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DOG TRAINING TIPS

The Woof! guide to dog training and behaviour



1. Rewarding good behaviour is the central tenet of good dog training. Focus on initiating and rewarding good behaviour rather than waiting for the dog to misbehave and then punishing it. You should praise your dog for behaving well at least twice as much as you correct the dog for misbehaving. Not only is doing so more fun, but also much easier.

2. Make training sessions fun. Dog training does not have to be a chore. If you sense that the dog is getting bored, stop the training and re-evaluate how you can make it fun for you and your dog.

3. Never punish your pet for coming to you or by calling it. Since dogs associate the last action with the reward or punishment, the dog will think it is being punished for coming to you. In time the animal will stop coming when called. If you do have to scold your dog, go to it, catch it in the act and then scold it.

4. When rewarding a dog with food, keep the size of the treats small to begin with. This ensures that you can give the dog a large number of rewards without filling him up or adversely affecting his diet.

5. A sense of humour is necessary when training a dog. Not only will it make the training session more fun, but the dog is also more like to obey you if you are cheerful and upbeat.

6. Whenever possible, use your dog's name positively, rather than using it in conjunction with punishment. Your dog

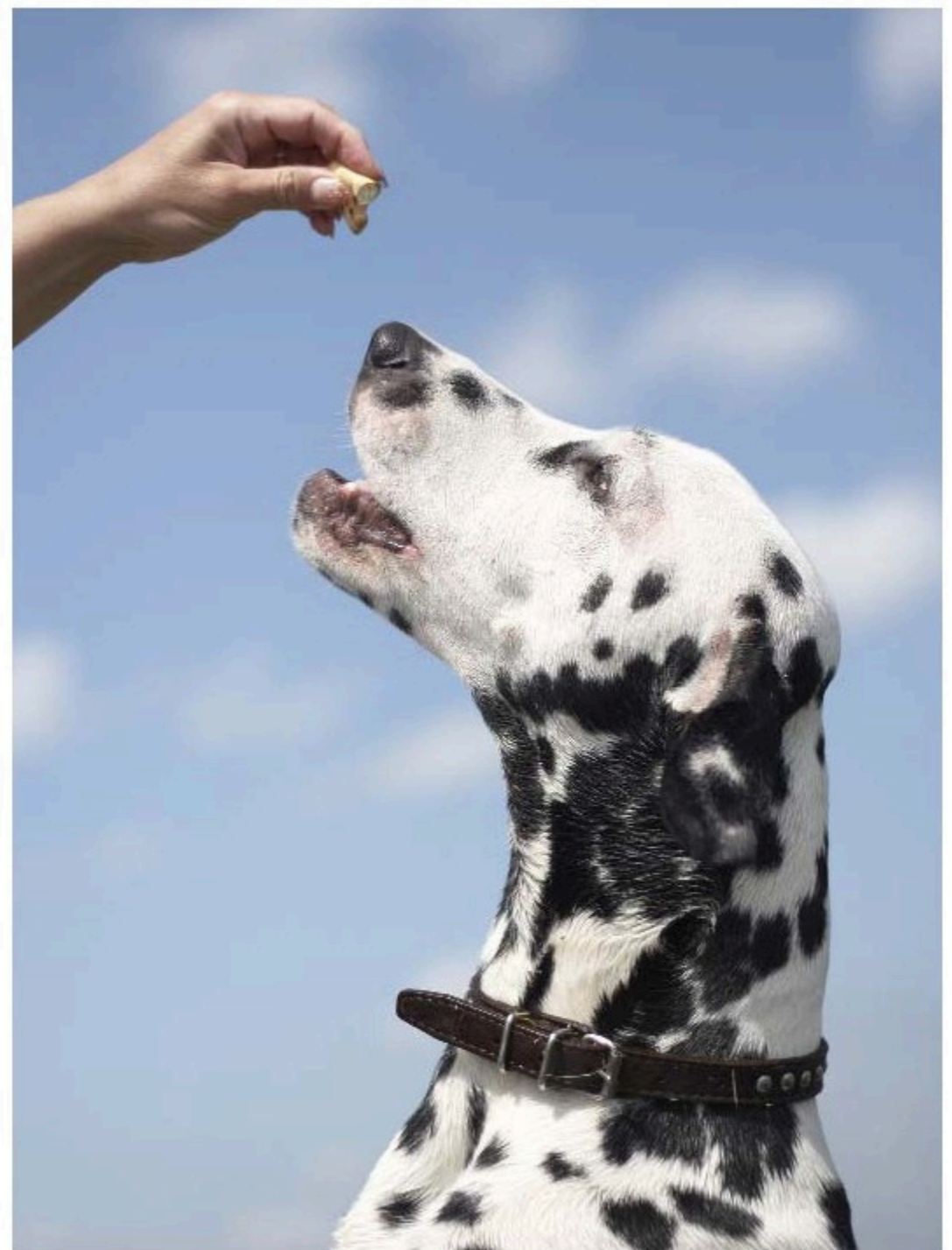
should trust that when he hears his name or is called to you, good things happen. His name should always be a word he responds to with enthusiasm, never hesitancy or fear.

7. A good trainer has oodles of patience.

8. Trained dogs have more freedom and an easier life than their untrained counterparts.

9. Dogs are not deaf. There is no need to shout a command to a dog. A command that is spoken clearly with the correct tone inflection will have the required result.

10. When giving a command make sure it is clear and distinct and use the same





word for the same behaviour each and every time, especially during the initial stages of training. Everyone involved with the training should use the same commands. For example, it is confusing for a dog if one person calls him Blacky, another calls him Black and a third calls him Blackjack.

11. If you only pay attention to your dog when he misbehaves, you might be rewarding bad behaviour unintentionally. Make sure you reward your dog for good behaviour; otherwise your dog might seek your reprimands as attention. Since this could be the only attention it gets, he won't mind even if it is negative.

12. Keep any corrections short, sharp and well defined. Don't nag the dog.



13. You can make your training session more fun by breaking it midway to play a game with your dog. If your dog enjoys playing fetch, whip out a toy as a reward for obeying a command and play with it for five minutes before resuming your training. It always works in perking up a dull training session.

14. If you become angry or frustrated whilst training, stop the training immediately. Resume the training only after you have calmed down.

15. Every time you callout your dog's name, your dog should respond by immediately looking at you. If your dog doesn't bother to pay attention to his name, you need to work hard on getting him to respond.

16. Do not punish a dog just because you are mad at it or to get even with it. Earning your dog's respect is never accomplished by yelling, hitting or handling your dog in a harsh manner.

17. Dogs communicate with other canines through vocalisation, body language and touch. Incorporate these elements into your training session.

18. End your training sessions on a good note with your dog obeying a command. If your dog is having difficulty with a particular command, switch to an easy one, get your dog to carry it out, reward it and end the session. It will go a long way in ensuring that your next training session starts on a good note.

19. Be confident when training your dog. If you are hesitant or unsure, your body language and weak commands will convey this and chances are he won't listen to you. A lack of confidence will also make the dog feel less secure in your abilities and judgement as the leader of the pack.

20. It is easier to prevent undesirable behaviours than to put them right.

21. Let your dog relieve himself before training it – dogs don't work well when they need to potty.

22. It is wise to integrate training into your daily routine.

23. A dog that obeys out of fear and submission is not a happy, well-trained dog. The truly obedient dog is one who obeys because he wants to.

24. A reward or a punisher must be given immediately or within two seconds of the act for the dog to associate it with the action. A good trainer is one with an excellent sense of timing.

25. Never hit a dog when training it. Not only does it hurt, but the pain also causes the dog to fear you and can put the dog off



training. Over a period of time the dog will lose trust in the owner.

26. Be consistent. Don't let the dog jump sometimes, don't let the dog get away with undesirable behaviour once in a while because its cute. Be consistent!

27. A reward should be something the dog absolutely loves, for it to be effective. What you think is a reward, may not necessarily be viewed by the dog as one.



So choose your rewards carefully.

28. Avoid playing games with your dog that will encourage rowdy or aggressive behaviour. Games that teach a dog to bite at clothing, nip at the arms and legs, and wrestle with people should be discouraged. Any game that elicits a growl from the dog must immediately be stopped. Games such as hide and seek, fetch, and scenting games will channel a dog's energies in a creative way.

29. The tone of your voice and your facial expression are important when communicating with your pet. A dog will pick up on your tone of voice long before he learns a word. When praising your dog make sure to keep your tone pleasant and your face smiling. When scolding, a low gruff tone and a frowning face will ensure your dog knows you're upset. Many owners confuse their pet by praising and scolding in the same tone of voice.

30. Your dog is a canine. Your dog's behaviour is perfectly normal for your dog. Respect that and treat him like one and not as a human being. Otherwise as the saying goes - 'treat your dog like a human and he will treat you like a dog'.

31. A simple collar or a martingale collar and a leash are all you need to train a dog.

32. When you start training your dog, make it easy on him and you by teaching in a quiet, non-distracting place. Once he has mastered the commands you should practise in different places like your compound and local park to get him used to working with distractions around.

33. Once your dog has mastered a command, don't withdraw the reward completely. It will cause the dog to lose interest or perform only when he so desires. The right way to use rewards is not to stop them, but to vary them. Varying the rewards will make them unpredictable to the dog's mind, thereby causing him to carry out the command every time just out of curiosity to see what the next reward will be.

34. Always praise your dog for behaving well.

35. Soft treats such as cheese, sausage and egg work better than hard treats (such as biscuits because the dog can eat them and get on with the lesson more quickly.

36. You don't need to dominate a dog to train it. It is easier and much more fun to train him if he thinks of you as a best friend he can trust.

37. Only ask a dog to carry out a behaviour it would do naturally in the wild. Jumping through rings of fire, climbing a tightrope, performing somersaults or getting a small dog to stand on a larger one are not tricks, they are cruelty.

38. Your dog should have total trust in you. Your dog should believe if it does what you ask, no harm will come to it.



Thus, even if the dog is unsure it will respond and trust your judgement. Trust is also important for a reliable recall.

39. When you give a command, don't let your dog ignore it. Always enforce commands that you give, and don't constantly repeat commands. Every time you give a command that is neither complied with nor enforced, your dog learns that commands are optional.

40. Your dog is a living, breathing, thinking creature, not a robot. Enjoy his uniqueness, accept his quirks and work with, not against, his personality.

41. Don't worry if you make a mistake whilst training your dog. Learn from it and move on. Dogs are extremely forgiving by nature.

42. Before giving a command, first get

your dog's attention by calling out his name. If your dog is occupied with sniffing the ground, he won't know that you are talking to him. It is more effective if you first get him to look up at you and then give the command.

43. It is unfair to train a dog that is sick or under medication. Not only will the animal not respond to the training, but it can also cause him to associate it with something unpleasant.

44. Building a relationship with your dog takes effort, just like any other relationship. Try to include your dog into your lifestyle it's working together that makes you a team.

45. If you want your dog to listen to you, don't talk too much. If you talk all the time, your dog won't pay attention to you when you say something special.

46. Your dog's basic nature and breed characteristics cannot be changed, but they can be channelled in a positive direction using a bit of training and intelligent games.

47. Avoid giving your dog more than one command at a time. It is difficult for him to come to you and sit at the same time.

48. Every dog will hit a learning plateau at some point in his

training. There will be days when your dog learns quickly and then there will be days when he is impossible to teach and behaves as if he has forgotten all his training. It happens. Your dog hasn't forgotten everything; it's just a phase he is going through. At such a time, get your dog to carry out a simple command and end the training for the day with that.

49. Ensure your dog gets plenty of socialising during the first four months. It leads to a happy, well-adjusted, friendly, secure dog, thus making future training much easier.

50. Don't rush dog training. Teach your dog one command at a time and don't move on until he gets it. Dogs need time to absorb what you're teaching them. If you rush through training, pushing your dog too hard, you will build a sloppy foundation.

51. A halti or a head collar is a far kinder and easier tool to use on a pulling dog than a choke chain. 🐾

