

**Training Guidelines**

*“Having a trained dog is a decision that the handler makes everyday.  Training happens by choice not by chance. Remember, dogs are learning 100% of the time and whatever is reinforced you’ll get more of, good or bad…”*

**Handler Praise:**

* How and when we provide verbal or physical praise to our dogs is extremely important and should not be taken lightly.  Often times we see owner's nonchalantly and freely touch the dog and talk to the dog. Leading to dogs spending most of their lives over stimulated and most importantly *CONFUSED* about what you actually want.  Consciously and consistently we should be praising a calm/stable state of mind as well as appropriate behaviors with “Good Dog” as a verbal marker.
* One of our recommendations is to practice being strategic with your praise (food, petting, toys) and encouraging the dog to EARN those things by giving you want you want first and then they get what the want.  Also known as Premack Principle or Grandmas Law.

**Feeding Ritual**

* “NO free lunches”.  The dog should not free feed/graze – it should be on a schedule so that you know the dog is hungry. Then we are able to use food as a “motivator” to tune-up training or teach new behaviors. Run your dog through its commands and hand feed him as he goes.
* If you don’t have 5-10 minutes to spend “feeding/training” then place the dog in a sit or down and set the food down without the dog breaking command.  If the dog does move issue E-Collar stimulation and command the dog back into position and then release it to food once eye contact is made.

**Structured Play**

* We 100% encourage you to play with your dog.  It’s a wonderful opportunity to bond and enjoy each other’s company.  It is important to note that the training rules still apply. For instance; if you put the dog into a sit or down position and then throw their favorite toy, the dog must remain in that position until they are released with the “break” command.  If they get up when you throw the toy then you must correct them and put them back into position.
* We also recommend that during your play times you practice mental challenges as well as physical.  Instead of throwing a ball repetitively for 15 minutes come up with creative ways of changing the game.  For example, place the dog in a down, throw the ball, walk 20 feet in the opposite direction of the ball, then recall the dog to you.  Once he has completed the recall THEN release him to go retrieve the ball. Keep them guessing by changing up the routine.

**Verbal Cues**

* Remember to not overuse or constantly repeat verbal cues. Say the command- whether it is sit, down, recall, place or heel- give the dog ample time to move into position. If he chooses not to comply issue a “No” accompanied by a stim and then issue the command again.
* The only time a dog is allowed to leave a command is when the release command is given or have told the dog to take another position.
* Sit/Down/Place all have an implied stay and need a release issued to be successful.

**Leash & Collar inside the house**

* Don’t hesitate to utilize a leash and collar inside the house.  This ensures that you are able to clearly direct the dog on his/her new skill sets.  Minimizing confusion on the dogs part.

**The Walk**

* Do not put the leash on when the dog is excited and certainly don’t chase the dog around to put the collar on. Recall the dog over to you and wait for them  to settle and calm before strapping on the leash.
* Once the dog is leashed put them in a “down”, open the door and step outside (check your surroundings) Call the dog to a “heel” and proceed on your walk.
* Remember to keep the leash loose (or dragging) and finger on the stim button to be ready to give the dog any information that is needed.
* When walking follow the 80/20 rule. 80% of the time the dog should be in command and 20% should be free time for the dog.  That 20% is when the dog can smell around and “do their business”.
* While you are on the walk, if your dog becomes distracted by other animals or breaks his “heel” say “No” and simultaneously issue a stim. Follow up with a “heel” command.  If necessary give yourself more distance from the distraction.
* Upon returning home feel free to spend some calm time with the dog while removing equipment and giving them access to fresh water.

**The Car: Entering/Exiting and Riding**

* Begin the exit of the house like you would be leaving for a walk.
* Utilize a sit or down while opening the car door (make sure to give yourself enough room to open the door).
* Use a “place” command when loading the dog into the car. The dog should remain in one spot and settled during the ride.

When exiting the car, treat the dog as if it is leaving the crate, the dog is not to leave the car without a command being issued. My recommendation is to stand 5-10 feet away from the car and call the dog with a recall cue. Then place in a sit or down while you close the door.

**Vet/Groomer**

* Once the dog is out of the car put them in a “down” for 3 minutes.
* “Heel” the dog over to a safe space to let the dog eliminate.
* Then “heel” the dog through the front door - remaining in control the entire way through the threshold.
* Once you’re seated, place the dog in a “down” until your appointment.
* Firmly deny anyone wanting to touch or “say hi”. Politely say “Sorry, he’s in training.”

**Utilizing a crate or other boundaries**

* When bringing the dog home the dog should have its leash on for at least the first week. It will make crating the dog much easier as you will have a tool to help you direct the dog into the crate if need be. Remember, when you are closing him in the crate, remove his training collar and leash.
* To crate the dog; call the dog to you with the recall cue. When he is a few steps away point into the crate and issue a “place” command.
* The door of the crate should be able to be opened and closed without the dog coming out- if the dog tries to come out remind them that  they must stay inside until released.
  + If the dog is not responding to the stim/command and re-entering the crate, don’t fret, pick up the leash and redirect the dog into the crate.  Practicing in and outs can be done repetitively to clarify.
* Your dog should be placed in the crate or on a place command for **at least an hour a day** with you at home so the dog knows how to act in its crate with the world still going around it. It will also let your dog know every time it’s in there it does not necessarily mean you will be leaving. In addition to it being great practice to keep the dog calm and quiet when you’re not there.

**Training Basics**

* In the early stages of training, your dog should be under a lot of control. Manage the dog heavily now so he/she can earn freedom later.
* Once the dog is placed into a command; people or other animals should NOT be allowed to touch the dog.
* KEEP CALM! ☺ If you want a calm dog it is safe to assume that your dog wants a calm human. Yelling is counterproductive. Be calm but assertive and confident when issuing commands.
* Practice makes patterns! The more you train with your dog the better he gets- the less you do the less likely he will be to respond quickly.
* An exercised dog is a happy and well-balanced dog. Walks and playtime are a must! Playtime is a perfect time to blow off steam but with structure! Try placing the dog in a “down” throwing the dogs ball and waiting for it to drop, THEN release the dog. The dog will have the best reward for staying put after it’s released!
* “What you pet is what you get!” If you are petting a nervous/barking dog you are reaffirming that you want that behavior. **STOP!** Let the dog settle and then give affection. If the dog reverts back to the behavior, withdraw affection until it calms again.



**List of Verbal Cues**

* **“Come”:**The dog returns to you and STAYS in your personal space until released.
* **“Sit”:** The dog takes a seated position and stays until released.  (proofed at 5 minutes)
* **“Place”:** The dog stays on a predetermined object (mat, bed, rug, etc) regardless of distractions until released.  (proofed at 2 hours)
* **“Heel”:** The dog remains in your personal space while you’re moving.  When you stop, they stop.  You set the pace and the direction of the walk.
* **“Down”**: The dog is to take a lying position. (proofed at 30 minutes)
* **“Free” (release cue):** Dog is free to move from their current behavior or position.  While they are “free” they are not allowed to pull on a leash, run off, jump on someone, be destructive, dangerous, etc… use your leash or e-collar to set boundaries.
* **“No”:** A simple corrective word for any inappropriate behavior or deviation/break of a command.
* **“Load Up”:** Used to get a dog into the car.
* **“Off”:** Used to get dog off of people, furniture, bed, counters.
* **“Out”:** Used to get dog to drop a ball or toy.
* **“Do your Business”:** Used as a cue to  instruct the dog to relieve himself, give more leash but stay planted where you are.
* **“Go lay down” (informal command):** Meaning give me some space and go find a place to lay down.  \*\*No Release Command (‘OKAY!) Required\*\*
* **“That’s Enough” (informal command):** Meaning to stop engaging in whatever you were doing.  Great to use for excessive barking or when stopping play with other dogs.
* **“Stay” (informal command):** Meaning to stop/stay behind a particular threshold or doorway indefinitely or until invited through.
* **“Let’s Go” (informal command):** Meaning to follow me or to come.
* **“Inside”:** Used to get a dog into their crate.
* **“Wait”:** Used to get a dog to take a moment and wait whether it’s for food, during a walk, at thresholds, etc. as they wait for their next command or release.
* **“Leave It”:** Used to leave something alone.
* **“Go Get It”:** Used to go get something.
* **“Climb”:** Used when desired action is to climb up or onto an object.
* **“Hup”:** Used when desired action is to jump up on or over something.
* **“Back”**: Used to get a dog to move back.

We utilize Foundation Style Dog Training ™ as our standard for all of our training clients.  The pyramid below is the roadmap for the system and one should always start at the bottom and work towards the top when working to change a dog’s behavior.

