



# THE DOGGY DIGEST

## TRAINING TIPS BROUGHT TO YOU BY MUTTS WITH MANNERS

### **4 Pawsitive Tips for Teaching Your Dog Not to Jump, and How you May be Reinforcing it**

After coming home from a long day of work, the last thing we want is your dog jumping on you to greet you. The truth is, dogs are social animals and it is hard for them to be away from their family for eight or more hours a day. Teaching them not to jump is a good way to remedy this embarrassing and obnoxious behavior!

Off is an impulse control behavior, meaning your dog has a choice to make in each situation. The impulses the dogs are learning to control with "come" are the desire to pay attention to or chase after something that looks more interesting and they have to choose you over everything else in their environment. With "off", they have to control their impulses to jump on you due to excitement and do something else instead.

1) Four on the floor- Reinforce your dog with food, access to a favorite toy, praise, and affection every time he has four paws on the floor. ANYTIME he greets you, a visitor, or a stranger on the street he should be praised heavily and given a little yummy for doing what we prefer. If there are only 2 or 3 paws on the floor, ignore him as best you can but reward immediately when four are on the floor.

2) Training an incompatible behavior can help teach your dog what to do for a greeting instead of not jumping. A dog cannot jump and sit at the same time; For really exuberant jumpers, you can even train them to lie down. This is done by telling the approaching person to ignore your dog until he sits. If he gets up as they approach, they should back away and wait for you to get him in a sit again. Dogs can quickly learn to stay in that sit position to get the pets and love from the stranger or family member.

3) You can also teach your dog to displace his excitement on something else, like a toy he can put in his mouth. If your dog has a favorite toy, like a squeaky toy, ball, tug toy, or something else, you can reserve that for giving it to them when you walk through the door, as a visitor comes in, or when you are having a conversation with a stranger on the street. Continue to praise your dog when he has four on the floor, even though his mouth is holding onto a toy!

4) In some instances, especially with dogs that have separation anxiety, the calmer you are the better they are. Ignoring your dog (not looking, talking, or petting them) for the first few minutes you arrive home or until they calm down (not jumping, whining, or barking) will get them to understand quickly the behavior you reinforce is a calm dog.

There are many ways to reinforce your dog for NOT jumping. Food, toys, praise, and petting are just a few. But, how might you be reinforcing the jumping behavior? Have you ever heard that negative attention is still attention? It is for your dog also. So when you do walk in the door, and your dog jumps, stop yelling, pushing, laughing, and making eye contact, because you are reinforcing the very behavior you want to extinguish. By definition, anything reinforcing that is added to a scenario, will increase the likelihood that the behavior will occur again. So, it doesn't matter if you are laughing and squealing or yelling and pushing, your dog thinks it is fun and will continue to jump on you.

A regular exercise program will help give your dog a consistent outlet for his energy levels. The more energetic of a breed or breed mix he is, the more structured and consistent his exercise program should be. Your dog needs a social life also, so at the very least, walk him every day.

Remember, your dog does not see the world the same way you do. He cannot tell the difference between your work clothes, exercise clothes, or evening gown, so as always, consistency and positive reinforcement are where the magic fairy dust is.

**Until next time, keep it pawsitive!**