



5 Tips Every Dog Owner Should Know

Dog ownership can be one of the most rewarding experiences of your life. Without knowing some important basic information, it can lose some of its enjoyment.

1. 100% Control.

Whether your new best friend is 8 weeks or 8 years old, you and their surroundings are new to them. Until they understand their new home and what the rules are, you must keep 100% control over them. This means give them no alone time unless it is a safe, or what I call "can't get in trouble zone." Crate and kennel training is a must. Leaving a puppy alone even for a moment can be detrimental. Inside or outside, there are too many temptations for a pup to ignore. Some of which can be dangerous. Not to mention if left unattended outside, they may want to explore and not know how to get back home.

The same goes for older dogs. Some may be chewers or a bit stressed by the new environment that may cause them to chew. As we all "no", chewing and ingesting the wrong thing is dangerous for any dog. An older dog may also be confused and not understand their new home. This may cause them to run away in hopes of finding the last place they were comfortable. When not in the crate or kennel, you should be with them interacting or monitoring their every move. This also helps promote healthy bonding for you and your dog. If they don't get in trouble, there is no stress and it becomes a happy home much faster!

2. Set And Build A Good Foundation.

Teaching a dog the rules at the beginning of the relationship will make for a more enjoyable life together. The number one rule is have good doggie manners. We may all have slightly different definitions of doggie manners but these are a few that I believe are important:

- 1) No jumping up on people unless invited.
- 2) No counter surfing.
- 3) No chewing.

I consider doggie manners to be a great controlled dog. How do we get great control? Through training good obedience. By setting the foundation of the 6 basic commands: sit, down, come, heel, focus and no; the manners will follow. This exercise is called "**Foundational Obedience**". The formula to follow when doing Foundational Obedience: "Command it, Make it happen, Reward." By following this simple formula the dog will not be able to fail. When you give a sit command, you can pull up on the leash and push down on the rear end and now you made the sit happen. Immediately after the sit you reward the dog. Do only **ONE** command,

make it happen, then reward it during Foundational Obedience. By spending the time teaching your dog these 6 commands, it will create a smarter, obedient and greater controlled dog. Once a pup is old enough to leave mama, you can start the Foundational Obedience...and yes, you can teach an old dog new tricks. Some older dogs may have good obedience already but you can never go back to the foundation too much. "Good obedience leads to great control!"

3. Train More Than Test.

First and foremost, training should be one of your dog's most enjoyable things to do. Training should be reward based with lots of praise and excitement. When it's time to train, then make sure you do just that. If you are training obedience, then the dog should be on leash. This way you have control and are assured the dog can not fail and form bad habits. If the dog is not on leash or under your control, then you are testing his ability to complete the command. For example, if you are "Training" and the dog is across the yard, not directly under your control, you give a down command and the dog does not lay down, you just "Tested" and the dog failed. If a dog fails too many times, you created a habit of not obeying your commands leading to a disobedient dog. As a general rule, test you dog once every 100 times you have trained. Much of your testing will occur during every day life. When someone knocks on your door, now is the time to test. Give your dog a down command from across the room as you open the door. If you have trained the down enough times, the dog will down and make you proud! When training on regular basis, and minimal testing, your dog will become more and obedient, develop good habits and you both will be happier!

4. 1000 Times Makes an Expert

The best way for a dog to learn is through repetition. As with people, the more you do a specific task the better we get at it. Think of anything you have done 1000 times or more, you are probably really good at it. This applies to our dogs as well. When it comes to obedience, we want them to be an expert at the 6 basic commands listed in lesson number 2. If your dog has trained the down 1000 times without fail, the dog will have an amazing down. What's the best way to get 1000 reps in the shortest amount of time? "**Communication Obedience**". Using the same principals of Foundational Obedience, Communication Obedience has only one difference. You reward after multiple commands are completed. The formula for Communication Obedience is Command it, Make it happen, Command Something Else, Make It Happen, then Reward. Make sure and change up the command order as well as the reward base. For example, give a sit, make it happen, give a down, make it happen, then give a come, make it happen, then reward. Next, start with a down, make it happen, then a come, make it happen, then a sit, then reward. Don't create a pattern. Start with 2 or 3 commands before the reward. Soon, you may be able to do 5 to 6 commands before the reward.



Training in short yet fun and exciting sessions, 3 to 5 minutes, multiple times a day is best. In a 5 minute session, try to complete 20 sits, 20 downs, and 20 comes. Do 3 sessions per day. That's 60 sits, downs and comes in 15 minutes per day. Conducted even 5 days a week is 300 sits, downs and comes in a week. Stick with this for a month and your dog will darn near be an expert! Imagine this over 2 years...!

5. Rewarding Your Dog.

Reward based training is the only way to teach your dog. To reward your dog, you need to understand what most dogs want. The drives in a dog is what makes them work. Drives are best explained by the way a dog reacts to specific stimulus. When teaching most dogs obedience, most dogs will react to 3 or 4 different drives. In working dogs there may be more. The drives I like to use are food, pack and prey drives. Food, of course is pretty easy to understand. Most dogs love treats. When using treats, make sure they are healthy for your dog and use them sparingly as not to make your best friend fat. Pack drive is when the dog wants to please the pack leader, YOU! How do they know you're pleased? By your praise. Make sure you use permissive high pitched and exciting voice tones when saying good boy or girl. Add a pat or rub and then they know they have made you happy. Prey drive comes in 2 forms. One, is "Natural Prey". This is a dog that loves to chase natural prey such as other animals, rabbits, squirrels, cats etc. This drive we don't want to encourage. The other is "Introduced Prey". We introduce a toy, ball or a tug, to take the place of natural prey. Introduced Prey is best used during Communication Obedience as the reward time takes a bit longer.

Dog ownership is an amazing experience. They give back so many benefits both emotionally as well as physically. By following the above tips, you can minimize some of the mistakes that dog owners commonly make. Love 'em, train 'em and remember, Be A Good Dog!

