



10 Common Problems Of An Adult Dog

Written By
Nancy Richards

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Introduction

When you adopt an adult dog you do not have much idea what his previous experiences have been. Therefore, much of his behavior may be a surprise to you. Even if you have researched his breed(s) and think you know what to expect, he may not act that way at all due to being neglected or abused or left for long periods without human contact.

Wherever you get your dog – breed rescue group, shelter, and foster care – ask questions and find out as much as you can. Often the people who have been around the dog for a few days or a few weeks can tell you quite a bit about his temperament and habits. Ask if he seems to be completely housetrained, how he does on a leash (balks, pulls), how he is with children and with other dogs and other animals, if he shows aggression or shyness, and if there are specific things he seems to fear.

It is always a good idea to assume your newly adopted dog has never been housetrained. If he has, he will go through the process quickly and successfully. If he has not, it may be the first time it was really done on a consistent basis and makes sense to him. It is your job to be really watchful, consistent, and patient. When he does the right thing, praise him lavishly. If he does the wrong thing, you must catch him in the act or you cannot say anything.

Other problems that may show up will be different from those of a puppy and will need to be dealt with differently from dealing with a puppy. If you are patient and persistent and you praise your dog when he does the right thing, you will be successful in training him to be the kind of dog you wanted. If you have problems, do not be afraid to consult a breeder, a veterinarian, an animal behaviorist or a professional dog trainer for other ideas.

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Housebreaking Issues

Many dogs end up in shelters or breed rescue sites because of housebreaking issues. In many cases the previous owner was unable to housebreak the dog or was simply lazy or inconsistent in housebreaking the dog, thereby blaming the dog and getting rid of the dog.

You may be told of the housebreaking issues or you may not find out about them until you have your dog at home and discover puddles or gifts. Just because the previous owner was not successful at housebreaking this dog does not mean you will have difficulty with housebreaking.



Some breeds are more challenging for housebreaking than others – examples are Bichons Frise, Beagle (and many scent hounds), and Dachshund.

If you have a newly adopted dog of one of these breeds, you may want to consult a breeder of the breed and/or a veterinarian for ideas and help. That is not to say that you cannot housetrain your dog, only that it might be a bit a long process with special challenges requiring extra patience and persistence on your part.

Typically dogs will not soil the area where they sleep. However, a dog that was kept in a crate (like at a puppy mill or pet store) day and night has learned to urinate and defecate in his sleeping area. Therefore, he became conditioned to living dirty and smelling the smells of his own pee and poop. Using a crate as part of this dog's housetraining will not be successful; it will be counterproductive – as you will soon discover.

The steps you need to use are outlined here. The key is **BE CONSISTENT** and **BE VIGILANT**. Whenever you are not home, put him in a crate or 'his room.'

- ✓ Create a space that will be 'his room.' It is preferable for it to be a utility room or kitchen or bathroom with a floor you can clean easily (not carpeted) and a doorway where you can put a gate. Keep him in this room whenever you cannot watch him carefully.
- ✓ When it is time to 'go potty,' put the slip collar and leash on your dog and walk him around the yard. Start him on the leash even if your yard is fenced. That gives you control over where he potties and whether or not he goes into flowerbeds.
- ✓ Take him to whatever area of the yard you have designated his "potty place." Stand still but allow him to go as far as the 6-foot leash allows finding the right spot to potty.
- ✓ Use whatever word or phrase you have decided will mean 'go potty now.' You may need to repeat it in a couple of minutes.
- ✓ Let him sniff. Let him wet as often as he wants. However, if he marks flowers or bushes or wanders into areas where you do not want him, jerk him back sharply about 6-8 inches and say "no" in a firm voice. Do not let the dog step out of the

boundaries of the yard. When he gets to the boundaries, jerk him back and say “no, boundary.”

✓ If he does not potty, take him back in the house and put him back in ‘his room’ or his crate and try again in 15 minutes.

✓ When he finishes pottying – either urinates (pees) or defecates (poops) – praise him in a very upbeat voice. Say something like: “Good girl” or “good job, Joey.” Look directly at the dog (in his eyes if possible) when you say it. You may rub his head or under his chin if you want, but do not roughhouse with him.

✓ After he potties (or, if he doesn’t potty, wait about 15 minutes) it is time to take him into the house, saying to him, “Let’s go into the house” in a very happy voice. This will set the stage for his coming into the house *any* time you say “house” to him and will be invaluable.

✓ You should give him limited freedom in the house, if he potties inside. Allow him in 2-3 rooms for up to 45 minutes but watch him carefully. If he sniffs like he is going to potty, take him right outside to his potty place.

This is the routine you will use with your dog every couple of hours during the day – every day for the first 7-10 days.

During the first month, **DO NOT**:

1. Let the dog out of the house by himself.
2. Take the dog outside of a fence without a slip collar and leash on him.
3. Allow him outside his crate or ‘his room’ without your direct and constant supervision.

After the first week or two (as long as your dog is over three months old), you can begin to stretch the time between “taking your dog out” by fifteen minutes every 3-5 days. By the end of the first month, your dog should be able to wait 4 hours between potty times.

Aggression

Aggressive Dogs are very problematic for training as they are a real threat to those around them. Dogs in this category may appear threatening by putting their ears back and growling, by lunging, by talking back when given a command, or by snapping.



Hostility is common in dogs since their history is that of living in packs and fighting for their standing in the pack as well as to get food and protect their young. Unfortunately, some of these dogs also show belligerence by body blocking or slamming other dogs or people with their bodies.

Any dog can be aggressive due to their having been neglected or poorly handled or abused. Some breeds are used for police type work because of their aggressive tendencies: German Shepherd Dogs, Doberman Pinschers. Others are bred to fight like Pit Bulls.

Aggressive dogs are either dominant-aggressive or fear-aggressive. The dominant-aggressive dogs are more dangerous since their aggression is based on their desire to boss and bully and be the dominant pack leader and keep everyone else submissive.

Fear-aggressive dogs may seem normal most of the time and then suddenly, for a reason unknown to you, attack someone or another dog. Their aggression comes from fear of a type of person or dog or particular situation.

Shake cans are very effective for dogs that are aggressive but not dominant aggressive. You can make a loud, yet easy-to-handle shake can with a soda pop can and 10-12 pennies.

After inserting the pennies, tape the opening closed. You may have to keep one of these in every room you allow your dog.

Make sure the dog can see you each time you shake it. When the can is shaken, it must be done loudly and be accompanied by a loud and firm "NO." When he quits what he is doing, praise him vigorously.

Fear-aggressive dogs need a firm jerk and release with a loud, firm command while dominant-aggressive dogs need a very hard jerk and release with a loud, firm, authoritative command.

Praise lavishly for each instance of obedience but be very careful not to get into the dog's face.

Be Warned !

Some dominant-aggressive dogs respond to commands by attacking, biting the leash, biting the person giving the command or correction, or other aggressive behavior. If your dog fits this category, do not wait to employ a professional trainer for your dog.

Any dog over 30 pounds that shows aggression or intimidates any member of your family needs to be out of your household until he has had professional help!

Biting

Biting is by far the most serious problem you can encounter with your new dog. There are many possible reasons for his biting, but no biting – for any reason – is acceptable.

Do not make excuses for him. Do not ignore the problem. Get help immediately. If possible, you should take him back to where you got him and ask for a refund or a different dog. A dog that bites needs to be retrained before putting him up for adoption.

If he is under a year old, try the solutions given here for retraining. If he is over a year old, you need the professional help of a veterinarian, dog trainer, and / or animal behaviorist



– and you need it now. Otherwise, you will have someone get injured seriously and you will be paying expensive bills – medical and legal. It is no fun living in fear of your dog biting you or someone else.

What Are The Reasons For A Dog To bite?

- ✓ He is a puppy and is getting his adult teeth. That should be over by 9-12 months. If that is the case, see how to deal with it in Mouthing, Nipping, and Biting in *10 Common Problems of a Newly Adopted Puppy*.
- ✓ He is a herding dog who uses nipping at heels to herd large animals. If that is true, you can put a stop to it by using the methods in Problem #3: Mouthing, Nipping, and Biting in *10 Common Problems of a Newly Adopted Puppy*.
- ✓ The dog is threatened. This is a big one. If the dog is teased, hugged too suddenly or too tightly, yelled at (close to his face), hit, or in pain, he will bite and he will be justified in biting. Therefore, it is very important to teach children how to behave around and interact with the dog.
- ✓ The dog is aggressive.
- ✓ The dog is shy.
- ✓ The dog is territorial. A dog that is territorial may not have ever had anything he could call his own. He may have had to fight for his food, so he is especially protective of his food. He may be very possessive of you and think he is protecting you or his relationship with you. Or he may be a breed, like a terrier, that is naturally territorial or like many working dogs (German Shepherds and Doberman Pinschers in particular) that are overly protective.
- ✓ The dog is in pain. The pain can be due to illness or injury or due to something a vet or groomer is doing to him. Or it can be pain inflicted by another animal or person. Biting is a dog's response to pain, but you can still teach him not to actually bite in response to pain from you, the vet or the groomer. It is okay for him to growl and curl his lip, but not to bite.
- ✓ The dog cannot see to judge what is happening. Either he has sight problems like cataracts or the movements around him are sudden or too many to keep track of – young children or a crowd of people all moving.

It is much easier and cheaper to prevent a dog bite than to recondition a biting dog.

How Can You Prevent Your Dog From Biting?

- ✓ Use common sense. For example, if he is in pain – ill or got hit by a car – EXPECT to be bitten. Therefore, do not put your face near him and do not move suddenly. Watch very carefully and be ready for a quick snap or bite. Wear gloves when trying to move him. Wrap him in a blanket to move him.
- ✓ Show children how to act around the dog and how to treat the dog. See Chapters 7 and 8 of *Super Dogs & Puppies: How To Choose, Adopt and Bring Your New*

Friend Home to better understand how to introduce your dog to children and children to your dog.

✓ Keep your dog free of medical problems and pain. If he changes behavior by becoming 'snappy' or surly, take him to vet immediately to find the cause and a way to ease his discomfort.

✓ Thoroughly socialize your dog. Once he is familiar with you and your family and has all his vaccinations, start taking him on walks in the neighborhood and in parks. Let him meet and see a variety of people – all ages, ethnicities, heights, voice ranges, etc. Encourage people come up to him and extend their hand to him to sniff. If you know he has bitten before, do not do this!

✓ Feed your dog at the same times and in the same place every day. Do not allow anyone or anything to interfere with his eating. If you must be gone at his mealtime, feed him early. If he has had to fight for food, he will gradually learn to trust you to provide his meals. The older he is when you get him, the longer it will take for him to trust his meals to appear at the right time.

✓ Give him plenty of toys. If he growls or snarls when you pick his toys up, teach him to put his toys away. Do not rotate his toys; simply provide a basket or box for him to keep all of them where he can find them.

✓ Obedience train your dog. Start at home. Take him to obedience classes.

✓ There are several types of muzzles available. Purchase one and put it on him every time he leaves your house and yard.

✓ Keep a slip collar and leash on your dog any time there is someone new in your home (or in his space). That way you can easily and quickly yank him away from the person if he curls his lip, acts afraid, or snaps.

✓ Do not make him live outdoors without human interaction. Keep him with you as much as you can. Allow him to come into some rooms of the house. Take him for walks. Play with him. Keep him with you when you work in the yard and do other chores. Take him in the car to run errands.

✓ Do not give him too large a territory. If he is territorial, you will just encourage him to claim more and more territory and you and everyone else will be endangered if you enter that territory. You may need to restrict his territory to 'his room' in the house and a dog run outside for a while. Once he is doing better, you can slowly enlarge his territory.

✓ Female dogs with puppies are especially protective. If you think your dam (mother dog) will feel threatened when you show the puppies to friends and relatives, shut her out of the room (preferable outside with something to chew like a Kong® toy with peanut butter) while you show the puppies. Simply putting her on the other side of a gate will not work. Even if she never jumped before, she will jump the gate and attack the visitors before you can do anything.

✓ Never reward or praise aggressive behavior of any type.

✓ Do not try to train your dog for protection or guard work yourself. This type of training requires great skill and expertise and cannot be achieved by inexperienced trainers.

✓ Never hit or kick your dog.

What can you do to correct and re-condition your dog if he has bitten someone – or growled or snapped at someone?

Do everything in the prevention list above.

Keep several shake cans around your house and always take one with you when you take your dog on a walk, to the vet, etc. (A shake can is an empty soda pop can in which you have put several coins and taped the opening shut.)

If your dog growls while he is eating, 6 or 8 times while he is eating (about every 15 seconds) shake the can to make him look up. Approach his bowl. If he growls, shake the can loudly and say “NO” firmly. Do not get bitten. Do not put your face down near him. If he quits growling and does not snap or bite, praise him “Good boy.”

You want to impress upon him that you are dominant and he must obey you. You also want him to know that growling, snarling, snapping, and biting are forbidden.

If the shakes can stops startling him, try clanging pot lids together like cymbals, dropping pans on the floor near him, using a whistle, or using a compressed air horn. If he is okay while eating but growls or snaps when you touch his toy, do it when he is playing, but give him back his toy and praise him each time so he is not afraid to play.

Consult a professional trainer as to how to train your dog to ‘back off’.

If you cannot solve this problem in 6-8 weeks, get rid of the dog and be sure to tell the shelter or rescue people about the biting problem and the dog’s being unreliable!

Barking

If your Dog is barking or howling when ignored or left, then it could be loneliness. Or there could be a specific noise or person or item in his environment that triggers his barking. Or he could suffer from separation anxiety. Barking is a symptom to a problem, not the problem.



How To Solve Barking Problems?

✓ Always crate your dog when you leave him. He will feel more secure in his den.

✓ Do not shut him in a bathroom or tie him outside. Many dogs are intimidated by closed doors or by being shut away from you. This can negatively affect his

personality. If you need to shut him in “his room” use a baby gate so there is not a solid wall.

- ✓ Make sure he has plenty of exercise and your attention each day.
- ✓ Feed your dog at the same times each day. Always have water available to him.
- ✓ Try to determine if there is a trigger which sets him off – for example, seeing children walking home from school or other dogs out for a walk with their masters. If you figure out what sets him off, put him where he cannot see or hear the trigger for a few days. Then gradually allow him to see or hear it with you present.
- ✓ When he barks, put your hand around his muzzle gently and say firmly either “no bark” or “quiet”. Let him squirm a minute and then release his muzzle. If he starts to bark again, repeat the action and the command.
- ✓ If he lets the trigger happen without his barking, praise him. Give him a treat and tell him how good he is.
- ✓ The next step is put your dog’s training collar and leash on him. When he starts barking, grab the leash and do a quick jerk and release while using the “no” command. Once you have his attention, use the “no bark” or “quiet” command. When he is quiet, praise him.
- ✓ You will then have to leave the house with him wearing his training collar and leash. Do not vary the routine from your normal leaving routine. Close (but don’t lock), the door, say good-bye, etc. Take a few steps away and wait. When he starts barking, open the door suddenly, grab the leash, jerk and release while commanding “no.” When he has stopped barking, praise him.
- ✓ You will have to vary how far away you go and how long you are gone. You may even get into the car and drive down the street and quietly walk back to see if he is barking.

There are some breeds like Beagles that are bred to bay and howl. Your chances of training them not to do that are very low; however, there are a lot of Beagles that are quiet most of the time. Keep working patiently and persistently. Don’t be afraid to consult a professional dog trainer or animal behaviorist for help.

- ✓ If the dog only barks when you are not home and you are unsuccessful in re-conditioning him, you may need an anti-bark collar.

The anti-bark collars come in two types.

Radio Collars - The radio collars deliver a mild shock when the Dog starts to bark. The collar has prongs that must touch the front of the Dog's neck so the vibrations of the barking trigger the shock.

Herbal Spray Collar - The herbal spray collars work the same way, only the vibrations trigger a mist of pungent citrus-scented fog into the Dog's face. The mist startles the Dog and interrupts the barking.

If you can set up a web cam to watch your dog while you are at work, it might help you understand when he is barking and why.

- ✓ Another method to try is to teach him to “speak” – bark on command. And then use “no speak” instead of “Quiet” to mean ‘do not bark.’
- ✓ If he barks a lot when you are around, you can try a squirt of lemon juice (available at the grocery store in a lemon-shaped squeeze bottle) in his mouth – be careful not to get it in his eyes – to get his attention to stop him from barking.
- ✓ Some dogs even like lemon juice, but most do not. However, it makes all of them pucker which makes it hard to bark! While he is quiet, say “Quiet” and praise him. When he starts barking, squirt lemon juice and say “Quiet”. Using his name before the word “quiet” helps to get his attention.

As with many other behavior problems, make sure he is getting plenty of exercise. Be sure to give him enough attention. And make sure he has toys to play with and things he can safely chew. Rotate his toys so he does not have the same ones out all the time (except for a couple of favorites).

Fears

Fears are both real and imagined, but you cannot explain away a fear to a dog. They are all real to him. Fears come from an association with a feared object, a group of persons, or a situation that involved a terrifying incident. Sometimes fears are a part of an inherited personality distortion. And some fears stem from the dog having had an owner with a fear, which conditioned him to have a fear reaction.

The first thing to do for any fears or phobias is to keep a list or chart of all the times and situations that evoke fear and what the dog’s reaction were. Number the situations in order of the intensity of the fear and try to name the fear – fear of being confined in the bathroom, fear of fireworks, or fear of men taller than 6 feet.

Some basic principles to use regarding your dog’s fears:

- ✓ Desensitize your dog to the fearful situation gradually (in steps) by using positive associations and reinforcements combined with lots of love, praise, reassurance, and special food treats.
- ✓ Counter condition your dog by relaxing him instead of allowing him to get anxious and excited. Use dinner rather than treats. Stroke him and talk to him soothingly.
- ✓ Obedience training will help to counter his fears because it adds structure to the situation and focuses him on pleasing you.

Fear Of Confinement

Use only crates that are wire all the way around so he can always see his surroundings. Place it where he can see you when you are home. If you confine him to a specific room,

use a gate and not a door. If you confine him outside, use puppy pen or chain-link fencing. Let the vet and groomer know he cannot be crated except in his crate (if you can get him to stay in his crate without hurting himself).

Fear Of Noise

- ✓ Purchase a CD (or tape) of the noises your dog fears. These are often available during Halloween, (and other times), at party supply stores or Wal-Mart.
- ✓ Alternately, make a tape recording yourself. Play this at a low volume as background music while feeding your dog something he really enjoys but rarely gets such as tidbits of cooked chicken or liver or some cheese. Keep playing it while you love him and pet him and praise him for listening to the recording.
- ✓ Play it for a total of about 15 minutes the first time. If he does well at that volume, the next day, do it again with the volume a little louder. If he is too scared to eat, then the second day, the volume will have to be as low as the first day.
- ✓ Once he has a day in which he can eat and pay attention to you while the recording is playing, you are making progress. After that you can start turning up the recording or varying the length of time you play it. Also make sure you vary the time of day you do this.

Fear Of People

Usually the fear of people will relate to specific people. Often these people will have some trait (voice quality, height, mannerism, cologne) that reminds him of a bad experience like a person who beat him.

- ✓ Socialize your dog by walking often and doing it in a variety of places – neighborhoods, parks, dog parks, downtown, etc. This will expose him to a variety of people and situations.
- ✓ Some kennels will take your dog and work with desensitizing him; however, if the people he fears are people who come to your home often, you need to have them work with you to desensitize him to them.
- ✓ Take your dog to an area of the house where he is relaxed. Give him some tidbits of favorite food or a Kong® with peanut butter or cheese in it.
- ✓ After talking to him and letting him eat a few minutes, have the person (one he has a low level of fear of) come into the house to the point the dog can see him/her.
- ✓ Pet and stroke your dog. If he continues to eat and does well, have the person come closer. Reward the dog with a treat and praise. Continue doing this until the dog reaches his level of tolerance and then have the person back away and leave. Repeat this an hour or a day or two later.
- ✓ After several sessions the person should be able to give the dog a treat and then pet him. Do the same desensitization with other people on the list.

Digging

Wolves and wild dogs dig to create a den in which to live and have their pups. Domesticated dogs dig for the same reason. But they also dig for other reasons. The dirt is a cool place in hot weather. The den gives them privacy but at the same time allows them to view the activities of the family and neighborhood.

If the dog is a Terrier, digging is part of his breed instinct since he is supposed to dig out burrowing animals.

Both wild and domesticated dogs dig to bury food. Some dogs dig to mark their territory or to bury feces. Many dogs dig because they are bored, have excess energy, or because you were digging to plant flowers or a bush or tree.



In many cases it is simpler to give him an area where he can dig than to fight with him. Often an area under a bush is good because it is shady and cool. If it is near a corner of the yard, it is even better since he can see in several directions while staying cool.

Other options are getting him a doghouse to be his den or putting up a dog run of chain-link fencing resting on a slab of cement. This satisfies his denning instinct but prevents him from digging. Dogs that like water might enjoy a children's wading pool to play in or lay in.

If you have gophers or moles in your yard, your dog is trying to get rid of them. Do not use any poisons or spring traps to get rid of them. Consult a professional.

If your dog keeps re-digging the same hole and you keep refilling it and packing the dirt down, try filling it with water for several days. Some breeds like Retrievers may like this better, but most breeds will get discouraged and leave it alone after a few days.

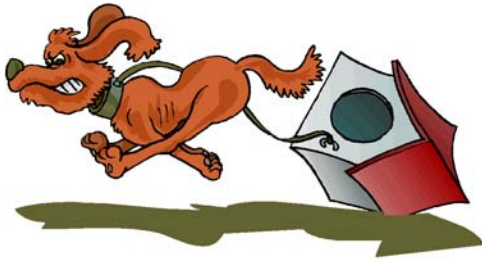
If that does not work, put a large rock or bricks or cement block in the hole and then put the dirt in and pack it down. Your dog will be shocked when he hits something hard and immovable and quit digging.

Other possibilities are squirting him with the garden hose or putting a few drops of Grannick's Bitter Apple on the dirt. The garden hose technique has to catch him by surprise. And if he has never experienced Grannick's Bitter Apple (available at most pet stores), you may need to let him watch you put it on the dirt and then you may need to put a couple of drops on his tongue for him to experience and associate with the smell.

He may foam at the mouth for a few minutes because of the bitterness but it will not hurt him.

Escape Artists, Fence Jumping, Running Away

The problem is not that the dog hates you. It isn't even that the dog is trying to run away. In many cases he is simply following his senses – sight or smell or hearing – or, out of curiosity or boredom, he is looking to see what else is going on in the world.



The real problem is his safety once he is outside of your fence. The secondary problem is the trouble he may cause outside your fence.

He may jump the fence, squirm under the fence, dig under the fence, or slip out an open gate. He may go through an invisible-type fence with no regard to the shock because he sees something or someone, but now he realizes the shock is there and refuses to come back and get shocked again. He may have been frightened and is trying to escape a scary situation, or he may be insecure without you so is looking for you.

If a dog is teased, he will try to get at his tormenter. If a gate is left open, do not expect your newly adopted dog to stay inside the fence. If your dog is not properly exercised, he may leave.

Some breeds are more prone to jumping fences: sporting breeds, larger hounds, and working group breeds like the German Shepherd and Doberman Pinscher.

Some breeds are more prone to going under (by digging) a fence: nearly all terriers and smaller hounds and a few of the toys.

In order to keep most dogs inside a fence you may well need a 6-foot chain-link fence with 6-8 inches of the chain-link buried underground with the dirt well-packed. If your neighborhood or town does not allow a 6-foot chain-link fence, you will need a 4-foot fence with homemade extensions.

These extensions will be 2" x 4" posts every 24" along the top and slanting in toward the yard. Chicken wire or hardware cloth can then be attached to these to prevent jumping. Once the dog quits trying to jump the fence, you can remove the extensions.

Bricks laid end-to-end, boards, or even cement blocks end-to-end laid against the bottom of the fence and then with dirt or mulch against them will help prevent digging under the fence. You can even dig a trench to put these in. If that does not work, attach chicken wire or hardware cloth to the bottom of the fencing and bury it under ground.

If you need to confine your dog while he is outside, consider purchasing a dog run. Place the chain-link below the ground. Use a cement slab. Make sure it is big enough for him to walk around and stretch out. Place it so that it is partially in the shade or create some shade with a tarp over part of the top. Make sure he always has cool, fresh water when he is in his run.

Each morning and evening put your dog on his slip collar and leash and walk him around your fence. If he sniffs right up against the fence, pull back sharply on his leash and say "no, boundary" and then walk on. If he jumps up on the fence, pull him down using the leash and say firmly, "Bad dog. No jump. Floor." Since the command "floor" means 'put all four paws on the floor' it is a good command to use in this situation.

Be vigilant – do not let your dog out in the yard except when you can watch him closely. If he starts to jump or dig, startle him with a shake cans or a squirt from the hose and tell him “NO” firmly and then distract him by playing his favorite game. A shake can is a soda pop can with 10 coins inside and the hole taped closed. If you can yank him back from the fence with his collar, do so.

An untrained dog is more likely to leave than a trained dog. Train your dog to come when called, to sit and lie down, and to stay when told. That way, if a door or gate gets left open or does not fully latch, you can call your dog and use the ‘sit’ command and he will sit and wait for you to go to him to lead him safely back.

Don’t blame or scold your dog for simply walking through an open door or gate; he does not know any better... yet. Get self-closing mechanisms that close your doors and gates securely and install them. Check doors and gates frequently. Walk your fence at least once a week and look for areas that are shallowed or dug underneath and evidences of its being broken down at the top.

Not Coming When Called

Teaching your Dog to come is one of the most important commands he will ever learn. It is also a command that will take a lot of time for him to successfully learn.

Begin with a SIT – STAY. Walk to the end of the leash, starting off on your right foot so he does not follow you. If he follows you, put him back exactly where he was and say “STAY”.

Because this is an action command, you will start it with his name: “Tippy, COME.” Pull on the leash, gathering it up as your dog approaches you. When he is directly in front of you, make him SIT facing you. Once he learns to come 6 feet and sit directly in front of you, you can run backwards with the leash and make him come 8, 10, even 15 feet before you stop and he sits.

Once he is sitting calmly, say “Tippy, BY HEEL” and pull him to your right. Rock back on your right foot and you switch the leash to your left hand behind you, pulling your dog around to your left side. Make him sit next to you (ready to heel). PRAISE YOUR DOG!

This is a difficult command to teach but do not give up and do not let your dog get away with sitting crooked, anticipating the BY HEEL, sitting behind you instead of to the side, etc. He must learn to do it and to do it correctly!

The key to success with this command is for your Dog to always associate the command “COME” with a good thing. A common mistake made by novice handlers is they use a firm tone with the command causing the Dog to associate fear with the command. If a Dog fears you, his instinct will be to run away instead of coming near.

NEVER chase your Dog when using the command “COME”. This is a sure way to teach your Dog the adverse of the command. NEVER command your dog to “COME” and then punish him. Many owners yell “COME” to their dogs when they have had an accident and then push their noses into it or yell at them or hit them. NEVER do any of those things to your dog!!

Once you believe your Dog understands the command, begin to reinforce it. Put a lead on the Dog's collar and allow the Dog to run around with the lead dragging behind. Gently pick up the lead, without the Dog noticing and say "Tippy COME".

If your Dog does not come, then gently pull the lead forcing him to come. Repeat this test often. Once this test works every time, use a retractable lead and let your dog go as far as he can. Then give the command "Tippy COME" and, if he does not start to you or come all the way to you, reel him in quickly.

For the first months of practice, and until your Dog comes to you reliably, NEVER command your Dog to COME unless you have the lead in your hand to back up your command (or someone else has their hands on the Dog to back up your command.)

If you need your Dog for something and you don't have the lead in your hand, go and get your Dog. Don't test the COME command when you are unsure of his response.

Separation Anxiety

If your dog bonded well with his previous family and then was uprooted and lost them, he will be afraid to bond with you and even more afraid to have you leave. He could display a variety of behaviors to show his anxiety with your being gone. Some dogs wet in places they would never wet normally. Others cry all the time. Still others chew things up.

No dog likes to be left alone. However, you can condition your dog to chew on his own toys and go to sleep while you are gone.

If your newly adopted dog shows any signs of separation anxiety, you cannot give him freedom in the house when you leave. Provide your dog with a structured environment when he is left alone. The environment must be safe, secure, and free of items that are inappropriate to chew.



Whenever you leave your dog, place him in 'his room' or a crate. If he escapes from 'his room' or he tends to chew woodwork, linoleum, throw rugs, etc., then you will need to crate him. Either way you will need to leave a variety of chew toys and other toys for him.

Especially helpful is an appropriately sized Kong® toy with peanut butter in it. Various toys are available that hold treats but only dispenses one at a time if the dog rolls the toy in the right way. These are a great way to keep your dog busy while you are gone.

- ✓ Start by leaving your dog for a short period of time.
- ✓ Make your departure the same routine, as you would usually do.
- ✓ Put your dog in 'his room' or his crate with his toys.
- ✓ Get ready to leave.

- ✓ When you leave your dog, say something like: "I'll see you in a little while. Have fun with your toys."
- ✓ Do not make a big deal out of leaving.
- ✓ Get into the car and drive to the end of the street.
- ✓ Stay 10 minutes and return home.
- ✓ Enter the house and putter around for a few minutes. Then go to see your dog.
- ✓ Praise him for being good.
- ✓ Release him and take him to his potty place.

The next day go through the same routine but try to be gone a few more minutes. Each day lengthen the amount of time you are gone until you can be gone for 2 hours. By then, your dog should feel comfortable that you really will come back. He should be able to use his toys to stay busy until he falls asleep.

If you work during the day, you will have to plan to have someone come in and walk him and talk to him and play with him once or twice a day. This same person should also come when you are home at least once a week and do the same things with him so he sees them as safe and constant in his life. This might also be a good person to watch him if you have to leave for a business trip or on vacation.

Humping

Mounting or humping can be a problem, especially with male dogs that have not been neutered. Therefore, the first thing to do is neuter your male dog. If you are having trouble with a female humping, make sure she is spayed.

Mounting or humping is a serious problem you need to deal with since people are greatly offended if a dog humps them (and you will lose your friends) and children are often frightened if a dog tries to hump them. Injury to the dog or person could result.

Why Do Dogs Hump?

- ✓ The dog is a young male who is just feeling his first sexual stirrings.
- ✓ The dog is a nervous or excitable type of dog.
- ✓ The dog has been encouraged to jump on people in play.
- ✓ The person being humped is a woman who is menstruating.
- ✓ The dog smells a female dog in heat.
- ✓ The dog was not neutered when he was young and may have previously bred to a female.

- ✓ The dog is dominant or aggressive and easily stimulated.
- ✓ The dog is of a breed with an anal gland that easily gets plugged, necessitating a trip to the vet.

What Can You Do?

- ✓ Use a shake can and say "NO" firmly while pulling the dog to the floor. Make him stay on a 'down-stay' for several minutes, then release him with praise and put his slip collar and leash on him so you can keep him with you and control him while that person is present.
- ✓ If there are specific conditions under which he always mounts, set those conditions up with him on a slip collar and leash. Do not invite him to mount but watch and see if he does. If so, jerk his leash and say "NO". Praise him when he quits. The first few times you may have to jerk him away using the leash. Put him on a 'down-stay' for one full minute and then release him with praise.
- ✓ If you are having guests, your dog must be shut in 'his room' or in his crate or on his leash next to you at all times until you can trust him.

You would be totally wrong to look at dogs humping as an unacceptable social phenomenon. It is a totally natural biological urge, which they can't withstand.

What you can and should do is to put to practice the tips we have given you above to make your dog realize that you strongly disapprove of this act. He will always want to please you and, with proper training, could get over this habit.

Nonetheless, as ample precaution, neuter/spay your dog to ensure that the embarrassing phenomenon doesn't put off your house guests and stop them coming to your place.

So, there you have it. I can't think of ten more important areas of concern for new adult dog owners and I hope we have been able to give you valuable insights into these.

It's not easy to bring up an adult dog, especially one that may not have been properly treated or correctly trained before he came into your household.

We realize this and have tried to give you practical solutions to some of the most commonly faced problems of adult dog owners. We know these are not the only issues which will trouble you but firmly believe that if you tackle the ten problems enumerated here in the way we have suggested, you will go a long way towards establishing a warm and loving relationship with your dog.

We wish you luck.

Nancy Richards