

IMPULSE CONTROL

Impulse control training is really important! It helps prevent dogs from engaging in potentially dangerous behaviors, like running into traffic, jumping on people, or chasing other animals. Dogs that can control their impulses are also more likely to follow commands and behave appropriately in various situations, making them easier to live with and take out in public. Dogs that struggle with impulse control may become anxious or stressed in certain situations, so training them to exercise control over their impulses can help reduce their stress levels and improve their overall well-being. Remember, every dog is different, and some may learn faster than others. Be patient, keep training sessions short and positive, and tailor your approach to your dog's individual needs and personality. Make sure to focus on positive reinforcement. A great option is working with a positive reinforcement based trainer who can guide you with training impulse control and basic manners. If you can't work with a trainer, try the tips below.

STARTING OUT

- 🐾 Begin training in a quiet, distraction-free environment. As your dog progresses, gradually introduce more distractions during training sessions (for example, change to a slightly more distracting area with more noise or movement. Example: going from a room to a yard, and then once your dog has mastered that, out in a public place).
- 🐾 Have plenty of treats that your dog likes ready for training sessions.

WORKING ON IMPULSE CONTROL

- 🐾 **IMPULSE CONTROL WITH TREATS:** One way to help your dog develop impulse control is to hold a treat or piece of kibble in your hand, leaving your palm flat and open. If your dog goes to eat the treat, close your hand firmly and ignore licking, pawing, or any demanding for the treat. When they eventually stop to sit and look at you on their own, immediately open your hand and let them have the treat. Repeat this over and over again, multiple times a day and ideally, work on this every day. This will teach your dog to be calm and look at you to get what they want!
- 🐾 **TEACHING "WAIT":** Have your dog sit, and put a treat on the ground at a distance from them. Say "wait" and make a stop gesture with your palm facing your dog. Start with a short duration, like a few seconds. Next, use a release command like "okay!" or "free!" to let them know they can move and have the treat. Practice this frequently, gradually increasing the duration your dog must wait before getting the treat. As they get more practiced with this and are reliably waiting in the original position, you can increase the difficulty by moving the treat closer to them or adding distractions like another person or toy, or making the treat a higher value treat that they like even better.

>>BE PATIENT: It may take time for your dog to master this. If they break the "wait" prematurely, calmly put them back in the original position and try again. Start with short periods of time with this training if they are struggling so they don't get too frustrated.



STOPPING JUMPING: If your dog is jumping on you, the best way to handle it is to turn around and **not** give them the attention while they are jumping. Once they have all four paws on the floor (four on the floor) give attention and treats. Consistently work on this and with consistency, your dog will learn not to jump. They will begin to associate four on the floor with positive rewards like attention and treats, and jumping with getting ignored. Make sure that every time your dog is giving four on the floor you reward them with the attention and love they want, so they can learn exactly what works and what to do!

>>KEEP IT CONSISTENT: Give guests visiting your home your expectations for how to react to your dog when they first enter your home and encourage them to do exactly the same as you do when they arrive, to reinforce to the dog that this behavior gets the same outcome from everyone, not just from you.

WHAT NOT TO DO

Do not punish your dog for unwanted behavior– use positive reinforcement instead! Punishment can cause more behavioral problems long term in addition to making negative experiences for your dog. Rewarding good behaviors teaches them to behave in the way we want them to over time, and no damage is done to develop further issues. These training sessions can also become a bonding experience for your dog and become a fun source of mental enrichment learning new things.