

WHAT IS MANAGEMENT

Management comes in many forms but they all share one common purpose - to prevent your dog practicing undesirable behaviour. Dogs learn really quickly to repeat things that work and rapidly develop habits which are difficult to change. If your dog has started to practice behaviour that you don't want - perhaps counter surfing, bolting out of the door or jumping up at people, you will need to put suitable management in place to prevent things escalating.

The sooner you can do this, the easier training an alternative behaviour will be. Management can be pens or crates to create a safe space for your dog, and prevent access to certain areas of your home. You can also set up baby gates at doorways to avoid your dog escaping when visitors arrive. Leads are great for managing interactions with people and long lines can be used when teaching your dog a reliable recall so that they don't run off to exciting distractions.

Other things which are important include tidying everything away that you don't want your dog to get hold of, providing plenty of toys and chew items for them to engage with and providing outlets for natural dog behaviour to make sure that they are content and happy.

You also want to make sure that your dog has a space they can relax in, where they won't be disturbed by children, other family members or visitors to the home. Don't be tempted to fade out management too soon - teens often regress with their training in certain areas and you want to continue to set them up for success as they mature.



HAPPY TRAINING!

IMPORTANCE OF ROUTINE

During adolescence you will want to be sure to keep a structured routine with your dog. Routines work really well because they create predictability which will reduce frustration in your dog during a time where there are many changes happening for them physically and emotionally.

Every day you will want to provide your dog with physical exercise, mental enrichment, outlets for natural dog behaviour, attention, training and plenty of rest.

Find a daily routine which works best for you both and is most like the long term lifestyle you would like to have. Small variations will help prepare your dog for natural fluctuations in day to day life, but try to avoid any big changes such as redecorating, hosting big family events or moving house where possible.



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FINDING YOUR DOGS MOTIVATION

Just like people, dogs have varying likes and dislikes. When it comes to teaching them new things you need to use rewards that they really want so that they are motivated to work with you.

Some dogs enjoy petting, others love food or play with toys. Your dog might also love environmental rewards such as sniffing and exploring.

Discovering what your dog loves the most, is the fun part.

There are a couple of things to keep in mind... What your dog finds motivating and worth working for is going to change depending on the environment, time of day, whether your dog has eaten recently or how much time they have spent playing, among other things. This means that just because your dog loves something one moment, it doesn't mean that they will the next. You need to have a selection of things your dog enjoys when you're training together, so you will always have something to reward them with.

Have fun trying out different treats and games to see what your dog loves the most.

Food is a great reinforcer for many dogs. It is something that they need each day anyway, so consider using their food allowance to train with. You will also want to look for higher value rewards for times when distractions are higher.

Look at the world around you and watch for things your dog is drawn towards. Recognise these as motivators and think about how to incorporate them into your training sessions.

Think outside the box and keep things varied for the best results.



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TEACHING A POSITIVE INTERRUPTER

There will be times when your dog gets into activities that you don't want them doing. This might be digging in the garden, barking at the neighbours or many other things. These are natural behaviours but that doesn't mean you can't give your dog alternative outlets.

To interrupt unwanted behaviour you can use a positive interrupter. This could be an upbeat sound or word that you pair with something your dog loves so that they start to build a strong positive association with it.

Start in a quiet area of your home. Make the sound and then give your dog something they love. You will need to repeat many times over.

When your dog starts to show recognition, you are ready to practice at random times throughout the day. Every time you make the sound, reach for your dog's favourite reward and celebrate enthusiastically.

In time you will find your dog rushing to you as soon as they hear the sound. Eventually you will be able to get your dog's attention by saying your interrupter no matter what they are doing.

This will give you the chance to direct them to a better activity and prevent them from returning to what they were doing before.

Remember to teach your dog an interrupter well before you need to use it. Train away from distractions at first and build up in stages as your dog's skill level increases.



HAPPY TRAINING!

DITCH THE BOWL

Did you know that dogs naturally enjoy working for their food? If you are feeding your dog from a bowl then you really are missing a great opportunity for enrichment!

Interactive feeders come in many forms, from rubber kongs that your dog can chew to access food, to others which get your dog moving about more actively and using their paws or nose. You can create opportunities for your dog to utilise their incredible sense of smell to find where food is hidden by tucking treats into a snuffle mat or scatter feeding into longer grass.

In fact science tells us that dogs often PREFER working for their food rather than having it freely given.

Give it a try at home! Offer your dog some food in a bowl and put some into a treat dispensing toy and see which they choose first! You may be surprised!

You can even make your own toys by getting creative with items found in your household recycling box. Sprinkle some treats inside of cardboard boxes or plastic bottles. You can even cut some holes to make the treats fall out easier to get your dog started.

This is a great way to create an outlet for your dog's desire to sniff, dig, dissect and chew which will prevent them becoming bored, and is a great stress buster that will leave them content and relaxed.

Have fun making mealtimes an enriching and exciting experience for your dog. Mix it up every day and you'll see a big difference in their mood and behaviour.



HAPPY TRAINING!

DISCOVER YOUR DOGS OUTLETS

Dogs behave in ways that are determined by their genetic make up as well as their life experiences. There will be behaviours that get reinforced because they lead to favourable outcomes in the environment and other behaviours make our dogs feel good on the inside. These are naturally rewarding behaviours and often dogs bred for particular purposes will find similar things enjoyable.

If your dog is genetically geared up to enjoy something it is important that we give them an outlet for this to set them up for success day to day. We need to fulfil their needs on a deep level to ensure their wellbeing and happiness.



If you have a dog bred to chase, for example sighthounds, your dog will likely need an outlet for that drive to chase so that they don't become increasingly frustrated or start chasing inappropriately. Flirt poles, football, playing fetch, and moving treat balls are great options.

If you have a herding breed, controlling movement is a big natural reward for your dog. Herders love to stop and start movement. Outlets such as herding ball games and human tag are great.



Many dogs love to dig, including terriers, bred to search for small rodents. Great outlets include sand pits with buried treasure, paddling pools or designating a digging zone in the garden.

HAPPY TRAINING!

DISCOVER YOUR DOGS OUTLETS

Most dogs love to use their nose and outlets such as snuffle mats or taking them on a sniffari, are great ways to harness this natural enjoyment of sniffing.



Some dogs, including bully breeds, find grabbing and mouthing really rewarding. Giving them a task where they can enjoy using their mouth is perfect as an outlet. You could teach them to bring in the newspaper or enjoy playing tug together. Remember to let your dog win the toy often!



Retrievers and other gundogs LOVE to hold things in their mouth and show them off to you. Encourage them to greet you with a toy in their mouth and play show and tell, where your dog approaches you with an object in mouth and you fuss them before running off for them to follow again.



Some dogs love to shred things. To ensure this doesn't lead to destructive behaviour in the home, provide outlets like cardboard boxes with treats in, shredded paper or egg cartons that your dog can enjoy shredding.

By giving your dog outlets for their natural behaviour you are setting them up for success every day.

HAPPY TRAINING!

LOWERING AROUSAL

There will be times when your adolescent dog gets really excited or frustrated by something that happens in the environment around them. This can cause them to start barking, pulling, grabbing or tugging with their mouth among other behaviours. It can be hard for your dog to calm themselves down.

Keep an eye on your dog's body language and if you notice changes that indicate they are getting more aroused it's a good idea to step in and give your dog something to do to help them de-escalate.

Activities that involve sniffing, licking or chewing are great ways to help your dog relax.

One thing you can do is scatter treats on the ground and get your dog to search for them using their nose. You may need to move further away from whatever has your dog's interest before engaging in this activity to set them up for success.

Getting your dog sniffing and seeking out the food will help them to reset and calm down from whatever has caused them to become more aroused.

Practice doing this when out and about in a variety of situations. The more you practice this with your dog, the more likely they are to start seeking out opportunities to sniff when they feel themselves getting amped up. This self regulation is the ultimate goal, but until your dog is able to do this for themselves, your support will help them greatly.



HAPPY TRAINING!

BEING AN EPIC PET PARENT PT1

Sharing life with a dog is a richly rewarding and wonderful experience. It is our responsibility to ensure our dogs not only have their daily needs met but get to experience the best the world has to offer. Here are 10 top tips to being an EPIC pet parent:

1. Research your dog's breed. Learn about what they were bred for and love to do. This will help you to provide them with outlets for naturally rewarding behaviour as well as understand them on a deeper level.
2. Provide them with a well balanced and nutritious diet and always have fresh water available in a clean bowl. Make sure your dog has regular access to a toilet zone and be attentive to their needs.
3. Create a zen zone for your dog - a quiet, comfortable place to rest so that they can get enough sleep without being disturbed by the daily activities around the home.
4. Select comfortable and well fitting equipment for your dog to wear, including a collar, tag, and harness, as well as appropriate length lead.
5. Ensure your dog gets an appropriate amount of physical activity throughout the day. This can prevent them becoming bored or destructive, but make sure not to over exercise them as they are growing.



HAPPY TRAINING!

BEING AN EPIC PET PARENT PT2

6. Take your dog routinely to the vet and groomer and be sure to make it fun and enjoyable for your dog. Spending time building positive associations early will make a huge difference.

7. Train your dog! From the essentials to fun tricks and games, training is a great way for you to bond and connect with your dog as well as a great way to exercise the brain.

8. Ditch the bowl! Create new and interesting ways for your dog to enjoy their daily meals and provide mental enrichment that will leave them feeling content and happy.

9. Learn all about canine first aid, so you can help your dog quickly in case of an accident or emergency.

10. Go on adventures and explore with your dog. No matter what age your dog is, there are always fun, new experiences to enjoy together. Make the most out of every day.



HAPPY TRAINING!

THE ART OF TREAT DELIVERY

When it comes to training your dog, there are a lot of human skills that will make the job easier. One such skill is the art of treat delivery. Being able to skillfully give your dog a treat in the right location, quickly and without dropping food to the floor can take a bit of practice to get right.

Investing time in playing in games to improve your own dexterity will help you level up your skills and make training your dog much easier!

One game you can play without your dog involves holding several treats in your hand and putting one down at a time on a countertop. Continue until you've placed all of the treats. You can practice with both hands and even time yourself to see how quickly you can accurately deliver 10 treats one after another.

When you are doing really well with this it is time to add your dog into the equation. Stand with your dog on one side of you. Practice rewarding treats one at a time from your closest hand. Remember to bring your hand back to your default position between treats.

When you are comfortable with this you can start to practice on the move with your dog.

Putting in time to master this now, will make it second nature when it comes to training together.



HAPPY TRAINING!

UNDERSTANDING DOG TOYS

When it comes to choosing toys for your dog, there is a lot of choice. Selecting the right toys for different activities and your dog's play style is really important in order to provide an outlet for natural behaviour and level up your training too. Toys can be divided into a few categories. Treat dispenser enrichment toys help fight off boredom and provide mental stimulation. Interactive toys enhance the bond between you and your dog and include items used to play fetch, tug and chase. These toys should be durable but are not suitable for heavy chewing.

Self amusement toys, are usually stronger, and more durable for dogs to play with when home alone. They include the Kong and Toppl among others. Always supervise your dog's chewing style before leaving them alone with any toy. Even the toughest toys are destructible if your dog is a very heavy chewer.

Lastly there are comfort toys, which typically are plush toys, but it can be any item that your dog snuggles up with or carries around the house.

You'll want to have a selection of toys out for your dog to have access to throughout the day but save their favourite interactive toys for use in training sessions together. It's also a great idea to rotate the accessible toys every few days to keep things more varied and interesting for your dog over time.



HAPPY TRAINING!