



## WHY AND HOW YOU NEED TO TRAIN YOUR DOG (AND YOURSELF)

You are about to bring a new family member home and it is an exciting time. A new dog will change your life in many ways. You will grow and learn from each other in so many ways. You will challenge each other and comfort each other. You will frustrate and puzzle each other. But just like any relationship, it will take work, patience, commitment, understanding, respect, boundaries and of course, love to get through it all. **And this is why you MUST train your dog and yourself. Your relationship depends on it and let's be honest, the dog doesn't have a phone or credit card to take the next step so it's up to you. Please. Do not fail your dog. Train now. Train tomorrow. Train for a lifetime.**

### When to start training

Almost immediately! It is fine to give yourself and your dog a week or so to settle in and get used to each other – but don't do so for too long without starting training. Habits, reactions, unproductive routines develop quickly and it's imperative for you both to start out on the right foot! It is better to establish a positive productive relationship than to undo a bad one. Dogs will also go through a transitional phase where many behaviors do not come out for several weeks. Do not be lax in assuming your new dog has no need for training in those first few weeks. Like every relationship, there will be ups and downs and the first few weeks are not indicative of what to expect over a lifetime. Do not put training off!

### Positive Training ONLY!

The Pet Professional Guild defines positive training simply as: "No Shock, No Pain, No Choke, No Fear, No Physical Force, No Physical Molding, No Compulsion Based Methods are employed to train or care for a pet."

It is vital to ensure that you do your homework before engaging in training because you often cannot undo negative, coercive or abusive tactics. Positive training will not only allow you to achieve the results you want but will build on (not suppress or punish) all the great characteristics dogs possess – intellect, instinct, love, energy, intelligence, loyalty! It will enhance the bond between you and your dog, making your lives together the best they can be. We have provided several outlets to find positive trainers in this document. We strongly encourage using professionally trained positive dog trainers who are certified by a system with mandatory ongoing training and education.

### Yes, Training is for Good Dogs Too

Training is not just for bad dogs. It will be tempting to get your dog home and be convinced that your dog is so good he or she doesn't need training because everything is going smoothly. And then, at week three you suddenly start to see new behaviors out of the blue. This happens when dogs start to settle and feel confident in their routine and environment. And owners may start to get a bit lax as well. Nip it in the bud! Training is not only about the dog. It is about you too. There is so much to learn about your dog and how you can be the best companion, guide and owner

to him or her. Training is not just for bad dogs. Training serves all dogs and all people. Too often, adopters wait until negative behaviors are happening to start training. And even more give up on their dogs when they find the time needed to “undo” these behaviors is significant. Do not wait until later. We guarantee you will learn something beneficial!

### **Train for a Lifetime**

Just like the human mind, the dog mind and body benefit from ongoing training and stimulation throughout his/her lifetime. There are many kinds of training available to you and your dog based on age, abilities, issues and interest. Consider finding classes and activities that keep your dog mentally and physically stimulated. A tired dog is less bored, less anxious and usually less destructive. Training can be between and you your dog (after you learn from the professionals). It can include nose work, search and rescue, agility – you name it. Find what works for you both and make it a part of your lives together!

### **Please Don't Fail Your Dog**

It is heartbreaking when dogs are given up after months or years in a home for behaviors that could and should have been identified and properly addressed and managed from the start. This is the best thing you can do for your dog. Millions of dogs still end up euthanized in shelters for behaviors that could have been prevented. We know that not every dog and human will be a forever match. But a commitment to training will save heartbreak, regret and stress on both ends. Our dogs depend on us. Making this commitment is the least we can do for a lifetime of love and companionship. **Please. Do not fail your dog. Train now. Train tomorrow. Train for a lifetime.**

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### **Finding a Positive Trainer or Veterinarian Behaviorist**

#### Training

**Your Dog's Friend**, [www.yourdogsfriend.org](http://www.yourdogsfriend.org) – Amazing organization in the DC area with professional, positive trainers. In-person and online classes (many free ones) and trainers available for individual hiring.

**Fur-Get Me Not** - [www.furgetmenot.com](http://www.furgetmenot.com) – DC area in-person classes ranging from basic manners to nose work.

**Positive Dog Solutions** – [www.positivedogsolutions.com](http://www.positivedogsolutions.com)

**Find a Positive Trainer Near You** – [www.apdt.com](http://www.apdt.com)

**How to Choose a Positive Trainer** - <https://apdt.com/resource-center/how-to-choose-a-dog-trainer/>

#### Veterinary Behaviorists

**Animal Behavior Wellness Clinic**, [www.abwellnesscenter.com](http://www.abwellnesscenter.com)

**Atlantic Veterinary Behavior LLC**, [www.AtlanticVeterinaryBehavior.com](http://www.AtlanticVeterinaryBehavior.com)