

PET BEHAVIOR AND TRAINING SERVICES, INC.

JUMPING ON PEOPLE

Jumping is one of the top three behavior problems listed most frequently on the registration sheets for our obedience classes. Unfortunately, it's the normal way dogs greet each other. They jump around, lick faces and sniff each other. If we want them to stop jumping to greet us, we have to teach them how we want to be greeted.

Teaching doesn't mean yelling "get off" and pushing the dog away. Can you just imagine how you would feel if you tried smiling and shaking someone's hand and they yelled and pushed you away?

- Start by teaching your dog to "sit". **DOGS CANNOT JUMP UP AND SIT AT THE SAME TIME.** Use a food treat held right over and close to your dog's nose. Move your "treat hand" backward; your dog's head will follow the treat. As the head goes back, his rump should hit the floor. Reward with praise and the food treat. When you can get him to do this several times in a row, you may add the command "sit". Practice this 4 or 5 times in a row, several times throughout the day.
- Now you are ready to ask your dog to sit without food in your hand, although you will still use food to reward him when he does sit. To understand the significance of this step, you need to understand the difference between food used as a lure and food used as a reward. When food is used as a lure, the dog sees it before he responds. When the food is used as a reward, the dog sees it after he responds.
- When you ask your dog to "sit" without the food in your hand, make the same hand motion as you did when the food was there. This becomes your sit hand signal. When your dog sits, reach into your pocket and reward your dog with a piece of food and your praise.
- Now teach him to hold his sit for a few seconds. Tell him to "sit", use your sit hand signal, wait 2 seconds, then reward him with praise and the food treat. Give him an "OK" release word. Your goal is to have him sit for 20 to 30 seconds. Build up to that time gradually.
- Doing a sit-stay while someone approaches or for petting is just like any other sit-stay. Start with someone familiar to your dog, so he will be less excited. While you are standing near your dog, tell him to "sit", and use your sit hand signal; have your helper approach him. If he holds his sit, praise and reward him with a food treat. Don't forget to release him with "OK". Then have your helper approach and pet him while he holds his sit. Praise, reward and release. Practice, practice, practice!

If you need further help with training, you may call Pet Behavior at 937-293-5686. Pet training classes are available at a variety of times for your convenience.

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937-293-5686

A non-profit organization specializing in the behavior of pets