



# THE DOGGY DIGEST

## TRAINING TIPS BROUGHT TO YOU BY MUTTS WITH MANNERS

### **The Incredible, Pet-able Sit!**

'I wanna cookie', 'I wanna go home', 'I wanna go play', 'I wanna have dinner', 'I want that cookie', 'I wanna be hugged', and last but not least, 'I wanna go for a walk'. All of these things probably sound like things children from the dawn of time have demanded, before of course, they learned how to say 'please'. We not only teach our children how to say 'please', but we expect it. In a lot of households, the children who live with us will not get what they want at all, without saying, or depending on the temper tantrum, mutter the phrase...'please'.

Our dogs are similar and can be held to the same standards. They may not have the linguistics to actually say the word 'please', but they certainly have the equivalent. WE call it the incredible, petable sit.

After your dog has learned how to sit on cue by saying 'sit' or giving the hand signal, your dog can be taught that this is how he asks for everything his heart desires. Okay, not everything, but at least some of the things that your dog finds important. By asking for a sit before your dog gets what he wants, he will learn what is expected of him. HE is also learning that communication is a two way street. It is important for the humans and the canines to be able to communicate to each other. Your dog will learn quickly that sitting is preferred over anything else, and that it delivers the cookies, walks, petting and praises much more rapidly than anything else. Staying consistent will also establish some quick boundaries for any new arrivals into your family, and reestablish the rules for existing animals in your home.

If your dog is sitting he cannot engage in a whole host of undesirable behavior. 10 of these include, but are not limited to:

- Door dash out of your home, car, or gate and run away
- Clear a coffee table with one swift wag of a tail
- Jump on you
- Charge his food dish
- Counter surf
- Steal food from your kids
- Play 'keep-a-way'
- Hump, bump or goose innocent by standers
- Knock you, your children, or elderly family members down
- Be a bully

Training is an ongoing process. This is crucial to understand if you are going to teach your pooch how to say 'please'. All interactions should be looked at as a training opportunity. You are always rewarding a behavior in your dog. What are you consciously, and unconsciously teaching your dog? An important question to ask is, would this behavior be okay with me if my puppy or dog was 100 pounds? Would jumping be okay then? What about pulling on the leash as you walk him? Barking for attention? Setting clear and kind rules and boundaries are just as important for our canine friends as it is for our children.

As Dr. Ian Dunbar says, 'If you want your puppy to follow the rules, don't keep them a secret.' I will take this a bit further and add, and please don't wait until you have a problem. It is far easier to prevent problems, than to counter condition them.

**Most importantly, keep it pawsitive!**