



Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals

HOW TO SOLVE JUMPING UP

Jumping up is an annoying habit to most people, but relatively simple to correct. Dogs mostly jump for attention and praise. This habit stems from puppyhood, when littermates “mob” the female and lick her around the face, looking for acceptance and a meal. Knowing this, you must teach the dog that the only way it can get your attention, praise, petting, or a treat is by keeping all four feet on the floor, not by jumping.

Teaching a dog not to jump requires good timing and consistency. If you have a consistent jumping problem, it’s best if you **DO NOT ALLOW THE DOG TO JUMP AT ALL**. For many dogs, the very act of jumping up and getting their face closer to yours is rewarding and every successful attempt will make the behavior more likely to recur. This training process requires the help of all members of the household and all who visit. The dog may only be petted when he is sitting, standing, or lying down.

Here’s an easy way to teach the dog not to jump on you:

1. Have someone hold the dog on a leash or tether your dog to a stationary object. Approach the dog calmly and quietly. If the dog begins to jump up on you, turn abruptly and walk away silently. If the dog remains with all four paws on the ground, praise and treat him. Repeat your quiet approach, turning away for every jump up and rewarding every polite greeting.
2. You can make your dog even less likely to jump up by waiting for him to sit before praising and treating him. Many dogs will automatically sit if you wait long enough, but if your dog doesn’t, simply say “sit,” if he knows the command, or lure him with a piece of food before rewarding him. If you practice often and reward well, he will soon anticipate the command and will sit automatically as you approach.
3. If your dog is consistently polite when you approach him silently, then raise the difficulty level by greeting your dog calmly and happily as you approach. Don’t forget to reward only the good responses. As your dog gets better at greeting you politely, continue to raise the excitement level of your greetings until you are talking excitedly and patting your chest as if you were inviting him up.
4. Practice this exercise with lots of different people, locations, and scenarios.

Honey, I’m Home!

1. It’s especially important to teach your dog appropriate greetings when you come home after any length of absence. Practice entering your home, opening your front door calmly and quietly. If your dog looks about to jump up, close the door unceremoniously in his face. He has to learn that, if he doesn’t greet you appropriately, you won’t stay home. Continue this exercise until he stays on the ground, even for a second. When he does, get immediately down to his level, so he doesn’t get tempted to jump up, and praise and pet him.
2. Gradually increase the time your dog must spend with all four paws on the floor before you reward him.
3. Remember to practice this exercise with as many people as possible, so he learns not to jump up on guests, either.

There are some common methods of treating jumping up that we do not recommend, because they are either inhumane or ineffective:

1. Don't step on or squeeze your dog's paw, knee him in the chest, check his collar or otherwise cause your dog pain. This kind of behavior can cause your dog to fear you, or even aggress towards you.
2. Don't yell or push your dog away, since he may interpret this behavior as play. Also, many dogs perceive yelling as a desirable form of attention. In any case, these methods do not work.

For more information on reforming a rude dog, call our Animal Behavior and Training Department at 713-869-7722, ext. 187, or email animals@hspca.org.