punishment*, *negative reinforcement*, and *negative punishment*.

These can be broken down into two factors:

- Reinforcement means to encourage a behavior to be repeated, whereas punishment means to discourage a behavior from being repeated.
- Positive means to add something to the equation to influence behavior, while negative means to remove something to influence behavior.

It can be tricky to see “positive” as discouraging a behavior, as in positive punishment, and “negative” as encouraging a behavior, as in negative reinforcement—but it's easy to understand in the context of operant conditioning where “positive” and “negative” are not used to mean the same things we normally use them for, such as “good” and “bad”.

Understanding Positive Reinforcement

We'll start with positive reinforcement and how it's applied to dog training. As explained, “positive” in this context means “to add to the equation” and reinforcement means to encourage a behavior to be repeated. Therefore, a positive reinforcement translates to giving your dog anything your dog sees as valuable, with the goal of encouraging the repeat of a behavior. Many of us do this intentionally while training, but we also do this outside of training and sometimes without even realizing it.

Here are a few examples of **positive reinforcement** in dog training, including both helpful and unhelpful situations where an owner is unknowingly reinforcing bad behaviors.

- Giving your dog a treat for doing an obedience command, such as a sit or down. Reinforcing the sit and the down.
- Throwing a ball for your dog to fetch after your dog barked at you. In this situation, the toy is reinforcing the bark.
- Petting your dog after your dog nudges your hand for attention. The petting is reinforcing the nudge.
- Your dog pulls on the leash and you walk in the direction your dog is pulling. Walking forward is giving your dog more freedom and control, which would be reinforcing the pulling. And people wonder why their dog keeps pulling on the leash.
- Your dog barks at someone and you reassure your dog by petting them. In this situation, you would be reinforcing the barking and not reassuring the dog as you may have thought.
- Your dog jumps up on someone and they pet your dog. The petting would be reinforcing the jumping

Understanding Negative Reinforcement

:

Negative reinforcement is when pressure is turned on to get the desired behavior, and once the behavior is completed, the pressure is turned off. Two things must take place in order for negative reinforcement to work:

- Once the pressure is turned on, it cannot be turned off until the dog complies.
- The moment the dog complies, the pressure must immediately be turned off.

Here are a few examples of negative reinforcement in dog training:

Getting your dog to sit.

Your dog is standing and refusing to sit. You start to push on your dog's rear until your dog sits, at which point the pressure from your hand is removed. Your dog now knows that every time he doesn't want your hand to push on his rear, he can sit to remove that pressure.

Why is this negative reinforcement?

The pressure from your hand was present before your dog decided to sit. His behavior of sitting is removing the pressure from your hand. Therefore, negative reinforcement is occurring.

- **Before:** Pressure is being placed on the dog's rear end.
- **Behavior:** The dog goes into the sit position
- **After:** The pressure from your hand is released.
- **Future behavior:** The dog will sit when the slightest pressure is placed on his rear.

Getting your dog into the down with your hand.

Your dog is standing and refusing to lay down. You start to push on your dog's shoulder blades until your dog decides to lay down. Once your dog lays down the pressure from your hand is removed. Now, your dog knows that every time he doesn't want your hand to push on his shoulder blades, he can down to remove that pressure.

Why is this negative reinforcement?

The pressure from your hand was present before your dog decided to lay down. His behavior of going into the down position is removing the pressure from your hand. Therefore, negative reinforcement is occurring.

- **Before:** Pressure is being applied on the dog's shoulder blades.
- **Behavior:** The dog goes into the down position
- **After:** The pressure from your hand is released.
- **Future behavior:** The dog will lay down when the slightest pressure is placed on his shoulder blades.

Getting your dog to sit with leash pressure.

Your dog is standing and refusing to sit. You start to pull up on the leash until your dog sits. Once your dog sits, the pressure from the leash is removed. Your dog knows that every time he doesn't want to feel the pressure from the leash, he can sit to remove that pressure.

Why is this negative reinforcement?

The pressure from the leash was present before your dog decided to sit. His behavior of sitting is removing the pressure from the leash. Therefore, negative reinforcement is occurring.

- **Before:** Pressure is being placed on the dog's neck from the leash.
- **Behavior:** The dog goes into the sit position
- **After:** The pressure from the leash is released.
- **Future behavior:** The dog will sit when the slightest pressure is applied by lifting up on the leash

Getting your dog into the down with leash pressure.

Your dog is standing and refusing to lay down. You start to pull down on the leash until your dog decides to lay down. Once your dog lays down the pressure from the leash is removed. Your dog knows that

every time he doesn't want to feel the pressure from the leash, he can lay down to remove that pressure.

Why is this negative reinforcement?

The pressure from the leash was present before your dog decided to lay down. His behavior of laying down is removing the pressure from the leash. Therefore, negative reinforcement is occurring.

- **Before:** Pressure is applied downward on the dog's neck from the leash.
- **Behavior:** The dog goes into the down position.
- **After:** The pressure from the leash is released.
- **Future behavior:** The dog will lay down when the slightest pressure is applied via pulling down on the leash

Understanding Positive Punishment:

Positive punishment is when something is added to the equation that the dog doesn't like, to reduce the likelihood of the behavior being repeated.

6 Examples of Positive Punishment

There are many ways to use positive punishment to influence behavior. Not all of these punishments are necessarily good ways to discourage behavior, but they are examples of the concept of positive punishment and the types of actions dog owners may knowingly—or unknowingly—perform.

- Yelling at a dog for a bad behavior (not recommended).
- Popping the leash on the training collar when your dog does an undesired behavior.
- Stimulation via a remote training collar when the dog is doing an undesired behavior.
- Kneeing the dog in the chest when the dog jumps up at you.

(again...not recommended).

- Honking a loud horn at the dog to stop an undesired behavior.
- Spraying two dogs with a water hose to stop a dog fight.

For more on positive punishment refer to Chapter 8: Compulsive dog Training.

Understanding Negative Punishment:

Last but not least is negative punishment. This is when something is removed from the equation that the dog likes in order to decrease an undesired or bad behavior. Negative punishments techniques are commonly practiced in dog training.

Examples of Negative Punishment

Once again, not all of these punishments are necessarily good ways to discourage behavior, but they are examples of the concept of negative punishment.

- While you're petting your dog, he decides to jump up at you. As a result, you stop petting your dog and you ignore him.
- Your dog barks at you to get your attention, so you put your dog in her crate taking away her freedom (not recommended).
- Your dog wants a treat, so you tell him to sit, he decides not to sit, so he doesn't receive the reward.
- Your dog starts to resource guard the couch, so you stop letting her on the couch.

Now we have a basic understanding of the four quadrants of operant conditioning, and the next chapters will detail how they work together.

Chapter 4 – The Three Primary Principles

These are the basics that I always teach to new students during introductory lessons. This is perhaps the most important part, and every other part of your dog training skills are built upon this foundation.

Remember to follow the three primary principles of dog training:

Principle 1: Timing:

It's scientifically proven that we have approximately one-second to influence a dog's behavior. This means you have one second to reward your dog for a behavior you would like repeated, and one-second to correct your dog for a behavior you would not like repeated.

If the reward or the correction does not come within one-second, then your dog will not make the connection. As soon as your dog makes a movement that indicates the behavior you want to capture, you have to either deliver a primary-reinforcer or a conditioned-reinforcer within that first second. The same principle applies for actions you would not like your dog to repeat; the moment your dog does the behavior in question, you have to deliver either a primary correction

or a conditioned correction within a second of your dog doing that behavior.

Here is an example of how important timing is. Let's say you're doing a down-stay with your dog and you're in a wide-open space like a football field. While you're walking away from your dog across the field, your dog breaks the down-stay without you seeing. Your dog then decides to run to you, and when you turn around and see your dog running at you, you then correct your dog for breaking the down-stay.

Even though you believe that you corrected your dog for breaking a down-stay, you just corrected your dog for coming to you. Since you did not see your dog break the down-stay, you should not have corrected the dog. Instead, you could have ignored the behavior, reset and tried again; or do what I do and reward your dog for coming to you, then reset and tried again.

Principle 2: Motivation:

Your dog will always do whatever is most motivating. For example, if you're trying to get your dog to perform a sit and he is surrounded by his favorite thing, let's say rabbits, he's going to be more motivated to chase the rabbits compared to his motivation to work for your treat.

It's important to keep in mind that dogs can be motivated by many things. They can be motivated to access something pleasant, they can be motivated to prevent something unpleasant, or the behavior itself is fun. By making sure that you always provide the most motivating factor for your dog, you will ensure reliability in your dog's obedience.

There are four ways you can motivate a dog to perform a behavior: You have food, toys, affection and force. It's important you learn to use all four types of motivation for your training. Another factor to keep in mind is that speed is based on motivation; the more motivated your dog is, the faster your dog will perform the desired behavior.

Aside from the motivating factors, the next important element is your

dog's level of **perseverance**.

Something that throws a lot of people off is when a dog has low perseverance and gives up when something seems too challenging. For example: you try to make your dog spin once in a circle for a treat—and he stops halfway through and gets demotivated.

In these situations, you have to adjust for the dog's individual level of perseverance. If they give up easily, you'll need to reward the dog midway through their completion of the behavior until they learn to finish it all the way.

Some dogs, however, have high perseverance and require less adjustment. As such, the dog will be easier to train.

Principle 3: Consistency

This one is paramount, because even if you have bad timing and wrong motivation, if you are consistent, your dog will still be able to learn. This involves always being consistent with what you want and expect from your dog. If you let your dog jump on the furniture one day, don't correct your dog for jumping on the furniture the next day. If you are inconsistent, you can create stress and confusion for your dog.

You also want to be consistent with the way you say your markers as well as your commands. Remember, your dog doesn't understand the English words S.I.T., rather your dog hears a sound. So, you want your commands always to sound the same, meaning you shouldn't constantly be changing the rise and inflection of your commands.

On this topic, let's now discuss *predictability*. This word is not part of the primary principles, but it's one you always need to keep in mind when it comes to dog training. Always think about your actions as you train your dog, and if they are becoming predictable or not.

You can use this to improve the training process, or by contrast, it can actually create problems. For example, let's say you love taking your dog to the beach, and this is an activity that your dog enjoys. Every

time you're ready to leave, you call your dog to you. Eventually, your dog will learn not to come to you when you call because you've created a predictable pattern that calling equals leaving the beach, which your dog doesn't want.

Instead, you would always want to play “come when called” games at the beach that predict a release and a reward, like a ball. This way, your dog will enjoy coming to you when called. It's a simple concept: if your dog can predict something, then your dog can learn it, just like obedience. You say the command, and then you show your dog the physical cue. This way, the dog learns that when you say a command, it is then followed by the action that gets the dog into the position. Once the dog knows this, then you no longer need the physical cue, because it is now predictable for your dog.

Playing Tricks: Not a Good Idea.

On the topic of consistency, there's a mistake some owners make: playing tricks with their dogs that destroy the trusting relationship.

For example: An owner playing fetch may pretend to throw the ball, but they really didn't. And then everyone gets to laugh when the dog goes chasing after nothing. While this is a funny thing to do, it's actually dismantling your training process.

There are many more examples, such as getting a dog excited thinking it's feeding time—then not feeding them. Or hiding a toy. Or any other types of “practical jokes” played on the dog.

A dog may not understand the humorous intent, and could begin to lose trust in the owner. An owner who frequently plays tricks will discover a dog that stops caring or taking seriously new things the owner wants to teach.

Chapter 5 – The Different Types of Training

Reward-Based Training (pure positive):

This is an ideal training to start your dog on, but can also take the longest. This is when you use rewards to teach all the desired behaviors, and you use negative-punishment when your dog fails to perform the action, so they learn to go into different positions to access rewards.

This training is almost entirely stress free for a dog, and it also makes the training very positive for them. This training uses a combination of positive-reinforcement and negative-punishment.

There are three common ways to use reward-based training (see the terminology chapter for some added examples).

- **Luring:** This is when you use food to guide your dog into the desired position, and once your dog is in that position, you would then release the reward to your dog.
- **Fix Shaping:** This is when you have a training goal in mind, but you're letting your dog figure out what you want instead of

showing your dog.

- **Free Shaping:** This is when you don't have a particular training goal in mind, and you are simply watching your dog to see if your dog will perform a behavior that you like.

Pressure-Based Training (Escape)

The next type of training is by using a leash, and involves using pressure-based training (which includes many other diverse methods, as well).

Using leash pressure is great if you want faster results. It uses a combination of negative-reinforcement, negative-punishment, and positive-reinforcement. You turn the pressure on, and when your dog complies you immediately turn the pressure off and reward your dog.

I don't prefer to start this way, but I like to use this methodology a little later in the training for reliability, teaching the stay command, and for teaching how to turn off pressure. However, some people prefer to start with leash pressure training as it will help your dog learn more quickly how to go into desired positions.

Leash Pressure Training Tips

There are a few things to know before jumping into this style of training. One of the first things to consider is how when you use a leash, you'll discover your dog is "resisting" it. That's because dogs possess what's known as **classical opposition reflex**, if you pull on a leash they resist and go the opposite direction.

However, with leash pressure, our aim is to teach them to go *with* the direction of the leash. This opens up new training opportunities.

Once the dog goes in the direction of the leash, we can use it to teach positions like sit / down / stand, directing into a heel position, walking forwards, walking backwards, or any other number of behaviors. We also use leash pressure to easily teach our dogs the "Stay" command.

Leash pressure also helps to teach a dog what behaviors are not acceptable without issuing a correction. For example, if a dog likes to jump up on people, you can perform the following exercise (for the purpose of this book we will be using the word “wrong”. You can use whatever word you choose):

- Have a friend start petting your dog.
- When the dog jumps up, have your friend immediately stop petting.
- Say “Wrong”, and then add the leash pressure, pulling the dog off the friend.
- Once all four paws have returned to the ground, turn off the leash pressure, then have the friend immediately return to petting.

We can also use this to stop specific behavioral issues such as jumping up on furniture or playing too rough with another dog. We follow the same idea of saying “Wrong” then applying the pressure, and releasing the pressure when the dog does what we wish.

Remember, positive reinforcement is limited by how much the dog wants the reward, but negative reinforcement means the dog is given no choice but to comply (and learn).

Avoidance Training

This is when you correct your dog into the desired positions. This is considered an older style of training and is not as commonly used anymore. The dogs learn very fast, but it creates a bad association to the training.

This training uses a combination of positive-punishment, negative-punishment, and positive-reinforcement. For example, the dog would be given the command “sit”, then the dog would be corrected into the position with an upward leash pop while simultaneously pushing the dog’s butt down. Because the dog was given the correction, they’ll start automatically sitting because they don’t want to experience another correction. In other words, you’re correcting a dog without the dog actually doing something wrong.

Again, this type of training is very old fashioned and likely not a good idea anymore.

Balanced Training

This is the most preferred style of training, and it's what I recommend. The balanced training method uses all four quadrants of operant conditioning: positive-reinforcement, negative-reinforcement, positive-punishment, and negative-punishment. In my professional experience, this style of training creates the happiest dogs with the highest level of reliability.

Chapter 6 – Training with Rewards

Before we start training our dogs, we must know what motivates them. With any dog I start training, I like to begin with food and luring. Now, something I'm often asked by people is, "How do I train my dog when my dog doesn't have any food motivation?" First, let me start by saying that every dog has food motivation, what varies is how intense the food motivation is. If you have a dog with low food motivation, there are techniques that you can use to increase that food drive.

Most dog's low food motivation is caused by a few things: Either the dog has been overfed, free-fed, given very high value food such as cooked steak, or sometimes just feeding out of a bowl can cause this. As a result, the dog just doesn't care that much about getting fed as a reward.

A common technique that we like to use to correct a lack of food drive is food deprivation. For this you will want to use mealtime as a training time. Bring the dog out and offer food to train, if the dog is not interested, no big deal, put the food away and try again at dinner.

Again, if the dog is not interested, put the food away and try again the next day. Continue to do this until your dog is willing to work for the food. Be sure not to give the dog any food between training. The dog has to know that he will only get food that he works for. I've used this technique on dozens of dogs and it's worked every time.

When we first start teaching a new command to a dog we start with continual reinforcement. Meaning, we reward the dog for the completion of every behavior we are teaching. Once the dog is performing the behavior on the command alone without the help of the physical cue, we then start spacing out the rewards.

The idea is that the dog must believe there is a possibility that he will receive a reward, but not that he will always receive a reward. Another way to look at it is when you first start training a dog, you are a vending machine. Every dollar (behavior) your dog puts in, they get their reward. Once your dog knows the command you must transition to a slot machine. Meaning, every dollar (behavior) your dog puts in, no longer guarantees a reward, but the hope is there. Just like people continue to put money into a slot machine, your dog will continue to perform behaviors for the possibility of the reward.

Once your dog is performing a behavior on the command alone, you can start the next process. For this example, let's look at the same series of commands with each step of this process. First series will be with continual reinforcement.

Verbal command is given, dog performs the action (sit, heel, spin, heel, climb, etc), marker sound followed by reward.

Now we will look at the same series when we first start to space out rewards, moving into more of a slot machine than a vending machine:

- Verbal command sit, dog sits, verbal praise but no reward.
- Verbal command down, dog downs, verbal praise but no reward.
- Verbal command stand, dog stands, marker sound followed by reward.
- Verbal command spin, dog spins, verbal praise but no reward.
- Verbal command come, dog comes to you, verbal praise but no reward.

- Verbal command heel, dog goes into the heel command, marker sound followed by reward.
- Verbal command center, dog goes into the center command, verbal praise but no reward.
- Verbal command climb, dog goes on the elevated platform, marker sound followed by reward.

Now for the next step we will alternate with praising and NOT praising, giving rewards and NOT giving rewards. In fact, we'll avoid giving any rewards until the 8th practice. Ex.:

- Verbal command sit, dog sits, verbal praise but no reward.
- Verbal command down, dog downs, no praise and no reward.
- Verbal command stand, dog stands, no praise and no reward.
- Verbal command spin, dog spins, verbal praise but no reward.
- Verbal command come, dog comes to you, no praise and no reward.
- Verbal command heel, dog goes into the heel command, verbal praise but no reward.
- Verbal command center, dog goes into the center command, no praise and no reward.
- Verbal command climb, dog goes on the elevated platform, marker sound followed by reward.

Next, try to get your dog to perform multiple commands in a row with neither praise nor reward, and then on the 8th set—provide both forms of reinforcement. Here's an example below:

- Verbal command sit, dog sits, no praise and no reward.
- Verbal command down, dog downs, no praise and no reward.
- Verbal command stand, dog stands, no praise and no reward.
- Verbal command spin, dog spins, no praise and no reward.
- Verbal command come, dog comes to you, no praise and no reward.
- Verbal command heel, dog goes into the heel command, no praise and no reward.

- Verbal command center, dog goes into the center command, no praise and no reward.
- Verbal command climb, dog goes on the elevated platform, marker sound followed by reward.

As you can see, we start with continual reinforcement (verbal praise plus the rewards each time), but over time we can get the dog to perform multiple commands in a row with only the hope they will eventually receive a reward. The order above was just an example of this process, the commands can be given in any order. The main idea is to transition your dog from always receiving praise and a reward, to mixing it up and only occasionally providing the reinforcement.

When to use toys with obedience:

If you have a dog that enjoys toys, you can start to use that motivation in your training. Once I have a dog performing all the commands on verbal alone and they no longer need a reward after every behavior, this is the point when I like to introduce toys into obedience training.

Before using toys, we need to make sure that the dog will give us the toy when asked. We can teach our dog(s) this command by implementing value transfer. The process goes as follows.

Value Transfer / “Drop It” Command:

Just like anything else we do, we want to make sure that we can get the dog to do the behavior with a physical cue before we add the command. For this example, we will be giving the “Out” command.

- 1.) You want to have two toys of equal value. Two completely identical toys will work best for this
- 2.) First present one of the toys, have your dog look at you, then say your terminal marker (like “Free”) to engage your dog into play. This will help create structure during play, by asking something from your dog before giving them the toy.
- 3.) If you’re playing tug with your dog you will do one of two things, depending on the dog. Option one: you will stop moving the toy (this can be difficult if you have a strong

dog), option two: you will release the toy to the dog. The second option works best if your dog prefers to play tug with you.

- 4.) Once the toy stops moving or after you release the toy, you will then give the “drop it” command (like “Out”). Be sure to only say the command once.
- 5.) Then bring the NEW toy out and make it more interesting than the toy the dog currently has. When done correctly, your dog will release the old toy to play with the new toy.
- 6.) After your dog is used to switching to the new toy after hearing the drop it command, transition into switching back to the SAME toy.
- 7.) So, you stop moving, say “Out”, after the dog releases the toy, use your terminal marker, then give the toy back to your dog.
- 8.) Begin to practice waiting for longer periods between giving the toy back.
- 9.) Eventually, your dog will know to just drop the toy after hearing the drop it command. For full demonstrations, see my YouTube video about this.

When your dog becomes more proficient at the drop it command, start saying “out” before step 3. This will help to teach the dog to release even while in active play. Here’s a quick breakdown:

- While you’re actively playing tug, say the “drop it” command.
- After you say the command, stop moving the toy. At first your dog will not out right away when you give the command.
- However, since you saying “out” predicts a stop or freeze to the game, your dog will learn to release the toy even if the toy is still active. This is considered an advanced “out” or “drop it” command.

Now we can start training with a toy reward. After giving your dog multiple commands, you would want to use your terminal marker and

then allow your dog to play with the toy. If you have a dog that prefers to play fetch, you can throw the ball for your dog. Once your dog comes back to you, take the ball back (using the drop it command) and go right back into more training.

If you have a dog that prefers to play tug, you can use your terminal marker and follow it with a short game. Ask your dog to drop the item and then go right back into obedience. This is a great way to make the training even more fun and engaging for your dog.

If you are like a lot of people that would like to use toys in training, but you have a dog that doesn't seem that motivated for toys, you can use a technique to try and increase your dog's toy drive. Just keep in mind that not all dogs enjoy playing with toys—even if you do increase their toy drive.

The first technique is to “clean house” if you have toys scattered all over the place. In this case it's much like free feeding a dog. Why would a dog want to work for something they get for free? Your dog must know that the only way he will be able to play with a toy is if he works for it. However, once your dog is willing to work for the toys you can start allowing them to have toys for free during the day.

The next technique to enhance toy drive is to build “frustration”. This is the process you'll want to follow:

- Attach a harness or an agitation collar to your dog. The point is just to make sure you can restrain the dog. You can also connect the leash to a pole or any other object to create a back-tie.
- Have a friend begin twirling or teasing with a toy just beyond reach of the dog. Building more distance can often create more frustration, so build distance as needed.
- Keep doing this until the dog becomes “frustrated” and barks. At this point, give verbal praise and reward the dog with the toy for barking (plus petting and attention, etc.). But make sure you or your friend holds on to the toy while the dog

plays with it. A flirt pole or ball-on-a-rope will work great for this.

- If the dog releases the toy from the grip, run back and continue the teasing until the dog barks again.
- Now it can become like a game: Try to steal the toy from the dog (if the dog lets go of it, don't rip it from the dog), and if successful, return to teasing, and once again reward if the dog barks.
- For demonstrations, see my “Teach Your Dog to Bark On Command” video at: <https://www.youtube.com/HeVWMcwbflw&t=21s>.

This helps build toy drive because much like humans, dogs want what they can't have. They also want what others want and have. This works best when you start during the imprinting stage of a dog's life. However, it can work later in the dog's life as well.

Chapter 7 – The Science of Teaching your Dog any Command

This section consists of an in-depth look at the meat-and-potatoes of a typical dog training lesson. We'll cover the step by step proven scientific process of dog training.

In regard to the science part, keep in mind that when you are training your dog the science is always the same; what varies between each dog are things like motivation, perseverance, intelligence, temperament, disposition, etc. Being able to adjust for each dog's specific needs is considered the art of dog training.

Because of this, not all techniques work on all dogs; and as a result, you have to be able to adjust accordingly. For example; a dog with a very high level of perseverance will continue to work through a difficult task to get a reward—while other dogs may give up early.

Step 1: Teaching the conditioned reinforcers (markers).

First, we want to develop our communication channels. As we've explained elsewhere in this book, these are the "markers" or "conditioned reinforcers" and are words or sounds (such as a clicker) that will let our dog know when they are right or wrong. I have a total

of six markers that I like to teach to the dogs that I work with.

This is the very first step I do with any dog that I'm training, assuming the dog doesn't have any fear or aggression issues. Some call this step "loading the markers", while others call it "engagement training". In this step you are paying (rewarding) your dog for focusing their attention on you. So, during this exercise, you are teaching your dog two things: You are teaching them the communication channels, and you are teaching them that it's a good thing to look at you. The more engagement you get from your dog, the faster they will learn.

Firstly, there are the two positive types of markers: The first one is the continuation marker (I like to use the word "yes"). This is a word or sound that lets the dog know that they are correct and will be delivered a reward. It's called a continuation marker because unlike the terminal marker, it doesn't release the dog. Meaning, if your dog is in a command stay, you can use this marker without releasing the dog from the stay.

However, if your dog is not in a command stay, then this marker just means they'll be rewarded. Therefore, this often confuses people because of the terminology "continuation". This is why it's easier to understand by what it predicts: A continuation marker *predicts a reward*. That's it. It doesn't change the circumstances, so if the dog is in a stay, they remain in the stay, and if the dog is not in a stay, then they remain free from the stay.

In contrast, we have the terminal markers (I like to use the word "free"). These release dogs from commanded positions as well as guaranteeing a reward. Ex.: If a dog was in a sitting position and you use your terminal marker, they are released from that position and will be given a reward (indicating the sit behavior is finished).

We have two versions of this marker: The first version lets the dog know that they're correct, and they will come to the trainer for the reward, which also releases them from the prior behavior. The second version of the terminal marker lets the dog know they are correct, and they may go and get their reward. Ex.: If you had a ball out on the training field and your dog was aware that the ball was there, they

would be released to get the toy.

However, you can use the same marker for both of these if you choose. Often the dog will know if you have the reward on your person or in the training field. Since I teach my dogs an implied stay, meaning if I tell a dog to sit, they are in a sit stay, I don't have to say the word "stay".

When I first start teaching the verbal command, I prefer to use the terminal marker. This gives me an opportunity to do multiple reps in a short amount of time and it relieves me of the added pressure of trying to reinforce a stay. In addition, the dogs will learn to perform the behaviors more quickly, because they will learn that the faster they perform the command, the faster they will be released and rewarded. Keep in mind that speed is based on motivation. The more motivated your dog is, the faster they will move.

We also have a non-reinforcement marker, and this is for mistakes. For example, if you tell your dog to sit, and the dog downs instead, you would use your non-reinforcement marker and then you would re-command the sit. Once the dog sits, you would then reward the dog. Giving a dog the ability to make mistakes and try again is imperative. If the dog gets corrected for making a mistake too early in training, then the dog will become cautious and is less likely to try new things, which would make it more difficult to teach new behaviors.

I also like to teach a marker that signals negative reinforcement. This is very useful when teaching the stay command or if you wanted to teach your dog to not jump on the furniture. This helps your dog to learn what they can and can't do without receiving a form of positive punishment. The type of negative reinforcement that it predicts is leash pressure. (As mentioned earlier, for the purposes of this book, we will use the word "Wrong")

The last marker is a signal for positive punishment. This sound lets the dog know they will be corrected. We use this for behaviors we would like to remove from the dog's repertoire. After we say the conditioned correction ("No"), the correction is performed through a training collar. It's important that these markers are pinpointed at the

moment of time an undesirable behavior occurs, because if the timing is off, the dog will think the correction is being made for an entirely different behavior.

This part of the training only requires that we teach our dog the continuation and terminal markers. The exercise goes as follows:

- Get your dog's attention.
- Once your dog is looking at you, you use your continuation-marker (could be your voice or a clicker).
- Deliver the reward. Note: the marker sound must come before you move to deliver the reward. If you say your marker while you're giving the dog the reward, your dog will never become conditioned to the sound.
- Wait until your dog eats the first reward and looks back at you. Use your terminal-marker, followed by moving away from your dog, encouraging your dog to come and get the second reward.

When doing this exercise, I prefer to go back and forth between the two markers. I also recommend switching your supply hand and your distribution hand. You will continue to do sessions of this exercise until your dog is conditioned to these two markers. When done correctly most dogs will become conditioned within a day or two.

We need to make sure we always keep timing in mind when we are training, and we need never to pair our physical with our verbal if we are trying to teach our dogs a verbal command. This analogy will help you remember the process: Let's say I place a blindfold on you, and I told you that I was going to swing a stick at your head, but before swinging the stick, I said "Duck!" This would give you just enough time to duck before I hit you with the stick, but imagine if I said duck and swung the stick at the same time: You would get beaten in the head with the stick every single time because it wasn't predictable. So, when you are teaching your dog a command, say the command first and then show your dog the physical cue, just like in this analogy.

Ivan Pavlov knew his dogs were conditioned to a marker because they'd salivate. The way I test a dog to see if it's conditioned is I will say the marker (the sound that predicts the reward, for example I say "Yes"), and instead of giving the reward I watch them for any changes of behavior. These are the four most common:

- Opening their mouths
- Salivating
- Licking their lips
- Moving their paws

On the other hand, if all they give you is a blank stare—you'll know they're **not** conditioned.

Now that your dog is conditioned to each marker, you may be wondering how long you have to deliver the primary reinforcer before you lose the connection. Well, you have as much time as the dog is paying attention. This could be any length of time until the dog is distracted (if a rabbit runs by and catches your dog's attention, you've lost it). This means you don't have to rush the delivery of the reward.

Next, when using a marker make sure your dog is doing a behavior that you like. Don't make the common mistake of using the marker to get your dog's attention. Meaning, your dog is not paying attention to you, so you use the marker to get your dog to look at you. Even though your dog looks at you after you say the marker, **the dog was actually being rewarded for looking away from you.**

Lastly, if you use your marker, you must pay your dog with the primary. A marker only has value because it ALWAYS predicts the primary reinforcer.

Once we teach our dog the different markers, we then move to the next step, which is to show the dog what we want them to perform.

(Note: before each training session I like to do engagement training for 15 - 30 seconds. This helps get the dog focused and in the right mindset to learn and maximize the results from each session.)

Step 2: The Physical Cue

Before we name a command, the dog must first understand, through a physical cue, what we want and expect from them. During this step, you will begin to teach your dog the desired behaviors this way, such as with luring or leash-pressure. You will continue to carry out this step until your dog is performing each position in the way that you would like them to.

Let's use "sit" as an example. If I'm using food, I will lift my hand up, and as the dog follows my hand, their butt naturally goes down into a sit. The moment the dog sits, I would use one of my markers and then I would reward the dog. Once I know that every time I lift my hand up the dog will sit, it is then time to name the command. This goes for any command we're trying to teach our dogs. Simplified: we must first get the dog to perform the behavior with a physical cue. Once we have our dog performing the action with our physical cue it is then time to name the command.

Now keep in mind, it doesn't matter what the physical cue is, as long as you know you can get your dog to do the behavior every time with that cue.

Here are a few examples:

- You want to get your dog to smile on command and you realize that blowing in your dog's face gets this behavior. Blowing in your dog's face would be the physical cue.
- Teasing your dog with a toy or knocking on the wall could get your dog to bark. This would be the physical cue you could use to teach your dog to bark on command.
- Placing a treat under a call bell could get your dog to ring the bell in an attempt to access the food. Once the dog rings the bell, you would lift up the bell and allow your dog to get the treat. This would be the physical cue to get your dog to ring the bell.

Once you get your dog to perform the behavior with the physical cue, you will mark and then reward upon completion of each behavior.

Step 3: Teach leash pressure

This is how you will teach your dog to turn off pressure by complying: Put a leash and collar on your dog and start to pull the dog in one direction, when your dog puts on the breaks, continue to pull until the dog moves with the pressure of the leash. Once he moves with the pressure, you immediately release the pressure and then reward. You will place your dog in all the obedience positions using leash pressure.

For a sit, you will apply slow, steady pressure upwards until your dog sits. For a down, you will apply slow, steady pressure downwards until your dog lays down (elbows touching the ground). For the heel, you will use leash-pressure to guide your dog into the heel position. Anytime you use leash-pressure; it is imperative to turn off the pressure once your dog makes the decision to go into the position. It's also important to keep in mind that once the pressure is turned on, it can't be turned off until the dog complies.

Pro Tip: We can make this process easier by using something the dog already knows to get them to quickly learn this concept. It will go like this:

- First, apply leash pressure.
- Next, after the pressure has been applied, you will use luring to guide your dog into the desired position. For example: if we want to use leash pressure to get the dog into the down position, we would apply pressure first—then once the dog feels the pressure, we would lure the dog into the down with a piece of food. This will help teach the dog the leash pressure—which occurs because whatever comes first is what you are teaching your dog. So, in this situation—it's the leash pressure.
- Turn the leash pressure off.
- Mark and reward.

Step 4: Putting a Command to the Behaviors

Once we have our dog performing the action with our physical cue, **it is then time to give the behavior a command.** The command can be physical or verbal. In order for your dog to learn the command, you must say or perform the command **ONCE** and then show your dog the physical cue. Don't make the mistake of repeating the command or saying something like "good sit" after the dog is already sitting, which can send mixed signals to a dog that is already sitting.

First be warned: A common mistake that people make is when they decide to link the behavior to a command, they will deliver the command while they are giving the dog the physical cue. If you pair (overshadow) your physical cue with your command as stated earlier, the physical will override the command and become the only cue for the behavior.

An example of this could be as simple as saying "Good boy" (or the marker that trainers would prefer, "yes") simultaneously to feeding the dog the reward. By mixing these two actions together, the verbal marker will not have any relevance in the dog's mind.

If we want the dog to learn the command, then it is important to make sure that the **command (verbal or physical)** precedes the physical cue by a split second. It must be predictable to the dog. So, the process becomes: command, motivate, mark, and reward, in that order.

- First say sit (command).
- Then you lift your hand with the treat (motivate).
- Once the dog's butt hits the ground, you either give the reward within the first second or you mark and then reward.
- You will continue to use the physical cues until the dog beats you to it. Meaning, if you say sit and before you lift your hand—the dog is already sitting.

This process is the same even if you want to teach a service dog to perform a specific command based on an involuntary human behavior conducted by the person with the disability. For example, you're

training a service dog to nudge his handler when his handler reaches high levels of stress, such as with a veteran suffering from PTSD. First you would need to figure out what the veteran's involuntary behavior is. For this example, we will say that the veteran looks up and starts to breathe heavily. Once we know this, then that will become the command for the behavior. The next step would be to present a physical cue that can get the dog to nudge your leg (which will be transitioned to the veteran later), let's say tapping your own leg works for this dog. Now the process would go as follows:

- First look up and breathe heavily (the command).
- Then you would tap on your leg to get the dog to nudge your leg (motivate).
- Once the dog nudges you, you either give the reward within the first second or you mark and then reward.
- You will continue to use the physical cues until the dog beats you to it. Meaning, you look up and breathe heavily and before you tap your leg—the dog is already nudging you.

Step 5: Teach the stay command using leash-pressure.

Once your dog knows all the leash-pressure cues, you can now start using it for your stays. Place your dog in a position of your choice. When your dog breaks that position, you will calmly say “wrong,” casually walk to your dog, grab the leash and use the leash-pressure to place your dog back into the position that was just broken. Once your dog is back in the desired position you will praise and pet your dog (petting is optional), but don't give your dog a treat or toy reward. The reason for this, is that some dogs will break the position on purpose, so they can get the reward when placed back into the stay position.

You must say “wrong”, or whatever word you choose, the moment (first second) your dog breaks the position, and you only say “wrong” once for each offense—even if it takes you a few minutes to get your dog back to the position that they just broke. You will continue to do this step until your dog either stops moving or goes back to the position they just broke on their own after you say “wrong.” This will

prove to you that your dog knows what is expected, and that your dog knows how to turn off pressure by complying. Once your dog shows you this behavior, you can then (if you choose) use corrections (positive punishment) for reliability.

As a side note: when teaching a stay, we do not say "stay," the stay is implied when you put your dog into a commanded position. However, some people feel more comfortable saying the word "Stay". If that's the case with you, feel free to use the word as it won't negatively impact the training.

When I place a dog into the stay command, I have three ways of releasing them from the stay.

- One: we can use our release word. For my dogs that word is "break".
- We can use our terminal marker which predicts release and reward. For my dogs that word is "free".
- Lastly, we can give the dog a new command, such as "come" or "heel".

I'm often asked how I teach my dogs the release word "Break". You can introduce the (release) word the same way you introduced the terminal marker. The only difference is that the release word doesn't always predict a reward like the terminal marker does. You can also say the release word and then follow it with verbal praise and excitement. I'll also squat down when I praise to encourage the dog to come to me. This quickly teaches a dog the release word.

We can also use leash pressure to help teach our dog what behaviors are not acceptable, as explained earlier in the manual. For example: let's say you don't want your dog to be on your bed. When your dog jumps up on the bed, you can say "wrong" or "off" and then use the leash pressure to remove the dog from the bed. This is an easy way to teach your dog boundaries without having to implement positive punishment.

Step 6: Teach reliability by adding corrections.

This will ensure reliability in your commands as well as your stay.

First, let's start with the stay command, as once your dog knows this, you can start adding corrections for reliability. When your dog breaks a position, you will say "no," but instead of using leash-pressure, you will give your dog a correction with the training-collar (even if your dog goes back into the position on their own). After you give the physical correction, you will then command your dog back into the position that was just broken. If your dog fails to do it on their own after the correction, you will assist them with the leash pressure or luring. You don't want to continue to correct a dog for the same mistake over and over again. Once the dog is back in the position, you will praise and pet as mentioned earlier.

Now, here is how to correct if your dog decides not to listen to a command: You give the dog the command. The moment they decide not to listen, which should be that first second, you mark it with a conditioned correction ("No") and then you follow it up with a correction on the training collar (like a leash pop). After you give the dog the correction, you repeat the command and help the dog achieve the position via the previous physical cue used to teach the dog the command or leash pressure. Once they are in the correct position, praise and reward the dog. Once again, don't keep correcting the dog over the same mistake—it's just one correction, then we help them out. And, as always, once the dog is in the commanded position, you will praise and pet.

Bonus: When doing a training session with a dog, I like to incorporate multiple behaviors in one session. Meaning; in one session I'm not just working on one command the entire time, but rather multiple commands. I may start by asking the dog to sit, then a down, then heel, then a down in motion, followed by the center command, etc. This makes the training more fun and engaging for the dog. As a side effect, the dog learns faster. Also, when training I would suggest filming yourself. This will help you identify and fix mistakes that you may be making.

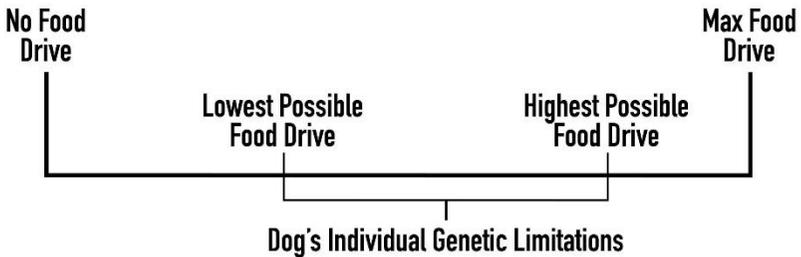
Genetic Limitations

Finally, people often underestimate how much genetics has a factor in the dog training process. I've put together these 3 charts to give you an idea of what this can look like and how much training can help in relation to the genetic factors creating certain limitations.

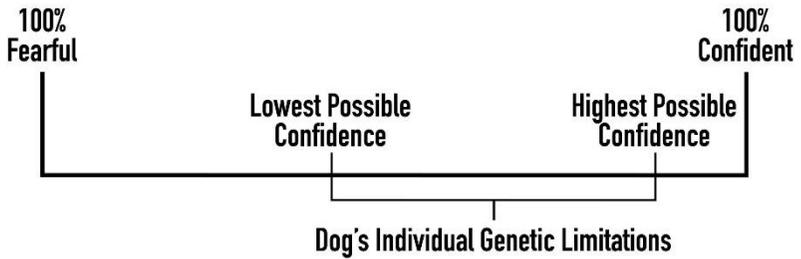
These charts are just examples. The larger scale represents max levels that can be achieved by a dog with specific genetics; while the inside scale represents that one dog's own limitations. For example, on the toy drive chart, that dog, with all the toy drive building exercises in the world, will still never go beyond his own "highest possible toy drive".

For a dog with a different genetic characteristic, the same amount of training may provide a much better result. This is a general guideline and each breed must be researched.

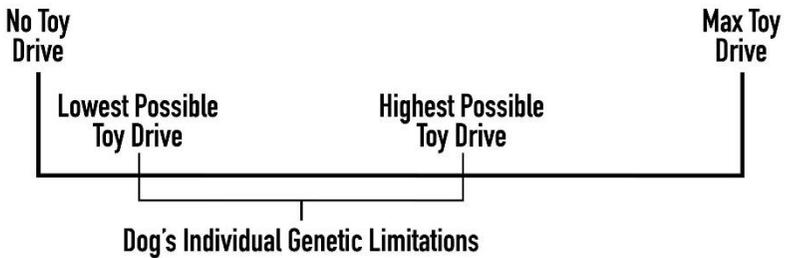
GENETIC FOOD DRIVE CHART



GENETIC CONFIDENCE CHART



GENETIC TOY DRIVE CHART



As you can see, with all 3 areas, a dog may only be able to achieve a limited toy drive, food drive, or confidence level despite all the training in the world.

Chapter 8 – Compulsive Dog Training

In this chapter we will be discussing the proper use of compulsion in dog training. Using corrections (compulsion) is not mandatory and you can get a really well-trained dog only using three out of the four quadrants of operant conditioning. However, if you want 100% reliability, then using compulsion becomes necessary. Some of the information in this chapter will be repeated from earlier, but when you're learning a new skill, it often helps the learning process to see and hear the information in a few different ways.

Corrections in dog training is when we are using positive punishment to stop an undesired behavior. First, we must keep in mind that everything our dogs do is based on motivation. The motivation to access something pleasant, or the motivation to prevent something unpleasant. If your dog is practicing a behavior that is fun (self-reinforcing behavior), then you have two options to stop this:

- One: Preventing the dog from practicing the undesired behavior.
- Two: Using a correction to stop the behavior.

A correction can be anything the dog doesn't like. So, in the end, the

motivation not to receive the correction must override the motivation to do the undesired behavior.

If you use a correction and the undesired behavior continues, then the correction is not high enough. Here's an analogy to help understand this concept: Imagine every dog has a bank account (their correction level). Some dogs are very wealthy, and some are penniless, just like people. Let's say that you are speeding down the highway and a police officer pulls you over and writes you a 25 cent-speeding ticket. The second the officer leaves, you will start speeding again because the ticket wasn't high enough to get you to change your behavior. But let's say he pulls you over and writes you a ten-million-dollar speeding ticket, now it's so high that you will avoid driving altogether, and you will be very stressed out. On the other hand, let's say he pulls you over and writes you a \$125 speeding ticket. That would be enough to get you to slow down, without causing you to avoid the behavior of driving altogether.

This is what we must do with our dogs; we need to correct them at a level that is adequate to their bank account. If the dog doesn't stop the bad behavior, then you may have to increase the correction. Just be sure to correct the dog in the act.

In addition, proper corrections should not create a fearful dog. Usually fear when correcting a dog is due to the owner being angry, yelling at the dog, or correcting too hard. When we use a correction, it's simple cause and effect. A correction should never be personal and you should never yell at your dog. Once the correction is done, then we praise and reward our dog when they're doing what we like. If your dog knows why he/she is being corrected and knows how to prevent the correction from happening, then you shouldn't create any fear.

When to correct your dog:

Below are different examples of when you may need to correct your dog, other than breaking a stay. It's also imperative to understand that you should not be correcting your dog until your dog knows the commands, knows what's expected of him, knows how to turn off pressure by complying and has a clear path to success.

- If you give your dog a command, and they choose not to perform that command, the moment they decide they aren't going to execute the command, you will say "no" and then you will correct your dog with the training-collar. After the correction, you will give the command to your dog again. If your dog still doesn't perform the behavior, you will then use leash-pressure or luring to place your dog into that position.
- You can use corrections immediately to stop undesirable behaviors that are not related to obedience commands. For example, if your dog digs, then you can correct that behavior out of your dog's repertoire, but you have to be sure to correct your dog when they are digging, not hours after the hole has been dug.

Remember, it's important that we set up our dogs up for success through staging different scenarios, so we can reward them the second they do it right. We also set them up for failure, so we can correct them the moment they do something wrong. Once you correct a dog for any bad behavior, you must immediately reward them when they are no longer doing that behavior. So, if your dog was digging and you corrected your dog, the second your dog stops digging, you would praise them for making the right choice.

We must make sure we always give our dogs the right answer. Here's another example: let's say your dog jumps on people, as many dogs do. You would say "no" the moment your dog jumps up, and you would correct them (with a collar that is attached to a leash.) The second all four paws are back on the ground, you would immediately praise and reward your dog. This way your dog will learn that if he wants to be petted, then he must sit nicely. This is the same process

we discussed earlier—the main difference is that the leash pressure has become a leash pop correction.

Just be sure that the correction is high enough to stop the behavior. If the correction is too low, the dog may learn to jump up, get punished slightly and then get more rewards. They may offer up the bad behavior in order to get the rewards after being corrected.

Below is a list of other behaviors that you can remove by using this concept:

- Play biting
- Biting the leash (or you can simply pop the leash out of the dog's mouth)
- Jumping on furniture.
- Jumping up on doors.
- Barking at people outside, such as the mail carrier.
- Barking at the doorbell.
- Barking in the crate.
- Barking for attention.
- Relieving themselves in the house.
- Chewing furniture.
- Eating feces.
- Chasing, such as chasing the house cat.
- Marking their territory.
- Barking at dogs or people while on a walk.
- Getting into the trash.

What to do if your dog keeps running away from you:

This is a common problem that a lot of people end up having, and it's not difficult to fix. First, you want to teach the behavior using the dog training science outlined in the last chapter. Once your dog knows the command, you can start working on building the habit of always coming to you when called by practicing the training every day.

But, let's say your dog is in your backyard or a park and doesn't have

a training-collar on. Your dog knows there is no collar on him, and he decides to run away from you instead of coming to you. Most people will instinctively chase their dogs; but this only makes it worse as your dog will likely think you are playing a game. Instead of chasing your dog, you should playfully run away from your dog. This will usually turn the game around, and it will have your dog chasing you instead. Once your dog gets to you, don't end the game by quickly grabbing them up, but instead continue the game by pushing them away from you in a playful manner. When you do decide to end the game, make sure you reward your dog, as this will encourage your dog to come to you, because it predicts play, instead of avoiding you to prevent a correction.

Another technique would be to set up a situation where you know your dog will choose not to come to you. Make sure you have a 20 - 30 ft long line attached to your dog, and then start giving your dog random “come when called” commands, reinforcing the command with the leash. Once the dog completes the task, release and reward them back to play.

Continue to do this training exercise until the dog comes without the help of the leash pressure. I would also recommend practicing this in multiple different environments to help get the dog to become generalized to the training. A dog that is generalized will understand that they need to perform the command in any environment regardless of the distractions.

Also, be sure to practice praising and rewarding your dog after you grab their collar. Most dogs will make a U-turn when knowing a human will reach for the collar because it usually means the end of the play.

When not to correct your dog:

If your dog is afraid of something, don't use a correction to help him get over his fear, as this will only make the fear worse. For example; if your dog is afraid of fireworks and you have your dog in a down-stay, and someone starts shooting off fireworks, if your dog breaks the down-stay to get away from the fireworks—you would not want to

correct them back into the down-stay. Instead, you would let the dog break the down-stay without any consequences, because in his mind, he's not breaking the down; rather he's escaping the fireworks.

The next point: you should not correct your dog for showing signs of food aggression or toy aggression. Correcting a dog for food or toy aggression can on occasion make the aggression worse. If your dog is being aggressive in this instance, it's usually because your dog doesn't trust you and believes you will take away the food or toys and will not give them back. If you are running into this, then I would first suggest trying value transfer (see the terminology list in the introduction.)

When using the value transfer technique, you have to make sure your dog is not being aggressive when you show him the other item; this is vital to keep in mind, because if you offered the other reward when he was aggressive, then you would be reinforcing the aggression, which you obviously don't want.

A potentially more practical solution for food aggression is to feed your dog in their crate. The basic strategy is never to take food away after you have given it to your dog, and crate-feeding solves this problem. This way they will never have a fear of you stealing their food. Another option is to start feeding every meal from your hand and make your dog work for it.

If the aggression seems to be getting worse, then I would suggest scheduling a private lesson with a professional dog trainer.

Furthermore: you should not correct your dog for doing what most people call begging. This is something that will often confuse dogs and can greatly slow down the training process.

The reason for this is because in the dog's mind they are not begging, but instead, they are offering up a behavior that has proven to deliver rewards in the past. Think about it: we get food and then we ask our dog to sit and look at us during training. So, the dog sees us with food and acts out the behavior they have been taught. Then the human corrects the dog for begging and it instantly creates confusion.

Instead, I would recommend asking the dog to do a behavior you would prefer in that situation. For example, when I'm eating, I tell my dogs to go to their climb command. This way we clearly show them what we want by not creating any confusion.

Safely using a prong collar.

First, we have to make sure that the prong collar is properly fitted to our dogs. The prong collar will come with multiple links that can be removed or added to get the proper fit. The collar should rest comfortably on your dog's neck directly underneath the dog's ears and jawline, and not so loose that it hangs like a necklace.

As mentioned earlier, each dog has their own correction level. Some dogs only require a very low correction while others may need a higher correction. When I start adding corrections in a dog's training routine, I first start with the martingale collar. If I correct the dog with a leash pop on the martingale collar and the dog continues the undesired behavior, then we have to move up to a prong collar. The reason for this is that you can only pop the leash so hard before you would start physically harming the dog. Since we don't want to harm our dogs, we must move to a collar that is designed to give a higher correction.

The process for teaching the prong collar is the same as it is with the martingale collar. The main difference is that it can deliver a higher correction without causing harm.

Start by teaching your dog leash pressure with the prong collar, but make sure you first teach them leash pressure with a flat or martingale collar. Even though your dog already knows leash pressure, you would still want to go through the full leash pressure training process.

It's important that your dog knows how to stop the pressure from the collar at any given time. However, unlike using a martingale collar for leash pressure, the prong collar can turn the training into a combination of negative reinforcement and positive punishment. The pressure from the collar combined with the prong's pinching can create this effect.

Now we can use the prong collar with the leash pop style correction as mentioned earlier.

Safely using a remote-training collar.

In the event, that you are required to use one or you want off-leash reliability, it's important to understand how they work so that they can be used safely, in which case read onward:

Most remote collars have a few options. Let's go over them:

- 1) Stim - The stimulation that comes from the collar. This is a muscle stimulator, so it can safely be used in water as well.
- 2) Test or Vibrate - This can be a tone or a vibration of the collar. Some trainers will use this before they correct the dog, treating this as a conditioned correction. I've used the vibration when working with deaf dogs as a marker. I've also used it as a recall command.
- 3) Nic - This is a split-second stimulation from the collar
- 4) Continuous - If you press this button down, it will continue to stimulate the collar up to 15 seconds or so, depending on the brand.
- 5) Light - Some remote collars offer a light setting for the collar. When you press this button it will turn on the collar's LED light

Recommended brands:

My two preferred brands are Dogtra and E-collar technology.

Recommended age;

The earliest I would start a dog on remote collar training for obedience would be 5 months of age, but I prefer to start such training when they are between 7-9 months. You can use it at a younger age to stop behavioral issues, though.

Using a remote training collar for obedience:

This is going to be different than when we use a remote collar for behavioral issues. When using one for obedience, first you must make sure your dog knows what's expected of them, they have been given a clear path to success, you have taught them how to turn off pressure by complying and they know how to prevent the correction. If you have done this, then you can start the process.

Before ever correcting your dog with the collar, you want to get them used to wearing it. For the first week, you want to put the remote collar on your dog randomly throughout the day. You have to make sure the collar is snug with both connectors touching the dog. This gets them used to the new collar without creating any negative association to the collar.

From my experience, if using Dogtra, between a 5 and 25 stimulation level works for most dogs. I prefer to start at the lower end and increase as needed. If I correct a dog at 15 and I don't see a change of behavior, I then move the collar to 25. If I correct a dog at 15 and they react with discomfort, then I move down to 10. A simple rule to follow is to go up increments of 10 when the correction is not high enough for the dog you're training, and down increments of 5 when the correction is too high. However, each dog is going to be different, so adjust according to your dog. For example, you may find better results in increasing increments of 6 and decreasing increments of 3.

First, it is important to make sure that your dog is directional to the remote training-collar before you use it without the leash. So, for the first two weeks minimum, you're going to pair the leash pop with the stimulation from the collar. Meaning, the moment the leash pops, you will press the button on the collar to give your dog the correction. This will help show the dog that you are giving the correction, and the collar is not just some random bug biting them on the neck. When starting the process, have the leash attached to a flat or martingale collar. Follow the procedures that were explained earlier when adding corrections for obedience.

For example; you ask your dog to down and your dog chooses not to

go into the commanded position. The moment you notice this, you will say “no”, then you will pop the leash. The moment the leash pops, you will press the button on the remote collar. Also, make sure the leash pop is very light. The intention is to give the dog direction, not to also correct with the pop on the leash. In addition, if you pop too hard, the dog may not feel the stimulation from the remote collar.

After two weeks of pairing the remote correction with the leash pop, you will test to see if the dog has become directional to the collar, which means your dog understands that it's a correction. You will place your dog on the climb command (without a leash), and you will wait till your dog breaks the command. The second your dog jumps off the climb; you will say "no," followed by a correction with the remote collar.

Your dog will then do one of **four** things: either your dog will freeze in place, go back on the climb, signifying that he is directional, or he will come running to you or away from you, showing he is not directional. If he comes running to or away from you, you will not continue to correct. However, you will place the leash back on your dog and continue pairing the collar with the leash for another week, at which point you will again attempt to see if your dog is directional.

Keep in mind that the correction level will change depending on the environment. If you're in an environment with a lot of distraction, the correction level will most likely have to increase. In contrast, in a neutral environment, the correction level may be decreased.

Once your dog is directional, you have then reached the status of off-leash trained.

Things to keep in mind when using a remote collar:

- Do not keep a remote collar on your dog for longer than 8 hours max. Ideally, you don't want to go beyond 4 hours.
- Do not leave a remote collar on your dog when you are not supervising them.
- Always check your dog's neck when you remove the collar to ensure your dog doesn't have an allergic reaction to the collar.

- Make sure the collar is on and charged before placing it on your dog.
- Unless you have advanced training on the remote collar, do not use the continuation button.
- Be mindful of the collar's settings. Do not accidentally correct your dog at a level higher than what is required.

When you should and should not correct your dog with the remote collar.

There are times when you can correct your dog with the remote collar even when your dog isn't directional yet, and for behaviors unrelated to obedience training. You can use it to stop unwanted behaviors like digging, getting into the trash or any of the other unruly behaviors mentioned previously. The second your dog starts to dig or puts his nose into the garbage, you can activate the collar. This creates an unpleasant association to the problematic behavior.

However, the important thing to remember is to never correct your dog with the remote collar if your dog is actively engaged with a dog or people. You do not want your dog to think that it's the other person or the other dog that is causing the correction with the collar. If you do, there is a possibility that the dog will develop aggression, so be mindful of that.

In addition, as explained before, the remote collar is also used for creating reliability with all of the obedience commands, so long as the dog is directional to the collar at that point.

Lastly, and this should go without saying, **never use the remote collar on your dog in an attempt to stop a fearful behavior.** As mentioned before, this would only make the fear worse.

Chapter 9 – Fear and Aggression

In this chapter we're going to take a deeper look at fear and aggression in dogs.

Sometimes fear and aggression are taught behaviors, but in many cases it can be caused by genetics. People often underestimate how much genetics have an effect in the dog's training and abilities (see charts in chapter 7). This chapter was written to give you an idea of what you might be dealing with. I've tried my best to make this section as black and white as possible; however, there are many gray areas when it comes to working with a dog that is aggressive.

If you feel you have a dog that is showing signs of aggression, I highly recommend that you hire a professional to help you with the issue

Communication vs. Aggression

Before moving forward, there's an important point to understand: On more than one occasion I've had clients tell me that their dog is aggressive. When they show me the "aggressive" behavior, It's clear to me that it's not aggression; but rather *communication*.

Since dogs are unable to communicate at the same level we can, we have to be able to read their body language as well as their vocal communication—as they may be signaling possible aggressive

behavior before it happens. Many owners don't realize this, and I've been told by people that have been bitten by a dog that the dog gave zero warning. However, this isn't usually true. In fact, dogs telegraph most of their behaviors, which is why it's important to become familiar with the signals your dog may demonstrate before biting or acting aggressively. Let's quickly go over some of these warning signs:

Sudden lip licking, yawning, tail between the legs, ears going backward, looking away—staring intently at the bite target, with the dog's hackles going up. These are all signs that may be telling the human to stop doing whatever they are currently doing.

If those don't work the dog may escalate to growling, showing its teeth, or walking away. If walking away doesn't work, then once again the dog may escalate to actual aggression. The dog may even give a warning bite. These behaviors are known as the escalation of aggression.

Keep in mind that these behaviors don't always mean the dog is going to bite. A dog that has been taught proper bite inhibition may also bite at the human in an attempt to get the human to go away or to back off, without causing any injury. You have to keep in mind the context of the situation. Just like a person who is cold may cross their arms, it doesn't always mean they are closed off or angry.

Often people will also confuse play with aggression. In many cases, dogs while playing will growl or even mouth the person they are playing with. This doesn't mean the dog is aggressive. This type of play can also be important for a young dog's development as it helps teach bite inhibition. You can stop this by redirecting the dog to a different behavior such as the climb command or teaching them a stop command. I do this by implementing the leash pressure technique that we discussed earlier in the manual.

Dogs will also correct other dogs. This is often seen when an older dog corrects a young puppy. The dog may growl at the puppy or even snap or do a quick bite at the puppy. The dog's intention is not to hurt the pup, but rather to teach the pup a lesson, such as respecting the

other dog's boundaries. This is much different from a dog that is attacking another dog to cause harm. An aggressive dog that is attacking another dog will bite, hold on, and shake to cause damage.

Let's discuss the 4 main types of aggression towards humans that you may experience when working with a dog.

- 1.) **Dogs that Bluff:** Dogs that will act aggressive in order to get a specific desired behavior from the human: I like to call these dogs fakers or dogs using fake aggression. They're just trying to manipulate a human to get a reward, but may not actually have hostile feelings.
- 2.) **Fear-Based Aggression:** The next and most common type of aggression. This behavior is due to a trauma, genetics, lack of exposure, or a conflict in the dog's personality, they are acting in a defensive and hostile way to people or other animals.
- 3.) **Aggression from Confusion:** This develops when a dog doesn't know what's expected of them. They don't know how to avoid, prevent, or stop a correction, and they haven't been given a clear path to success, which results in confusion. This is the most preventable type of aggression as it's only caused by mistakes made by the human. This is also why it's very important to always be consistent with your dog's training.
- 4.) **Dominant / Domination Aggression:** This is the less common form of aggression. Since 2012 when I started training dogs professionally, I've only come across two dogs that were dominant aggressive. These dogs may bite regardless of being provoked or not.

Dogs that Bluff:

First, let's discuss our fakers. It's imperative to be aware that a puppy or dog may be using aggressive behaviors as a way to get the desired outcome (by manipulating the owners). It's important to stop these behaviors before it develops into real aggression.

Fake aggression behaviors originate from owners teaching or reinforcing aggressive behavior without realizing it. An example could be: your puppy is on your couch, you try to get the puppy off the sofa, the puppy growls, and so you leave the puppy there. What happens next is that the puppy grows up, and this behavior has become hardwired into adulthood. While it may have felt innocent or even cute when the dog was small and fluffy, the adult version of the puppy growling from the couch is now threatening and scary. These behaviors may start as a fake or bluff, but if not stopped early, the bites could become real.

What should be done in such a situation is to act like you are not even acknowledging the growl, and then simply get the puppy off the couch. This way the puppy learns that growling doesn't work. Keep in mind that most puppies who are growling are trying to get a result from the owner—fear aggression is possible, and dominant aggression is very rare.

Below is a list of some of the common ways a puppy may appear to be aggressive. Most of these will go away if it doesn't have a positive effect for the puppy:

- Biting at your hand when trying to take a toy.
- Biting or growling when taking away food.
- Biting at your hand when putting on a collar or leash.
- Aggressively rushing at house guests who enter.
- Acting aggressive inside the crate.
- Growling, barking or snapping if given a command.
- Aggression toward other dogs.

This becomes more of an issue if it's an adult dog that has been practicing this behavior for a while. To make matters worse, if something has been working for a dog for a long time and one day it doesn't work, the dog may amp up the behavior to get what they want, because in their mind that behavior still works but suddenly requires extra effort. Therefore, it can get worse before it gets better (this is known as an extinction burst - The behavior becomes more intense before it drops off).

If I'm working with an adult dog that is displaying this behavior when I ask them to do something, I make sure to always follow through to guarantee they perform the action. However, I'm also very careful not to get bit, in case the dog decides to escalate the aggression to an actual bite.

For example: Let's once again reference a dog that refuses to come off the couch. I would set this situation up so I could best control it. Meaning; I would make sure the dog has a leash and collar on, I would give the dog a chance to jump up on the couch—whereupon I would say “wrong” or “off”, then I would use the leash pressure to pull the dog back off the couch.

In this situation, some dogs may growl, but will be fine once you follow through and pull the dog off the couch. I've had other dogs lunge at me, whereupon I use the leash to prevent the dog from biting me by lifting up on the leash restricting the dog's forward movement. As mentioned before, never make anything personal by yelling or getting angry at the dog. I always keep in mind simple cause and effect. Once the dog realizes that this bluffing doesn't work on you, then the behavior goes away. Just keep in mind that the longer a dog has been practicing this, the harder it will be to break the dog of the behavior.

Dogs That Resource Guard

Dogs and puppies may use fake (bluffing) aggression to guard their resources such as food and toys. When in a situation like this, I may have to use the “Superman” method to get the dog to relinquish the resource and learn being aggressive is not an option. However, keep in mind that constantly harassing a dog while they are eating can cause the aggression.

- You should have protective gear on, including long gloves to withstand dog biting. This is especially important if working with an adult dog (if the dog is still a puppy, it's probably not so important).
- Put your hand over the resource. The dog may go to bite you. Don't correct the dog when this happens, as this could make it

worse.

- Keep your hand over the toy or food, and let the dog bite and bite.
- Once the dog stops biting, reward with praise (“Good boy!”) remove the hand and pet the dog.
- Repeat this process. We are showing the dog / puppy that just because your hand is coming, it doesn’t mean you’re going to take their resource away. It also teaches the dog that biting won’t help.
- When doing this with an older dog, they may amp the behavior up (extinction burst), which means growling is more likely to turn into actual biting.
- With older dogs, it may be better to teach the “drop it” command (see earlier in the book) via obedience training, and if they don’t drop it reinforce it with a correction as opposed to using the “Superman” method. This technique is better suited for puppies who can’t really hurt you. In addition, if one bite location is not working for the dog, they may try to bite a new location on the human—beware of this behavior when dealing with all forms of aggression.

Resource Guarding A Territory

If a dog is resource guarding something like a couch, usually the best option is to use obedience training with the leash (see prior chapter). If they act aggressive, just use the leash and pull them off the couch to show the dog it doesn’t work to do that. You’ll want to set the dog up ahead of time with the collar and leash, within their protected territory, and be prepared to use the leash-pressure if the dog begins guarding the territory. Make sure there is distance between yourself and the dog and in the event of large, aggressive dogs—protective gear is needed.

Resource Guarding a Human

Sometimes the owner of the dog is the resource that a dog is aggressively guarding. If you find this to be antisocial behavior that you want your dog to stop, it can often be corrected if the owner implements positive punishment to tell the dog it’s not OK to do this.

The important point, however, is that the owner themselves must implement this, whereupon the dog will listen. Someone who's not the resource being guarded may create more aggression if they try correcting the dog while the dog is resource guarding their owner. From my experience, it's better when the owner corrects the dog for this behavior.

However, you may also use negative punishment to stop this behavior. This works when you are dealing with a "chicken with a bodyguard"—which means a dog that is acting aggressive and confident because it's being held by the owner or is next to the owner. Once the owner walks away, the aggression stops.

Here's how you can set a situation up to deal with this scenario: Have the dog on a back-tie next to the owner, when you approach the dog—if it starts acting aggressive—have the owner walk away from the dog. This will teach the dog that the unwanted behavior will remove the dog's bodyguard. After implementing this enough times, through controlled training sessions, different locations, and different people approaching to generalize the dog, the behavior may go away.

Fear based aggression:

As mentioned earlier, this is one of the most common types of aggression and can often be fixed with confidence building, counterconditioning and desensitization, which we'll discuss in greater detail in the following chapter. It's also important to always give this type of a dog an escape. If they feel they can't escape a situation, then they may bite. In the dog's mind, they are not biting to hurt the human, but rather protecting themselves.

When working with dogs that display this type of aggression, I like to follow a step-by-step process. Please note, before we begin, that this process is for my client's dogs that I'm training, but not my personal dogs. With your own dog you can skip the first four steps of building trust and comfort.

Step-By-Step for Working with a Fearful Dog

- 1.) First, we need to build trust. And the first step is I'll just sit next to the crate while the dog's in the crate. I may give them some food and just "hang out." What I'll be very careful of is not rewarding the dog if the dog is growling or acting aggressive. So, if the dog starts growling, it gets no reward. I may do this for up to an hour depending on the dog's behavior.
- 2.) The next step is I open the crate, let the dog out and just ignore him. I act as though the dog is not even in the room with me. Meaning: I don't let the dog see me look at them and I don't talk to the dog. Usually, I'll watch the dog through the camera on my phone, so it looks like I'm looking at my phone and not the dog. Eventually, the dog will come up and investigate me by smelling my legs.
- 3.) Once the dog starts showing interest in me, I start to slowly walk around the room dropping treats on the ground for the dog to pick up. If they get even more comfortable doing this, and I'm not seeing any outward signs of aggression, I may stand with the food in my hand—facing away. I'll let the dog come and take food from my hand without facing me.
- 4.) As the dog gets more comfortable with that, I may start to become more frontal, allowing the dog to take food from me directly.
- 5.) Then, if I feel the dog is becoming more comfortable with me while taking food from my hand, I'll try to pet them to see a reaction. What you don't want to do is pet the dog with your hand going straight toward the dog's head. This type of movement can trigger aggression. Instead, you want to move nice and slowly.
- 6.) To teach a dog to be comfortable with hands coming forward, put food in one hand and keep your other hand free—and bring both hands toward the dog at the same time. Feed and pet at same time. I may pet their chest first as this part of the body is

less likely to trigger aggression. This is really about building trust.

- 7.) Once they trust me and are comfortable via the above methods, I'll begin the normal training process—using nice slow movements the whole time.

During the subsequent training processes, you'll want to use counter conditioning to desensitize them toward what they may be fearful of. This process basically depends on identifying the causes of a dog's particular fears, and using high value rewards to change the feelings toward those situations. For more information, see: counter conditioning in the glossary.

This process is likely to be different for every individual dog, and is where the skill of dog training really comes into play.

Getting a Fearful Dog out of the Crate:

Fearful dogs will often prefer to stay in the crate than they will be to train. If that's the case, follow the process below.

- I will try to introduce the fearful dog to leash pressure before attempting to get them in and out of a crate, being careful the whole time and using slow and gentle movements.
- The first issue that may arise is a dog will go into the crate, but is too afraid to get out. For this reason, let them go into a crate but keep the leash on them, then you can use the leash to guide them out. Alternatively, just wait. A dog will always come out eventually.
- It's also recommended to cue the dog with the leash while keeping your back to the dog, sending the dog to go around behind you. Showing your back is less of a threat to a lot of dogs.
- Once the dog comes out, allow them to go back into the crate. Having them go in and out of the crate will get the dog more comfortable with this behavior. Also remember that

dogs learn through predictability. If the dog learns that you are going to train the moment the dog comes out, you may find more resistance next time if the dog doesn't want to train.

Forward Fear Aggression Problems

This is a more dangerous dog situation, but a little more workable than the dominant aggressive dog I'll talk about next. I dealt with a dog like this fairly recently, in 2020. A client came to me to help with aggression issues, and I discovered their pup was a fearful forward-aggressive dog. What this means is the dog was extremely pro-active in “neutralizing threats” with its aggression. However, unlike dominant aggression, this was still based in fear. So, while most dogs growl or act aggressive only in a defensive way and they avoid the thing they're afraid of, this dog decided to “take matters into her own hands” and attack the thing she was afraid of.

When working with this dog, I had my back to her in a non-threatening way, and she still ran behind me and bit me. Although once I turned around and grabbed her by the collar, she stopped. As you can imagine, this is a pretty extreme (and dangerous) situation for a trainer to come across, and like a dominant aggressive dog—protective gear is a wise idea.

To train such a dog, it's basically a rehash of what we just discussed for a normal fear-based dog, but everything is going to go much slower, much more methodically, and generally being much more careful (or leaving it to a skilled professional trainer).

Confusion Based Aggression Problems

These situations are the result of poor training, and can occur without an owner realizing they've created a dog with aggression issues.

One example is a dog featured by Inside Edition as “Frankie the Demon Dog.” As it turns out, Frankie wasn't a devil dog, at all—but had no idea what to do, what not to do, etc, creating erratic behavior.

One way a dog becomes this way is if the timing of obedience training is off by even a second. In this situation, Frankie's owner was performing poorly timed corrections, such as saying "No!" too late—after Frankie was calm and lying on a couch. In Frankie's mind, lying on the couch and being calm was the behavior that was wrong—and Frankie out of frustration and confusion answered with aggression.

These situations are resolved by instituting proper obedience training, and it may take time to work out the bad habits that were created from the previous poor training.

Of course, in this situation we have to make sure we identify the type of aggression issue, to ensure it's confusion-based and not a more dangerous situation with a different type of aggression. The best way is to see how the owner performs their dog training techniques, and if they're the ones creating the confusion / aggression.

Dominant Aggression Problems

As I mentioned previously, these situations are rare, and I've only encountered two dominant aggressive dogs among countless dogs I've worked with since 2012. These are dogs using their aggressive behavior as a way to dominate and control a situation. Dominance to a dog also means having priority access to valuable or limited resources.

The way to deal with these situations is you need protective gear on to block any damage from bites. Then, the goal is to simply show the dog that the aggression is not going to work. This means not showing fear or even any response at all to the bites. You're taking the power away from the dog.

You also want to do your best to prevent the dog from trying to bite you in the first place.

One of these two dogs was a dominant aggressive husky puppy (7-8 months). When I set something on the ground for the dog, the dog

would rush toward me and immediately try to bite / attack me. To the dog I was taking something that he considered to be a valuable resource. You can see how that can turn into an issue.

So, what I did was I set up many different situations where the dog may ordinarily try to bite the human, but there was a boundary in place. In this case, I set up an object on the ground, put the husky on a climb bed with a leash, and secretly back-tied the leash. When I went to go pick up something on the ground—which was an aggression trigger—the dog ran at me, but was auto corrected by the leash—blocking his attempt to bite me. Afterward, the main goal was to repeat this many, many times until the dog began to realize “I’m not going to be able to bite people anymore to get what I want” and the behavior started to go away.

While wearing protective gear, if the dog is biting you, you can ignore the bite or “pull them into” the bite until the dog feels very uncomfortable, as the only type of “corrective” measure I’d probably use in a situation like this. You’re basically pulling their mouth and jaws into your protective gear until they realize “biting really sucks and I don’t want to do this anymore” because it’s so uncomfortable. Again, be careful that the dog doesn’t transfer the bite to a new location.

To recap:

- These can be dangerous situations.
- They do try to bite, they want to bite, and may even get satisfaction from it. Beware.
- You must prevent them from biting in the first place.
- But DON’T correct them WHILE biting, this can turn into a fight.
- So, you must have protective gear on regardless.
- If you don’t have such protective gear available, this is a good time to hire a professional dog trainer. Even if you do have such gear, hiring a professional is still the recommended course of action.

Dealing with Dog on Dog Aggression

Just like we see different forms of aggression towards humans, the same is true with aggression towards other dogs. You will see fear aggression, dominant aggression, aggression to get a specific result, etc.

Generally, a dog could become aggressive to other dogs because of experiences when it was a puppy, lack of socialization, and other problems during the dog's upbringing. In numerous situations, a dog can learn that other dogs are a threat, including being attacked. Another factor may be the dog's DNA and a built-in tendency to be less friendly to other dogs.

In either situation, obedience can either stop or mask the issues—so even if a dog has a compulsion to attack another dog, they'll weigh that impulse against the thought of a reward or correction, and are less likely to be aggressive anymore.

When restricting a dog from attacking another dog, such as on a leash, it's possible that the dog redirects the aggression to the human. Over arousal aggression (too much stimuli) can become a redirected aggression.

Dominant Aggressive to Other Dogs

As with dominant aggressive behaviors to humans, this is also an extreme situation, and as such I'd never bring a dominant aggressive dog among other dogs to work the problem out. It's not fair putting a normal dog in the vicinity of a dog that wants to attack them simply out of dominant / bully behaviors.

Another way to go about this: Keep the dog muzzled, on a leash, and then expose the dog to many other dogs in the area, like outside of a dog park. As we mentioned earlier in the book, you can keep the dog on the periphery of the park, like along the fence and out of actual contact with other dogs. Over time, and it may take a long time, the dog may learn to stop trying to intimidate other dogs. These are the concepts of desensitization and a bit of counter conditioning at work.

If you do encounter another dog in the vicinity of the dominant aggressive dog, make sure you have full control. If the dog escapes your leash, and especially if the dog isn't muzzled, in a few seconds another owner's dog could be dead.

Dogs Fearful of Other Dogs

Dogs may become fearful of other dogs due to trauma, genetics, lack of exposure, etc. Issues may have arisen when they were a puppy, with incidences involving other dogs, or if the puppy was raised with a very fearful mom. The reason fear stems from the mother is because dogs will often replicate the behaviors they see displayed by their mother. This behavior is identified when the dog cowers and whimpers when other dogs are around, or when another dog intrudes too closely, that dog may get defensive, growl, bark, or snap. Usually, they don't want to hurt the other dog—they just want the other dog to get away. Their message is: "I'm afraid of you, I don't want to play, please go away."

These types of dogs can be fixed if you bring them around very friendly, nice dogs. I've worked this situation out many times by introducing them to friendly dogs in play situations. At first, they will cower and whimper. But over time, the dog starts to realize the other dogs are not a threat. As they discover this, and are given positive experiences, that will often stop the fear.

This type of aggressive behavior can be identified by their signs of actual fear and cowering. So, make sure you properly identify the type of fear your dog has first and foremost—because as I mentioned with dominant aggressive dogs, you do not want such a truly aggressive dog around other dogs in a play environment, or the results could be disastrous.

Aggression to get a specific result:

Often dogs will also act aggressively to get something from another dog. Most people, when experiencing this, will call the dog the "Alpha". The reason is that this dog will often take what they want from the more submissive dog. For example: one dog has a toy and the "alpha" takes that toy from the other dog. They'll also take food

away from the more submissive dog. The easiest way to deal with this is to keep the toys and food limited to just one dog at a time. You may also want to feed the dogs in separate rooms or their crates.

This usually won't turn into a dog fight, because the more submissive dog will yield to the more dominant dog. If I want to stop something like this, then I prefer to prevent the dog from stealing or being a bully to the other dog. By preventing the dog from practicing a behavior, just like anything else, it will often go away.

However, the best course of action is to simply not leave out anything the dominant dog sees as valuable. You can try to teach the dog that it's not an okay behavior by implementing obedience, but I would prefer not to put any other dogs in a potentially dangerous situation. Follow the three simple steps below.

- 1.) Put away all toys that the dogs may fight over and only allow them to play with the toys when they are not around any other dogs.
- 2.) During feeding time, feed the dogs in separate crates or rooms.
- 3.) Teach both dogs their own separate "climb" commands, such as on their own beds, and don't allow them to ever go on the other dog's bed, ever. This way when the submissive dog feels threatened, he or she can go to their "safe" place.

Dealing with a dog fight:

Unfortunately, if you own a dog, there is a possibility that your dog may end up in a dog fight. The important thing is knowing what to do if the situation arises.

What most people do in a panic is they try to pull the dogs apart by the scruff around their necks or they try hitting them, hoping that will get them to stop fighting. Grabbing them by the neck is not only dangerous for the human, but if you try to pull them apart that way, you can end up causing more damage to both the dogs. If you try to hit the dogs, hoping that will stop the fight, it may just add fuel to the fire and increase the struggle, since they'll

think it's the other dog causing the additional pain.

Instead, trainers in particular rely on a few solid methods to break up a fight, which I'll talk about next.

- 1.) Lower Back Technique: The first course of action I'd consider. Try and stay calm and target the dog that is being the aggressor, then grab the scruff on the dog's lower back by the base of the tail. You will then lift the dog up, by that scruff until the dog lets go of the other dog.

If the dog doesn't let go of the other dog, then just twist the dog's scruff to make the dog let go. Be cautious, though, because it is possible that some dogs may redirect the aggression on the human.

This isn't a perfect solution and anytime dogs get into a fight, there is the possibility of the dogs being injured or the person being bitten. However, if you do it the way I just described, you will have a much higher chance of stopping the fight and coming out of it without an injury to the dogs or yourself.

- 2.) Hind Leg Technique: This is another method trainers and people working in shelters use. Target the aggressive dog, then target their hind legs, lift the dog up, then back it away while turning, so the dogs are no longer facing each other. If you do this technique, be careful not to damage the dog's hind legs.
- 3.) The Choke Out Technique: Another technique professionals use where they target the aggressor dog, target their collar, and lift up to attempt to choke the dog out of the bite. If this technique is not working, and if the dog's jaws are around the victim dog, the trainer may twist the collar to increase the pressure until the victim dog is released.

For each of these techniques it helps if a second person is holding the other dog that's being attacked—which is to prevent the victim dog from feeling like the humans are in the room to gang up on the aggressive dog, whereupon the dog that was attacked may try to

attack the attacker.

Spraying the two dogs with a water hose to stop the fight or blowing a loud air horn is also used. In fact, the water hose is one of the safest ways to stop a dog fight. However, since you don't always have a water hose on you or an air horn, it's good to know what to do when those tools are not present.

Another common technique is using a pipe to separate the two dogs. This is not a technique I would recommend.

As you may have gathered, you want to use the technique most suited for the situation and the intensity of the fight. A less intense fight can be stopped with a spray bottle, while others may need more extreme measures. However, dealing with any dog fight poses the possibility of being bitten. With the first technique, often the dog will turn around to bite you—then notice you're a human, not another dog, and either not bite or bite very lightly. That said, it's impossible to predict what may happen, however by remaining calm, and if possible having a second person help you—we can reduce the risks as much as possible.

Chapter 10 – Confidence Building, Counterconditioning and Desensitization

Confidence in a dog is a lot like confidence in a human. Almost universally it's a positive characteristic. As an example, would you want a confident employee or one who's unsure? A confident doctor or a frightened doctor? How would you feel if your friends constantly had anxiety when they're around you?

As a trainer, sometimes owners tell me of their issues with dogs that lack confidence. An example might be a dog who's shaky, scared to try new things, fearful of ordinary situations, or prefers to ignore his owner instead of doing something uncomfortable.

The solution they may say is, "I want my dog to become submissive to me, so it stops acting anxious and does what I tell it."

However, contrary to popular belief, we do not want a submissive dog. In a dog's mind, submission means: "Look how small I am, please don't hurt me." In fact, this is NOT confidence.

The dog may push itself to do certain behaviors if it's truly become submissive, but it's out of fear. At the end of the day, you have a fearful

dog, not a confident one. Who would want that?

By contrast, a confident dog is much easier to teach new behaviors to. A dog that is willing to try new things is much easier to train than a dog with fearful characteristics. This means far fewer problems with your dog down the road compared to having a submissive / fearful pup.

Often younger and adolescent dogs will go through a period of fearful behavior, sometimes known as the fear period. During this time, the dog may appear to be easily startled, worrisome, and seemingly losing confidence. For example, at 7 months of age one of my dogs went through a fear period where she was afraid of people:

When she would see someone new her hackles would go up, she would continuously bark while backing up. When she first started to display this behavior, I knew it would be important to fix it right away before letting it become a bigger problem.

Lucky for me, I have a lot of dog trainer friends that helped me through this training process. For two weeks I personally did not feed her, but instead, I had my friends feed her from their hands. It was a progressive process, as they couldn't just give her the food right away because she was cautious of them. So, instead they would have their backs facing her with their hands down by their sides, palms facing out with food. This took away a lot of the pressure and my dog was able to steal (in her mind) the food out of their hands.

As she became more confident, they started to turn more towards her. Eventually, they were able to bend down and feed her while petting her. By doing this we were able to create for her a very strong and positive association with new people. New people now gave her the same positive feeling that she received when she was being rewarded by my friends. Because of that training, she enjoys meeting new people now.

If your puppy or adolescent dog is having fear problems, there are some considerations to make: One thing you don't want to do is reinforce the behavior (petting, soothing, etc.). However, you also don't want to use a physical correction to attempt to fix the problem.

As mentioned earlier, this can make the fear worse.

Instead, there are a few things that can be done with a puppy or adult dog to increase their confidence immediately. Similar to the Disney character "Bolt the Superdog", we can build a dog's confidence by making them believe they are a "super dog." This can be done through confidence-building activities.

An easy way to look at confidence-building is to take something that the dog may be unsure about and make it predict something pleasant instead. For example: Let's say you want to get your dog comfortable with different sounds, so you fill an empty kiddie pool with empty plastic bottles for the puppy / dog to play with. At first, the puppy or dog may be hesitant about the situation, but if you show the puppy or dog that it's fun by either getting in the pool first or luring the puppy or dog into the pool, they will soon discover that it's a fun activity and the puppy or dog will associate the sound of the plastic bottles with fun (this is something a lot of protection dog trainers will do with their puppies because some protection sports, they will use what's called a bottle curtain, which is basically a bunch of empty plastic bottles hanging from a pole in a curtain-like fashion that the dog will have to run through.) Simply put, it's about constantly exposing your dog to new things and making those activities pleasant by predicting something the dog enjoys.

Below are some confidence building exercises that I like to do with puppies and dogs that I work with.

- Having the dog walk on multiple surfaces while giving the dog treats. An example could be having the dog walk on bubble wrap or a gym floor.
- Having the dog walk on elevated surfaces while providing rewards. Making sure the dog won't fall and get hurt, which could have the opposite effect.
- Playing tug and always allowing the dog to win. If I want the toy from the dog, I always use the "drop it" command. I never physically take the toy away by ripping it from the dog.

- Exposing the dog to different sounds while providing rewards. Starting at a low volume and increasing as the dog becomes more comfortable.
- Taking the dog to different environments for training. This is part of socialization.
- Create a puppy or dog obstacle course.

These are just a few examples, but you can see how the process works. Try being creative when doing confidence building exercises with your dog.

Existing Fear Issues

Confidence building helps prevent a dog from having fear issues, but what if those issues are already present in our dog? This is when we use counterconditioning and desensitization. Counterconditioning is very similar to confidence building, but the main difference is that we use counterconditioning to help a dog overcome something they may be afraid of.

For example, your dog is afraid of the vacuum cleaner:

- Expose the dog to the vacuum cleaner while it's turned off.
- Reward the dog with high value rewards just for being comfortable with the vacuum cleaner. The dog will start to associate the vacuum cleaner with high value rewards.
- Start moving the vacuum cleaner around the carpet (turned off). Again, reward the dog for behaving and being comfortable, but not if they're barking at it.
- Turn the vacuum cleaner on, then off, treating it like a marker. Reward the dog.
- Keep turning it on and off, and eventually leave it on, and reward the dog. Now, the dog will no longer associate the vacuum cleaner negatively at all. You can also simulate the sound on your phone by starting at a low volume and gradually increasing it as the dog becomes more confident.

Here's another few examples: When I'm training a sports protection dog, they have to become desensitized to gunshots, because one of the exercises requires the dog to bite the decoy (person in bite suit) while the decoy is firing a blank pistol. We do this by first firing the blank pistol at a distance that doesn't trouble the dog. As the dog becomes more comfortable with the sound, we slowly, over time (could be weeks or even months), bring the gunshots closer and closer to the dog, until the dog isn't bothered by it at all. Keep in mind that each dog will take a different amount of time to learn a new behavior or increase in confidence.

I had a dog that I was working with a few years back that was terrified in public, and in two weeks I was able to fix the issue. Here's what I did with that dog using a combination of desensitization and counter conditioning: First I ONLY fed the dog and did obedience outside of the house. The first day I was in my front yard training, as the days progressed, I slowly moved to more locations with slightly more activity. As the dog's confidence continued to go up, we went to even more locations with more activity. By the second week I was doing obedience with the dog inside of a local Home Depot and a Petsmart. It's important to keep in mind that I did not feed the dog in the house where the dog was comfortable. I wanted the dog to associate the public locations with the pleasant experience of training and food rewards.

The idea is to be on the same team as your dog, rather than having a relationship based on fear, or the belief that the owner needs to be the "alpha".

Proper socialization early in the dog's life will also help with confidence building. We'll discuss proper socializing in the next chapter.

Chapter 11 – Grading and Socializing Your Dog (Desensitization)

Generally, it's a good idea to introduce your dog to increasingly challenging environments and levels of obedience training, also known as grading. This includes the levels of the task, levels of obedience, levels of proficiency, and the intensity of the environment (which includes training your dog's social skills).

Without being aware of these guidelines, you could be in for a lot of problems during training. For example: Don't ask for an advanced task from a dog that is still at a lower proficiency level in a highly intense environment. You would be setting yourself up for failure.

On the flip side, if you've just started your training, starting on a low obedience level in a low-key environment, using beginner tasks, makes a lot of sense.

Therefore, part of your training process is knowing how to grade your dog's skill and ability to work in different environments. Another part of this that's closely related to grading the environments is the process of socializing.

Socializing doesn't mean just allowing your dog to play with all the

other dogs in the neighborhood, or jump on every person that he or she sees, the big idea is to expose your dog to new situations, people, and environments. This leads to a dog that's adjusted for many situations and has a balanced personality.

But it's important to control the situation. As an example, we wouldn't want your dog to be exposed to aggressive dogs at your nearby park, thus associating that park with the confrontation. Your dog should also avoid humans with poor skills around animals.

Socializing is, therefore, a process that involves introducing your dog to new situations, to help him or her learn in a positive way. This can include bringing your dog around other well-behaved dogs, owners who reinforce positive behavior, and activities that you think your dog might enjoy.

Here's a breakdown of these elements of grading:

Obedience levels

Dogs, like humans, gradually become more proficient at what they are trying to learn. Starting out, and when working with a dog who's new to training, it's usually necessary to begin at a first stage of obedience. In time, a dog may graduate to a full obedience level, able to perform a wide variety of tasks. The road to get there is going to be faster or much slower depending on the individual characteristics of the dog.

Here are the 4 stages:

- **Little to no obedience:** Simply not allowing the dog to practice bad behaviors, but not yet trying to teach specific commands.
- **Very little obedience stage:** This is when we ask the dog to perform a few easy commands that they can get proficient at.
- **Medium obedience stage:** implementing a few more complicated commands and more repetitions of the easy commands.

- **Full obedience stage:** This would be more of the final stage when we are asking the dog to perform all obedience and service dog tasks.

Likewise, it's possible to grade a dog's proficiency during obedience training. How long for a dog to become highly proficient may depend on your dog's level of perseverance.

Command proficiency levels:

- **No proficiency:** Completely unable to follow any level of obedience training.
- **Slightly proficient:** Can take on basic tasks and basic positions (having your dog sit for a treat).
- **Mostly proficient:** Can undertake basic tasks quickly and easily, and is capable of learning more complex tasks.
- **Completely proficient:** The dog is skilled at all learned tasks and can quickly take on new tasks from basic to advanced.

Task levels:

Next, it's important to grade the dog's actual tasks based on levels of difficulty. This is fairly straightforward:

- **Basic Tasks:** What we all know: sit, down, come, loose leash walking, stay, etc.
- **Advanced Tasks:** Service dog tasks and other advanced obedience concepts, such as retrieval training or a focused heel.

Environmental Stimulation / Intensity levels:

A superstar dog is able to perform advanced tasks even in a very distracting environment. But most dogs are not at that level and must

start much more slowly.

- **Almost no stimulations:** This would be a place your dog is very comfortable at, such as your home.
- **Very little stimulation:** This would be a place your dog is comfortable at, but with some natural distractions. An example of this could be your front or back yard.
- **Somewhat intense:** This would be a new environment that has some distractions, but not so many that the dog could become overwhelmed.
- **High stimulation / most intense:** This would be a new environment with multiple distractions, such as a very busy park, people grilling food and wild rabbits jumping around (you get the idea).

Let's go deeper into the concept of stimulating environments, and getting your dog used to socializing / performing with other dogs around:

The main goal with this element of the training process is desensitization. This is the technique of making your dog less reactive to stimulus that would ordinarily cause a bad reaction (chasing after another dog or other strangers), and is done by exposing the dog to the stimulus at a very low level until there is no response. Gradually, as you increase the stimulating environments, the dog will become non-reactive.

The process of socializing (and desensitizing a dog) could mean first taking the dog to a park in the early morning without many other dogs or people around. Later, as you increase in intensity, you might return to that park in the afternoon on a Sunday with lots of other people and dogs around. The goal is for the dog to behave the same way in either situation.

- At the beginning, start with low levels on all the stages discussed above. So, a low intensity area, low task levels, low obedience levels, etc.

- You can move on to higher levels once it seems clear the dog is very proficient.
- When moving into a situation with higher environmental intensity, start again with a low obedience level. This will increase with the speed of the individual dog. Eventually, like before, the dog will master this environment (eventually).

Goals to Aim For

Here's some things to aim for with your dog as you work through these different levels of training, and how to know you're making progress:

Dog Social Skills.

Much of our socializing process is more about exposure and less about contact. However, part of the process of socializing the dog is to reinforce the dog's social skills around people and other dogs, namely ensuring the dog is not aggressive or reactive in any way. This requires controlling situations so the dog can have nothing but pleasant experiences with other dogs and humans. This will help prevent fear or aggression issues in the dog you're training.

A busy area with other people's random dogs around may not be such a good idea compared to a barbecue with friends who are savvy dog people themselves, who have behaved dogs and who don't reward bad behaviors like jumping.

If you can't find such a group of people, perhaps check online for dog owner get-togethers, like Meetup.com.

Generalization

This is the concept that the dog knows that a command applies in any situation. This is where the dog's proficiency in the training and desensitization really comes into play. A dog that has generalization ability knows to "sit" whether at home, in a busy dog park, in a shopping mall, a park with squirrels, you get the idea. A dog that is less well-trained may only sit at home, but once exposed to a new environment, the training goes out the window. **This is what we seek**

to avoid happening via training our dogs in multiple environments. A superstar dog will sit obediently and perform necessary tasks in virtually any situation.

Road Map to Success

Here's an example of how to apply everything outlined so far on a schedule:

- **Day one:** a new environment with almost no stimulations. This could be something as simple as your front yard or local park that doesn't have much traffic. Start with little to no obedience, but don't let the dog practice bad behaviors such as barking at other people / dogs or pulling on the leash.
- **Day two:** The same environment, but start asking for basic tasks.
- **Day three:** The same environment, but ask for basic tasks and start introducing more advanced tasks.
- **Day four:** The same environment, but ask for basic and advanced tasks and work on proficiency in the commands.
- **Days five to seven:** New environment with very little stimulation. Repeat the previous process.
- **Days eight to 11:** New and somewhat intense environment. Repeat the previous process.
- **Days 12 to 14:** New more intense environment: Repeat the previous process.
- **Days 15 to 17:** New high stimulation / most intense environment. Repeat the previous process.

If you follow this simple process you will be able to train your dog to behave with other dogs and humans, as well as responding to your commands, in all environments. Keep in mind this process also plays a huge role in your dog's confidence.

Final note: when you do allow your dog to interact with other dogs and humans, just make sure it always a positive learning experience. Make sure all the humans are good with dogs and won't yell at or unfairly correct your dog. When your dog is interacting with other dogs, make sure they are dog friendly dogs that won't try to dominate your dog. If a dog friendly dog is attacked by another dog—it has the potential to create a fear aggressive-to-dogs pathology. So be careful what kind of dogs you allow your dog to play with. This is one of the reasons dog parks should be avoided in most situations.

Chapter 12 – Choosing, Imprinting and Raising a Dog

Whether you are a first-time or experienced dog owner, getting a new puppy can be a lot to consider. Of course, owners who prepare will experience a lot less stress and a lot more fun. In this part, we'll go over some important pointers regarding bringing a new puppy home and how to raise them.

(Special thanks to Bethany Preud'homme from PhDogs in Riverside CA, whom I can cite as a primary resource for many of the sections in this part of the book. Check out our interview on the Nate Schoemer YouTube channel: https://youtu.be/G_cczA1r470).

Choosing the Right Breed:

One of the most common questions people ask me is, "Hey! What breed should I get?" and my first thought is typically, "What's your lifestyle like?". I'd want to know if you lead an active way of life; do you want a companion to take hikes with? Or would you prefer the type of dog who enjoys lounging by the fireplace and all-day movie marathons?

This is a major factor because dog breeds include incredibly different personalities. The common belief that "it's not the dog, it's how you

raise them" is a huge misconception. While nurture does have an effect, genetics play an even larger role as discussed earlier in the manual.

Some of these points may seem like common sense, but many people need reminding about these factors. It's not all about how cute your new pup is.

If you lead an active lifestyle, get a dog that can keep up with you. For example, you may want a Vizsla. That's just one example of many breeds that are excellent for an active lifestyle.

By contrast, if you lead a lifestyle that is less active, perhaps if you work at home on the computer all day, a Vizsla may not be such a good idea. Instead, a Golden Retriever would be a better idea. It would have just enough energy, but it wouldn't go into overdrive by never having an off-switch.

After determining the activity level, the next thing to consider is factors like the size of your dog, whether you are worried about shedding, if you can maintain a thick coat or if you'd prefer a thin coat or a dog with hair instead of fur.

Another factor is intelligence. Without directly insulting any of our canine friends, the unfortunate truth is that some dogs are smarter than others. Now, getting the most intelligent dog could seem like the best idea, but if you don't keep that advanced brain constantly working—such a dog could become destructive. On the other hand, a smart dog could also be a great joy to own. These are, again, factors that depend on personal preference and lifestyle.

Another common concern is the cost of a new dog. Veterinary bills can be steep, and some dogs are prone to many health problems by comparison to other breeds that tend to stay healthier.

As you can see, it's important to take many variables into consideration.

Choosing a Puppy From a Shelter

While professional breeders often do the selection process for new clients, in other situations—such as picking a dog from a shelter—it's very helpful to perform particular tests to get an idea of a dog's traits, which helps when there is no other information available or staff are unfamiliar with the traits and behaviors of the litter.

These **compliance tests** are ways to check the behavioral characteristics of a puppy, indicating what kind of experience you may have with the dog in the future, and how easy they will be to train. Note: Always get permission first from the shelter or owner before doing these tests.

- 1.) The first test I'll do is I'll select a puppy, and just cradle it in my arms like a baby. If it doesn't resist or fight, but just lies there very calmly, that usually means the puppy is going to be more compliant and easier to train—even into adulthood.
- 2.) Some trainers hold a puppy by the neck scruff, and just hold it there. If it just dangles there relaxed—more likely than not it will be a compliant dog vs. if it thrashes, fights, etc. They may also hold the puppy by the scruff to the ground. I don't use this test as the first compliance test is adequate enough.
- 3.) The next thing I do is I test to see how interested the puppies are in humans. If there's a litter of puppies, I look for the ones that show more interested in people. Puppies with a liking to humans are easier to train.
- 4.) Next, I may test a puppy with food and toys. I'll start luring them and finding the one that's really scrambling to get my food—this will be a higher food drive dog, and thus easier to train. I'll do the same with toys, tossing them around and seeing if a puppy picks up a toy and runs off with it (or brings it to me to play). These are all indications that the dog loves toys, and will be easier to train. Sometimes all the puppies in a litter are this way, but typically we'll find a select few with the highest interest.

5.) Another test I may do is a confidence test. So, with a litter of puppies present, I'll knock over a chair or make a loud noise. If the puppies freak out, run and hide, this may not be a litter I want a puppy from. However, if they get startled, react to it, then go back to their business playing—this shows a more confident batch. Of course, the ideal litter would be one that ignores the sound entirely.

A few more points:

- Keep in mind the breed of the puppy. For example, if I'm getting a Malinois, the compliancy test of holding the puppy will be far less important, because typically a Malinois is thrashing everywhere, anyway. In this case, I'll focus a lot more on the food / toy drive. On the flip-side, a Golden Retriever will almost always be very compliant, anyway.
- A compliancy test doesn't mean you won't be able to train a dog, at all. It just means they don't like being held in a restrictive state.
- A puppies' behavior may not be consistent, either (e.g.: You may have found a sleepy dog being high energy, a high energy dog being sleepy.) So these techniques may not always be 100% accurate without the help of someone who knows the litter very well.
- Although not every shelter is the same, some do operate with staff more like a breeder would, and they may know the puppies very well and be able to help pick out the ones with the traits and temperament you're looking for.
- Watch out for rescue operations that perform "rescue retails"—claiming they are rescuing a dog from a meat market in China, when they're really just making a profit. See if what they're claiming is true and if it can be investigated first.

- Look for a dog in a shelter that you feel you can build a relationship with more than picking a dog out of pity. As Bethany Pred'homme says, when people get married because they feel sorry for / pity their spouse, that's usually going to end up with a divorce. You don't want to end up in the same situation with a dog who you'll end up "divorcing" when you find you can't get along once the feeling of pity ends.

Choosing a Puppy from a Breeder

When going through a reputable breeder they are likely to choose the pup for you via the matchmaking process. In fact, you may not even be allowed to pick your own pup, at all.

The reason for this is that a breeder is going to know the specifics of the dogs much better than a new customer who's only spent 20 minutes with the pup. For example, a prospective owner may have encountered what they believed was a high energy pup—but ends up with the sleeper who is normally snoozing all day—and the customer got unlucky by seeing the sleeper all worked up on a rare occasion after a bit of play.

Another reason is customers are notorious for making the wrong decisions on their own about what they want. For example, prospective owners often pick a dog based on looks (such as fur color, coat thickness, etc.) only to find those physical characteristics completely change as the dog ages—and have no bearing on temperament or other, more important factors.

A matchmaking process is especially important if you're getting a dog for protection training or an occupational purpose (law enforcement, a therapy dog, etc.) but may be less appealing to new owners looking for a family pet (where owners often want to choose personally who the new family member is going to be on a more holistic level).

However, even in a situation where a prospective owner wants to pick or physically hold the puppy, blindly picking a dog without consulting with the breeder is a bad idea. A quick look at a dog's physical

attributes or making a strong guess about the pup's temperament doesn't necessarily mean the new pup will be the right pet for you.

This is a good time to mention my first warning sign to look for at a breeding operation: Beware of a breeder who doesn't know the litter very well. A good breeder should be VERY aware of the pups and their dispositions, and have spent a lot of time working with them. If the breeder's attitude is "Your guess is as good as mine" about a pup's traits, you've found a bad breeder.

Asking the Breeder Questions

It's very important to get some information from the breeder, as well, while selecting the puppy.

- Ask the breeder what they are breeding for. We're looking for breeding in reference to temperament, trainability and disposition. If the breeder responds that they breed just for looks, the cutest dogs, etc., this is a warning sign and may not be a litter you want a puppy from.
- The breeder's goal for the litter should match what you're searching for.
- Ask what the breeder hopes to produce with this pairing—what the goals are with the litter: Speed, big jumpers, full grips (bite work), more prey drive, more food drive, etc. Be sure to specify the traits you need in your dog, for example—you don't want a police dog scared of louse noises and unmotivated. A breeder who hasn't produced a police dog before could still have a great police dog hiding in a litter—but it won't be a sure thing.
- For pet dogs: Ask if the puppy has a calm disposition, friendly with kids, plays with toys, friendly with other dogs, people, not prone to resource guarding, etc.
- Ask how long the breeder keeps their puppies. A good breeder keeps the pups for at least 8 weeks, so that the puppies can

learn communication with each other and with the mom. If the breeder releases a puppy earlier than that time, they're not being responsible.

- Ask the breeder if they have a matchmaking / questionnaire process as outlined before, to be able to match the puppies to the owners. If this service is not available, you're likely dealing with a non-professional breeder.
- Ask the breeder if they have a health guarantee. A good breeder should be checking the dog's hips, eyes, elbows, heart—all the health inspections you'd expect a breeder to have done with adult dogs. The breeder should also search for parasites (including giardia which is common in young dogs) and performing vaccinations. Note: Health testing varies by breed, some breeds are predisposed to different issues, like if the puppy is a purpose bred mixed breed (Goldendoodle, Border Whippet, etc,) the breeder should have health testing on each parent.
- In regard to a dog's health tests, if you're with a reputable breeder then a dog's health may be available on public record. For example, if you search the database at the Orthopedic Foundation for Animals (OFA.org) you can find a dog without even contacting the breeder first, and their health tests will pop up (in regard to orthopedic health). Just make sure you're using the dog's registered name (which may be different from the given name).
- The breeder should want the dog back if, for some reason, the human can no longer keep the dog. A good and ethical breeder believes in their dogs, cares about their dogs, and keeps in contact with the people they've sold dogs to—and are willing to take the dog back if the human can't take care of them (they may not necessarily refund the owner, though).
- Guarantee the breeder has a contract. This contract should include the dog's information, registration number, microchip, and a history of events in the dog's life. This contract should

also make it clear that if the dog has to go back to the breeder, the dog will NOT be given away to a shelter (which could mean the end of the pup's life) but will be taken care of within that breeder's network.

- Ask the breeder when the last time the puppies had their nails trimmed. A sign the breeder is a backyard operation is they don't think about these types of things. This also means the puppy will not be used to being handled.
- Experts warn against premature spaying and neutering. This causes physiological and mental issues. So, the contract should be specific that dogs belonging to the breeder are not spayed and neutered until 1 ½ to 2 years of age. If the breeder has a stipulation in the contract that you must spay / neuter the dog before this time frame, find a new breeder.
- Ensure the breeder has stipulations on dog breeding. New owners who decide to breed their dogs should follow standards associated with that, and a breeder who doesn't care about this factor is unprofessional.

Where to Find a Breeder

You can save time worrying about whether or not your breeder is a good one by narrowing your search, and trying a few of these techniques to find the best breeder in your area.

- Your first step may be the American Kennel Club's AKC Marketplace which will showcase breeders in your area. Check it out at: <https://marketplace.akc.org/>.
- If your goal with owning a dog is to get into a sport, like agility, then your best resource is your local agility sports club. Just ask who's breeding good dogs for your purposes.
- Most dog breeds have breed clubs. You can investigate the breed club of the dog you're interested in owning, finding their website, then using that website to locate a breeder. These

breeders will always follow the important criteria outlined earlier.

- A good veterinarian is going to be aware of not only the breeders to contact—but the ones you should avoid.

Breeders to Avoid

Experts don't suggest going with amateur breeders. For example, Craigslist or a neighbor with a box full of puppies. While it's a good thing to adopt a puppy that wouldn't otherwise have a home, be aware of the risks associated with doing this if you want a specific breed for specific purposes. In some situations, you could also risk falling victim to a scam.

As stated earlier, if you enter a breeding operation and find they are giving away puppies before 8 weeks of age—when they should be in a developmental stage with the other puppies and the mom—skip. The same goes if the breeder is keeping puppies during this critical period of up to 13 weeks, but doing nothing with them and isolating them from the mom and other puppies.

As mentioned a couple pages above: If the breeder has no idea about the individual characteristics of each puppy, this is a very bad sign.

Beware of a breeder who says the dogs are “health tested” because a veterinarian checked them over. That's not health testing, which is more detailed than getting a look-over from a vet.

Beware of a breeder who has a litter full of fearful dogs (see prior points about the compliancy tests). If the dogs are all scared to death of everything—the breeder is breeding the wrong types of pups that won't fit as good pets or working dogs.

Beware of a “breeder” who will only meet you in a parking lot, won't even Facetime you to show the whole litter, and won't show who the parents of the pup are. These are all signs of a sketchy backyard breeding operation.

Beware of a breeder with no registration papers. This means the parents likely have no breeding rights, which means the breeder is not responsible for anything.

This is fairly obvious, but take into consideration the condition of all the puppies in the litter. If they're dirty, unhappy, or other issues, follow your gut.

Beware of a breeder who's having back-to-back litters from the breeding dogs to make a profit. Sometimes a breeder does this for health reasons as it's physically healthier to breed back-to-back and spay at the end, but if a breeder isn't aware of this and is over-breeding to maximize profits, it's probably not an ethical operation. Try asking the breeder "why" they are having so many litters from the same dogs and see how they respond.

Beware of breeders creating fashionable and trendy dog colors (silver Labradors, white German Shepherds, white Dobermans, etc.). While such dogs may be novelties, it also indicates a breeder doesn't care about temperament and health, but is trying to make a buck by selling the novelty.

Pricing the Pups from a Breeder

During this process, be mindful of the prices of the pups. Search online to get a good idea of the average costs, and be mindful of situations when a breed is being sold too low or too high.

When you find a puppy is sold for more than the average cost, determine why. You're looking for a situation where a pup is priced higher because of undergoing all the necessary health requirements, within a great professional operation. That's good, and is preferable.

If a puppy is being sold high, and there is no evidence the breeder is really doing that work (see prior points about questions to ask, breeders to avoid) then obviously this is a big problem.

The other big problem is if the price is too low and there is no professional process being undertaken, such as health testing. You'll

end up paying more in the long run doing all those things yourself.

Transporting the Pup

Not every breeder will ship a puppy, but most puppies when they're small enough can fit under your seat on an airplane, so don't hesitate to fly out and grab the puppy.

If a ground transport option is available, however, you'll want to do a lot of research and make sure they're reliable and safe. You may find some trustworthy companies that do this in your area.

Experts, like Bethany Preud'homme, warn against puppies shipped from an area with loose breeding regulations, in particular Missouri, where there is a higher chance the puppy is coming from a "puppy mill." If you do decide to select a dog without going physically to the location to meet her, then try to Facetime the operation, take a look around the premises, and use the tips provided thus far to determine if it's a legitimate breeding operation or not. You need to make sure it's live video of the operation. If they don't permit live video—skip on that breeder.

Otherwise, if everything checks out—the dogs have their health tests, you can see live video, the breeding operation is legitimate—there's no problem with shipping.

Picking a Retired Breeding Dog

A good thing that reputable breeders do is they retire their breeding dogs and find them new homes. This is an excellent option if you're looking for an adult dog rather than a puppy. So, ask the breeder if they have a waiting list for their adult dogs.

The reason this is a good option is because such dogs are going to be health tested, heavily socialized, well trained, possess good genetics, and typically not be very expensive. They're also likely to still have many years left in them.

Preparing your home:

Congratulations! You figured out what type of puppy to get—which by now you've probably discovered can be a long, difficult process. Now you may be worried that the little scoundrel is going to eat your Master's thesis on your desk.

So, puppy proofing your house may be a good idea. Here are some of the suggestions that I have:

- Firstly, if you want to control where the dog goes within the household, then use puppy gates. These will restrict the dog from going into certain rooms, or leave certain rooms. They can be installed in doorways.
- Start to develop puppy-proof habits. Much like being concerned with a rogue two-year-old, it's wise to pay attention to what is accessible for the puppy to chew on or steal. Don't allow your children to leave their toys on the floor, for instance.
- Is your bedroom compatible for your puppy's crate? It's a good idea to keep your puppy close to you at night to prevent separation anxiety, which could lead to a lot of whimpering during the puppy's early years. You should also be prepared to get up during the night to potty the puppy.

Welcoming a new dog into the home

If you're bringing home a puppy and your other dog is good with dogs, then it should be a simple process. Just bring the puppy home and let your older dog see you holding the puppy. Most dogs will not be aggressive to a puppy because a puppy is not a threat. However, some dogs will correct puppies for getting into their space or not respecting boundaries. Often this isn't an issue, but it can start to teach your dog to be submissive. Since I don't like my dogs to be submissive, I don't allow my older dogs to correct puppies when I bring them home. If I notice that the puppy is bothering the older dog, then I'll move the puppy away from the other dog. It also helps to introduce them in a

neutral environment, such as the front yard.

However, I follow a different process if I am bringing an adult dog home. First, I want to make sure that I can walk both dogs on a loose leash. Once I can do that, then I walk both dogs together. One dog on my left and one dog on my right. You can also have a person help with this process. Just be sure a person is between both dogs.

While I'm walking the dogs, I'm making sure the dogs are not showing any aggressive behaviors. Most of the time, non-aggressive dogs will just walk as if it's a normal walk. They will show interest in the other dog, but nothing to raise any flags. Once I get back to the house, I walk both dogs into the backyard or in the house if no yard is available. By walking around the neighborhood with both dogs it seems to welcome the new dog into the group. Once in the yard I drop the leashes and let the dogs interact. For peace of mind, you can have the water hose ready if the dogs decide that they don't like each other. Spraying dogs with the hose is a safe way to stop most dog fights. This is usually not necessary if you did the walk correctly and watched for signs of aggression.

Training your new puppy:

The moment your dog enters your house, it is learning. From the moment the dog is born to 16 weeks of age is the most important time in the dog's life. This is known as the imprinting stage and we want to make sure it is learning the things we want it to maintain as it grows into an adult. Therefore, it's important to begin as early as possible learning the concepts necessary to raise a puppy into adulthood with excellent behavior.

You want to start training your puppy the moment you bring them home. You should try to get in 1 - 3 sessions each day. Each session should be between five to fifteen-minutes.

When training a new puppy, I like to use mealtime as training time. In the beginning, you want to do continual reinforcement, meaning you reward every correct behavior. If you don't have time to train, don't feed your puppy out of a bowl. Instead, put the food into a raw bone

or kong and freeze it. Once it's frozen, you can give that to your dog in the crate. This will help keep them entertained, but it will also satisfy the puppy's need to chew. Don't try to increase the value of the food by giving them something like cooked steak. If you do, that's a lot like giving your dog a pay raise. This will make it more difficult to use less value rewards during training, such as your dog's kibble.

Confidence building exercises, socializing, and exposure is also very important with a new puppy. Be sure to follow the process explained in chapters 10 and 11.

Advanced obedience with your puppy.

If you plan on doing any advanced obedience with your dog, it's a good idea to get them to enjoy that type of training at a young age.

Let's say you wanted to do scent detection with your puppy when she gets older. You would want to start scent training during the imprinting stage. One example of making this training more fun for the puppy would be to make it predict the puppy's favorite toy. This would create a strong positive association to scent detection training and it will make it much easier to create a strong scent dog when the pup gets older. You don't have to worry about the puppy being proficient at scent detection training, but you would want the puppy to love the training. That would be the main goal.

This would be the same for anything else you want your puppy to excel at when they get older. For example; I enjoy teaching my dogs the basics of bite work. Because of this I start teaching them how to bite a puppy bite sleeve when they are only 8 weeks of age. By making them enjoy the basics of bite work when they are 8 - 16 weeks old, I can easily get them to do more advanced bite work when they are older.

The main idea is this: if you want them to be experts at something when they are older, get them to love it when they are puppies.

Potty Training and Crate Training (this same process works with adult dogs):

You're going to want to start potty training right away. I would advise staying away from puppy pads unless you want your puppy to learn to go potty in the house.

Below is a simple step-by-step process, involving a crate that's just big enough for the dog to stand up, spin around, and lay down (and not any larger). If the crate is larger, then the puppy would be able to go potty in one end of the crate and then sleep on the other end, which would slow the potty-training process. By having the crate the correct size, this will allow the dog to learn to hold their bladder. When your dog is fully potty trained, a larger crate will be acceptable.

There are three crate-training principles to understand: The first guideline for crate-training is that you always want to make the crate a pleasant place for your dog and never a place of punishment, like as a time-out or something of the sort. The second most important guideline is to never put your dog in the crate only when you are leaving the house, or the dog will learn that the crate means that you are leaving, and this can create anxiety and further problems for the crate-training process. The third guideline is to keep your crate next to your bed at night to make it a more comfortable place for your puppy to sleep.

List of crate to-dos:

- Feed your dog in their crate with the door closed.
- Put your dog into the crate randomly throughout the day (even when you are not leaving the house.)
- Give your dog treats in the crate.
- Have your dog sleep in the crate at night.
- If your dog barks or whines in the crate, then directly hit the top of the crate with a metal bowl and this will usually make them quiet. Be sure to say “no” the moment they whine or bark BEFORE hitting the crate. As with any correction, it's about cause and effect, never personal, so no yelling because you're angry. This technique works on most dogs.

Depending on the age of the dog, we have to consider how long they can hold their bladders. A simple rule to follow is a dog can stay in a crate for as many hours as months they have been alive. For example, a young pup at two months old can stay crated for two hours. Three months, three hours. Four months, four hours. All the way to eight hours being the max time in a crate.

After the time in the crate, the puppy is taken out and given a chance to go potty.

If they successfully go potty, the dog should be rewarded, perhaps taken on a walk or playing fetch. We try to reinforce that the bathroom break leads to more fun activities (however, when I wake up to potty a puppy in the middle of the night, I won't play after they go potty. I'll let them sniff around for a couple minutes and then I take them back inside).

If the puppy doesn't go, then he or she is brought back to the crate. We wait 20 minutes, then repeat the process.

The important factor is to make the dog associates going outside with going potty, and that it's something to look forward to.

If the puppy happens to go inside the house, you don't need to rush at them yelling. You simply say "no," correct the puppy, then take the pup outside, and reward with positive reinforcement after they go potty.

Often people will argue till they are blue in the face that they can teach a dog not to go potty in the house by catching them after the fact. However, out of the ten times they corrected the dog for this behavior one or two of the times they actually caught the dog in the act, and that's when the dog learned.

If the puppy has gone potty in the house, but you did not catch them in the act, then do NOT correct them. You must catch them immediately or else they won't understand. Please see the importance of timing discussed elsewhere in this book.

Here's an analogy I use for explaining this to people: Let's say that you become a prisoner of war in a foreign country where you don't speak the same language. You have your little prison cell with your toilet that you use every day with no issues. One day you become bored and you start to carve on the wall. One of the guards sees you carving on the wall and he runs into your cell, yelling at you in a language you don't understand. They then take your face and shove it into the toilet. Are you going to think that they are shoving your face into the toilet because you used the toilet, or are you going to think they are shoving your face into the toilet because you were carving on the wall? Because that's what you were doing when they started yelling at you.

It is the same for our dogs and our puppies. If your dog or puppy goes to the bathroom in the house and you did not see them go to the bathroom, and the dog starts a different activity, then whatever that activity may be, if you start to yell at your dog during that activity and shove your dog's face into their own mess, they are going to think that you are shoving their face into their own mess because of the activity they were doing when you started yelling at them.

Note: if your puppy goes potty inside their potty-training crate, then it's your fault. Dogs do not go potty where they sleep or eat unless they simply can't hold it. However, if your puppy continues to potty in the crate even though you have been giving them plenty of opportunities to go potty outside, there is a possibility that the puppy has a UTI and should be looked at by your veterinarian.

When training your puppy, remember, you want to make the training as fun as possible, creating a fun learning environment that the puppy wants to keep coming back to. Follow the training process as explained earlier in chapter 7: The science to teaching a dog any command. Be sure to work on multiple commands in each session. This makes the training more fun for your puppy and as a side effect, they will learn more quickly.

Dogs That Always Go Potty on Soft Things

A dog owner wrote to me about how her one-year-old dog is potty trained, doesn't have accidents in his crate, but continues to have

accidents when there is something soft in the crate. Whenever she thinks her dog is done having accidents, she'll put a blanket or dog bed back in the crate—then predictably a few days later, accidents start happening again. This dog can be taken outside to go potty, but will still prefer to potty in the crate if there's anything soft in it. The owner is desperate because she doesn't want her dog to have to sleep on a hard surface for the rest of his life.

This is a surprisingly common situation. Here is my response to this issue:

This problem is the same reason why it takes human toddlers longer to be potty trained vs. 30 years ago. They've made diapers so effective at absorbing the urine, that the child doesn't experience the discomfort from a wet diaper, and as a side effect they continue the behavior. The less absorbent the diaper, the faster the child learns.

First, you want to keep in mind that everything our dogs do is based on motivation. The motivation to access something pleasant, or the motivation to prevent something unpleasant. When you don't have a blanket in the crate and the dog goes potty, then he experiences a consequence. The discomfort from being wet with urine. However, when you have the blanket in the crate, the dog doesn't have to sit in his pee. This is good and bad. Good because we don't want our dogs in their mess. Bad because it gives them the chance to relieve themselves without discomfort. Much like the very absorbent diapers. Basically, the dog has realized that it's more comfortable for him to pee on the blanket than it is to hold the pee in.

When this happens in a dog's mind, the best way to stop it is to correct the dog in the act. This is how I fix it:

- Step one: Let the dog sleep in the crate at night without a blanket.
- Step two: Then in the morning, remove the dog from the crate. Place the blanket in the crate. Then put the dog back in the crate without providing a bathroom break. We are setting the dog up to fail, so we can correct them when they do the undesired behavior.

- Step three: Have a camera set up (Facetime or a Furbo works great for this) so you can watch the dog when you leave the room.
- Step four: The moment you see your dog starting to go potty on the blanket, you say "no" or whatever sound you prefer. Then you walk to the dog and give him a correction with the training collar.

I would do this a few times until the dog can hold it for an additional 5 minutes or so after I put him back in the crate with the blanket. For example; if it's the 3rd day that I'm doing this and the dog holds it for 5 minutes after I leave the room, then he's probably trained at this point and I don't have to set him up to fail anymore. He has to know that it's not an okay behavior. So, the motivation not to receive the correction needs to override the motivation to go potty on the blankets.

Dealing with Separation Anxiety

Crate training has more than one purpose, and can be used to keep the dog from engaging in bad behaviors when home alone, but it can also add to your dog's anxiety issues if this method is not handled properly.

Often, when a dog is left alone, they won't know what their responsibility is in the house, so they'll find things to do (undesirable behaviors, getting into trash, etc.) or become very stressed out in the house not knowing when we'll return. Many owners deal with this by putting their dog in the crate the whole time.

The way to handle this is by remembering one of the three primary crate training principles mentioned earlier: **always place dogs in the crate at random times. Do not place the dog in the crate ONLY when you are going to leave for an extended period of time**, or else they'll start to identify being in the crate with the owners leaving. This causes a lot of stress.

However, by putting them in randomly, we'll see this stress go away.

So, if you're going in the shower, crate the dog, or cooking in the kitchen, crate the dog, and so forth. We also want to do behaviors that we may do when we are normally about to leave—without actually leaving. For example, grabbing your jacket and putting it on, then setting it back down, picking up your car keys and putting them back down, etc. Crate the dog each time.

We are doing this because dogs are very good at recognizing patterns, and they'll identify certain behaviors with "crate time." When those behaviors are no longer linked to a pattern of leaving, then the dog will no longer link these two concepts together. So, just because you picked up your keys and left the house—the dog will not necessarily calculate that you went anywhere—you must still be home like every other time you picked up your keys—so the dog will remain crated worry-free.

When a New Dog or Puppy Whines

Sometimes, when crating a puppy, or when you leave the house, you'll find they are whining a lot or barking.

For young puppies, this is normal because instinctually they are separated from their mother or pack and want to alert everyone. But when a dog gets older, it may be a manipulation tactic to get you to release them from the crate.

When I have a dog like this, I simply use any metal dog bowl, and I keep it on top of the crate. When the whining starts, I say "No" which is the marker the dog is conditioned to, then I walk to the crate, and I hit the top of the crate with the bowl once. I don't do it harshly, just enough so the dog understands cause and effect: Whining and barking causes the crate to get hit by a bowl making an unpleasant sound. In time, the dog will figure out that it's not worth it to bark / whine.

Finally, remember the crate should never be used as a tool to punish the dog as in a time out.

Chapter 13 – Canine Nutrition: Food & Treats

Before moving forward into this last chapter, keep in mind that I'm not a canine nutrition expert, nor do I claim to be one on the internet. However, below are some of the resources that I use when choosing the right food for my dogs, as well as what I like to feed my dogs as their training food, treats, and meals.

With a puppy or a new dog in training, I will often start with a 5-star high-quality dry food during the training process. I also usually give the puppy raw goat milk from Answers to help ensure the dog is getting enough quality nutrition.

If I don't have enough time for a training session, then I soak the kibble in water or raw goat milk and stuff it into a Kong or raw bone, then freeze it. In addition, I train with freeze-dried dog food, but that can be very pricey. Usually, a high-quality kibble will be okay. For me personally, I'll transition them to a raw diet when all the main training is completed and then I use the freeze-dried food as a reward while training. This way, your dog's "dog food" will be his training treats. This is a healthier and cheaper option to using store bought sugar filled dog treats.

My number one source for k9 nutrition is from Dr. Karen Becker. She has an excellent YouTube channel full of useful content that will help you decide what to feed your dog to maximize their health and wellbeing. You can find her channel on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/user/MercolaHealthyPets>. She also has a great book titled "Dr. Becker's Real Food for Healthy Dogs & Cats: Simple Homemade Food."

Another great source to learn more about dog food is dogfoodadvisor.com. This website gives a non-bias review based on a 5-star rating system. Keep in mind, however, that each dog food category is rated amongst other dog foods in the same category. For example: dry food is rated against other dry food, raw food is rated against other raw dog foods, etc—the issue with this is food categories are not all the same. Just like a martial arts belt system, we can think about dry food as white belts, canned food the blue belts, dehydrated and freeze-dried would be the purple belts, and raw would be the brown and black belts. Therefore, just like a 5-star white belt isn't better than a 4-star black belt, a 5-star dry kibble isn't better than a 4-star raw dog food brand. Once this is clear, it's a great website to investigate the best foods compared to other brands.

If you're looking for the best choice possible for your dog's diet, then I would recommend a 5-star premium raw dog food. Your dog needs a lot of water to stay fit and healthy, and many dogs on dry food are slightly dehydrated since dry food is only around 18% moisture, in comparison to raw at 70% moisture.

Recommended treats for your dog:

I don't recommend many store bought treats, which are rarely healthy for your dog (just read the ingredients to see what I mean—lots of animal byproducts and factory floor scrapings). Instead, you're better off making your own treats, or using premium ingredients. For example:

- Freeze dried food used as a treat.
- Bully sticks.
- Bones from a butcher.
- A bone or Kong filled with raw dog food or premium canned dog

food, and then frozen for a tasty frozen treat.

Human food:

Often I'll hear people say proudly, "I never give my dog human food". This is great if their definition of human food is fast food. However, there is nothing wrong with giving your dog natural raw foods from the grocery store. Often when I'm cooking, I'll give my dogs small bites from the raw ingredients. If I'm unsure of a certain ingredient, a quick Google search will often let me know if it's okay or not okay to feed to a dog. Just like with anything, the key word is moderation.

Final note; The longest living dog was an Australian Kelpie named Maggie that lived 30 years. The owner said that he fed her primarily a raw diet, including raw goat milk, and she would get plenty of daily exercise on the farm. This may be a good method to follow if you want your dog to live the longest and healthiest life possible.

In Conclusion

Dog training is an art form and it takes years to become an expert. However, through the essentials we've provided in this manual, anybody can take their dog ownership to the next level right-away. Although you won't master this field overnight, you can quickly develop at least the essential skills needed to fix the majority of issues that dog owners face. In addition, you'll discover a greater relationship with your dog, as you now have the tools to address the bad behaviors that may have frustrated you or pushed you further away from your companion. I believe that improving the lives of dogs, along with their owners, is the most important thing. We'll talk soon!

Nathan

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nathan Schoemer". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "N" and a long, horizontal flourish extending to the right.

About Nathan Schoemer

Nate Schoemer is an American dog training and canine educational expert and former United States Marine. He was certified as a Professional and Master Dog Trainer through the Tom Rose School, where he graduated at the top of his class in both the Professional and Master Dog Trainer programs where he was later invited to be an assistant instructor.

Nate began using his extensive experience to help many canine professionals establish their own similar companies. Eventually, Nate's career culminated with the creation of Nate Schoemer's Dog Training, with a mission of improving the lives of dogs and their owners through education.

In 2017, Nate's dog training caught the attention of Animal Planet and was cast as the co-host of *Rescue Dog to Super Dog*; a UK show that was formatted for American audiences. In the show, Nate transformed rescue dogs into service dogs to help the lives of people affected by disabilities.

More recently, Nate joined forces with the non-profit Operation Therapy Dog with a two-part mission of helping veterans and training service dogs for the disabled. He is the head of canine operations for Operation Therapy. He has designed their premier training program matching the ideal training techniques with the proper physical and mental developmental period of a dog's life. His approach to training virtually eliminates the amount of time a dog ever has to spend in a kennel for the benefit of the dog, the trainer and the veteran.

Lastly, Nate hosts a popular YouTube channel to help continue his mission of improving the life of all dogs by educating those that care for them.

He prides himself on his self-motivation, honesty, integrity, enthusiasm, and determination to serve his clients and his community in all of his endeavors. He currently works on his entrepreneurial activities and lives with his Malinois, Arih and Labrador, Charlie.