



Preventative Training

Preventive training means you try to prevent your dog from exhibiting inappropriate behavior by keeping an eye on him when he is with you, or by keeping him in his crate or a puppy/dog-proofed area when you cannot keep an eye on him.

The methodology behind this type of training is if your dog does not get an opportunity to exhibit an unwanted behavior, you do not have to modify his behavior or use negative training methods. This type of training requires more participation from the owner as far as constant supervision and consistency, but in the long run, preventive training is far less stressful on both owner and dog. This training method has two advantages:

1. It sets you up immediately as the pack leader; and
2. It expedites the bonding between you and your new "friend."

If you bring your new puppy home and just turn him loose in your house, in a matter of maybe five minutes he will have carried off as much as he could stuff in his little mouth, and chewed up what he could not.

On the other hand, if you chose to train in a preventive manner, you would only allow your puppy or dog in the room you are in and you would have a supply of proper chew toys ready for him when the need arises. If you catch him chewing on something he should not have, such as your draperies, you would distract him by saying "NO" in a very firm tone of voice and then offer him a proper chew toy along with praise so he will associate the praise with the appropriate chew toy. Remember dogs/puppies understand about three tones of voice along with body language and eye contact. For example:

- High-pitched, excitable tones would be very effective for motivating your dog/puppy (for coming to you when he is called or for heeling properly). This tone also reminds him of his littermates (this is why children have a difficult time winning the respect of a dog/puppy, since they sound like equals).
- Matter-of-fact tones are excellent for giving commands to your dog/puppy (same tone as a bark - calm, direct, no urgency).
- Lowered tones, which would simulate a growl from mom (which means whatever it is you are doing, stop it now). Remember, yelling or striking your dog/puppy will only confuse him and cause him to mistrust you.

Dogs/puppies do not understand being hit or grabbed. They will only learn they cannot trust you or to fear you. They will understand direct eye contact, tones in your voice or your body language, so use it to your advantage.

Direct eye contact can mean you are looking at your dog lovingly and he will exchange your glance. Or when giving a dog a good long stare in the eyes after he has just jumped on you and you have told him "OFF" the stare means "I mean business."

What about body language? Do you have a puppy who cowers when you approach him, maybe even squats and urinates just a little? You do not hit him, so why does he do this? The way you move toward a dog can be a threat in itself. Are you a lot bigger than the dog? Do you move quickly? Do you bend towards him? Why not try to encourage the dog to come to you, squat down on his level so you are not so threatening; use a piece of his dog food or a favorite toy to convince him to come closer. Pet him when he gets very near you (do not reach out), make sure you praise him for showing courage.

All too often people console their dog/puppy when he shows signs of being frightened, which is a normal human reaction. However, to a dog/or puppy, this only confirms his fear. For example, your child drops a metal lid from a cooking pan onto the hard surface of the kitchen floor. Before you can blink an eye, your dog/puppy has thrown himself under the nearest piece of furniture shaking uncontrollably. Instead of pulling him out and consoling him (which would be the same as saying to your dog/puppy "It's okay to be afraid"), try enticing him out with a treat, laugh, be positive. Your dog/puppy will pick up on your mood. Show him he has nothing to fear.

Des:

Learn the proper command tones used in preventive training for puppies and dogs to get a better response.