

The Dog Dialogue

from Pawsitive Manners



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Positive Methods. Positive Outcomes.

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Road Tripping with Your Dog

1. Practice Makes Perfect. Before taking off on your long road trip, practice taking your dog in the car for longer periods of time.
2. Plan Dog-Friendly Stops Every Hour. Find dog-friendly parks, trails, beaches or other safe places you two can stretch out at and have a little playtime too. Even a short pee and water break will help!
3. Keep Your Dog Restrained While Driving. It's dangerous for your dog to roam loose in the car! Use some type of restraint like a roomy carrier, car hammock or dog car seat to stay safe.
4. Prepare, Prepare, Prepare (Even for Emergencies)! Do you need something for car anxiety or motion sickness? (check with your vet first) Your dog's prescriptions? If nothing else, pack a pet first aid kit, vaccination list, medical records and current photos.

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LIVING WITH DOGS

Battling Boredom

Dogs are a lot like children. If you don't give them something fun to do, they will make their own fun—and often not in ways you approve of.



Give your dog plenty of physical and mental exercise, and you get a happier, healthier, better-behaved dog. Well-exercised dogs bark less, chew less, sleep more, and rest easier when left home alone. They are also much less likely to rummage through the trash, attack the couch cushions, or pester you while you're trying to focus.

Leash walks are great brainteasers because of all the sensory information dogs get from them, but they don't count as aerobic exercise. Your dog needs to run, swim, or do something else that gets his heart pumping for at least 30 minutes every day.

Workouts for the body:

Chasing a ball or Frisbee. Swimming. Playing tug. Active play with other dogs. Off-leash romps or hikes. And if life is too busy, consider hiring a dog walker or, if your dog enjoys the company of other dogs, send him to doggie day care.

Workouts for the brain:

Work to eat. Biologically speaking, your dog is not supposed to have a bowl of kibble plunked down in front of him. He is a hunter by nature, meant to work for his keep. Mimic this by serving your dog's food in a Kong or treat ball. Your dog will spend the first part of the day figuring out how to get at his food and the rest of it recovering from the mental effort. Perfect!

Toys galore. Toys are a great way to engage your dog's brain. Dogs have distinctly individual toy preferences, depending on the day, time, and situation. Do some detective work and find out what truly tickles your dog. The best toys have a purpose. They deliver food, present a challenge, squeak, or make themselves interesting in some other way.

"There's no psychiatrist in the world like a puppy licking your face."

—Bern Williams

Turning on the Thinking Brain

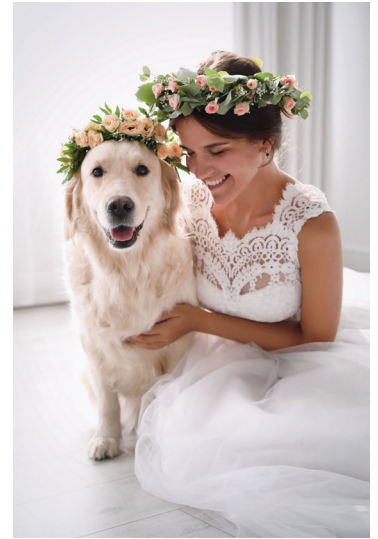
To truly comprehend why food is so powerful, you must first understand the influence it has on the dog's brain. Food has the power to not only enhance a dog's ability to learn but also helps a dog overcome fear or anxiety by raising the levels of dopamine in the brain and stimulating the desire to seek or move towards the food reward. Dopamine is a neurotransmitter that plays a major role in reward-driven learning and helps regulate movement and emotional responses. If a dog is presented with food before he reaches a high stress level in the presence of a stimulus that scares him, a positive emotional response occurs. There are circuits in the dog's brain that encourage seeking or hunting behavior and circuits that elicit the fear response. When you present food to your dog you turn on his seeker system, effectively turning off the fear. This is one reason why using food for activities such as scent work is so valuable for fearful/aggressive dogs. Turning on the thinking brain deactivates the emotional brain, enhancing a dog's attentiveness with positive motivation and allowing him to move into a calmer state where learning can take place. Therefore, because food is incompatible with fear, using food treats for teaching is incredibly valuable, especially when it comes to modifying a dog's anxiety and stress.



A WORLD OF DOGS

Wedding Dogs

As dogs have become increasingly ingrained in our families and daily lives, the number of dogs participating in the actual wedding ceremony of their human parents has exploded. In a trend that's easily trackable in the age of Facebook, Pinterest, and Twitter, dogs in tuxedos or wearing flower wreaths trailing happy couples as they walk down the aisle is an ever more common sight. On duty as ring bearers and flower girls—perhaps even as dog of honor—they pose for wedding photos, socialize at receptions, and boogie with two-legged guests. Some less socially inclined pooches are not physically present during the party but are mentioned in the vows or have their likenesses sculpted into wedding cakes or gracing fancy invitations.



And why not? Dogs are an integral part of the family, so including them in this ancient family ritual is only natural. Of course, when animals are involved, no amount of preparation and practice guarantees a perfect outcome; a sense of humor is essential in case the big day has a few canine-related glitches. Certain commonsense precautions will help keep mishaps to a minimum, though. Don't overdress the wedding dog, for example, lest she spend the entire ceremony trying to wiggle out of her outfit. It also pays to find a wedding photographer who is experienced working with pets—a well-timed squeaky toy can mean the difference between a so-so photograph and a lifelong treasured memento for the living room wall.

If the plan is to include a strong, young, nervous, or high-energy dog in your special day, getting help from a professional dog trainer can be well worth the investment, especially if the designated dog escort isn't used to dogs. Additionally, many wedding planners now offer pet-friendly services that take into account the quirks and demands of furry guests. Short of that, enlist help and back-up dog handling from dog savvy friends in attendance. After all, a wedding is about love and family, and for many of us, neither is complete without our four-legged friends.

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5. Food and Water Travel Bowls Are a Must. If possible, leave that water out while driving too so you pup can have a drink whenever thirsty.
6. Stock Up On Chews, Treats and Toys. You'll want to give lots of love and treats for positive reinforcement.
7. Puzzle toys are awesome to give your pup something to do too while couped up in the car.
8. Pick Up That Poop. Do I need to say more?
Keep Cool. Never leave your dog in a hot car. Ever.



DOGS IN ACTION

Canine Parkour

If you're looking for a canine sport that can be enjoyed anywhere, requires no special equipment, and suits dogs of any size, shape, age, or energy level, canine parkour may be the answer for you and your best friend.

Canine parkour is a creative, flexible mash-up of agility and human parkour, where dogs are trained to navigate environments by jumping, crawling, climbing, and balancing across whatever they encounter in their path. It can be played in any environment, from an urban sidewalk to a suburban park to a forest floor.

And lest you worry you might be required to scale walls or jump from banisters like the parkour wizzes on YouTube, you can participate at your own fitness level, too. Creators, proponents, and trainers of the sport stress its flexibility and inclusiveness. Whether you guide your dog with your own feet firmly on the ground or match him leap for leap, there's plenty of fun to be shared.

To learn more: Read *Dog Parkour* by Anna Louise Kjaer (available at www.dogwise.com), visit the International Dog Parkour Association at www.dogparkour.org, or search for a local class.



HEALTHY DOG

Beware Bloat

Bloat, also known as twisted stomach, is a scary condition that results in death in 25–40% of cases. While the cause is unknown, we know risk factors include eating too fast or too much, drinking too much water, eating one large meal per day, stress, trauma, and a dry food-only diet. Any dog can get bloat, but the victims are overwhelmingly large, deep-chested breeds like akitas, boxers, basset hounds, Irish setters, great Danes, rottweilers, and German shepherds. Signs of bloat are a distended stomach, retching that doesn't produce anything, weakness, drooling, panting, pale gums, a galloping heart, and collapse. If you think your dog might have bloat, get him to a vet immediately.

Preventing bloat: Feed your dog several small meals per day instead of one large meal. Don't let your dog overeat or exercise vigorously right after eating. Don't use a raised food bowl unless your vet tells you to. Vary your dog's diet.

DOG IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Saluki

Also known as the Persian Greyhound these majestic dogs first appear on Sumerian wall carvings dating from 6,000 to 7,000 BC. Notable moments from there include depictions on Egyptian tombs, travel from ancient Iran to China via the Silk Road.

While greyhounds are said to be the fastest dogs, it's a Saluki credited with the Guinness Book of Records' top dog speed, clocked at 42.8 mph.

Salukis may bore easily and are not an ideal breed to leave unattended for long periods; however, they are well-suited to life in apartments, since they are generally quiet and calm as adults. The saluki does not typically enjoy rough games or activities such as retrieving balls, but does enjoy soft toys. Early socialization will help prevent timidity and shyness in later life. Given their hunting instincts, the dog is prone to chasing moving objects, such as cats, birds, squirrels, and bugs.

To share your home with a Saluki, search for a sight hound rescue near you.



10 Tips for Helping Your Dog Be More Social

Socialization is so much more than your dog getting along with other dogs. Think of socialization as how your dog interacts with the world. Sounds. People. Environments. Objects. Footings. Helping your dog build confidence with new experiences can help you both enjoy life more.

1. Get to know your dog. Observe your dog and you'll pick up a lot about how your dog feels about different environments or people. Whatever they are fearful of is an area for thoughtful socialization and confidence building.
2. School yourself on common signs of stress or anxiety. A panting pup isn't necessarily a thirsty one. It can be a sign of stress. Read up on signs of dog stress and anxiety so you know what to look out for!
3. Timing is everything. Reward your dog for staying calm when their trigger shows up. Not before and not after. The treat or toy needs to show up when the trigger does so your dog can start to develop a positive association with it.
4. Strike a balance between training and relaxation. You don't want to force your dog to do something they aren't ready for but you don't want to coddle them either.
5. Be consistent. It's important to give your dog the same signals every time. Make sure others use the same signals too so your dog knows what each one means.
6. A "good job" goes far. We like to hear it and so do our dogs. Praising your dog with treats and playtime is an important part of socialization. Reward their good behaviors.
7. Some rewards are better than others. Know what rewards work for your pup. Toys and treats are awesome but make sure to save their absolute favorites for the big wins.
8. Set your pup up for success. Focus on creating good experiences in environments you can trust and/or control. Go at their pace so they do not get overwhelmed.
9. Radiate confidence and your dog will pick up on it. Regardless of what's happening, if you can remain calm and neutral, your dog most likely won't develop fearful associations. Dog's have an incredible ability to pick up on how their human feels, so do your best to radiate confidence.
10. Don't be afraid to ask for help. Dog socialization and training is a skill. Even if you didn't have any issues with another dog, you could face unique challenges with another one. If you're struggling, contact a positive-based trainer in your area. It can make a world of difference!



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Live Harmoniously with Dogs



The Stoic Dog

Masking pain or illness is an evolutionary survival mechanism in dogs, which can sometimes make it hard to tell when your dog is feeling poorly. Here are some signs of trouble to look out for (when in doubt, always consult your vet):

Activity level changes: Lethargy, restlessness, or a less cheerful dog can mean something is wrong.

Mood swings: Happy one day, grouchy the next? Pain could be at the root. The same goes for a buddy who's happy in the morning, but cranky at night.

Sudden aggression: If an otherwise friendly dog, especially an adult, shows aggression, be sure to include pain as one of the chief suspects.

Loss of appetite: Could be pain, illness, or something less alarming, but a lack of appetite always warrants a trip to the vet.

