



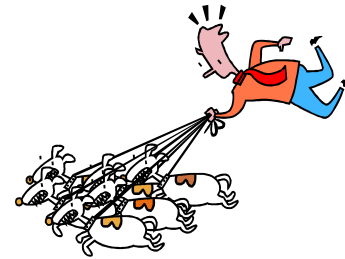
Canine Learning Centers *Doggie News*

“Fall 2006”



Leash Manners

Our dogs need at least one or two good long walks a day. A dog with bad leash manners can be extremely frustrating to deal with and many owners eventually give up walking their dogs altogether. Walking your dog should be fun and relaxing and be an opportunity to bond with your canine pal. It shouldn't be the cause of shoulder pain and stress. Do yourself and your dog a favor by adding more structure to your daily outings. Providing more structure during your walks could amend many bad habits and is the foundation for an overall stronger relationship with your dog.



Establish your leadership by having your dog walk next to you or slightly behind you. Your daily walks should be an opportunity to establish your position in the pack. In a dog's mind the rules are as simple as this: If you are in front, you are the leader. If you are behind, you are the follower. Therefore, a dog who is allowed to forge ahead of you and drag you all over the neighborhood is not only difficult to handle, but is also being allowed to lead the pack.

Most of our dogs have been bred for specific jobs like retrieving or herding. In our homes these in-bred instincts often go unused. Treating our dogs solely as pets that we spoil and dote on takes away their sense of purpose. Have expectations of your dog while walking. Make your dog work. Your dog's job on-leash is to pace itself with you, stay next to you and follow your lead. If you are fit and in good shape, pick up a nice fast pace for your dog to keep up with and don't let your dog slow down and sniff along the way.

Have your dog take care of business before heading out on your walk. Your dog's reason for urinating around the neighborhood is to define his territory and can be the cause of aggression towards other dogs which your dog views as territorial intruders. The purpose of the walk is not to urinate on every bush in the vicinity! The purpose of the walk is leadership and exercise.

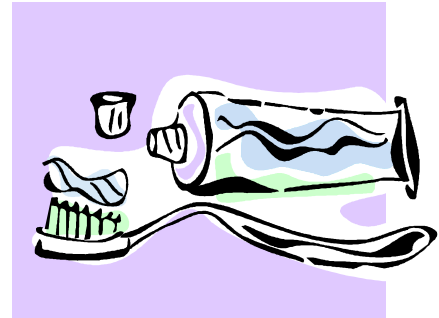
If you've been out with your dog for a long time and you think he may need to go potty, lead him to a good spot and give him permission by lengthening the leash and following him around. Once he is finished resume the walk as before.

By raising your expectations on walks, you will be doing both of you a service. Exercising your leadership on walks will lead to a dog that is more likely to accept your leadership in everyday life. Providing your dog with this newfound structure and mental stimulation will result in a calmer dog in all aspects of life. □



Take care of your dog's teeth

Developing good habits regarding your dog's dental hygiene will make him a much healthier pet in the long run. Gingivitis is our dog's #1 health threat and has been found in dogs as early as age three. Just like humans, our dogs need routine dental maintenance. If plaque is not removed regularly, it will harden into a substance called calculus. Calculus is the yellowish staining you can see along the gum line. If the bacteria build up unchecked, it can cause a whole slew of problems like receding gums and loose teeth. In extreme cases, bad teeth can lead to kidney and heart disease.



Preventing the development of harmful bacteria can be as easy as brushing your dog's teeth. The job is actually not that difficult considering just brushing the outside of your dog's teeth will allow you to reach the areas that need it most. Focus your attention on the outside of the upper teeth. You can buy a specialized doggie toothbrush or simply use a child sized one with soft bristles. Do not use human toothpaste because your dog will swallow it, upsetting his stomach. Dogs find human toothpaste extremely distasteful, so buy specially formulated toothpaste just for dogs from your vet or local pet store. This toothpaste can be swallowed and comes in poultry and beef flavors your dog likes.

If you have never brushed your dog's teeth before, there is no time like the present. Try not to overwhelm your dog in the beginning, instead, take your time teaching him to accept this new procedure slowly. Start by getting him used to you holding his nose still and try massaging the teeth and gums with your finger. Then, move on to brushing a few teeth at a time. Do this over the course of a few weeks until he is comfortable with you spending the time to do his entire mouth. Continue brushing his teeth regularly twice a week.

Realize that eating kibble (hard dog food) is not a sure way to ensure clean teeth. Small amounts of food actually end up mixing with saliva and bacteria and contribute to tartar development. There are however several chew treats on the market that help to keep teeth clean. Some of these should be given with caution because your dog can choke on items like rawhides and greenies. Pig ears are not very effective for cleaning teeth and are also extremely high in fat, as are greenies. Raw bones and Bully Sticks do the job well and have less of a choking hazard. Also, a diet high in meat will lead to a stronger immune system as well as keep a healthier environment in your dog's mouth.

Check your dog's mouth regularly for signs of bad breath or redness of the gums. It is a good idea to get your dog's teeth looked at when you visit your vet. If your dog needs any medical procedures requiring anesthesia have your vet clean your dog's teeth at the same time while it is already being "put under". Some tartar (if it hasn't gotten too bad) can be scraped off without your dog being put under anesthesia. If you have an older or unhealthy pet, be sure to do blood tests to make sure your animal is in good enough condition to undergo anesthesia.

Establish good dental care sooner than later to ensure your dog's health in the future. If you have a new puppy, now is the best time to get both of you in the habit of brushing teeth. Regular dental care is essential for your dog's overall health, so do your dog a favor and get started today!!!□

The Canine Good Citizen Test

The American Kennel Club website describes the Canine Good Citizen program as follows: “CGC is a certification program that is designed to reward dogs who have good manners at home and in the community. The Canine Good Citizen Program is a program that stresses responsible pet ownership for owners and basic good manners for dogs. All dogs who pass the 10-step CGC test may receive a certificate from the American Kennel Club.” To attain a certificate from the American Kennel Club is proof that your dog has reached a sound level of obedience.



CGC Test Items

1. Accepting a friendly stranger
2. Sitting politely for petting
3. Appearance and grooming
4. Out for a walk (walking on a loose leash)
5. Walking through a crowd
6. Sit and down on command and staying in place
7. Coming when called
8. Reaction to another dog
9. Reaction to distraction
10. Supervised Separation

The CGC program is a great start for owners who are interested in following through with activities such as competitive obedience, tracking and agility. It is also a great place to start for those who are interested in volunteering their dogs for Therapy work; the test is often used as basic screening for Pet Therapy programs.

The CGC is affirmation for you, as well as for other members in your community that your dog is educated, responsive and safe in public. “State legislatures began recognizing the CGC program as a means of advocating responsible dog ownership and 17 states now have Canine Good Citizen resolutions.”

As Canine Learning Center Instructors, there is no greater sense of achievement as having one of our students pass the Canine Good Citizen Test. It is the result of lots of hard work and dedication and the result is an attentive well-mannered dog of whom all of us can be proud. It is a great way to ensure that “the dogs we love will always be welcome and well-respected members of our communities”.□

For more information visit the American Kennel Club website @ www.akc.org

What Games to Play

Games are a great way to interact with your dog, but it is important that they be constructive. Some games can do more harm than good. Constructive games are a great way to supplement your training and will serve to strengthen your bond with your dog.



Games you should avoid playing:

Playing rough -

You should avoid roughhousing with your dog. Men are especially guilty of initiating this game. Although dogs love playing rough with other dogs, this behavior shouldn't be displayed towards humans. Your dog will start nipping at people when they show excited or rambunctious behavior, which should be of major concern if your dog is ever expected to be around children. Getting rough with your dog and encouraging him to bite your skin, or pushing your dog away so he lunges back at you, can exacerbate antagonistic behavior. A dog that is regularly allowed to bite down on our hands and arms during play will inflict a more damaging bite if he does so out of aggression.

Keep away –

Another game, which should be strictly avoided, is “Keep Away”. This is where your dog teases you by running past you; he may or may not be carrying a toy in his mouth. You, in turn, respond by chasing after him like you are trying to catch him. But you can't catch him and you never do because he never lets you. Let's be honest, dogs are much faster than we are. This game is a terrible idea and ingrains some incredibly bad habits into your dog. It puts your dog in a very powerful position; he will learn that you can't catch him, which allows him to be in control. This game will ruin your “Come” command, because whenever you try catching him, he will start to play the “keep away” game. This game can go on for hours even when you are “seriously” done playing and you are ready to leave. You will find this situation extremely frustrating but you will only have yourself to blame because you practiced it so diligently during play. Bad idea!

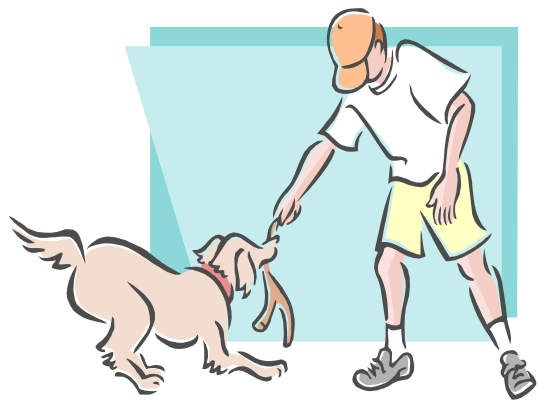
Games you should play:

Tug of War –

Contrary to popular belief, tug of war can be a good substitute for rough play. Although it is not recommended for all dogs (be careful with dogs like Pitt Bulls and bull Terriers which have dangerously strong jaws), **IF PLAYED WITH STRICT RULES**, tug of war can be a constructive game.

The rules:

1. Make sure that you never allow your dog to start the game. For example: if your dog comes up to you and nudges you with a toy in an effort to get you to play tug, ignore him and don't respond. Wait until your dog has given up on the idea before you start playing (make it your idea).
2. Always be the one to start the game and end the game.
3. Break up the session by making your dog “drop-it” intermittently throughout the game.
4. Don't let your dog win. If you start to lose your grip make your dog “drop-it” before he gets it away from you.



5. If your dog gets control of the game don't chase him. Wait until your dog loses interest and then get the toy back.
6. Never let your dog touch your skin with his teeth or else it is "GAME OVER".
7. End up with the toy at the end of the game. Declare yourself the winner!

Tug of war is a good game to play during training and can be used instead of food rewards. This is an especially popular technique amongst those who practice the sport of dog agility.

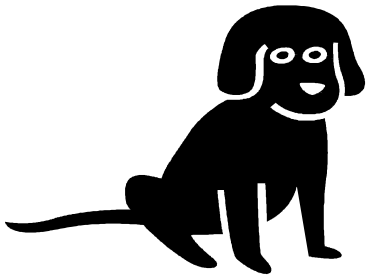
Fetch -

Throw a ball, toy, or Frisbee for your dog. This game is great for relationship building because your dog cannot play this game without you. It is also a great way for your dog to get some exercise. Make sure that you never chase your dog while he has the ball in his mouth and always be the one to start and end the game.

Come -

Call your dog back and forth between two or more people. This is wonderful game to play. It will make the "come" command fun for your dog! It will also strengthen the command while giving your dog a constructive outlet for its energy. Great!□

SEND US YOUR DOG'S BEST PHOTO



ENTER OUR PICTURE CONTEST BY EMAILING YOUR CUTEST PHOTO TO: laura@k9lrng.com

**THE WINNERS WILL BE POSTED ON OUR WEBSITE:
www.k9lrng.com**

GOOD LUCK!!!

UPPER-LEVEL CLASSES

2007 Start Dates:

Del Mar -	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
6:30 a.m. Thurs	1/11/07	5/3/07	9/6/07
	3/8/07	7/5/07	
University City -	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
10:15 a.m. Sat	1/6/07	4/28/07	10/13/07
	3/3/07	6/23/07	
Carlsbad:	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
10:15 a.m. Sat	1/6/07	4/28/07	9/8/07
Encinitas:	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
9:30 a.m. Wed	TBD	TBD	TBD

**** Class schedule is subject to change!**

Cost:

\$100 / for one 4 week session

\$195/ for the entire year (three 4 week sessions)

To reserve your space please call us at 760-931-1834 or e-mail us at Laura@k9Lrng.com