

TIPS FOR TRAINING

Help! Fido won't stop jumping up!

Where most dogs enjoy a little jumping here and there, others take it to a whole other level. This article is for those who would like to put an end to jumping. Applying a few consistent principals will make this problem become a distant memory.

The cause:

You've received endless advice on this problem but so far nothing has resolved Fido's excessive jumping. Repeating the same mantra DOWN, DOWN and continually apologizing for his atrocious manners has only produced frustration for you and your dog.

Puppies discover early on that jumping is a sure-fire way to receive attention from humans and is most often when jumping establishes its roots. Roots that carry right into maturity and beyond. Why give up something that worked so well as a puppy? If little Fido is a chronic jumper you can be assured that jumping has produced results, results that have kept the behavior alive.

The Fix:

The fastest way to extinguish a behavior is to make sure it fails. In other words, failure in the sense of zero results. To stop jumping up on you or your guests requires the same consistent failure. Any reaction can be misconstrued as attention by your dog and therefore reinforcement. Pushing away, saying no jump, or any type of tactile can be reinforcement, and by the way reinforcement doesn't just come from you but may also come from well-intentioned strangers.

Extinguishing jumping is only half the battle, you must also be prepared to teach a more desirable behavior to replace jumping. Sitting is usually the preferred option. Upon entering your home Fido will learn to sit instead of jump. Jumping will no longer produce the anticipated response of attention, instead it will be blocked and ignored while sitting magically produces treats or toys. Rehearse sitting often, during times when jumping is most likely to occur. Supplying consequences of failure and success will make learning happen quickly. Desirable behavior produces rewards undesirable behavior produces failure.

As for rewards, let Fido decide what he's most likely to work for. For most dogs that will mean various treats or toys. A good reward is one that gets requested a lot.



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