

How To Train Your Dog

“World-Famous Expert Reveals His Secrets”

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About the Author

Gaby Popper, 60, lives in Montreal, Canada, where he operates several highly successful dog obedience schools.

He is blessed with a natural affinity for animals, an affinity he says stems from his early childhood years in Hungary.

"I lived next to a zoo and was surrounded by animals," Popper recalls. "I was very non-athletic and I thought, unattractive. The girls would have nothing to do with me. Then one day I got a dog and began walking him in the park. I practiced some of the training techniques I learned from watching professional trainers at the zoo. Soon I was swarmed by adoring girls. This positive reinforcement convinced me that dogs and I were meant for each other!"

Joking aside, Popper has made more than a career from his ability to train dogs. He has developed a NATURAL PHILOSOPHY of dog obedience that has its origins in canine history.

To understand dog training we must understand its natural history.

According to Popper, 82 percent of novice dog owners do not have the patience to stick out basic obedience training. Unfortunately, it is this same percentage who claim that they cannot handle their dogs and relate horrific incidences of doggy destruction.

"Dogs have to be trained to survive in our city environment," Popper says.

Popper's philosophy of training involves POSITIVE reinforcement. He does not believe in punishment unless the situation is particularly serious. He does not believe in hitting, kicking or otherwise physically dealing with dog behavioral problems. What he does advocate is treating a dog like a dog.

And by adopting Popper's logical formula for dog obedience you will be assured of a well-mannered and delightful pet that will serve you well for years to come.

Introduction

In today's urban society an improperly trained dog may soon meet his doom. There are too many dangerous situations involving high technology and motor vehicles that can prove fatal to the dog allowed to run wild.

To survive in our world, a dog must be properly trained to obey his master or mistress. Statistics show that more and more city dwellers are adopting dogs as pets even if they live in townhomes or high rises. We are a society that wants companionship and love. Yes, a dog can fill both these needs, but only if it is controlled.

Any dog over three months can be obedience-trained. There is no age limit for training. All that is required is your dedication and patience.

Sadly, many novices give up. In many cases they end up giving away or destroying their beloved pets because they cannot control them.

A little thoughtful training and work could prevent unhappy endings.

TWO BASIC TECHNIQUES OF DOG TRAINING

There are two basic techniques used by dog trainers: POSITIVE training in which the dog is rewarded for performing the desired behavior and NEGATIVE training in which mistakes are punished.

A combination of both these techniques is also common. I believe that positive training is the most enduring. It teaches the dog to trust and obey the owner without instilling fear. By using praise-the right tone of voice you can successfully train your dog to obey.

Negative training can breed violence. It is well accepted that dogs may react to violent and punishing training by mirroring the same violence. Dogs trained negatively, with punishment, may themselves become vicious.

You, the owner and trainer, must decide early on what road you will take. Your relationship with your dog should be one of joy. Remember that every minute you are with your dog, you are teaching him to be affectionate or reserved, courageous or timid, responsive or withdrawn, obedient or disobedient.

How To Train Your Dog - Introduction

Each action you take will shape your dog's future. It is a lot easier for most of us to be kind and positive than mean and negative. Therefore, most of us find positive training more in keeping with our own philosophy and character. It is much simpler to reward good behavior than to wait for disobedience to punish the dog.

A dog who lives in constant fear of its master may develop a fearful personality-hardly desirable for any living creature.

THE KEY COMMAND WORDS

Your pet only needs to learn five key command words for survival. They are:

- **SIT:** Sit.
- **DOWN:** Lie down.
- **STAY:** Stay in either the sitting or lying down position I left you in until I return.
- **COME:** Come and sit in front of me, facing me.
- **HEEL:** Come to or walk by my left side.

There are no circumstances in which one of these commands cannot control your puppy.

These practical, easy-to-learn commands can be executed by any member of the family. By the way, I heartily recommend that when you are training your puppy or taking him to obedience school, you include ALL family members. I have seen too many instances where the good done by the trained person is undone by an untrained associate.

Here is an example of how these commands work. Most dog obedience experts say that you should raise your knee, striking the dog's chest, when the dog jumps on you or a visitor. This isn't very practical if your dog is a Great Dane who is jumping on your child. The dog is three times the child's size! However, if your dog is trained to respond to the commands SIT or DOWN, the child can easily execute the command to elicit the desired behavior.

I also recommend that small children learn to "startle" the dog into submission by using a water pistol. The squirted water is harmless to the pet, but startles him enough to respond and obey. More about this technique later....

NEGATIVE VERSUS POSITIVE TRAINING

Using the above example, here is how our two trainers would respond to the dog's overly friendly behavior. The NEGATIVE trainer would punish his puppy for jumping up on a visitor.

The POSITIVE trainer would command his dog to "DOWN" and then PRAISE him for doing so.

REMEMBER THAT YOUR PUPPY'S PRIMARY INSTINCT IS TO TRY TO PLEASE YOU. BE PATIENT, CONSISTENT, AND USE YOUR VOICE TO CORRECT MISBEHAVIOR-NEVER YOUR HAND.

It may take you HUNDREDS of repetitions to get your dog to respond instantly and consistently to your commands. Be prepared to put in this initial work immediately so that you will reap the rewards later. As your dog becomes more obedient, your relationship with him will flourish. Your relationship will become more than owner and pet-it will become man and companion. There is no easy way out. You will not find the word "easy" or "instant" in this booklet. To train a dog correctly, you must put forth daily effort. Choose training periods of no more than 15 minutes, periods when you are in a good frame of mind and not fatigued or troubled by outside interests.

Stay detached and unemotional when you train your dog. Remember that your tone of voice is crucial. Yes, there are "tricks" to every trade and dog training is no exception. But these tricks-which I will outline later-should only be used when conventional training methods fail.

There are very few exceptions to the statement that EVERY DOG CAN BE TRAINED and certainly no exceptions to the concept that every dog *should* be trained.

A well-trained dog is a pleasure to be around and a joy to own.

Canine History

Believe it or not, your adorable toy poodle "Tippy" is a direct descendant of the wild wolf.

To understand Tippy and her behavior, you must understand how wolves live in the wild. Instinctive behavior is passed from generation to generation.

The wolf can be best described as a pack animal that lives in a group consisting of a LEADER and his FOLLOWERS.

The leader is called the ALPHA wolf and the followers are called BETA wolves. This is an important point to remember because it forms the basis for our whole philosophy of dog training.

In order to gain respect and obedience from your pet, YOU must become the ALPHA wolf. YOU must take the honored position of leader of the pack.

Wolves live in dens. The den or cave is his place of rest and privacy. It is his home and he, by nature, keeps it meticulously clean. He will not "mess" in his cave. This fact forms the principle of housebreaking your puppy. You must provide an area or "den" for your pet that he will learn to respect and keep clean. We will discuss housebreaking in more detail later on in the booklet but, for now, remember why the principles of a confined area or den are applied.

The wolf is a mammal, similar in physiology to man. He is warm-blooded and needs a comfortable environment and temperature in order to survive. Dogs should not be exposed to extreme temperatures for prolonged periods of time. Just like man, a wolf, or his direct descendant, the dog, can suffer heart failure or strokes, from extreme conditions.

Wolves are very flexible creatures, who instinctively and quickly adapt to the different personalities of their leaders. You may have wondered why some dogs who are almost totally ignored by their owners-left to fend for themselves outdoors and fed scraps or leftover table food-are just as loving and obedient to their owners as the pooches that are cuddled and coddled by their owners.

Dogs, like their wolf ancestors, will adapt to almost any condition. They will still adore and be eager to serve their masters no matter how they are treated. Thankfully, the majority of dog owners are kind

and humane and deserve the unconditional love of their pets.

The wolf, contrary to popular belief, is a gentle animal. Unlike man, he does not derive pleasure from either inflicting or observing pain. The wolf does not make war on its own species. It only kills for food and not for pleasure.

A wolf WILL defend itself if provoked, but it will not attack for fun or sport.

The wolf is a "nose-brained" animal. He has a keen sense of smell and gathers most of his information through his nostrils.

He is also a hunting animal, like man, and shares many of the common instincts we knew in our own primitive states.

THE HISTORY OF DOMESTIC DOGS

We theorize that in the days of prehistoric man, a weak pack of wolves chose to sneak food from a group of cavemen rather than hunt for their own nourishment.

They got closer and closer to the tribe of cavemen until one night by the camp fire, man and beast struck a bargain.

In exchange for food, the wolves were allowed to stay with the tribe if they promised to protect against intruders. Man realized that the wolf had superior hearing and trusted his newfound friend to "sound an alarm" whenever danger was imminent.

The wolf also helped man hunt by utilizing his superior motion sensitivity. As the centuries rolled by, the primitive wolf became more domesticated.

In shepherding communities, he helped his master gather flocks of sheep. In Western culture, he became the cowboy's right-hand "man" by learning how to corral cattle. Over the ages, the wolf evolved through selected breeding into what we know as the domestic dog—a creature of sensitivity, loyalty and dedication to his master. Modern dog is still much like his forefather. He still offers unconditional love and support to his master, the ALPHA wolf. He is still the pack animal, eager to follow and eager to please his leader.

Today, there are 150 recognized breeds of dogs and perhaps millions of "Heinz 57's," or mixed breeds, living on this earth.

The Basic Principle Of Dog Training

In my work, over the years, I hear the daily cry from uninformed pet owners: "My dog is my best friend."

As we have just learned, these owners have forgotten canine history. **THE BASIC NEED OF A WOLF IS TO BELONG TO A PACK AND FOLLOW HIS LEADER.**

The dog also needs to belong to a pack and to please his leader. You, the dog owner, are that leader and must always remember your position in relation to your pet.

Repeat the following: "MY DOG IS MY DOG AND I AM HIS MASTER."

Whenever you are tempted to give in to your dog and let him "win" a point in training, repeat this phrase. It will help you keep the basic principle of dog training clear in your mind.

I would like to stop here and make a point. In case some of you misinterpret the word "leader" to mean a tough guy, armed with ball and chain who likes to beat his followers into submission, let us look at how Mr. Webster defines the word. According to the dictionary, a leader is one who provides guidance and direction.

As your dog's leader, you must give him the guidance to enjoy a safe and productive life. Being a leader does not mean brow-beating your pet into obeying you, but teaching him to respect and listen to your judgment at all times.

A good leader is loving, caring and wise. He or she shows fairness and consistency in all actions. Once this position is established, you and your dog will enjoy a satisfying relationship.

A good example of this bond occurs when dealing with modern traffic. When I cross the street with my dog, I judge the oncoming traffic and my dog relies upon my judgment before crossing. He looks at me for direction-we do not go strolling arm and arm into the sunset!

In the wolf world, the BETA or lesser wolves, go up to their leader, the ALPHA wolf, and rub their hindquarters with his. They nibble on his lips, looking for acceptance and approval. The leader then rubs back, showing the BETA wolves that yes, they still belong.

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Your dog must earn your approval the same way. Do not be too quick and generous showing your affection. When you get a burning desire to hug and kiss your pet, hold back. If you constantly approach Fido with YOUR love, you are mirroring the behavior of the BETA wolves.

In other words, you are asking your dog for approval, making him now the ALPHA wolf. The next time you ask him to perform a task or trick he will look at you and think:

"Why should I do what HE says? I am the ALPHA wolf!"

If you simply must "mush" up your dog, make him do something first, such as give you his paw or fetch his bone. Then offer him affection as a reward for successfully following your command.

Of course, when Fido comes to you asking for love and affection, by all means give it to him freely.

Remember that YOU are the ALPHA wolf and HE is the BETA wolf.

ADAPTABILITY

The dog is an incredibly adaptable animal. You can judge this for yourself merely by visiting a dog show. You will clearly observe that the big, burly guy owns a big, burly dog; the nervous, high-strung spinster has a nervous, high-strung pooch; the lethargic old man is accompanied by a sleepy old dog lying at his feet.

Dog owners seem to select breeds that reflect their character, and the dog almost always lives up to that image. A dog quickly adapts to the character and personality of its owner. Some say dogs and their masters even begin to look like each other!

Look at the dogs in your own neighborhood. In one house, the canine is kept tied to a tree in the backyard. The owners may even mistreat the dog, kicking him and feeding him scraps of food. Still, the dog lives to a ripe old age and even wags his tail when the man who dares to call himself a master approaches.

Next door, Mrs. Pringle's poodle languishes on her own waterbed surrounded by toys, and dines on specially prepared meals cooked by Mrs. Pringle's own hand.

She puts boots on her dog's feet when it rains, powders armpits with doggie deodorant and rinses her dog's mouth with mouthwash.

This dog, too, lives to a ripe old age and she also wags her tail when Mrs. Pringle approaches.

Both animals exhibit the keen sense of survival adaptability that has made dogs such marvelous pets. Unlike your pet cat or bird who could easily fend for itself in the wild and chooses to live at your house for its convenience, your dog learns to adapt to his leader's conditions. This is the way wolves, hence dogs, have kept alive over thousands of years.

ADAPTABILITY IN TRAINING

The reason I mentioned the cases above, is to show you how to use this adaptability to suit your own training needs. I often observe first time dog owners trying to adapt to the dog's schedule rather than making their own.

For example, some owners have doggie gates all over the house restricting Fido's movements. In truth, it is a lot easier to train Fido not to step into the living room than it is for you to jump over gates all day.

I see homes where rubber duckies and other doggie toys are scattered all over the floor in order to give Fido something to chew on so he will not destroy the furniture. It would be quicker and wiser to teach him to chew only on a bone and only outside.

Many dog owners complain that Fido constantly chews on their expensive wall-to-wall rugs. When I visit their homes, I see immediately what caused the problem. The dog has dozens of rubber toys to play with and therefore has learned that rubber is an acceptable chew toy.

The owner forgets that underneath their expensive wall-to-wall rug is a backing made of rubber-like material. Fido knows. He smells the rubber and commences to do what his master has taught him is correct. He chews on the rubber-right through the rug!

One of the major complaints of dog owners concerns early morning walks. One master I know jumps out of bed like a fireman each morning at 6 a.m., pulls on his pants, and sleepily and begrudgingly

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walks his dog in the early morning fog.

It would be simpler and much more sane if this man would train Fido to wait until a more reasonable hour for his first walk of the day. Believe me, Fido will adapt to the later schedule a lot easier than his master did to the 6 a.m. Walk.

Use adaptability to your advantage. Make your own rules and make sure everyone in the family observes them, too.

CONSISTENCY

Movies and television have made us believe that dogs are the Einsteins of the animal world. Benji jumps over fences on command. Lassie pulls Timmy out of the water and saves his life. Rin Tin Tin goes on patrol and saves a whole army by outwitting the enemy.

These are exciting and honorable feats, but they are not acts of reasoning and intelligence. You can be sure that when you see Lassie leap to young Timmy's rescue, his devoted trainer has worked with the animal time and time again to perfect the trick.

He may have repeated the training procedure hundreds-even thousands-of times until Lassie had it down pat. There are different methods of training or controlling behavior. You may use natural instinct, conditioned response or stimuli to train your pet. We will discuss them later. Whatever method you use, however, you must be certain of one thing: To ensure successful training, you must be CONSISTENT.

The more consistent we are with our rules, the easier it will be for Fido to figure out what is expected of him.

SOME EXAMPLES

Now I want you to realize that Fido is not stupid. He is intelligent and learns quickly with the right kind of training. But remember that you are his leader, and if you lose your power over him he will not respect you or your rules.

For example, you refuse to feed Fido at the dining room table. You consistently refuse to feed him your table scraps for 99 days. Then, Aunt Mary comes over for supper and slips Fido a piece of filet mi-

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gnon under the table.

Guess what happens? That's right. Even though for the past 99 days he has politely stayed away from the table because there was no benefit in hanging around, Fido becomes a little beggar.

The next night he's at the dining room table looking for handouts.

Throughout the spring, when Fido's feet are muddy, we wipe his paws at the front door before he comes into the house. By early summer he is so used to the ritual that he stands perfectly still at the door while we wipe his paws.

In the summer the ground is dry and we have no use for this habit. He stands at the front door after his walk waiting for his paws to be wiped and we just simply ignore him.

Soon he, too, ignores the ritual and simply enters the house.

In the fall, when the ground is once again muddy, will Fido automatically know that he has to stand still to have his feet cleaned? Of course not.

So let us make life simple for our dog. He is either ALWAYS allowed on the couch or bed, or he is NEVER-not even for five minutes-allowed on either.

He is either allowed to share my food at the table or he is always and only fed from his own bowl.

Either he is to wait at the doorstep until I wipe his paws 365 days a year or he simply enters.

Don't waste your valuable time demanding occasional behavior. You must make your own rules-whatever they may be and stick to them without ANY variation.

Consistency and routine will make life easier for both of you. Feed and walk Fido at the same times every day. Make sure all members of the family obey the same rules. You will frustrate both you and your dog if you vacillate.

FORESIGHT IS IMPORTANT

Each dog owner must develop his own code of rules to live by. I make the rules for my pack of dogs, and you must decide upon yours.

Some folks do not mind sharing their bed or couch with their pet. However, make sure that you use some foresight in setting your rules.

You may think it is adorable to let your puppy on the sofa. But if that puppy grows up to be a Great Dane, it will not be so cute when he ends up using you as a cushion!

PUNISHMENT AND REWARD

Even though the preferred method of training is to REWARD good behavior through praise, it may sometimes be necessary to punish your dog in order to correct him.

I repeat that punitive measures are to be used ONLY as a last resort and not as a matter of regular training. It is much more desirable and pleasant to guide your dog's behavior through POSITIVE training methods.

If you do have to punish your dog, do it as close to the way his ancestors punish their pups as possible. Let's look at how wolves correct their pups.

The bitch deals with poor behavior from her cub immediately. She does not threaten and wag her forefinger, saying:

"Wait till your father comes home and you'll really catch it!" Nor does she wait until the next day to withhold a special treat, such as an ice cream cone, "for the way you treated me yesterday."

Humans often punish after the fact because their "cubs" have the power of reasoning and recall. Your child remembers his misbehavior. He knows what he did wrong long after the act.

The wolf cub or dog, however, quickly forgets the present and moves on to the next adventure. It is absolutely useless to punish Fido for an act that occurred even 10 minutes ago. In his mind, it is already history.

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That's why his four-legged mother grabs him by the scruff of the neck while he is still engaged in the act. When he stops misbehaving, she stops and begins to soothe him.

Fido can understand only action and reaction. Like the law of physics that states for each action there must be a reaction, your dog soon learns to expect either a POSITIVE or NEGATIVE reaction from his actions.

But the reaction must occur immediately, during or soon after the act for Fido to make the desired connection. Quick timing is crucial.

How quick? If you punish Fido five seconds AFTER catching him in the act of misbehaving, he will connect the punishment or correction with you. If you correct him WITHIN five seconds of catching him in the act, he will then connect his actions with your reaction.

Like the mother wolf, you must stop correcting or punishing him AS SOON AS HE STOPS THE UNDESIRE BEHAVIOR. If you continue, you will confuse him. On the other hand, if you START punishing him when he misbehaves and STOP when he stops, he will soon get your message.

TYPES OF PUNISHMENT

In the animal world, the mother wolf corrects her cubs primarily by sound. She makes various whines, grunts and barks as a form of reprimand. Occasionally, she startles her cubs by pouncing within inches of them. We also have observed her nipping the cub's ear when he is at her nipple too long. She may pick him up by the scruff of his neck and shake him if he misbehaves or displeases her.

Then, of course, there are certain actions that carry their own predictable set of reactions. For example, the young cub soon learns the hard way not to stick his nose into a beehive!

We, as human leaders, can try to duplicate the way the bitch and Mother Nature train their young.

When you catch Fido doing something wrong, make a loud sound immediately. What you say and how you make that sound is irrelevant. You can shout "NO!" or yell "HEY!" or clap your hands.

Some trainers smack a newspaper on the table or blow into a training whistle. An empty can of soda filled with pennies makes a very effec-

tive training rattle.

I personally prefer using my voice for a very basic reason. Since we stated emphatically how important timing is to training Fido, using my voice ensures immediacy. I may not have time to locate my whistle or newspaper to create the loud sound. If your pup does something wrong in the living room and you have to chase all over the house to find your shaker can or whistle, the crucial moment of correction has long since passed.

By the time you blow the whistle in his face, Fido has forgotten what he is being punished for and will become confused at your angry behavior.

Sometimes creating a loud sound will not work because Fido is hell bent on his destructive activity and chooses to ignore you. In this case, we graduate to the next level of punishment and that is to STARTLE. Some dog owners use water pistols while others toss crinkled paper or confetti at their pets. Simply throwing your keys near Fido will startle him into stopping his activity.

Once again, I do not care which method you use as long as your timing is good. A word of warning: While these methods are extremely effective ONCE IN A WHILE, do not overuse them.

Fido will soon get used to the squirt from the water pistol, and it will no longer be effective. It is best to rotate two or three methods to keep them fresh. Put the water gun away for two weeks, and it will regain its effectiveness when you bring it out again.

PHYSICAL PUNISHMENT

It may become necessary to use physical punishment to correct your dog when he commits a very serious act of misbehavior.

Physical correction is ONLY used when both the sound and startling methods have been unsuccessful. Use your head when you resort to this action and not your emotions. Be quick and to the point.

Remember that animals do not hit each other, kick each other or swat each other on the nose with a weapon. To be fair and effective, you must duplicate the bitch's corrective methods by either shaking Fido's scruff while shouting something at him. It will remind him of his mother's rebuke when she shook and growled at him.

Or, you may pinch his ear lobes with your finger tips much the way his four-legged mother nipped his ears when he was a nursing pup.

If you choose the latter method make sure it is a QUICK pinch.

BOOBY TRAPS

The final method of correction is called "booby trapping." It ensures that certain acts of misbehavior are turned into unpleasant circumstances.

One of my four-legged friends thought it was great sport to shred toilet paper. Nothing I could do seemed to have an effect on his habit. One day I unrolled the paper and sprinkled black pepper on it before re-rolling it back into place.

The next time my little shredder went to play with his "toy," the black pepper went up his nose. He quickly learned his lesson.

Another dog was a confirmed waste-basket scavenger. I stuck a rubber snake into the basket so that the next time he foraged through it, the snake jumped out and scared him thoroughly. That ended his habit once and for all.

Still another member of my pack used to steal food off my kitchen counter. One day he found a piece of meat attached to a string on the counter and began to enthusiastically tug at it. Little did he know that I had tied a paper cup filled with water to the other end of the string. When Fido pulled the piece of meat, the water tipped and fell on his head. He never touched food from our counter again.

Remember that punishment alone does not teach. REWARD is the teacher. Once you have arrested bad behavior, be sure to praise the good.

Just as the bitch licks her pups, petting is a good form of reward. She also uses her tone of voice to show her pups when she is pleased or displeased, growling to correct them and using soothing sounds to praise them.

Many dog owners ask me if you can also use food to reward a pup. Certainly you can, but remember that the ultimate goal is to teach your dog to respond to your voice commands and to behave well for its own sake and not a material reward.

DAILY MISCHIEF

Dog owners often come home only to find the results of their dog's misbehavior. It could be a torn couch, toilet paper streaming all over the house or chewed-up wires.

They begin to rant and rave at the poor dog who doesn't understand what all the commotion is about. They may even punish the dog out of fury. What are they teaching their pet? They are teaching him to dread his master's arrival. All the dog knows is that when his master comes home, he will be punished. He does not remember the misdeed.

He then learns a pattern: When the key is turned in the door, hide or get out of sight! The monster has arrived! Naturally, this cycle snowballs. The master becomes doubly enraged finding the results of Fido's mischief and then cannot lure his dog out of hiding. The relationship of loving pet and master quickly deteriorates.

Remember what we said earlier: It is no use punishing a dog after the fact.

Does that mean we should be pleased when Fido, chews up our best pair of shoes? Of course not. It simply means that until we have time to encourage good behavior at all levels, the pup should be restricted when we are out of sight.

Keep Fido in a safe area such as the kitchen or bathroom with all obstacles of danger removed until he is older and wiser (translate that to mean obedience trained).

Advocate keeping young dogs in a CRATE or den when you are not home. It is perhaps the easiest and safest way to curtail the inquisitive pup's activities until you return home to monitor its actions.

What's done is done. Unfortunately, you must accept a few accidents along the way if you are to have a dog as a pet in your home. They do not mean to be bad. They do not mean harm. But it is up to you to teach them what is right and wrong.

CONDITIONING

Conditioning is the more accurate term for dog training. It follows a simple formula:

- Signal.
- Simultaneously demonstrate the meaning of the signal.
- Reward.

The corollary to this formula is repeat, repeat and repeat again. Gradually reduce the demonstration portion of the formula as your dog becomes more adept at performing the desired command.

You will be aiming at the end result:

- Signal.
- Action.
- Reward.

Here are some examples:

I give you a meaningless verbal signal such as "Ug-Mug" and simultaneously pick you up and place you in the corner of the room.

I then hand you a ticket for a trip around the world.

I then repeat the whole process. I say "UgMug," put you in the corner and hand you the keys to a new sports car.

I repeat the sequence a third time, rewarding you with a different gift. Within a short time when you hear me say "Ug-Mug," you will automatically head for the corner, waiting for your reward.

This process is called "conditioning." I guarantee that after a few repetitions that result in wonderful presents, you will hustle your buns into the corner whenever the word "UgMug," is uttered.

I may put hurdles in your way. I may put you in another room and say the word "Ug-Mug", but by now you have been so thoroughly conditioned through constant repetition that you will find your way to your corner despite the drawbacks.

TEACHING FIDO TO SIT

One of the first commands you will want to teach your dog is to sit. Place one hand on Fido's collar-a training or "choke" collar is always the best training tool-and with the other hand, gently but firmly lower his rump.

Lift UP with the hand that holds the collar while simultaneously pushing DOWN on his rump. Say the word "SIT" at the same time you are physically demonstrating the action.

When he gets into position, lavish him with praise. This is his reward.

Now repeat and repeat the same sequence. Always reward him when he successfully performs a "sit." Yes, I know it is time-consuming and repetitive, but I assure you that conditioning is the ONLY way to achieve lifelong results of good behavior. You must have patience.

Set aside at least two (preferably more) short training sessions each day. Make sure you are in a good frame of mind yourself so that you can train Fido fairly: with your brain and not your emotions.

After a reasonable amount of repetitions, you find that you no longer have to push down on his rump - a simple tap on his hindquarters will do the trick.

Again, keep repeating the sequence. Say "sit," tap his bottom, and reward him when he gets into the correct position.

After a while you can eliminate the tap and merely point to his rump when you say "sit." After a reasonable number of further repetitions Fido will sit on your verbal command.

Whether you are teaching your dog to "heel," "sit," "stand," "down," "stay" or "roll over," the formula remains the same:

- Signal.
- Demonstrate.
- Reward.

Then, after the required number of repetitions, gradually remove the demonstration part.

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For the lovers out there, here's a shortcut to teaching your dog to kiss you on command. Simply smear a little butter on your face and say "kiss." After a while, he will gladly give you a smooch when you ask him.

The Most Commonly Asked Doggie Questions

Now that we have outlined the way we should train our dogs, let us examine common situations that occur to new dog owners. We hope that the questions we pose and answer will assist you in all facets of your own dog training.

Remember that the methods and procedures outlined are applicable to ALL breeds of dogs. Although some pooches respond like "butter" to training, others may require more intense work.

Do not give up. Keep an optimistic and positive attitude, and you will most certainly succeed.

1. WHAT EQUIPMENT WILL I NEED?

When you bring puppy home, it is advisable to have his training area ready. As I stated earlier, a crate or airy box is fine for housing a small pup. This is his den. You may also gate off a section of the house, such as a tiled kitchen, for his use.

Have ready a six-foot leash, preferably made of leather.

Buy a choke or training collar that is about one inch larger than the circumference of the dog's neck. If you have any doubts as to size, your veterinarian or pet shop owner can assist you in choosing the right collar.

By the way, for those of you who feel that the choke collar-an unfortunate choice of words-is cruel, let me assure you that it is the collar of choice for humane and effective training. A quick, one-second tug on the collar properly executed duplicates the bitch's method of grabbing her pup by the scruff of the neck to correct him.

You will also need a grooming brush specially designed for dogs, a nail clipper (which you should ask your vet to demonstrate) and, of course, stainless steel bowls for his food and water.

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THINGS TO REMEMBER

You should ask the dog's breeder or your vet to recommend the kind of food that is suitable for your dog.

Make sure that your dog has received a thorough checkup from a veterinarian, and that the dog has had all necessary shots. You should also buy an identification tag that includes the dog's name and address.

Many vets also recommend daily vitamin tablets, and if you live in the South, heartworm pills are heartily recommended.

2. HOW DO I CHOOSE A VETERINARIAN?

Unfortunately, I can only suggest careful investigative reporting to answer this question. Most vets are highly reputable and conscientious, however, you should double-check their reputation and credentials by questioning the breeder or pet shop where you purchased your pet. Ask friends who have pets and whether they are pleased with their vets. If money is a problem, compare fees. The most expensive vet is not necessarily the best.

Trust your judgment. It is just as important to get along with your vet as it is to get along with your own physician. If the two of you "hit it off," that is a good sign.

Another factor is proximity. If the vet your friends recommend lives many miles away from your home, you will dread taking your pet for routine or emergency visits. Choose someone who is close by, so that if something happens to your pet, you can easily transport it.

3. HOW OFTEN SHOULD I FEED MY DOG?

When your puppy is pre-puberty (up to eight months) give it three feedings a day in the amounts recommended by your vet. The amounts should also be listed on the bag or label of your pet's food.

After eight months, drop one feeding, usually the midday feeding. After the age of two, reduce the feeding to once daily. It really doesn't matter whether it is a morning or evening feed. Whatever suits your schedule is fine.

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You may include a few dog biscuits daily as snacks. Many of these commercial biscuits help keep your dog's teeth clean.

I know that many of you give your dog table scraps. If this is your choice, make sure that human food does not exceed 10 percent of the dog's daily diet.

4. HOW OFTEN SHOULD I WALK MY DOG?

Puppies need to be walked at least five times daily. They need to eliminate frequently. Try to walk them right after a feeding, first thing in the morning, and late at night to prevent "accidents." Adolescents, eight months or over, need four walks a day. Adult dogs need only three walks daily. Each walk is a MINIMUM of 15 minutes.

Act prudently if the weather is either terribly hot or brutally cold. Dogs do not have good heat exchange systems. They suffer greatly in hot, humid weather, and can have heart attacks if forced to walk in extreme heat. Restrict your walks to early morning or late evening hours when it is very hot. Seek a sheltered or shady area to protect your dog from the elements.

5. WHY DOES MY DOG BARK?

You should be proud that your dog is exhibiting this behavior. Barking is the dog's instinctive way of sounding an alarm. It is protecting its territory and therefore, by definition of being your pet, it is protecting yours. Barking is Fido's way of saying that something strange is happening so be alert!

6. WHY DOES MY DOG HOWL

Howling is nature's call of grouping. When your dog howls, it is imitating the wolves' signal: "Come to me." Dogs may howl when their master or mistress leaves the room or the house. Wolves use this signal to group for the hunt.

7. WHY DOES FIDO WAG HIS TAIL?

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Many of you will be surprised to learn that a wagging tail is not always a sign of happiness, but rather one of conflict. All back and forth movements in the language of animals means being pulled in two directions. In most cases, it is a "stay or leave" conflict.

8. WHY DOES MY DOG ROLL IN FILTH?

It is frustrating and confusing to see your beloved house pet act like a common animal! But an animal it is and all hunting mammals are born with the instinct to camouflage their odor.

Bears rub against trees, cats rub against whatever surface is available, dogs roll in filth and humans put perfume or deodorant on.

9. WHY DOES MY DOG CHASE HIS TAIL?

It is quite comical to see Fido running around in circles trying to catch his tail! He does this when he is bored. Dogs are social animals who need the company of other living creatures. Many lonely puppies chase their tails, but they soon grow out of the habit.

10.WHY DO DOGS EAT GRASS?

In nature, a wolf also chews on grass. All foliage contains folic acid an important substance that is necessary in a dog's dietary requirements. If Fido feels instinctively that he needs more folic acid, he will chew on grass to obtain it.

11.HOW WELL CAN MY DOG SEE?

Dogs see very well, but in a different way than we humans see. The dog's vision lacks depth perception and it cannot distinguish colors, The dog sees the world as a flat, black and-white movie! Dogs can see better than we can in dim light, and they are extremely sensitive to movement. Hunting dogs, especially, can perceive a distant rustle in the grass or distinguish a bird preparing for flight. They also have a wide visual range of 270 degrees compared to the human range of 180 degrees.

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12.HOW WELL DOES MY DOG HEAR?

At very high pitches, a dog's hearing is far superior to ours. A wolf can hear a howl four miles away! At a low or normal pitch, a dog's hearing is no better than ours.

13.WHAT ABOUT HIS SENSE OF SMELL?

There is a basic physiological reason for the dog's keen sense of smell. A human nose contains 5 million smell-sensitive cells. The canine nose contains 220 million of these cells. When it needs to discern certain smells for hunting or survival, its nose performs millions of times better than ours. If the dog has no use for the scent, however, its nose works no better than ours. It is a question of priority.

14.IF I BREED FIDO WILL IT LESSEN HIS NEED TO MATE?

This myth is absolutely not true. Letting a male breed is not the answer to lessening his sex drive. Allowing him to mate may actually INCREASE his desire. If your dog exhibits strong mating urges that interfere with his daily performance, and you have no personal or professional reason to mate him, neutering may be the solution.

15.WHEN MY DOG FIGHTS IS HE OUT TO KILL HIS OPPONENT?

Absolutely not!!! Dogs are NOT by nature blood-thirsty killers. Normally two dogs will fight for a short period of time before one surrenders to the other. The fight is then over. Dogs tend to make a lot of growling noises when they battle, giving onlookers the impression that they are tearing each other apart. Dogs fight simply to decide which one is the leader, and not because they are blood thirsty. The exception to this rule, however, is the trained dog who has been conditioned to do bodily harm to others. We are all aware of the tragedy of the pit bull, a dog who has been bred and trained to be aggressive.

16.HOW CAN I STOP MY DOG IN THE MIDDLE OF A FIGHT?

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First and foremost, do not play Tarzan the animal trainer and leap into the middle to break up the dogs. When two dogs are at each other, they are oblivious to the rest of the world.

If you can, try to break them up by startling them. Make a very loud noise by using your voice. This way you are safe from an errant bite.

17.SHOULD MY DOG GO TO OBEDIENCE SCHOOL?

Every dog, no matter what the breed, can benefit from obedience school, not only for the sake of the pooches, but for the sake of the owner as well. A good obedience school teaches the owner how to teach the dog.

You may, of course, send your pup away to school and have someone else train it. But you will be missing a crucial point: YOU, the master/mistress, must establish your leadership over the dog. Working with your dog will help you develop a relationship with your pet.

Another plus for obedience school is that it allows your dog to socialize with others of its own kind. He learns to work while being surrounded by distraction.

18.WHY IS EXERCISE IMPORTANT?

I believe that lack of exercise accounts for about 75 percent of behavioral problems. When an animal is bursting with energy it becomes anxious. It looks for a release and usually finds it in some sort of destructive behavior or mischief. A tired dog, on the other hand, can relax, rest and live in harmony with his surroundings.

A well exercised dog is calm and self-assured not jumpy and nervous.

19.HOW MUCH EXERCISE SHOULD I GIVE MY DOG?

Every dog, unless it is physically handicapped, should get as much exercise as possible. The MINIMUM is one hour daily.

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If you can give Fido three hours of exercise daily that is even better, but I am aware that working people cannot always spare that amount of time.

Please remember never to push a dog too hard. It is cruel to make a dog run alongside of you as you bicycle in the mid-summer's heat. Dog's suffer heart attacks, too.

However, walking alone does not allow the dog to release all of its pent-up energy. If your pet is obedient enough to be let off the leash, let it run to its heart's content. Play Frisbee or ball with your pet.

If your dog must be leashed, buy a 30-foot rope and let him run around the park tied to his long lead.

You may be lucky enough to find a fenced-in area so that your dog can run free. If you can find it another dog to play with, all the better.

20.MY DOG IS TOO FRIENDLY. WHAT CAN I DO?

I do not believe there is such a thing as a "too friendly" dog. You may be upset because your sociable pet jumps all over visitors, but that behavior can be quickly corrected through training, not by discouraging your dog's attitude.

NEVER PENALIZE A DOG FOR BEING TOO TRUSTING OR FRIENDLY.

I think that there is nothing more appealing than a smiling, happy dog! I have seen more than my share of aggressive, insecure dogs. These unfortunate animals make my heart sad. Three cheers for the friendly ones!

21.HOW DO I STOP MY DOG FROM NIPPING ME?

Dogs nip to solicit play. They nip at each other's necks, legs and hindquarters as if to say, "Okay, guy, now you can run and catch me!"

When Fido tries to make you play with him by nipping at your hand or leg, immediately scold him. If he continues to nip, take your squirt gun to startle him into stopping. If he continues, shake his scruff and scold him.

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Remember that once he stops and looks up at you with those hurt doggie eyes, make him sit, and then love him up for performing an acceptable act. It may take 100 repetitions to stop him from nipping, but you will see results from your guidance.

22.HOW DO I STOP FIDO FROM JUMPING ON ME?

Set aside a quiet Sunday afternoon to teach Fido the error of his ways. Leave the house from the back door, and enter through the front door.

Dogs have a poor sense of timing, and Fido will not realize that you have only been gone a few minutes. He will greet you with his usual friendly leap.

Sharply raise your voice **THE MOMENT HE JUMPS ON YOU**. When he is back on the ground, bend over and place him in a sit position. Lavish him with love and praise. Repeat this little game again and again.

If you are having trouble making him stop simply by using your voice, then try a noisier method. Clap your hands loudly in front of his face when he jumps up, or bang two pots or pans together. You can also toss a glass of water at him or use the shaker can (an empty soda can filled with pennies) to make him behave.

Remember to **IMMEDIATELY** reward him by bending down, making him sit, and then praising him. It is not enough to show Fido what he is doing wrong. You must reward him for doing what is right.

23.HOW DO I KEEP MY DOG OFF THE FURNITURE?

Quite simply by **NEVER** letting it jump upon the furniture **EVER** in its life. Use the same methods of scolding or startling we outlined in the question above to discourage the dog's behavior. If your dog jumps up on the sofa, let it know you aren't pleased.

As soon as its four paws are back on the ground, give it praise.

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If it tries to climb on the furniture in your absence, lay a sheet Of aluminum foil on your couch. The sound and feel of foil will chase it off the couch for you.

24.MY DOG CHASES CARS. WHAT CAN I DO TO BREAK HIM OF THE HABIT?

To begin with, your dog should NEVER be let loose unless he is very well trained to heel and to come.

A loose, untrained dog is a traffic hazard and a danger to himself. If your pet chases cars even when he is on the leash, you can teach him to stop by using the following method:

Enlist the help of a couple of friends: one to drive, and one to thwart the dog's behavior. Have your friend drive by in a car as you are walking your dog. When Fido leaps at the car, the person in the passenger seat will throw crinkled paper, squirt a water gun or throw confetti at the dog. Repeat this procedure at least 25 times until Fido is well conditioned not to chase cars.

25.MY DOG HATES CAR RIDES. WHAT CAN I DO TO MAKE HIM ENJOY OUR LITTLE OUTINGS?

Again, to get a positive response from your pooch, you must present a positive reward. If your dog associates car rides with unpleasant endings-say a trip to the vet's for shots-he will naturally learn to dislike trips in your automobile.

Take short trips to a nearby park where Fido can run and play. Give him a treat when he gets into the car. He will soon learn that car rides are pleasant experiences. Begin with short distances and gradually build up to lengthier excursions. By then your dog will have made the connection between car rides and enjoyment.

Before you know it, he will enthusiastically leap into the car as soon as you open the door.

26.SHOULD I LET MY DOG RIDE IN THE FRONT OF THE CAR WITH ME?

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The answer is emphatically NO! A dog that is allowed to sit loose in the front of the car may be in grave danger. If you have to brake suddenly, it may be thrown against the windshield. If your dog becomes excited and jumps on you, it may block your vision, causing a serious accident.

Experienced dog owners insist that their dogs stay on the floor in the back of the car. If necessary, keep a puppy tied to where the rear seat belt anchors to the floor.

27. MY DOG BARKS A LOT WHEN I LEAVE HIM ALONE. HOW CAN I CURTAIL THIS ANNOYING HABIT?

Begin by leaving Fido alone in a small room in the house. Leave the room and hide around the corner, within earshot. When he begins to bark, enter the room and scold him.

He'll cease and look up at you innocently. Bend down and pet him, and reassure him that you are always coming back. Tell him to be a good boy and then leave again.

When he begins to bark, come back and repeat the scolding followed by the reward. Look forward to quite a few repetitions before he gets the message.

28. MY DOG CHEWS CARPETS, FURNITURE, ETC., ETC?

I believe that the number-one cause of chewing problems is the type of toy we buy for our dogs. You will recall that we described dogs as "nosebrained". They seek objects through the sense of smell rather than sight,

Therefore, when Fido loses his rubber duckie, he goes around the house sniffing for it. Lo and behold, he smells rubber under your wall-to-wall carpet. Aha! He has found rubber duckie! He then proceeds to chew his way to the underpadding, which is made of a rubberlike material.

That is why I tell dog owners never to give their pets old shoes to play with. Fido quickly "graduates" to new shoes. He cannot tell the difference between your discarded sneaker and your \$100 pair of leather pumps. A shoe is a shoe is a shoe....

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Your best bet is a bleached, hardened bone available at most pet shops. Train him to only chew this bone. Keep him in a sterile environment for 30 days with only the bone to chew upon. After this period, he will ignore other chewable objects, preferring his own bone.

29. HOW DO I PAPER TRAIN MY PUPPY?

Paper training is an effective way for city dwellers or those living in apartments to avoid rushing home to suit puppy's bathroom schedule.

However, it should not be used as a substitute for daily exercise.

Lock Fido in the kitchen for two weeks. Cover the floor with newspaper. Choose one corner as his "bathroom" and add a few extra layers of paper. In the opposite corner lift up the paper, and make him a comfortable bed. In the remaining two corners lift up the paper, and put bowls of food and water. Since dogs instinctively do not like to soil areas near their food, drink or bed, they will avoid doing their "business" in the three corners reserved for these articles.

If Fido messes anywhere but in the designated "bathroom" corner, clean the area thoroughly with an ammonia-based cleanser, replace the newspaper with a fresh sheet, and place the soiled sheet in the bathroom corner.

Fido will soon get the scent of where he has soiled and will most likely go to that old, soiled sheet to do his business.

Within a few days you will notice Fido heading for the desired corner to go to the bathroom.

Now gradually reduce the other papered areas, about 10 percent each day. By the end of your two-week period, Fido will be consistently doing his business on the desired layers of paper, in his bathroom corner.

By now you have reduced his designated area to three square feet.

For the next two weeks you can either lock Fido in the kitchen with food and water and his newspaper or let him roam the house attached to a leash. This way you can observe his behavior.

When you see him sniffing and circling a spot, hurry him to the newspaper. You may have to improve your time for the hundred-yard dash, but once again, timing is crucial.

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When he "goes" on his paper, praise him lavishly.

At the end of this two-week training period, Fido will know he must run back to his corner whenever nature calls.

30.HOW DO I HOUSEBREAK MY DOG?

To housebreak Fido we use the instinct of his origins as a cave-dweller. The den or cavedweller does not mess where he eats or sleeps.

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Birds are free-flying animals-they defecate and continue to fly. Cows are grazing animals-they defecate and continue grazing.

But, a dog is a den-dweller, and by instinct respects his private space.

The trick to house-breaking your pup is to limit his space so that he has no choice but to "hold it" or sit in his own mess.

If you give him too large a space so that he can mess in one corner and sit in another, he will do so.

Therefore, limit his space or den to about 1 1/2 times the length of his body so that he has barely enough space to turn around.

An airy box with a lid is fine for a very small dog, while a specially designed dog crate that can be purchased from a pet store is preferable for a larger animal.

Put him in the crate along with a bowl of food and a bowl of water. Most crates have fastenings that allow you to safely suspend the bowls from the sides of the crate so that Fido will not accidentally upset them. Include his chew bone, too.

Be forewarned that he will cry for his first few days, but stay firm. Do not give in to his cries. This is not a cruel training method. It is most humane and acceptable to the dog's natural instincts.

The first week, walk him every two hours, taking him to the same tree to do his business. Establish a verbal code such as "Fido, let's do our business" or "Fido, let's take a break."

If he does his business at the tree, praise him. Don't be too quick or thorough in cleaning up the mess. Remember that he needs that scent to remember to do his business there tomorrow.

Now you can play with Fido (after he has performed his duty) for 15 minutes before returning him to his crate.

This is how he learns the rules of you and your home. He will not mess on the carpet since he has already eliminated at his tree.

The second week, extend the hours between walks to three hours. You may also expand the play period to 30 minutes.

The third week, Fido must learn to wait for four-hour periods between walks. He is now allowed to play for 45 minutes, but **ONLY**

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AFTER HE SUCCESSFULLY ELIMINATES OUTDOORS.

By the fourth week, allow him to play for an hour in the house.

Remember, Fido can hold his bladder for only an hour for every month of his life. This is a good general rule of thumb. For example, your three-month-old pup can only hold back for three hours. A four-month-old can hold for four hours and so on.

Never exceed nine hours, however, regardless of the age of your dog.

When you reach the maximum time based on the age of your puppy, stay on that schedule for an extra week to truly condition your dog '

From now on it becomes your job to get him to his tree on time. If he makes a mistake, scold him and run to his tree with him, then praise him when he does his business there.

After a while, you may remove him from the crate to a restricted area of the house-such as the kitchen and see how he performs in that area. Gradually increase his space.

31.HOW CAN I TEACH MY DOG TO ASK TO GO OUT?

Stand on one side of the door with his favorite food in your hand, leaving the door open just a crack. Excite him with your voice and the food, asking: "Speak, speak!"

Once he barks, immediately open the door and give him the reward. Continue this exercise a couple of times and soon Fido will realize that when he barks at the door it will be opened to either let him in or out.

Medical Needs

Your dog's good behavior has a lot to do with his good health. Take your new puppy to the veterinarian as soon as possible for a checkup.

When the puppy is six to eight weeks old, he should begin getting vaccinations to guard him against distemper, parvovirus, parainfluenza, canine hepatitis and leptospirosis.

At three to six months, he will need his first rabies shot. The vet will also introduce medication to prevent heartworm disease.

Good grooming is essential to monitor your dog's health. Check him daily for evidence of ticks or fleas.

If you do encounter fleas, enlist the help of your vet immediately to combat the problem before it becomes monumental.

GROOMING YOUR PET

No matter what kind of coat your dog has, he will benefit from regular grooming.

Hopefully you took grooming into consideration when you chose your pet.

Smooth-coated dogs such as Doberman pinschers, Labrador retrievers, and beagles are easy to groom. Occasional brushing and bathing are all that is required to keep this type of dog well groomed.

Keep the ears clean with a weekly swipe of cotton ball dipped in alcohol.

Long-haired dogs with an undercoat-German shepherds, collies, and Old English sheepdogs-have a long outer coat of "guard" hairs and a soft undercoat for warmth.

If your dog has this kind of coat, comb him daily from the skin outward to prevent tangles.

Bathe this type of dog twice annually, in spring and in the fall.

SILKY-COATED dogs, cocker spaniels, Afghan hounds and Pekingese-also need daily combing. They should be bathed monthly, and may require cream rinses to prevent their hair from tangling.

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WOOLY-COATED dogs, poodles and Bedlington terriers-need brushing every few days, and professional trimming or clipping depending on breed type.

WIRY-COATED dogs, such as some types of terriers, schnauzers and Airedales, need professional clipping every six to eight weeks as well as frequent brushing.

CORDING-COATED dogs such as the komondor and the puli, both Hungarian breeds, are best left alone. Consult a professional groomer about how to bathe and care for this type of dog.

NAIL-TRIMMING can be done at home. Use special clippers, and ask your groomer or vet to how you how to trim your pet's claws safely. Clip **ONLY** the curved part of the nail, cutting just below the bloodline.

BATHING YOUR DOG. Always use a dog shampoo, and make the experience as pleasant as possible. Remove all tangles and mats from the hair first, then put the dog in a bath tub on a rubber pad to avoid slipping.

Gently wet your dog's hair, and apply the shampoo. If it is a flea preventative, you must leave the shampoo on for about five minutes. During this time, massage your dog, and talk to him to keep him distracted.

Use warm water to rinse off the shampoo, and make sure the water runs perfectly clear, leaving no trace of soap on your dog. Do not get soap in his eyes or ears. Clean these areas with a washcloth or cotton dipped in water. You may use a little baby oil to swab out his ears, especially if he is a floppy-eared dog, to prevent infection.

Dry your dog thoroughly with a towel and comb-do not brush-his coat to hasten drying.

TRAVELING WITH OR WITHOUT FIDO

Ideally you should get Fido used to traveling with you. However, there will be times when taking him with you is not practical. Airline travel is hard on a dog, and driving around the country with a hungry, thirsty or tired pooch is certainly no vacation.

What are your options? You may board him in a reputable kennel, leave him at home asking a neighbor to come and check up on him,

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hire an in-house sitter or send him to camp!

Most kennels are reputable but cannot offer the individual care and attention your dog may be used to receiving. There is also the danger of spreading airborne diseases when so many dogs are confined within a space.

If you can leave him at home with someone you trust, that is your best solution.

Julie Diehl, of Pompano Beach, Florida, who has made canine boarding her profession, offers a genuine alternative. She houses a limited number of dogs in her home and gives them lots of exercise and "hands-on" care. Here are her suggestions on how to find a good boarding facility for your dog and how to make the stay pleasant:

- Check the facility yourself WITH your dog. You will soon get the "feel" of the environment, and so will Fido.
- Check the credentials of the boarding master with your humane society and your vet.
- Make sure that all dogs boarded have their inoculations.
- Ask about emergency care. Your dog may need emergency care in your absence.

Make sure you sign a release permitting the caregiver to take your dog to the vet for treatment.

- Make sure someone is on the premises 24 hours a day. Many dogs develop "bloat" in the early evening, a condition that can prove fatal by morning.
- Ask about the flea and tick policy. Many good dogsitters will not take an animal who has fleas. Some kennels require mandatory flea baths before and after boarding.

When you leave your dog:

- Be positive. Hide your anxieties so that Fido will not pick them up and be anxious himself.
- Bring all medications or special food he may require. Write out any pertinent information about eating and bathroom habits as well as personality quirks that may help the dog-sitter.

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- Leave a telephone number where you can be reached in case of an emergency. Let your vet know that Fido will be boarded at such-and-such a place in your absence.
- Above all, include some article or item of clothing that belongs to you. Since dogs are ruled by scent, having your odor near him when you are gone is most reassuring.

A Final Word

I have attempted in the space of this short booklet to outline the best method of training your dog to become an obedient and loving pet.

Remember that your pet is not a four-legged person, but an animal. As an animal, he needs the discipline and leadership of his species to learn positive behavior.

I realize that it is difficult to resist those loving eyes that look up at you so innocently. I feel the same way about my dogs.

Although I know that coddling them is wrong, I, too, have been guilty of buying my dogs an ice cream cone. I also love to kiss and cuddle my Dobermans. And, I know there is a time to discipline, and a time to simply let go and laugh at their canine antics.

For example, the other day my wife left a pot of spaghetti sauce to cool on the kitchen counter. One of our dogs decided that the sauce was definitely cool enough for him and dug right in.

When I arrived at the kitchen door, he was paw deep in spaghetti sauce. He looked at me, his jowls dripping with sauce in anticipation of my reaction.

What did I do? Yes, I should have disciplined him right there on the spot, but instead I burst out laughing and ran for the camera to capture the moment for posterity.

Dogs are dogs, and we are human. We will make mistakes in training. But, do not give up. The dog is a most forgiving creature. He will love you no matter what you do.

I sincerely hope that I have given enough guidance so that you can embark upon the successful journey to dog obedience. It is a road filled with obstacles, but one that yields dozens of rewards along the way.