

6 Common Dog Discipline Issues

Frequent dog behavior issues and how to solve them.

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Dogs and humans don't always speak the same language. When humans ask their dogs to follow the rules, oftentimes the animals don't listen. These misunderstandings are perceived by owners as discipline issues.

John Wade, of Canada's "Ask the Doggy Guy (<http://www.askthedogguy.com/>)," and Marc Morrone, of the show "Petkeeping with Marc Morrone (<http://www.hallmarkchannel.com/petkeepingwithmarcmorrone/home>)," agree: discipline issues are not the problem when it comes to training a dog.

Here are some common dog behavior issues and tips on how to deal with them.

1. **Jumping**

Keep your pooch on a leash when you're expecting company or are out for walks. "Leash training is important, even inside; keep the leash on as the dog runs in the room so you can control them when needed," says Wade. If the pup jumps, pull it down by the leash to modify the behavior.

Morrone believes in training with rewards, then gradually removing the reward as the behavior is corrected.

2. Unruliness and Barking

Morrone advises people to understand the history of human beings and dogs living together. "The first pet dogs shared caves with no worry of behavior issues, since their human counterparts lived in nature much as they did," Morrone says. "The first dogs were wolves and did not bark. The savviest would make a low sound when they saw something to warn their human friends about. Barking evolved from humans teaching dogs to alert with a sound. Through evolution and breeding, these sounds grew into [the] barking that is innate in today's dogs."

Dogs feel as if they are helping their owners when barking as they see people pass by a window. In the dog's mind, he is chasing intruders away. Morrone advises you to simply close the window shade.

3. Lack of Attention

Wade says, "Owners need to learn to be teachers all the time. Shape a dog as you would in nature. Do not ignore bad behavior by rewarding only good behavior." In other words, "Balance training is creating a balance between bad behavior and good behavior adapting for each particular dog."

4. Destroying Objects

Dogs are creatures of habit, so it is important to never give them the option to chew on an object that is not theirs. Dog proof your house. Don't feed a dog from the table. Close closet doors and pick things you don't want your dog chewing on off of the floor. Crate training your dog will also prevent him from destroying things while you're out.

Dogs may also chew out of stress or lack of exercise. If your dog isn't getting enough stimulation, he may be taking that excess energy out on your favorite pair of shoes. Take some extra time in the mornings to walk your pup a little further. If you come home to a chewed object, refrain from scolding. Your dog won't be able to connect the scolding to earlier actions, and you'll both end up frustrated.

5. Leash Pulling

Always direct your dog to sit and stay while putting on his leash, and don't let him get too far ahead of you outside. You want to be leading the walk, not the other way around. Modifying behavior is the key to curbing leash pulling.

Morrone teaches dogs to listen and learn through a reward system. Direct the dog to stop pulling on the leash by giving the pup a directive, followed by a reward for the proper behavior. "Behavior training are directives, not commands, that have positive results for dogs," Morrone explains. A dog will always do a behavior when he or she knows that there will be benefits, such as treats, when directions are followed.

6. House Training

Wade and Morrone both express the importance of using the dog's natural instinct to not go where he or she sleeps. Pet owners have to act as the mother dog and teach pups the proper place to eliminate.

Crate training is a key component to house training. Morrone teaches the dog to perceive the entire house as a "sleeping den" not to be soiled by beginning with crate training and gradually letting the dog move into the rest of the house.

It also helps to have your dog on a schedule. "Teaching a routine is key to house training," Wade shares.

Both experts agree that dogs' behaviors and actions are derived from biology. Everyone, including animals, has evolved into how they approach life. In order to cohabitate peacefully, it's important to understand where their behavior was born and how to work with them to maintain a harmonious relationship.

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