

7 Tips For Training Your Dog

To help you reach your goals and improve your relationship together.



1. Find what your dog finds motivating

Behaviours that are rewarded are more likely to happen more frequently in the future. This means that when our dogs do something that we like eg. come when called or sit when asked, if we reward the behaviour they will be more likely to do it again next time we ask.

For this to work though, we need to use rewards that our dogs actually like in that moment. If your dog isn't interested in toys, throwing a ball for them wouldn't actually be a reward. The same goes for if your dog isn't hungry and doesn't want a treat, offering them food wouldn't be rewarding to them either.

Find something that your dog LOVES and use that to your advantage. You can even use things in your environment, like letting your dog sniff on a walk as a reward for walking on a loose lead.

2. Provide adequate biological fulfilment

As a basic explanation, different dogs have different activities that they were bred to do. If they aren't given appropriate outlets for those behaviours it can cause behavioural issues like nuisance barking, digging, chasing other animals etc.

Using herding breeds including Aussie Shepherds, Koolies etc as an example, if they aren't given an appropriate outlet for their herding instincts they can be prone to developing behavioural issues like chasing/barking/lunging at cars and bikes and nipping ankles when people are walking.

To effectively teach herding breeds to not display those behaviours inappropriately, one of the keys to the puzzle is providing them with an outlet to do those things. A solution is to let them chase and herd a herding ball and to stalk and bite a toy attached to a flirt pole.

Letting dogs practice the behaviours doesn't make them do it more. They are genetically hard wired to do those behaviours anyway, so if we can give them an appropriate outlet, we can then teach them not to do it in other scenarios like when walking past moving bikes.

3. Is your dog getting enough proper rest?

Did you know that young puppies should be sleeping for 18-20 hours a day and adult dogs should be sleeping for at least 12 - 14 hours a day?

If puppies and dogs aren't getting enough quality sleep, they can display a variety of behavioural issues and struggle to learn during training sessions. It is similar to when we are tired after a poor nights sleep and we are lacking concentration and can be more irritable!

If your puppy or dog struggles to get enough sleep, giving them a small cozy area with something to chew on can help them settle down for a nap. Using a crate, play pen or small room like a laundry can be useful for this. Giving them something to chew on can help them settle until they fall off to sleep and reduce the likelihood of them having a tantrum from being overly tired.

4. Seek out professional help when needed

Behavioural issues are solved more easily the sooner they are addressed. There are some really great free online resources for training, but there is also some questionable information.

If you are ever unsure, your best bet is to reach out to a trainer that you trust who can give you appropriate guidance customised to your dog and your situation.

This advice applies to any issue/s that you are having but is especially important for more serious concerns like reactivity, aggression, separation anxiety and resource guarding.

5. How nutrition impacts behaviour

The saying “you are what you eat” also applies to dogs. The higher the quality of the nutrition we give them, the better they can be.

We choose to feed our crew Lyka. Nutritionally balanced fresh food feeding is our personal preference. We love being able to give our dogs a species appropriate, balanced diet that doesn't contain any fillers or questionable ingredients. It is just real, healthy food.

**Lyka have given us a link that we are allowed to share with clients to give a discount off their first 2 orders if they give Lyka a try.
lyka.com.au/join/BESTPAW**

We also love balanced raw food, and when we are travelling we use dehydrated or freeze dried food for the same health benefits without needing refrigeration.

If a fresh, freeze dried or dehydrated diet is out of the budget, choosing the highest quality kibble you can afford and adding budget friendly healthy toppers to boost nutrition is a great option. When looking at kibble, aim for the highest meat content possible and try to avoid foods that have fillers like corn, wheat, rice and soy as some of the main ingredients.

Some healthy topper ideas include sardines in spring water or olive oil (not vegetable oil), whole eggs including the shell, coconut oil and dog safe pureed veggies. When adding extras to meals the general rule is for them not to make up more than 20% of your dogs daily calorie intake.

6. Rule out underlying medical issues that can impact behaviour

Some behavioural issues can be caused by an underlying medical issue like pain or disease. We always recommend getting a vet check to rule out any medical causes before undergoing a training program, but this is especially important if your dog has had a sudden change in behaviour that can't easily be explained.

7. Consistency is key!

Dogs learn through repetition, and to set them up for success we need to be consistent with whatever training we decide to do. If we only work on teaching our dogs to not jump on visitors 60% of the time, they will keep jumping on visitors because of the lack of consistency.

Successful training will actually happen faster if we choose things to work on that we can be 100% consistent with for a shorter period of time. This will help make the new behaviours we are teaching our dogs become their default behaviours.

Thanks for reading! We hope that you have found this useful.

If you would like some individual training help, you can contact us on:

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