

The Dog Dialogue

from Pawsitive Manners



Positive Methods. Positive Outcomes.



Two-Way Communication With Your Dog

Any harmonious relationship depends on communication, and your joyful life with your dog is no exception. In order to teach her, you're going to need to know how to communicate with her. And in order to talk to her, you'll need to first learn how to listen. If you can do both you can help fulfill her needs and yours, communicate what you need, and solve your problems!. Clear communication will also save you time when teaching.

Dogs whose communication (including body language) is heard and understood can tell us what they need/want in the body language equivalent of whispers. When they don't have to shout, we can build a fulfilling relationship based on mutual understanding.

The first step to clear, two-way communication is learning canine body language.

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LIVING WITH DOGS

Out and About: Setting Your Dog Up For Success

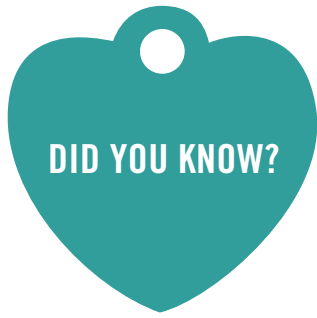
A successful outing with your dog is one that's safe and enjoyable for both of you. As natural and easy as that sounds, it often doesn't happen unless you prepare for and practice it. Here are some tips for making the most of your time with your favorite companion.



- 1. Preparation is half the battle.** Before you go anywhere, think about the challenges you're likely to encounter: bins full of goodies in a pet store, other dogs, people who want to pet your dog, people walking by you at an outdoor café, kids running around in a park, trash on the ground. Decide how you will handle each challenge. Will you move away to create distance? Use treats to keep your dog's attention on you? Use cues your dog is well practiced at (settle, watch, leave-it) to help guide his behavior?
- 2. Be on the lookout.** Actively scan the environment so you can respond proactively to challenges rather than reacting when the distraction is already too close.
- 3. Work at your dog's level.** Is your dog ready to settle comfortably for the full duration of a café lunch or should you start with a shorter visit like a trip for coffee? Has your dog noticed the chew bones in a lower bin at the pet store? A leave-it, let's go, or watch from several feet away is more likely to work than when he has his nose in the bin.
- 4. Set your dog up for success.** If your outing was not as enjoyable as you would like, spend some time at home working on the behaviors your dog struggled with. Then pick an easier outing, such as the park during the morning lull instead of the afternoon rush. Bring tastier treats and go before your dog's mealtime, not after.

"A dog can never tell you what she knows from the smells of the world, but you know, watching her, that you know almost nothing."

-Mary Oliver



How Dog Blood Groups Work?

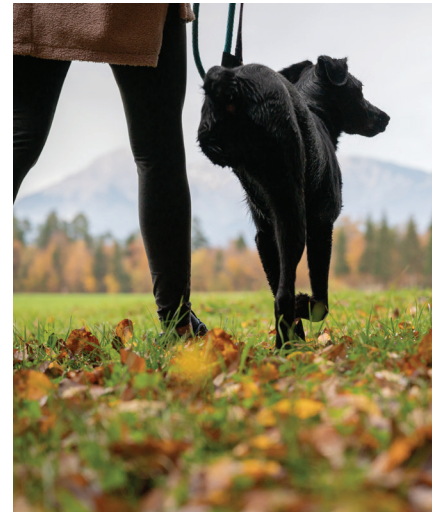
- Dogs have 10-13 blood groups (the number differs by country), categorized by the Dog Erythrocyte Antigen (DEA), a number, and a designation of positive or negative.
- All dogs belong to more than one group and many belong to more than two.
- DEA 1.1 positive dogs—about 40% of the dog population—are what's known as universal recipients (they can receive blood of any type without experiencing a life-threatening reaction).
- DEA 1.1 negative dogs are considered universal donors (but can't tolerate DEA 1.1. positive blood).
- Just to be safe, it's best to have your dog blood typed—that way, you know what to tell the vet in an emergency.



A WORLD OF DOGS

Tenacious Tripaws

A common reaction when people see a three-legged dog is sympathy (“Poor thing...”), or admiration (“What a brave pooch!”). Both are understandable. For humans, amputation can involve complex psychological and emotional issues. For dogs? Less so. Dogs have no notion of body image, no mental image of what they are supposed to look like. What they care about falls into two major categories: One, whether they are in pain. Two, whether they can do things they love: go for walks, play with toys, eat yummy food, get belly rubs, snuggle on the couch, etc. A pain-free, well-fed dog with a loving home doesn't give a hoot that her daily walk happens in the characteristic tripaw hop instead of a four-legged lope.



Amputee dogs, often called tripaws or tripods, generally lose a limb either as a result of an accident or as a means to prevent cancer from spreading. In rarer cases, a congenital deformity makes the leg nonfunctional. The number one cause is canine osteosarcoma, or bone cancer, an aggressive disease that can rapidly spread into other parts of the dog's body. Treatment for this kind of tumor is limited to surgical removal and chemotherapy, and the prognosis is often dire. Radical as it may sound, amputation is usually the best option. Many tripaws go on to live normal life spans after surgery. Because dogs carry about 60 percent of their weight up front, losing a hind leg is easier than losing a front leg. But front-leg amputees adapt too. Even dogs with moderate arthritis can do well on three legs.

Guardians of amputee dogs can also do a lot to make the transition easier. A tripaw-friendly home has non-slip surfacing on stairs and floors, as well as ramps for climbing up on sofas and into cars. A harness with a handle the human can hold can help dogs navigate difficult stairs and uneven ground. Walking on softer surfaces, such as grass, while out and about can put less stress on remaining joints. And a whole range of fitness gear has been developed to help tripaws strengthen their remaining limbs and improve their balance. For the rest of us, encountering tripaws out and about? Love them up like nothing has changed, because, to them, nothing that truly matters has.

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Training is a conversation, and we want our dogs to listen! Before they can learn to listen to us, we need the skills to listen to them. They don't use words, but with a little practice, you won't need them to. Once you can listen so that they can talk and talk so that they are listening, your relationship will deepen in ways you never imagined possible.

Interested in learning more? Contact me today to schedule an appointment.



DOGS IN ACTION

Saving Lives in the Snow

The mention of a rescue dog on a mountain might conjure up a St. Bernard, plowing through snow drifts carrying blankets and whiskey. In reality, you are much more likely to run into a German Shepherd, Border Collie, Labrador, or Golden Retriever. These types of dogs - active, hard-working nose detectives - are the partners of choice for avalanche search and rescue teams. Trained to locate human scent in snow banks, a fully certified "avy dog" can cover 2.5 acres in thirty minutes, an area it would take people four hours to cover.



To an avalanche victim, that speed can mean the difference between life and death. Barring fatal injury, as many as 90 percent of victims survive if found within the first 15 minutes of burial, a figure that drops to 30 percent after half an hour. Avalanche dogs go through rigorous training, all based on positive-reinforcement methods. The handler determines where it's most likely someone could be buried, how the wind is blowing, and then releases the dog to search based on a strategy of optimal coverage. When the dog indicates human scent by digging in the snow and wagging her tail, humans with shovels take over. Every year, avy dogs help save lives in the world's mountainous regions and ski resorts. Are you a skier? Carry dog treats!



HEALTHY DOG

Healthy Foods for Healthy Dogs

Vegan diets are healthier and safer for dogs than conventional meat-based diets, according to the largest study to date, as long as they are nutritionally complete.

The diet and health of more than 2,500 dogs were followed over a year using surveys completed by their guardians. These assessed seven general indicators of health, such as multiple visits to the vets, and 22 common illnesses. The researchers found that, for example, almost half the dogs fed conventional meat-based diets required non-routine medication but only a third of the dogs fed vegan diets did so. A separate study in 2021 found that dogs found vegan diets just as tasty as regular dog food.

For more information visit V-Dog.com and WildEarth.com

DOG IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Bichon Frise

This cheerful and companionable powderpuff hails from the Mediterranean area; bichons traveled widely as companions for sailors, minstrels, and circus groups. Beginning in the Middle Ages and into the Renaissance, they found favor with one royal European family after another, from Spain to Italy to France (King Henry III of France reputedly carried his bichon in a basket hanging from his neck). Bichons are the star performers of the dog world. Consummate entertainers, they love engaging with their people and can play and clown around for hours. The well-socialized bichon is friendly, resilient, and quick to learn. This, combined with a sturdy build, makes him an equally great buddy whether traveling or lounging at home. Despite his classification as a non-sporting dog, the bichon is a terrific little athlete that, with training, can excel at agility, nose work, and other dog sports.

To give a bichon frise a home, search online for a rescue organization near you.



5 Things to Ask Before Choosing a Dog Groomer

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Some groomers are better equipped to care for your dog than others. Before you commit to a groomer, here are 5 things you should be sure to ask.

1. Can I tour your facility? Great groomers are excited to show you their workspace. If you get a tour, take note: Even if fur is flying at the moment, is it clean and organized? Does it seem like a place where your dog will feel as safe and as comfortable as possible?
2. Have you ever worked with my dog's breed or type? If your dog has an unusual coat, a medical or behavioral condition, or is very large or tiny and fragile, ask if they have experience and/or feel comfortable with your dog.
3. How will you keep my dog safe while grooming? You should get answers that address physical barriers and safe restraint, types of equipment, sanitation measures, their techniques to calm an anxious dog, as well as their protocol for emergencies.
4. Can I see a complete list of your services? Grooming packages vary and you'll want to discuss what would be best for your dog, now or in the future. This will help give you an idea of what services the groomer is comfortable offering and will also give you clarity on price points.
5. Why did you become a groomer and where did you learn your profession? Their answers should be enthusiastic and reflect their love for animals. Grooming certification isn't necessarily regulated, so make sure your potential groomer is trained and holds a verifiable credential to prove it.

If your canine companion needs regular grooming to be clean, happy, and healthy, finding just the right groomer is an important choice. Take your time, ask questions, and get to know the grooming professional who will become a big part of your dog's "people network."



Safe Food Storage for Dogs

Food-borne illnesses can affect dogs as severely as humans. Here are some tips for keeping your dog—and his dinner—safe:

Use sealed containers. Clean, sealed containers are essential. Store dry food in a cool, dry place and wet food in the refrigerator. Wash and dry containers between uses.

Wash your hands. Before you prepare your dog's food, wash your hands in warm soapy water, just as you would before handling food for your family.

Wash his bowls. Would you reuse your plate tomorrow without giving it a wash? Probably not and neither should your dog. Wash his food and water bowls daily.

Mind the expiration date. Don't risk feeding your dog expired food. Even if it's safe, the nutritional value is likely to be greatly diminished.



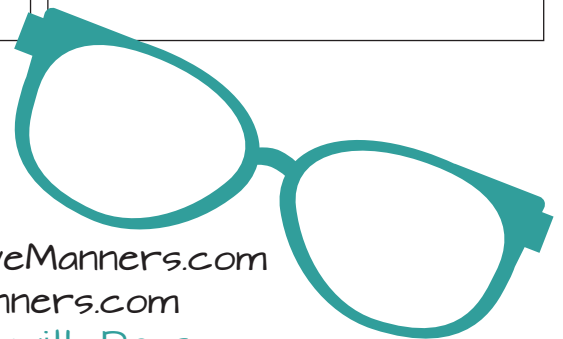
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Live Harmoniously with Dogs



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