

Dog and Puppy Obedience Training â€“ Start Out Right!

Having a trained pet is critical for peaceful everyday living on the part of both dog and dog owner. It does not matter if the dog is a purebred or if he is mixed, if he is strong-willed or mellow, dog obedience training is a must. An untrained dog is unhappy and prone to develop various bad dog behaviors -- and he makes everyone around him equally frustrated. A great many independent dog trainers, as well as dog obedience trainers who teach classes at pet stores, make a common mistake. They often instruct the dog without directing him. This is both unfair and confusing for the animal. Most dog obedience trainers start the dog off with the command "Sit." I prefer to do things a little differently to make it a little more fun for the dog. Before starting, I try to be sure the dog has been to the bathroom recently and that he has not eaten too much, either. Full stomachs make one sleepy, and full bladders make it hard to listen. I take a new dog on a walk first thing and of course introduce him to the command "Heel." I burn off a little energy so he is more apt to listen. When he is intently focused on me, I drop his leash and have him follow me. I correct him if he becomes distracted. What if the dog runs away from me? As I approach, I make him stay where he is through eye contact and the clear hand signal of 'stop.' I then call to him. If he does not come when called, I bring him to me, to the spot where I was when I first called. Never chase your dog if he runs, because chase is a popular dog pack game. Walk with authority and calmness toward him. Bring him back and do it over. Keep practicing the command for no less than five minutes, no more than ten. When do I start introducing my dog to the 'come' command? Only after he has had some challenge to both his mind and body. That makes him more focused on me and more responsive. Until your dog is excellent on commands, do NOT remove his leash. Take him to an area with as few distractions as possible and place him in one spot. Move two steps away and call him to you. Reward him with a few calm pats and lead him back to the same spot. Each time you do it, move a little further away. Tell him to stay when you move. If he comes to you without being called, just put him back in the same spot and do it over. If he does not come to you, do not say "come" again. Make it happen, then do the exercise again. Do not correct your dog at any time if he has no idea what you are asking him to do. Help him do it. He needs to understand the action that you want, then you can put a name to it. Otherwise, you will just make him nervous, anxious, and confused. On the other hand, if your dog is not listening because he is distracted by a dog, person, or some wildlife, the dog deserves to be corrected for not paying attention. Also, as you engage in dog obedience training and everyday life with your pet, do not feel bad about disciplining him and telling him what to do. A pack leader tells his followers when to come and when to stay, and he would not hesitate to discipline any non-responsive dog. There is no wild dog behavior in a dog pack in the wild. The pack respects, trusts, and admires its leader. This is how your dog needs to see you!

About the Author

Rifton Gait Trainers for children with disabilities. Rifton Gait Trainers come in 6 colors.

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