



Jumping Up

When puppies are young, we tend to let them get away with more because they are still small and so cute! The down side of this is that they are learning behaviors that will most likely follow them to adulthood. Once they are older, the jumping up can become a nuisance and can even be dangerous.

Why Do Dogs Jump?

Dogs jump up when they are excited and to get attention. If you have a dog that regularly does this, it is most likely because he gets attention for it and therefore the behavior is reinforced. Pushing the dog away and/or fussing at him to stop won't get the point across to your dog. Instead, they think it is part of the game. Whether it is positive or negative attention, it is still attention in his book!

There are also those who enjoy and encourage the jumping up. They will pet and play with the dog when he jumps up on them. This in turn teaches the dog that jumping up leads to something he wants – attention. It is important to ask everyone not to encourage the jumping by doing this. Even if they say “It's fine! I don't mind!” Remind them that everyone the dog comes in contact with has a part to play in good manners.

Ways to Train Your Dog to Stop Jumping

Most of the time, dogs jump up when they are excited to greet someone. The best way to change this behavior is to work on showing your dog how to properly greet guests. They will never know unless we show them!

Your dog can easily learn how to sit politely when saying hello. They do best with consistency, so it will be your job to ask for this every time. To do this, you will teach your dog to sit with a verbal cue and then reward with treat. Only when they are sitting or have all four paws on the ground can they interact with the guests.

An important management tool is to prevent your dog from rehearsing the behavior. This will keep your dog from being accidentally reinforced and will allow you to stay consistent in training him. When you first start training, put your dog in a separate room or behind a gate when letting guests in. This will keep them from rushing up out of excitement.

Next, you will need to teach your dog the sit cue. You do this by using a food lure to guide your dog into the sitting position. Hold the treat in front of your dog's nose and slowly raise the treat toward the top of the dog's head. As soon as your dog's bottom hits the ground, say “yess!” and give him the treat. If he jumps up, you are probably holding the treat too high.

When your dog is consistently sitting. You can start to begin to practice with yourself as the visitor. Put a bag of treats outside the door. Go outside and pick up a treat. When you enter, immediately ask your dog to

“sit”. You can also get a mat and set it up a little away from the door and get your dog to sit there. This will keep them from crowding the door. Make sure not to give any treats or praise until the dog is sitting. If your dog jumps on you, you can ignore him and turn away or even walk back out of the door and try again. Avoid using an angry tone and try to only ask him to “sit” once. To do this, ask for the behavior and then wait. Eventually he will put two and two together.

When your dog is doing well and greeting you with a sit when you walk through the door, you can start to add a knock or ring the doorbell. This can be a trigger for some dogs and can heighten their excitement. When he is doing well with that, you can start to practice with friends. Have them come to the door and knock (grabbing a treat on their way in). Ask your dog for a “sit” as they enter and have them reward him for a polite greeting.

While he is learning, it will be important to reward your dog frequently for polite greetings. After lots of practice, you can start using only praise sometimes, but continue to use food rewards intermittingly to maintain his attention.

If you ever run into any snags, remember that you can always remove your dog from the situation to prevent the jumping and let him calm down. You can also proof the behavior by using the same exercise when on leash at the park, at the pet store, and when visiting other people’s homes. If people want to pet your dog, ask them not to approach unless he is sitting. If necessary, get him to sit using a treat. We want to make it as easy as possible for him to learn what he is supposed to do!