

SoCal Dog Training Tips & Tricks



FREE SOLUTIONS:

This article reflects years of research from thousands of books, internet articles, and training sessions. Although these practices can help you with your dog issues, they do not all reflect the training practices of SoCal Dog Training's proprietary methods. Please visit our training philosophy page to discover our method of training.

PERSONALIZED TRAINING:

With so many training programs out there, it can become more and more difficult to get a solution that is tailored for your situation. We offer personalized training for whatever situation you might be facing with your puppy. The tips and tricks provided in the article are for general use, if you are looking for more specific help, please contact us today!



We frequently get specific questions from owners on behavioral issues that they are dealing with. Below is one of the most frequently asked questions we receive.

Nip Jumping in the Bud

Question:

How can I stop my 1-year-old Labrador, Buffy from jumping on my guest? My friends and family won't come over, anymore. Last Friday night Buffy jumped on my girlfriend and knocked her over, causing her to hit her head on a table. I have tried to ignore the dog by turning my back when she jumps, but it doesn't seem to work. I dearly love my dog, however; I am also a very social person. Help, before I have no friends or social life left.

Answer:

Let us look at how this all began. As an 8 week old puppy, everyone came over to see Buffy. She put her little paws on them and guess what? They picked her up; after all, she was so cute. What did Buffy learn, whenever people come over suddenly she gets a lot of attention and if she jumps up, they pick her up. Now suddenly when she becomes 5 months old and a lot bigger, now when she jumps, some people still pet her while others start pushing her off, and give you a dirty look. By the time she is 7 months old, nobody is happy including Buffy. Jumping always brought her the pleasure of being petted. Now everyone is yelling, pushing her, grabbing her collar or keeping her locked up when a guest arrives. This only makes her bark causing, even more, yelling and frustration for you and Buffy. Our poor Buffy never learned how to meet people or how to contain her excitement and is now paying the consequences. What is cute when your dog weighs 8 pounds isn't cute when they are 60 pounds. Prevention is always better than the cure.

NEVER LET YOUR DOG RAISE ITS BODY ON YOU. The worst offenders are people with little dogs. Actually, do you know that the worst behavior problems that people have and we deal with stem from small dogs? Why?

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Because they spoil them, that is why. The puppy is so small cute and helpless, so we pick up this puppy for everything. You would think that small dogs were never born with their own 4 legs. This puppy will never get too big to pick up and when they gently jump on us you barely feel them. So why care if they jump, everything they do is so cute. Except for this morning you are wearing nylons and they jump, they came in with muddy paws, your friends come over all dressed up, or your child's 7-year-olds friends come over and the dog jumps on their bare legs. You can not have your cake and eat it too, as dogs do not understand the difference between when it is rainy (muddy paws) and when it is not.

What about our attention seeking dogs. These dogs that unless you are giving them your undivided attention they will purposely act up to get your attention. They tried sitting pretty in front of you and they were ignored. Now they bring their toy and we ignore them, however; suddenly they jump on you and you give them attention. Though negative, it is attention. We all want attention whether it is at work, school or home. We like to be told when we are doing a good job. The bottom line in order for your dog to learn manners they need to know when they are wrong and when they are right. By making your dog work for a living and rewarding good behavior, then your dog won't think they have to jump on you just for you to acknowledge their existence.

You might be asking what type of job should I give my dog. If only they could do dishes. All we need to do is make our dog do a little obedience. Once in a while call your dog to you and make them sit. Now you can give them hugs and kisses. Make your dog sit stay before you feed them, sit stay before you just throw their toy etc. This way your dog is getting positive attention for doing positive activities.

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Let's look at pack mentality and hierarchy. When two dogs meet, the more submissive dog will lower their body to show homage to the more dominant dog. When puppies play often the more dominant puppy will put their paws on a more submissive puppy's back. Very dominant dogs will actually jump and wrap their paws around the owner. They are letting the owner know who they think is boss.

We need to recondition your dog to understand that jumping isn't acceptable behavior. Have you ever seen dogs jump on a rose bush? No, because Mother Nature knows how to protect their beauty with thorns. You see Mother Nature knows 3 major components, timing, consistency, and motivational. When the dog jumps on a rose bush, who is the trainer, the bush; when your dog jumps on you who is the trainer? You. For very sensitive dogs just turning your back and ignoring them works. However; your high wire sporting dogs or a hyper terrier could care less if you ignore them. They will just now jump on your back. One of our clients, had an instructor, from another school, try to stop their Labrador from jumping by turning her back. After 25 times, the dog was still jumping. Just not as high. The instructor said, "See it works the dog is slowing down". Actually, the dog was just getting tired. I will never advocate kneeing a dog in the chest or stepping on the back paws or any other potentially dangerous corrections.

We do need to find which behavioral interruptible approach will work with your dog. Always start with the gentlest and simplest first. If this doesn't work we may need to escalate. For sensitive dogs that don't like water we could squirt them with water, others clapping your hands and stepping forward works. We can also use a shaker can every time they jump. For our really hard headed dogs, we might need to give them a leash correction every time they jump. Remember trying to solve one problem is often like putting a band-aid on a gaping wound. If you implement the whole Alternative Canine Training system than you have a far better chance of establishing long-term satisfaction.