



# DOG TRAINING

*Helping you and your dog become best friends for life.*

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## **JUMPING**

**OBJECTIVE:** To learn how to stop your dog from inappropriately jumping up on people.

Jumping up to greet us is a very natural behavior for puppies and dogs, yet most people want to actively discourage this behavior. It is not a bad behavior to discourage, as a full-grown dog, at least the larger breeds, could inadvertently knock a child or elderly person to the ground.

Puppies instinctively jump up to greet returning adult dogs so they can lick the corners of the adult dogs mouth. This action causes the adult dog to regurgitate food so that the puppy can eat. This behavior continues into adulthood, as it is how one dog may greet another. We see this behavior more often with domestic dogs than we would in the wild due to our human habits of constant coming and going. The way we live, constantly coming and going, requires lots of ritual greeting activity by our dogs.

Our puppies also jump for another even more basic reason; our faces are several feet above theirs. The only way they can get to our faces is by jumping. Unfortunately, many people actively encourage jumping by the young puppy and then are upset when the dog continues to jump as an adult. If we want to be fair to the puppies we need to establish some consistent guidelines about jumping, and if it is not allowed then everyone, friends, family and strangers need to discourage it.

Many existing dog books recommend kneeling the dog, pinching their feet, or jerking them on a training collar to stop jumping. Is it really fair to punish a dog for a friendly greeting? I do not believe it is.

Dogs jump for two reasons. Either we have not trained them to do otherwise or they have been rewarded for jumping in the past. The easiest way to stop jumping is to 1) stop rewarding them when they jump and 2) train your dog a behavior which is mutually exclusive to jumping (A behavior that the dog cannot do at the same time as jumping, such as a sit).

## **Controlling Jumping Via Behavior Extinction**

Many undesirable behaviors will go away or extinguish themselves if we ignore them. Jumping is one such behavior with many dogs. To eliminate jumping by extinction follow these steps:

1. All members of the family (including children) and people visiting you must not allow the dog to jump. It is confusing to your pet to be permitted to jump on some people but not others.
2. When your dog jumps on you ignore them. You are not to look at them, touch them or speak to them. Just walk away as if they are not there. Often dogs are like children and any attention, even negative attention, is better than no attention at all. When you start ignoring your dogs jumping you will generally see an extinction burst. This means that your puppy will get worse before getting better, jumping even more frantically. It is imperative that you ignore him and wait him out.
3. When the dog ceases to jump he will usually either sit or stand. The instant their front paws hit the floor you click and toss them a treat. You have just rewarded the puppy for not jumping.
4. After your dog is not jumping on you, do the above exercise with each family member and then friends.

NOTE: This process may be difficult if you have a large adult dog, children in the household, or if the dog has a long history of being reinforced for jumping. If this method does not work, please see one of the instructors for some alternatives.