

## **Behave!**

**Extra info for Web:** Info provided by Candy McKing

The relationship you have with your dog is precious. Your training should strengthen and enhance your relationship. No training must ever destroy the dog's trust in you, their trainer. Therefore anytime you are with your dog you are training it.

Example: You are training the dog not to jump on people. However, while you are at school your brother encourages the dog to jump up because they like the dog to jump up. They even hold food high over the dog's head encouraging the dog to jump!

What is the dog learning? The dog is learning to jump on people. What is the dog getting rewarded for? Jumping on people. Is the dog wrong? No, the dog is doing what it thinks the human wants.

Should you be upset with the dog? No! Dogs can be trained to perform exercises in many different environments, but they must be trained to perform this way. They will behave differently for different people, because they are opportunists. They will do what they think they can get away with.

Dogs are like people because they like good stuff. Dogs always want good stuff to happen. They never want bad stuff to happen. Dogs work with humans based on what they can get out of the relationship. Dogs will try this idea on everything and with everybody. Once you understand this is how dogs see the world, you can start taking control of the dog.

First time trainers/first time dogs:

When training at home, the dog is off leash in a secure and quiet area. In class the dog is on leash.

Collar and Leashes: use gentle leader, halite, flat buckle, martingale or well fitted harness.

Treats should be very small ( $\frac{1}{4}$  inch cube). At home use the dog's regular food.

While training, wear a nail apron to hold treats. Have water available for your dog.

Train your dog these commands:

leave it  
attention  
heel  
sit  
stay  
come  
finish

Use the training technique called luring. Luring uses the food to encourage the dog to follow where the food goes. The food must be held so that it is easy for the dog to take.

The best way is to hold your hand flat with the treat held between your fingers, the same as if you are feeding a horse.

### Come

Come is the most important behavior. Never call your dog to come and then do something unpleasant like trim nails. Even calling the dog to come to go into the house can be unpleasant if the dog does not want to go inside. Dogs are very quick to catch onto patterns of behavior by you. So if you always call the dog to come and then go inside, the dog thinks that is always what happens when it gets called. Surprise the dog: call as if to bring the dog inside but then reward and let the dog go again. Now the dog is confused. That is good. As the trainer you can use this as motivation for the come. The dog is never sure (as long as you vary your behavior) if the reward will be more play time or going inside.

Start at dinnertime. The dog comes anyway when the food bowl is clanging around. Use this time to train “come.” As the dog is moving toward you say the cue “come” and give a treat. Place small bowls of treats or dog food around the house in places where the dog doesn’t expect a treat. Games to reinforce coming when called include Catch me, Ping-pong dog, Hide and Seek and toy throws.

### Leave it

Show the dog a treat in your hand. Expect the dog to sniff, lick, and nibble on your hand but don’t move your hand away from the dog or let the dog have the treat. Say “leave it.” As soon as the dog stops bothering your hand, open your hand and allow the dog to eat the treat. Repeat this 5-10 times.

### Sit

It is easy to find out if your dog really knows this command. Say the word sit one time in a normal tone of voice and see how long it takes your dog to perform your request. If he just looks at you, you know he doesn’t have a clue what you are talking about. Now you can really start to train your dog. Put a sucker in your mouth to remind you be quiet. Hold the food at nose level of your dog. Move the food slowly back over the top of the dog’s head. The dog will look up to keep its nose close to the food. As the dog’s head looks up, his rump will go down and he will sit. As soon as his rump is on the floor, give the dog the food. Say NOTHING. Be sure to move slowly and keep the food right at the dog’s nose. If you are using your left hand you are also training the dog for the sit hand signal. Repeat this 5-10 times.

Now repeat the whole exercise but move to the right of the dog. Then the left. Then behind.

Now repeat the whole exercise in another room.

Now repeat the whole exercise outside.

Now repeat the whole exercise at the park. This is getting pretty boring isn’t it? But this is how your dog learns to perform everywhere anytime.

Putting the sit cue with the behavior: Now that your dog will sit without you saying anything we will add the cue. Start from the beginning. Say the cue “sit” just as his rump touches the ground. Repeat, repeat and repeat.

#### Attention/stay

As you were training for the sit you probably noticed the dog was looking at you. That is attention. To develop attention and the stay, put food in your hand and move it up to your face when the dog looks into your eyes give the dog the treat. Repeat, repeat and repeat.

Don't try to coax the dog to look at you. Wait until the dog looks at you. The behavior will be stronger if you wait and reward when the dog is offering the behavior rather than trying to make it happen. The best and easiest way is to wait for the behavior to happen then reward it.

#### Heel

Start this training after your dog is sitting reliably. Put a sucker in your mouth be remind you to be quite. Put food in your left hand make sure the dog knows where the food is. Sit the dog on your left BUT DON'T say “sit.” Give the dog a treat for sitting. Get another treat in your left hand. Now take one step forward and stop use your hand with the food to get your dog to sit. Repeat, repeat and repeat.

#### Down

Sit your dog. Get a treat and put it to the dog's nose move down to the floor between the dog's legs. Then slowly move the food along the floor in front of the dog until he moves down. If the dog gets up, start over. An alternative method is to lure the dog through your leg. Kneel on the floor. Bend one leg putting your foot on the floor to make a bridge. Lure the dog through your leg. Repeat, repeat and repeat.