

# JUMPING

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Dogs do what works. For many, jumping up on people works to get attention. Most people feel that they are not part of the problem but further review usually reveals some behavior from the human that the dog finds rewarding. Often even an angry response from a human is still considered attention by the dog. There are two ways to approach this problem.

## Extinguish the jumping.

- Extinction is simply ignoring the behavior until the dog gives up. This means you must do everything you can to not reinforce the dog. The best example of this is the dog that wants to play ball. If he continually drops the ball in your lap but you never throw it under those circumstances he will eventually give up. When using extinction it is very important to **be consistent and not give up and reinforce the behavior**. *Any movement, vocalization, or eye contact from you can be considered reinforcement by the dog*. This includes anything you might think of as punishment such as physical or verbal reprimands. If you give up too soon and throw the ball then you have not only reinforced the behavior, you have taught the dog to be persistent and to continue to pester you until you finally give in.
- Be aware, when you use this technique you will often see an “extinction burst.” This means the dog’s behavior will get worse for a period of time before it gets better. Have patience. Ignore the dog and this phase will pass.
- The most effective form of extinction for jumping up is to ignore the dog. Do not talk to, touch or make eye contact with the dog. **Become a statue**. Crossing your arms and looking away adds drama to your refusal to participate. The minute the dog has all four feet on the floor you can reinforce him. If you become a statue every time at the first instant your dog jumps (not after 2, 3 or 4 jumps), he will quickly learn what he is doing wrong that.
- If this is not effective after some consistent practice and repetitions then you will want to do the same thing but also turn your back.
- The instant the dog stops jumping you can come back to life and share your attention and praise. Some dogs jump in order to get closer to your face so when they offer a behavior you like (sitting or even just keeping feet on the floor) you may want to squat down so they can be at your eye level for their reward.

## Reinforce and train an incompatible behavior.

- Your goal is “four on the floor.” This means that the dog has all four feet in contact with the floor. Sit, stand and down will all accomplish this goal. Start by reinforcing any behavior that includes four on the floor. You can make the guidelines for greeting more specific after you have eliminated the jumping up behavior.
- Tether your dog to a solid object. Approach the dog at a normal speed. Moving too slow can make this much more difficult for a dog. Do not get close enough for the dog to make contact. If he starts to jump or jumps before you get close, immediately turn your back and walk away. Note how close you were able to get to the dog. Approach again and if the dog jumps, turn and walk away. If the dog does not jump and you are able to get to the point of the previous jump, click then treat. Keep repeating the exercise and get closer after each

successful trial (no jumping). Keep practicing so that the dog gets many successful repetitions.

- After your dog has successfully mastered four on the floor and sit (in separate training sessions) you can combine the two. Now when you approach the dog, ask him to sit and click, then treat. You can eventually extend the sit into a stay for a really lovely, polite greeting.
- *Warning!!! Avoid the jump and sit trap.* If you consistently ask your dog to sit after or as they are jumping on you they will believe that the jump is part of the sit behavior. Do not ask your dog to sit as or immediately after he has jumped up on you.

### **Difficult situations**

- ☞ When greeting your dog after being away, keep your behavior calm and your voice low and soothing so you do not add to the dog's excitement. Also make sure the dog is getting plenty of exercise so that all their energy is not saved up for greetings.
- ☞ For most dogs, guests are too much stimulation. Guests often do not listen to your requests and instruction about the dog. Persist and do not be afraid to tell your guests that your dog is in training and is not allowed to jump on people. As back up for these situations, have the dog on a leash. If the dog starts to jump on people simply step on the leash. Click then treat any four on the floor behaviors. Once he has earned the right, he can drag the leash so will still have some freedom.
- ☞ All family members must be in agreement about how to handle greetings. You cannot allow the dog to jump on some family members but not on others.

The real secret to solving this problem is many practices in quiet situations. Slowly build to the more difficult, exciting greeting such as visitors to your home or friendly strangers on the street. Successful practice will pay off in future greetings.