

FREQUENTLY ASKED DOG QUESTIONS

PROPER PAWS DOG TRAINING

PROPER SOCIALIZATION

Socializing your dog is so much more than allowing people to pet them or letting them play with other dogs. It's about teaching your dog to stay calm and neutral in new locations or around new sounds, how to observe what's happening around them calmly, and most importantly, how to stay focused on you even when surrounded by other people, dogs, or new distractions. Even though our puppies learn these behaviors from the very beginning, and how we handle their socialization plays a huge factor in their training in the long run, it is never too late to re-socialize them to train the behaviors we want.

TEACHING IMPULSE CONTROL

Impulse control is an essential component of your dog's training. Improving your dog's focus and impulse control leads to the ability to resist sudden urges (or impulses). One of the best ways to teach your dog impulse control is to teach your dog the leave it command and how to focus on and seek value through you, even when around exciting situations. This takes consistency and patience. But as your dog's impulse control strengthens, so does the foundation of their training!

SEPARATION ANXIETY

It is essential to teach your dog how to be alone. If you are struggling with separation anxiety allow time for your dog to be in the crate for 20-30 min while you watch TV or are around the house. Not only does this time allow them to decompress, but it will also help them learn that it is okay to be away from you. It is better to work with your dog on separation while you are home vs. only when you leave the house. If you leave your dog in an area such as a mudroom or laundry room, use a doggy gate as a barrier rather than closing the door. By closing the door, you isolate the dog, which can cause anxiety. When using a doggy gate, they can be 'part' of the rest of the home while staying in their secured area.

APPROPRIATE VS. INAPPROPRIATE REINFORCEMENTS

Appropriate reinforcements are the rewards or reinforcers we control to drive the behaviors we want from our dogs—such as giving a treat to pinpoint a behavior once completed. Inappropriate reinforcements are the rewards or reinforcers that work against us and drive the behaviors we don't necessarily want. For example, getting pets when jumping on people, stealing food leading to constant counter surfing or digging in trash cans, playing with other dogs or engaging with people after disregarding a recall, or pulling on the leash. While these are not intentional or purposefully given by the owner, they are still reinforcements that drive the dog to repeat the behavior.

MENTAL EXERCISE

Physical exercise is necessary for our dogs, but it is only half of the equation—our dogs also need mental exercise! By adding mental exercise to our dogs' routines, you can:

- Provide natural enrichment
- Create mental stimulation
- Reduce stress
- Alleviate boredom
- Deter destructive behaviors
- Lessen hyperactivity
- Help burn energy

And more!



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