

The Dog Dialogue

from Pawsitive Manners



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Positive Methods. Positive Outcomes.

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You're a Dog Mom or Dad If...

- You celebrate your dog's birthday
- You call your pooch their "grandpup" when you discuss your dog with your parents.
- Your phone's camera roll is 99.5% pics of your pup, and you'll happily show them off to complete strangers. In fact, you've made new friends that way!
- You sleep with your dog - of course!
- On holidays that rate a special family meal, your dog gets an extraordinary dinner, too.
- You bake dog cookies more often than you bake for yourself.
- Vacation planning always revolves around your dog.

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LIVING WITH DOGS

A Coffee Date With Your Dog

Sitting with your family at a local cafe, your favorite canine pal lying calmly at your feet, is a dream of many dog lovers. As with many dreams, however, things don't always go as planned. If your dog brings chaos to every outing - barking, knocking over staff, lunging at passing dogs, stealing food from the table - you may need to go back a few steps.



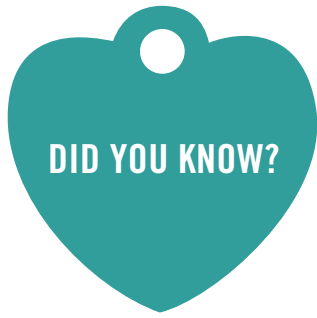
Firstly, it's worth considering whether this is something your dog will really enjoy. Some dogs are calm as cucumbers in any location and just love being included in the party. Others find it incredibly stressful, and a busy cafe environment may be too stimulating for them. The dream of the perfect cafe dog is compelling, but sometimes we have to put these dreams aside for our dog's wellbeing, as well as our own stress levels.

If you do bring your dog along for a cafe outing, set them up for success. Bring a mat for them to lie on, as well as a tasty chew so they have something to keep them occupied (if they're prone to guarding, leave the chew at home). Aim for quiet times of day and keep sessions short. Rather than sitting down for a long and leisurely brunch, start with a coffee - you could even bring a takeaway cup so you can make a speedy exit if needed. Build duration over time and keep an eye on your dog's body language throughout - if they're restless, trying to hide and vocalizing, it's probably time to call it a day.

Still a little nervous? Practice at home! Set up a cafe-like scenario in your house or yard and invite friends over to build in new distractions. Put your dog on lead and replicate what you would love to see out in the real world - lots of rewards for calm behavior and for staying in one place beside you. If you have willing family members, you could ask them to come and 'take your order' at the table so you can reinforce your dog for not jumping up on them.

"We must remain hopeful that a universal ethic of courage, caring, sharing, respect, radical compassion, and love will make a difference even if we do not see the positive results of our efforts... We can never be too generous or too kind."

Marc Bekoff



Day of the Dogs

While you've probably heard the saying 'every dog has his day', did you know that in Nepal all dogs are celebrated on one day each year?

Kukur Tihar is an annual Hindu festival which honors dogs, who are considered messengers for the god of death and justice, Yama. Not only is it considered sinful to disrespect dogs on this day, but they are also offered food such as milk, eggs, and meat. They are blessed with a red mark on their forehead known as a tilaka, and flower garlands are placed around their necks.

And it's not just pet dogs who are recognized - police dogs and stray dogs are also honored on this special day.



A WORLD OF DOGS

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Understanding Fear In Dogs

When we think of a scared dog, what usually comes to mind is a trembling animal hiding in a dark corner or under the bed, whining, his tail tucked. Nonstop barking doesn't often make the list. Nor does shredding of clothes, gnawing through window frames, or growling and lunging at visitors.



But these can all be symptoms of fear in dogs. Fear-based behaviors vary so widely that we frequently don't recognize them as such. Instead, we think of the dog as stubborn or naughty or trying to run the household (the long-discredited dominance theory), which means we end up trying to solve the wrong problem. Clues in canine body language can help us identify fear and anxiety—fear-based behaviors always come with some physical, postural giveaways. It might be muscle tension, a tightly closed mouth, crouching, dilated pupils, yawning, or ears held back, among many others.

Why dogs develop fear-related conditions is a complex question without an easy answer. Genetics play a role (experiments have shown you can breed for fear of people, for example), and so does proper socialization, the all-important early exposure to new people, places, animals, sounds, and objects. Puppies who have positive experiences with new things in the environment are much less likely to develop fear later in life. But that isn't the whole picture, because some well-socialized dogs do develop fear disorders. And again, bad experiences (abuse, accidents) can explain some of those cases, but not all.

Helping a fearful dog takes patience and effort on the part of human companions. Once a visit to a veterinarian has excluded pain or illness as the source of a problematic behavior, a qualified force-free trainer or behaviorist can assess the situation and design a behavior modification plan. Treatment might include desensitization (exposing the dog to something he fears at such a low level it doesn't trigger his anxiety) and classical counterconditioning (pairing something the dog fears with something he loves). The less-than-good news is the amount of time it can take to see improvement. But the good news is that many dogs can and do overcome fear.

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- You've given your dog several silly nicknames — and a middle name, too.
- The very first thing you do when you get home from work is hug your dog!
- Your dog shares your snack or gets a special treat of their own every time you go through a drive-through for coffee or a meal.



DOGS IN ACTION

In Defense Of Penguins

If you're keen for some heartening viewing, you might want to check out the 2015 film *Oddball*, inspired by some real life canine superstars. *Oddball* is the name of the first dog who came to Middle Island in Australia in an attempt to save a rapidly declining population of little penguins. This diminutive species of penguin had been residents on the small uninhabited island for many years, but after being discovered by foxes were almost entirely wiped out. Their numbers plummeted from the hundreds to single digits in the space of just a few years.



Enter *Oddball*, a Maremma dog who knew how to protect a flock of birds. Not a single penguin has been killed since the program was introduced around 10 years ago. Maremmas now patrol the area, keep an eye on the penguins and deter any curious foxes. These dogs are guard dogs, originally bred to protect animals such as sheep and goats from predators. A team of Maremmas continues to be used on the island, and tourists can even take a visit to meet these special dogs and marvel at their penguin saving skills.



HEALTHY DOG

Canine Hydrotherapy

We humans have been "taking the waters" for our health for thousands of years, and nowadays dogs are getting their paws wet for the same reason. Canine hydrotherapy (also called aqua or swim therapy) is essentially warm-water swimming and/or massage for curative purposes—and it can be very effective. Many veterinarians recommend hydrotherapy for athletic conditioning, pre- and post-op care, reducing inflammation around an injury, and relieving arthritis and other chronic conditions. It's also ideal for exercising older or overweight dogs because water supports the body and takes the weight off sore joints.

Canine hydrotherapy facilities are becoming incredibly popular, so if your dog might benefit from this healing activity, consult your veterinarian. They will help to assess suitability and point you in the right direction. Some facilities offer leisure swim time for dogs and owners together. Who needs to swim with dolphins when you can get in a heated pool and play ball games with your pooch?

DOG IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Basenji

This dapper little hunting dog traces her general ancestry back to ancient Africa; carvings of dogs resembling Basenjis decorate the tombs of Egyptian pharaohs. Of the many charming distinguishing characteristics a Basenji possesses, the most well known are her "barroo," a yodel-like sound, and her habit of standing on hind legs to see better, the way meerkats do. Another fun trait is her almost feline obsession with grooming—a pastime she can spend hours on. Despite (or perhaps because of) her acute intelligence, the Basenji is not the easiest to train, but with patience and gentle, positive methods she can be a polite and attentive family companion. In addition to gracing royal tombs and paintings throughout history, this dog's imperial good looks and curious and independent nature has inspired movies (*Good-bye My Lady*) and novels (*Heart of Savannah* and *The Basenji Revelation*).

To give a Basenji a home, search online for nearby rescues.



WEIGHT CHANGES & OTHER OFTEN-MISSED SIGNS OF SICKNESS IN YOUR PET



Pets can't tell you when they aren't feeling their best. That's why it's important to watch for clues that they aren't feeling well. Lots of pet owners understandably miss early signs that their pet is sick. Dogs and cats work hard to hide their illness until they just can't tolerate the pain or fatigue. And some signs – like weight loss in a tubby pet – may even seem like a positive change, instead of a sign of illness.

Be mindful of subtle changes in your pet's physicality or behavior. If you see any of these often-missed signs of sickness in your pet, it's probably time to call your veterinarian for advice or a visit.

PHYSICAL SIGNS

Stool changes. Diarrhea is obvious, but other changes to watch for include constipation, hard dry stool, or a change in color from standard brown to yellowish or tar-like black.

Urinating more or increased accidents. House-trained dogs and cats don't suddenly pee on the floor or bed to get revenge on you. Accidents are often a sign of anxiety or illness.

Increased thirst or a decrease in water intake without a known cause.

Unexpected weight loss or weight gain.

A dull fur coat, or increased shedding or matting.

Increased dandruff or itchy, scaly patches of skin.

A limp or change in gait.

Smelly breath, or pale, yellowish or bluish gums.

An inflamed or drooping eyelid, or the third eyelid obscures part of the eye.



BEHAVIORAL SIGNS

Unexplained changes in your pet's normal daily behavior may be due to sickness. If they have always loved to hang out with you on the couch every evening but now suddenly want to rest alone in a different room, something's up.

Hiding in an out-of-the-way spot is common for cats – and some dogs, too.

Failure to self-groom. Dogs and cats don't enjoy being dirty, and so if they stop cleaning their fur, paws, belly and private areas, they may feel too sick to bother.

Increase in licking a single spot. This could be due to itchy skin, or they could be suffering from unseen health issues like arthritis, infected anal glands, a urinary tract infection, etc.

You are your pet's advocate. Keep up with regular wellness exams and call your vet immediately if you notice any usual changes in your pet's behavior or appearance. Early intervention is the key to a long, happy and active life with your pet.



How To Remove A Tick

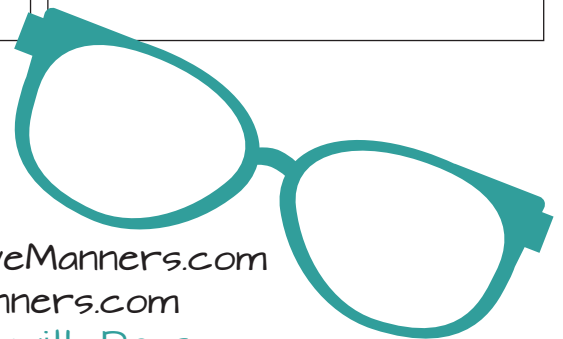
Found a tick? Hurry slowly! As in, get it out right away, but be slow and deliberate about the actual procedure. If you accidentally leave parts of the tick behind, it can cause serious problems. Put on rubber gloves to protect yourself and have a partner hold your dog still. Then:

1. Dab the area with rubbing alcohol.
2. With a pair of tweezers or a tick pick, grab the tick as close to your dog's skin as possible.
3. Pull straight upward. Don't twist, jerk, or squeeze the tick.
4. Disinfect the area, wash your hands, and sterilize the tweezers.
5. Monitor the bite site for the next few weeks, especially if any parts of the tick have been left behind. If you see redness or swelling, bring your dog to the vet right away.



Pawsitive Manners

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Live Harmoniously with Dogs



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