

The Essentials

The most important thing that you must do in order to have your dog obey and respect you is to gain his focus. This is the first step in respectful communication and effective teaching. There are four points that you must remember and achieve:

Keep Your Command Simple:

Everything with dogs is a simple “Yes or No”; “Black or White”; “Left or Right”. When you ask them to do simple, repetitive actions, they can easily respond. “Sit” always means put your rear on the ground. “Come” always means get from there to here.

Always Your Idea:

In the dog world there is only one boss and the rest are followers. The boss is the one who always tells everyone else what to do. Everyone else focuses on the boss so that they are ready for his direction. Never allow your dog to tell you what he wants you to do (i.e. he walks over to you with a toy and you throw it for him). Always make sure it is your idea; you want him to do it.

Correct When He Breaks Your Rules, Encourage When He Obeys:

Correct your dog the moment he breaks your rule. You must be telling him “What you are doing NOW is wrong”. Encourage or give your dog praise as soon as he is no longer breaking your rule. You are telling him “See, that is right!”.

Stand... GRRR... Squirt...

Communicate with your dog using the simple, progressive method that he uses. Body language is most important form of communication. It is visual and "the most visual" thing that you can do is to stand up. Your voice comes next. You must provide a sound that uniquely communicates "I am talking to you". We always suggest a low, guttural tone. If needed, you need to provide a physical stimulus. The sensation of a squirt of water from a squirt bottle or the distinctive sound of a rattling chain from a plastic bottle containing a piece of chain are often very effective.

Remember that your goal is to get your dog's focus. You never want to scare, frighten, or hurt him! Once he is calmly looking at you, you are in control and you are the boss. Telling him what to do next will be no problem.